

A close-up, low-angle shot of a woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a bright yellow tank top with a dark blue trim. She is smiling and looking upwards, with her right arm raised. The background is a clear, bright blue sky with some light clouds. The lighting is warm, suggesting a sunny day.

Making Women and Girls More Active

A Good Practice Guide

“From the first steps in the playground to the steps onto the podium, we’re with women in Scottish sport all the way”

Julia Bracewell OBE

Foreword

by Julia Bracewell OBE
Chair, **sportscotland**

Sport is an essential part of my life. To imagine a life without sport is a difficult concept for me. I grew up with it, and was encouraged to pursue it passionately. My sporting life started with dancing and continued with fencing - first as a seven year old in my back garden, eventually as an Olympic athlete.

Despite my passion for sport, it hasn't always been easy to make time for it; work, children, and simple day to day living sometimes conspire to make it impossible. But the rewards have always made the effort worth it. Sport benefits mind, body and spirit – and I believe everyone should have the opportunity to enjoy these benefits. For those of us involved in sport and privileged enough to enjoy it on a regular basis, it's sometimes hard to understand why others do not participate. Reading this guide tells us why. If we have a greater understanding of the reasons girls and women do not take part in physical activity, we have a better chance of helping them gain access, embrace opportunity and enjoy sport and taking part in physical activity.

The fitness and wellbeing of women and girls in Scotland has been on the political agenda for some time. **sportscotland**, the Scottish Executive and a number of organisations within Scottish Health have identified women and girls as a group that are under-represented in sport and need more opportunities and targeted work in order to address their levels of fitness and general health. These are the facts. The challenge to those of us working in the field of sport and physical activity; to get more girls and women more active, more often. This guide seeks to help the Scottish sporting community rise to the challenge of helping girls and women live a more active life through providing background on the barriers they face and practical recommendations and advice on breaking down these barriers.

The challenge of lower female activity levels is not a new one, and much good work and progress has been made by many. We've relied on them for the advice and information in this guide; the good practice examples alone demonstrate that massive inroads into this area are being made. I give my sincere thanks to those who have contributed thus far, and urge them to continue their good work.

Great things start with small steps. For me it was fencing as a young girl, and wanting to be a part of the Olympics I saw on TV. For others, it might be the freedom to take a swim, the chance to try out a new sport, or simply the time to take a walk. No matter what the aspiration, no matter the sport or activity, having the time and opportunity is something every woman and girl deserves.

We can all play a part in making a physically active life possible for all women and girls, no matter what their age, circumstances or life choices. Let this guide be the beginnings of those efforts, and herald a new era for women and girls in sport.

Good luck



Thanks to our partner:






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An Introduction to Gender Equality in Sport

This Good Practice Guide is for those working within sport and physical activity, whether it is in schools, leisure centres, clubs, governing bodies of sport or in other areas of the community. Its aim is to provide advice, information and good practice examples for anyone planning or delivering programmes of sport and physical activity.

This Guide has grown out of a partnership with the Women's Sports Foundation (WSF). It details the inequalities that exist in sport and physical activities and provides you with information on women's participation in sport and physical activity. It also offers advice and recommendations on how to overcome many of the barriers faced by women and girls taking part or wishing to take part in sport and physical activity. It intends to show how we can work towards a greater gender equality in sport and make sport and physical activity more accessible for all women and girls.

Throughout the guide you will find practical advice as well as good practice from all over the country. Having spent some months travelling around Scotland delivering training and meeting with people working with girls and women in the area of sport and physical activity I have seen at first hand some of the fantastic work that is being done. I have also begun to understand some of the problems and barriers practitioners are faced with when delivering activities, sourcing funding and working to effect change for girls and women in a very diverse Scotland.

We'd like to know what sections of the guide you find useful and any good practice or ideas from your own work in achieving gender equality in sport. There is a lot of good work being done in various areas and communities and we'd like to hear about initiatives worthy of recognition. Please let us know what good work you are doing by contacting us at sportscotland – details at the back of the guide. We'd also recommend looking at wider good practice examples at www.whatworksforwomen.org.uk, a fantastic resource showcasing initiatives from across the UK – you can also register good practice here.

With the new duty on the public sector to promote gender equality due to arrive in December 2006, sport and leisure will need to assess their policies and practices and the aim is that this guide will be one useful tool in this work.

We hope you will find this Guide a useful and supportive resource that assists you in your work with girls and women in sport and physical activity. We can all play a role in making women and girls more active and sharing good practice can only help us get better at what we do. Please continue to let us know about all of the good work going on across the country.

Jessica Lindohf
Women, Girls and Sport Officer
sportscotland

Gender Equality

...means that women and men have equal conditions for realising their full human potential, enjoying civil rights and for contributing to, and benefiting from, economic, social, and political development.

Gender equality is therefore the equal valuing by society of the similarities and the differences of men and women, and the roles they play.¹

Women's Sports Foundation UK

The Women's Sports Foundation, founded in 1984, is the national non-governmental organisation solely committed to improving and promoting opportunities for women and girls in sport at every level.

We work through a combination of advocacy, information, education, research and training.

Our vision is of a society which celebrates the diversity of women and girls and enables them to benefit from, excel at and fulfil their potential through the sport of their choice.

sportscotland and the Women's Sports Foundation are committed to promoting Good Practice in sport and physical activity to ensure that more women and girls in Scotland benefit from all the advantages of an active life. This guide is a collaboration between **sportscotland** and the Women's Sport Foundation (WSF).

sportscotland's corporate strategy is inspired by the objectives of Sport 21: *The National Strategy for Sport* which maintains a vision of Scotland as:

- a country where sport is more widely available to all;
- a country where sporting talent is recognised and nurtured; and
- a country achieving and sustaining world class performances in sport.

In relation to the first element of this vision, women and girls have been identified as one of the key groups to focus on in order to increase participation in sport. Several of the targets of Sport 21 identify the importance of increasing women and girls' participation in sport, particularly in addressing drop off in participation in the teenage years.

sportscotland is absolutely committed to promoting equity in our organisation and in Scottish sport, and we believe that the principles of equity should be central to every aspect of development, delivery and decision making in sport. That means ensuring that diversity in sport is encouraged, supported and celebrated.

The importance of advocating and supporting more women and girls to participate in sport is highlighted in **sportscotland's** *Women and Girls Equity and Diversity Strategy*, as well as in **sportscotland's** overall *Equity Strategy: Working Towards Diversity and Inclusion in Sport*. The Equity Strategy sets out **sportscotland's** commitment to increasing equity, diversity and inclusion in sport and outlines our targets and intended outcomes for 2005-2007. **sportscotland** will deliver this strategy by implementing the *Equity Standard: A Framework for Sport*, developed by the four home country sports councils and UK Sport in 2004 as a tool to assist sports organisations taking steps to increase equity in their organisation and services.

Through **sportscotland's** investment in the Active Schools Network we aim to increase activity amongst:

- school aged children;
- girls and young women;
- children and young people from ethnic-minority communities;
- children and young people with physical and learning disabilities; and
- children and young people in areas of socio-economic disadvantage.





01 Benefits

“In the UK, obesity has trebled since 1980 and continues to increase at an alarming rate. 1 in 3 girls aged 11 is overweight”

The Benefits of Physical Activity

Being active is good for all of us. The benefits described in this section are just some of the reasons why many of us exercise – and some of the reasons why we should encourage others to be active.



“Physically active people are at about half the risk of coronary heart disease compared to those with a sedentary lifestyle”

The benefits fall into three categories:

- 1 Physical Health
- 2 Psychological
- 3 Social

1 Physical health

Being physically active has a significant positive impact on our physical well-being. It helps:

- those who smoke to give up;
- prevent coronary heart disease;
- prevent osteoporosis;
- prevent late onset diabetes (Type II);
- prevent high blood pressure (hypertension);
- prevent obesity and assist with weight control. Obesity and being overweight can lead to other health problems, such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, bronchitis and osteoarthritis. The good news is that aerobic exercise can lead to moderate weight loss, even without dieting. Dieting combined with physical activity is one of the most effective ways of managing mild to moderate obesity;
- prevent some cancers, such as cancer of the colon, breast, kidney, endometrium and prostate, as well as cancers which are linked to being overweight or obese;
- develop and maintain physical competence. For example, regular exercise can help children develop coordination and can reduce memory loss in older people;
- prevent and treat non-specific back pain.

2 Psychological

Regular physical activity also has fantastic benefits for our psychological and emotional well-being. It can:

- raise self-esteem and self-confidence, energy, alertness and awareness;
- encourage better sleep patterns;
- reduce and prevent depression by stimulating chemicals in the brain (endorphins) which act as natural mood enhancers;
- reduce feelings of stress and anxiety;
- improve body image. Poor body image is a particular problem for adolescent girls, and can contribute to eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia. Physical activity and sport can help improve body image and thereby prevent eating disorders.

3 Social

As well as individuals, communities also benefit from sport and physical activity. It can help:

- develop social skills. Young people who participate in sports can learn social skills and the value of hard work, fair play and teamwork. Physical activity can provide a safe and supportive environment for children and young people to explore their strengths, develop skills and test their limits. This can help young people grow into capable, well-balanced, productive members of the community;
- improve academic performance. Athletic participation is linked to favourable academic outcomes, including better grades, fewer disciplinary referrals, lower absenteeism and drop-out rates, and increased commitment to further education;²
- reduce anti-social behaviour, social exclusion and loneliness across all age groups. Physical activity is particularly important for helping adolescents through the years of transition to adulthood. The on-going social relationships and skills that develop from taking part in sport can provide a core of social resources to support and protect children and adolescents as they mature;
- improve sexual health and well-being. Girls who play sports are less likely to have unprotected sex or have an unplanned pregnancy.³

Did you know?

- Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) and stroke are major causes of premature deaths, causing about 18,000 (1/3 of all deaths) in men and 7,000 (1/5 of all deaths) in women under 65yrs. However, physically active people are at about half the risk of CHD compared with those with a sedentary lifestyle.
- 80% of the 6,000 hip fractures which occur each year in the UK are experienced by women over 50yrs of age. Weight-bearing exercise helps maintain body mass and can reduce the risk of a hip fracture by up to 50%.
- In the UK, obesity has trebled since 1980 and continues to increase at an alarming rate. Those particularly at risk of obesity and being overweight are those (especially women) living on a low income, those with obese parents as well as some ethnic groups such as Afro-Caribbean and Pakistani people.
- 1 in 3 girls aged 11 is overweight.





02 Barriers

“Almost 3.5 hours of a woman’s day is taken up with domestic work, compared to less than 2 hours for men”



Barriers for women and girls

It's clear that taking part in regular sports or physical activity is good for individuals and good for communities. Despite this, women and girls are far less likely to be physically active than men or boys: the gap between women and men's participation in sport in Scotland currently stands at 12%.

There are also significant differences in what activities women and girls and men or boys do as well as how they do those activities. Women and girls tend to be more involved in non organised activities and as a result are less likely to be affiliated with a sport club or other organised sport organisation. In Scotland only a third of club members are adult females and just 5% are girls under the age of 16.⁴

Did you know?

- Already at the age of 7 many more girls than boys have been put off sport.⁵
- 40% of girls have dropped out of all sports activity by the time they reach 18.⁶
- Almost half of adult women in Scotland (43%) participate in little or no sport at all⁷ and 79% of girls aged 8-15 did not see being fit and healthy as important.⁸
- Only 17% of girls in Primary 7 – Secondary 2 report doing moderate physical activity for 1 hour on more than 5 days per week as recommended by national guidelines. In addition 42% of girls in this age group report doing 1 hour or less per week of vigorous physical activity.⁹
- Disabled women are 49% less likely to participate in exercise compared with the national average, while disabled men are 24% less likely to participate in exercise compared with the national average.¹⁰

1 How can we explain this difference between the sexes?

There are many practical, personal, social and cultural barriers to participating for women and girls. However, there are ways to overcome these barriers. In section 02, we outline the key reasons why women and girls don't take up sport or physical activity.

Of course, these barriers will be different for different people, and women and girls vary for a whole host of reasons; personal character, ethnic background, socio-economic group, sexuality, age, physical and mental impairments to name a few. It's important to bear this in mind when thinking about what kinds of sport or physical activity will suit different groups of women and girls.

To know how best to engage with women and girls, you need to have an understanding of the particular barriers they might face. This guide makes a start with that, but the best way to understand is to ask women and girls themselves. Consultation with the 'experts' – women and girls – is a key component of good practice.

2 The lifecycle of women

Although all human beings grow up and grow older, women and men experience the aging process differently. Events and stages of people's lives can affect them in different ways as they take on changing roles and responsibilities and develop new interests and pastimes.

For example, the arrival of a first baby seems to affect most women's lives more than men's. At each stage of life, women and men might have quite different caring and (paid) work responsibilities.

These events will leave them with more or less enthusiasm, time and money to take part in physical activity and sport. Attempts to engage women of all ages should take into account the different motivations across each age group.

Clearly, there is no 'typical' girl or woman and the lives of women differ depending on, for example, income, ethnicity, disability, health, sexuality or motherhood. However, women may have similar experiences at similar stages of life. The timeline of women's lives that follows illustrates the changes they may experience at different ages.

Adults taking part in sport (excluding walking) at least once a week in Scotland:¹¹ female 24%, male 38%

A Timeline of Women's Lives



Adolescence 11-16 yrs

This is a time of important physical and emotional changes and growth for girls. They tend to be affected by puberty earlier than boys and so-called 'early' and 'late' developers may feel awkward and self-conscious as they experience growth spurts. They may also experience pressures around schoolwork, social life, 'fitting in', body image, sexuality and sexual activity, being independent, family life and expectations. Clearly, there are many things competing for the attention of adolescent girls. These pressures explain the high drop in activity participation rates of adolescent girls.

Young Adult 17-24 yrs

For most young adult women, this is a transitional period from education to work, which brings new experiences and challenges. It is the time when they move away from the organised sporting structures of school and many drop out of physical activity and sport. While there are pressures to be independent, more and more young adults stay in education and live in the family home. Many young adult women have some disposable income, limited caring or other responsibilities, an active social life and an interest in appearance and 'looking good', which might provide the motivation to take part in physical activity. Others have the responsibilities, pressures and pleasures that come with motherhood.

Adulthood 25-39 yrs

Many women look after children in their late 20s and 30s, so, as well as having the physical effects of pregnancy and childbirth, there are more demands on their time, finances and energy. As women rather than men still take on the main caring role, many women with young children reduce their hours of paid work and juggle the demands of home and family. Typically, they'll focus on their children's health more than their own, but the happiness and health of their children might in turn provide a motivation to be active.

The timeline shows that women, like men, are not a homogeneous group, all sharing the same life circumstances. Instead, the priorities, pressures and motivations of women to engage in sport or physical activity vary over their lifetimes.

Think about the different motivations for different generations of women to take part and tailor your service and information accordingly. Ask women from your potential participant group which activities appeal to them and why, so that you can understand their motivations and the other demands on their time, energy and money.

The types of activities that appeal to different age groups also vary. For example, many younger and older women are attracted to dance (albeit different kinds of dance!) for the psychological, social, emotional and physical benefits it brings. And whilst exercising alone in state of the art

gyms might appeal to women in their 20s and 30s, it is more likely to be intimidating or 'boring' for women in their 50s and 60s. Older women are more likely to prefer activities which they don't consider to be sport, such as walking, dancing, swimming, gardening, yoga and cycling.

Different women enjoy different forms of exercise and sport and although it is often assumed that adult and older women are more interested in aerobic exercise and fitness classes, many would prefer team sports or more competitive activities. It's often the assumption that women who take up or continue sport in their middle age or later years do it as a hobby rather than because they want to excel. As a result competitive sport tends to be offered to younger women, but it is important to recognise that older women might also like to participate competitively and achieve at the highest levels.



Middle Age 40-59 yrs

Middle-aged women may have a growing young family and find that their lives are focused on family activities and concerns. Others may focus their energies on their careers. Most juggle both family and paid work. Social lives and leisure activities are likely to revolve around networks of family or workmates. Women may find they have very little time for themselves and that caring for others is their main priority.



Third Age 60-69 yrs

As children move out of the family home, women may find they have significantly more time on their hands. At the same time, women's own parents may need more care and support as they grow old. Women, rather than men, tend to take on these responsibilities.

Chronic health problems and disabilities often set in at about this age and may influence a women's participation in sport and physical activity.



Old Age 70+ yrs

Women in their older years tend to be more interested in living for today than preparing for tomorrow. This means that the motivation of improved health in the future is a poor motivator for physical activity.

Women of this age are less interested in exercising for physical health benefits; they are more likely to enjoy the social relationships which can be maintained through participating in sport and physical activity. The shared benefits of exercising with another person (whether that's a friend, a partner, a grandchild) or even of walking the dog are more important than the personal benefits such as health and well-being.

Did you know?

- As women grow older their physical activity levels drop and whilst the age group 35-44 are the most active group only 34% of this group fulfil national guidelines.¹²
- Among older women only 19% of those aged 55-64 and 8% of those aged 65-74 fulfil guidelines of 30 minutes of moderate activity 5 times per week.¹³
- Older women, like younger women, find self-consciousness about their body and their body image demotivators for taking part in physical activity.¹⁴
- Older women in particular benefit from having social support to encourage their participation in physical exercise and for this group it is the social aspect of taking part in exercise that is the greatest motivator.¹⁵

Practical Barriers

Practical barriers can affect women and girls throughout their lives, or as their lives change. The barriers they may face will depend partly on their circumstances and stage of life – for example whether they are mothers, disabled, living in poverty, in employment, even whether living in rural or urban areas.

However, it's unlikely that a woman won't experience any of these barriers at some time in her life. Understanding how widespread their effects are is an essential part of knowing how to adapt provision of sport and physical activity so that a wider range of women and girls can benefit.

- 1 Lack of time and childcare
- 2 Lack of money
- 3 Lack of transport
- 4 Personal safety
- 5 Funding
- 6 Access to facilities

Did you know?

- Almost 3.5 hours of a woman's day is taken up with domestic work, compared to less than 2 hours for men. Food preparation takes up the bulk of the chores, with cleaning and shopping the next most time-consuming.¹⁶
- Men do an average of 97 minutes longer paid work each day than women, but women do around 2 hours more housework and childcare than men.¹⁷
- Lack of time is also a factor for girls taking part in physical activity and sport and 34% of S2 girls cited lack of time as an important barrier, 43% also cited lack of equipment as a major barrier.¹⁸
- It is predominantly women who take time off to look after sick children, including 60% of women who earn the same as or more than their partners. Working mothers with children put twice as many hours into housework as their partners.¹⁹
- On average women tend to have less income than men; women working full time earn on average £559 or 18% less per month than men do.²⁰

1 Lack of time and childcare

Women tend to have less leisure time than men as they take on the greater burden of responsibility for housework, childcare and care of elderly or infirm relatives. This is one of the key reasons for not taking part in sport. Women also cite lack of childcare facilities as a major factor discouraging them from taking part in sport and physical activity; in a recent study, four times as many women as men identified this as a barrier.¹⁶ Girls are also likely to be affected by this, as they're more likely than their brothers to be expected to take care of siblings and to take on housework and cooking.

Recommendations

- Investigate options for the provision of childcare, or help with childcare costs, and adopt a child-friendly approach so that women can bring their children with them to the venue.
- Provide crèche facilities and/or provide classes for toddlers and children, either with or separate from their parents, so that the adults can bring their children along when they go to exercise. For example, parents and baby aerobic classes could incorporate exercises like lunges with pushchairs, encouraging participants to see how they can incorporate physical activity into their daily lives.
- Making physical activity a part of the working day can help address the lack of time so many women experience. For example, lunchtime walking, running or exercise groups, supported by the employer, can help staff to fit physical activity into a busy working day. Encourage your employer to support such schemes.
- Provide sports facilities for schoolgirls during school hours or before the start of the school day as well as in the evening.

Good Practice Example

Bodyworks is operated by Argyll & Bute Council's Out of Schools Learning team. It's an initiative which brings together individual PE-departments and local instructors to run lunch time activity sessions in schools. Instructors are provided by Bodyworks; half the cost is carried by the school, the other half by Stramash, the overarching project funded by the Big Lottery.

Bodyworks means that girls in rural areas who might find it difficult to take part in after-school activities because of time and travel constraints can take part in physical activity during lunch time. Activities range from kick-boxing to dance – less traditional activities which have also successfully attracted girls who are otherwise non-participants. The supportive 'girls only' environment has also proved popular in upping attendance from this sector.

As a further incentive to increase activity and participation, free entry vouchers to evening classes run by the same instructors are offered to all the girls who take part during their lunch hour.

Edinburgh Leisure runs a number of women only sessions in a variety of activities; sessions that have become much appreciated by women in the community.

Several of the leisure centres also provide crèche facilities to enable women with children to take part in activities whilst their children are cared for and engaged in suitable activities.

As a follow on from this work Edinburgh Leisure has also secured funding from the 'Girls on the Move' participation programme to provide a service for young mothers. This initiative will target young mothers from socially excluded areas and will provide access to leisure opportunities as well as a crèche free of charge.



Good Practice Examples

Girls on the Move Leadership Programme is a result of a partnership between the Scottish Sports Association, Scottish Executive and The Robertson Trust. Its aim is to involve more young women as leaders in physical activity.

The Leadership Programme targets young women who already have an interest or active involvement in sport who wish to pass on their interest and enthusiasm to other girls and young women who are currently not active. The programme does this by providing skills training and personal development on free residential courses. Programme participants can gain up to two nationally recognised awards in sports leadership.

The programme instils a sense of well being and boosts self-confidence in the girls that take part; qualities that ensure they can lead their contemporaries in physical activity with skill and self-assurance. And the benefits don't end there – skills gained through the programme can be applied elsewhere – at school, at work and in the wider community.

Applicants don't need to be sporty to take part – interest, motivation, enthusiasm and potential are most important. The programme is not about producing athletes, it's about turning girls into leaders.

Glasgow Caledonian University, encouraged by the Scottish Health at Work initiative, has a very comprehensive physical activity policy providing facilities, time and support for exercising throughout the working day.

Covered and secure cycle racks, showers and gym facilities on site mean ample provision is made to exercise. Walking and jogging groups and fitness classes take place each lunchtime, and more time to take part is being introduced. There are plans to reward those who exercise with an hour of exercise time taken from their working week, which could, for example, translate to twenty extra minutes over three lunch hours. Innovation doesn't end there – stair walking signs are displayed throughout the campus to encourage daily activity, a comfortable clothing policy has been proposed, as have staff lockers; and 'meetings in motion', allowing staff to exercise during meetings are next on the agenda.

2 Lack of money

More women than men say that lack of money prevents them from taking part in sport and physical activity.

Exercise and sport are often seen as luxuries, or rewards for paid work, and, even though nearly as many women as men are in paid work now, men are still seen as more deserving of such rewards.

Poor families may not be able to afford to invest in club membership, or pay for sporting clothing and equipment, and mothers from poorer families are unlikely to afford the childcare necessary to give them the time to take part in sport.

Disabled people and black or minority ethnic people are amongst the poorest in our society, so they are particularly affected by the costs of exercise and sport.

Recommendations

- Subsidies for women's activities can make them more affordable. If subsidies cannot be sustained consider offering them at the start of a new project or activity and then gradually introduce fees.
- Provide the first session of a course free, to offer a taster before participants commit themselves.
- Make physical activity part of working life to address lack of money and time. For example, workplace gyms and/or gym membership can be tax-deductible benefits if provided by employers to keep their workforce healthy and active.

3 Lack of transport

This is a particular problem for women with young children, elderly women, women and girls with disabilities, and women and girls living in rural areas. These groups are more reliant on public transport, which is too often unreliable, inconvenient and expensive. The cost of public transport is a particular hurdle, given the lower incomes of women in comparison with men.

Recommendations

- Explore partnerships with transport-providers. Provide information about public transport. Help the participants (or parents of participants) of your services organise themselves into groups, so that they can go to and from venues together, or organise share-a-ride systems.
- For some people, travelling to a venue to take part in a class or sports session might be out of the question. For these women and girls, consider developing a web-based resource which enables them to follow a programme of activity on their own or with other local people and to get feedback on their progress.
- Promote physical activity which doesn't require transport, such as walking and running. Develop walking and running groups – such as jogscotland and Running Sisters – to support women to take part in low tech, easily accessible physical activity in a friendly, supportive group. Groups can be tailored for different sectors, such as young mothers (with or without their children) or women in isolated areas.

Good Practice Examples

East Dunbartonshire Swimming for Black and Minority Ethnic Girls, offers an opportunity for black and minority ethnic girls in the area to swim in a friendly and safe environment.

This programme offers black and minority ethnic girls ages ranging from 9-18 the opportunity to participate in a swimming programme specifically designed to meet their needs. The geographical spread of the girls wishing to take part coupled with lack of parent's time and access to transport meant that transport was identified as a potential barrier to participation. As a result bus transport was arranged to pick the girls up from their schools, take them to the pool and then back to their school. This has proved successful as the majority of girls have continued to attend.

Glasgow Women's Jogging Network, is managed and core funded by Glasgow City Council. There is a small membership charge with discounted rates for those on a low income.

The Network is designed to attract women of all ages and capabilities to jog in a safe, supportive and motivating environment and joggers of all abilities can take part. Those new to jogging are encouraged to start by taking part in a ten week course for beginners pitched at levels to suit their needs. Other groups, who can run three or more miles, meet weekly at various leisure facilities in the area.

The network also encourages women to participate in Glasgow City Council's popular annual Women's 10k. For beginners who want to enter the race, 10k crash courses are delivered starting in January. They give women from all walks of life the opportunity to train and jog with other women in a goal setting, confidence building, supportive environment.

4 Personal safety

Personal safety on the streets, on public transport, and in and around sports and community venues is a particular problem for women and girls who may fear not only physical and sexual attack, but also unwanted attention and harassment.

These fears may make parents of girls reluctant to allow their daughters to go out after dark. In fact, recent research shows this to be a major reason why women and girls don't make use of some leisure and sports facilities. In one survey 47% of Scottish girls found the area in which they lived intimidating and influenced them in being less active.²¹

Some groups are particularly vulnerable. For example, lesbian girls and women are sometimes targeted with unwanted attention and/or physical assault because of their sexuality. Similarly, black and minority ethnic girls and women can become the focus of racist behaviour. People with disabilities are often the targets of bullying and abuse.

Travelling to and from venues for sports or physical activity can present particular barriers for these groups.

Recommendations

- Carry out an assessment of the venue to take into account the safety of the surrounding area, street lighting, transport links and so on.
- Ask participants and potential participants about their experiences and views of personal safety in these areas. Work with them and Facilities and Transport Managers to improve safety.
- Offer self-defence lessons and personal alarms.
- Ensure activities are offered in locations or facilities that are safe and appropriate for women and girls.
- Make sure that external lighting is good; this can make facilities safer. Activities scheduled for earlier rather than later in the evening might be more suitable for women and girls.
- Consider having a member of staff available to meet and say farewell to participants, so that entry to and from the building becomes safer.
- Exercising in groups can make physical activity safer for women and girls. (See, for example, walking and running groups, described in Section 03 'Lack of Transport'.)

Good Practice Examples

Mile High Club – Get High on Miles, is an initiative developed to respond to recommendations of Scotland's national physical activity strategy. It is funded as part of the wider New Sporting Futures project at East Ayrshire Council.

The programme includes walking, jogging and running groups in specific geographical areas led by professional staff. Professional leadership and safety in numbers through group exercise means this initiative provides a safe environment for exercise. There are all types of groups, from after-school groups run in partnership with Active Schools, to uniformed groups and informal/community based groups. The programme specifically targets 12-18 year old girls, encouraging them to set target mileages prior to their involvement, then rewarding them for their achievements. Participants are rewarded with free tickets to cinema and football matches, skiing lessons, trips and gift vouchers, all given through sponsorship of the scheme.

The programme has approximately 300 participants, 65% of which are female. A particular success of the programme has been the number of young people moving from the clubs to an Athletics Club as a result of participating.

5 Funding

At most levels, women's sport attracts less funding than men's. Women make up 40% of all athletes funded through various programmes and while the five sports councils in the UK funded 668 men in 2004/05, they funded only 509 women.²²

Prize money at most major events is higher for male athletes than for women (for example, the Wimbledon Men's Champion receives £602,500 while the Ladies' Champion receives £560,500).

Similarly, at the community sport level, girls' teams tend to attract less sponsorship from local businesses because of old-fashioned ideas about sport not being suitable for girls.

These inequalities in funding result in poorer facilities, equipment and kit, as well as less sponsorship for female athletes.

Recommendations

- Review existing practice and allocation.
- Allocate equal funds, prize money and sponsorship to male and female athletes, clubs and teams competing at all levels of your sport or activity.

Good Practice Examples

In the 1990s, the **International Triathlon Union** established a policy of fair practice; it does not sanction an international race unless equal prize money for women and men is offered.

Girls on The Move Participation Programme is a new funding programme designed to increase the physical activity levels of girls and young women in Scotland.

'Girls On The Move' has been designed to address the barriers which prevent girls and young women from participating in physical activity. The programme aims to give girls and young women opportunities and choices to achieve the social, psychological and physical benefits possible through physical activity. The programme is managed by The Robertson Trust and targets charities and in particular youth organisations who wish to develop new programmes to encourage girls (aged 9-18) to become more physically active.

The programme will make between 15 and 20 awards each year, most in small amounts up to £5,000, to be used to develop new activities within existing youth work provision at a local level. The awards will be used to fund everything from sessional staff to equipment and marketing and two more substantial awards for employing full or part-time staff will also be made.





“One third of disabled young people feel excluded from local sports opportunities”

6 Access to facilities

Women and girls can't play sport if they can't get access to the necessary facilities. Too often, sports halls prioritise male sport when it comes to pitch time so that men/boys get facilities at their preferred times, while women/girls have to make do with less convenient times. Given that women have less leisure time than men, this is a double whammy of inequality.

Women and girls' access is sometimes restricted by sexist practices and, even, legislation. For example, private members clubs (which are not covered by all current equality laws) have denied women full membership, prevented them having voting power, restricted their access to club facilities, given them much less playing time than men and barred them from weekend play and local tournaments. This results in ridiculous situations whereby women who take their sons to play have not themselves been allowed to enter the club house!

Access to sporting opportunities is particularly limited for women and girls with disabilities. In fact, one third of disabled young people feel excluded from local sports opportunities.²³ Access can be limited by physical barriers such as inaccessible entrances, reception areas, changing rooms and sports facilities, lack of accessible transport and parking or poor lighting, to name a few. Lack of information in accessible formats for the visually impaired and/or hearing impaired people can also create barriers.

Access can also be limited by unwelcoming attitudes and ignorance amongst staff and participants. The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) covers many of these issues and requires public bodies to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. It's worth noting that improving training, access to buildings and services will assist a much larger section of the population than just disabled people.

Given the issues about transport, women and girls in rural areas have particular difficulties in gaining access to sporting opportunities.

Recommendations

- Allocate facilities and pitch time equally between women and men's sports and teams.
- Ensure all staff are trained in working with people with disabilities.
- For women and girls who can't travel to facilities, consider developing a web-based resource which enables them to follow a programme of activity on their own or with other local people and to get feedback on their progress.
- Be imaginative about venues. For example, use community centres, schools, village halls rather than sports centres – use the great outdoors. In Sweden, some gyms de-camp to parks to run their classes in the summer. This provides a more easily accessible, informal, less intimidating environment and can increase recruitment from intrigued passers-by!

Good Practice Examples

Evolution Skate Park, North Ayrshire Skate Group, wanted to encourage girls and young women to take up inline skating, skateboarding and bmx-cycling when they had a skatepark built. As skate parks often become part of territorialism and very much a boy's only zone they wanted to counteract this trend and provide a safe and non-intimidating park where girls felt welcome. The skatepark introduced two girls-only sessions per week. Girls can come and learn to skate under the watchful eye of a tutor, at hand to encourage and help them develop their skills. The skate park has approximately 30-40 girls attending each session and many of the girls have gained enough confidence to use the park outside the girls-only sessions.

Ladies Netball, The Dunblane Centre

The main users of this centre are women between the ages of 35 and 55. For this age group, activities beyond aerobics and fitness classes are often rare. But the Dunblane Centre has made efforts to change this. Ladies Netball was introduced as an alternative, competitive option, run by women volunteers and successfully attracting around twenty women per session in the target age-group. The introduction and success of Ladies Netball heralded a programme of activities to include this age-group in everything from badminton and circuit training to pilates and step – a programme that has proved to be very popular.



Personal Barriers

Some girls and women do not experience any or many barriers to participating in sport. Others face barriers but manage to overcome them. Others are daunted by the barriers they encounter and, because of them, are put off sport and physical activity.



Women and girls, like men and boys, differ in many ways. The barriers we list here will not apply to all women and girls, but most will face some of them in some way. Knowing about each barrier, and how they combine with other barriers, is the first step to overcoming them so that you can engage women and girls in more active lifestyles.

- 1 Body image
- 2 Clothing and equipment
- 3 Lack of self-confidence
- 4 Parental and adult influence

Did you know?

- Girls are more likely to be influenced by their peer group when it comes to taking part in physical activity and sport and as many as 45% say that they would give up the activity they currently take part in if their friends wanted them to. Likewise 81% say that they would like to bring a friend when taking part in an activity the first time.²⁴
- Recent research has found that about a third of girls don't like others to see how they look when taking part in sport and physical activity. Girls whose main motivation was enjoyment, rather than changing their weight, were far less likely to feel self-conscious about taking part. Girls were less self-conscious when their friends took part.²⁵
- Allowing girls to wear whatever they like or use a girl friendly, not too revealing or tight fitting PE kit helps to raise their participation significantly.²⁶

“45% of girls would give up the activity they currently take part in if their friends wanted them to”²⁴

1 Body image

This issue affects all aspects of society – research shows that, in general, female adolescents report greater body image dissatisfaction than do males. However, body image is a particularly important issue in sport – research also shows that women are far more self-conscious than men when taking part in sport and physical activity.

For girls and women the relationship between body image and physical activity is a vicious circle; the more self-conscious they feel about their bodies, the less likely they are to take part in sport and yet participation in sport has a positive effect on girls' perceptions of their bodies. This is particularly significant for obese and overweight girls and women who are least likely to want to be physically

active and who are frequently excluded from activities based on their own and society's perceptions of their interests and abilities.

Attitudes to women and girls' bodies differ in different cultures and religions. Western fashions promote increasingly revealing clothes for women and girls, whereas social norms in some cultures prohibit exposure of the female body. For example, some Muslim girls and women observe Islamic law which prevents them appearing in front of men dressed in 'inappropriate' attire. This is just one of the factors which results in lower than average participation rates for black and minority ethnicity girls and women.

Girls and women with disabilities may be particularly affected by problems around body image. With an increasingly body-obsessed culture, especially for women and adolescent girls, people with disabilities and those who are overweight or obese are frequently judged negatively.

Body image issues are also related to sexuality and sexual orientation. Girls who are developing sexual identities as straight, lesbian or bisexual might dislike the attention that certain kinds of clothing or activities bring. For example, lesbian girls or women might be turned off the prospect of certain sports because of the revealing uniforms which attract unwanted sexual attention.

For these reasons, being watched while doing sport can be excruciatingly painful for some girls and women. Some may prefer to take part in female-only groups and/or to participate in activities at venues where they cannot be observed.

These factors also make some girls and women very reluctant to wear tight-fitting and/or revealing sportswear; some would rather not do sports at all than face the embarrassment.

Recommendations

- Ensure girls and women can have privacy in changing rooms and in facilities. If it's not possible throughout, make sure a couple of showers are private, to enable minority ethnic girls/women to take part. Make sure there are adequate mirrors and hairdryers available. If possible, plan activities at the end of the school day, to enable girls to go home to shower and change.
- In the design and layout of venues, minimise exposed areas between changing rooms and facilities such as a swimming pool. Allow swimmers to wear T-shirts over their costumes.
- Use a variety of images in publicity, not just those which show the idealised female figure.
- Provide single-sex activities, staffed by women and make sure that they're not running next to a men's session; there's no point running a women-only aerobics session in one half of a hall, only to have men's football in the other half.
- Encourage staff and coaches to wear casual, loose-fitting sports clothes.
- Challenge unnecessary or offensive comments about women/girls' bodies or physical appearance.



Good Practice Examples

Scottish Youth Dance have been involved in delivering 'Girls in Sport' in South Lanarkshire, a project created to encourage teenage girls to stay active. The idea is to get girls interested in dance in addition to 'traditional' sports like netball and hockey and the project targets many girls who otherwise would not be involved in physical activity and sport. The girls learn to dance a variety of styles and get to dance to music they really enjoy.

The Y-dance team supports and tutors them in a way that takes into account the girls' ability as well as trying to provide a good body image and trainers who are good role models. Different styles and moves are taught but always with consideration for the girls ages and how appropriate certain styles are. Involvement in dance and physical expression is continued through Desperate Journeys and Science Physical, which focus on the body as a teaching tool in history and science. The idea is that the body becomes a useful tool of self-expression rather than an image fulfilling a limiting ideal.

The Canongate Youth Project, based in Edinburgh, targets girls aged 11-17 who were not previously doing any physical activity and who are from an underprivileged area. Participants were responsible for deciding the programme of activities with the resulting programme of taster activities including rock climbing, Skyride, trampolining, skiing, bowling, gym, dance and canoeing.

The first session in the programme was a "Health MOT", designed to give participants more information about their own bodies, health and fitness. Girls who take part are encouraged to discuss health issues, body image, food and lifestyle. At each session food is provided and prepared by the participants, stimulating further discussion on healthy eating and wider health topics.

The project also recognised that individuals are often prevented from taking part in physical activity due to lack of equipment. As a result a fitness pack including a sports bag, water bottle, shampoo, shower gel and deodorant was provided. Participants were awarded a voucher for each activity they took part in and when they had been part of at least seven activities they were rewarded with a trip to a Spa to enjoy the fitness facilities.

2 Clothing and equipment

Clothing and equipment for sports can be expensive. This is a particular problem for women, given that, on average, they earn less than men. Images of sportspeople can promote the idea that, unless you're dressed in fashionable clothing designed for a particular sport, you'll look out of place. Some sports clothing is also quite revealing, which creates problems for women and girls, linked to issues about body image.

Equipment can be inappropriate for women and girls. For example, women's development in golf has been hampered, at times, by being forced to play with inappropriate equipment for their build, strength, level and swing speed. Sports venues often have clothes or equipment for hire which is suitable for men but not women; for example, 'unisex' wetsuits can make women feel uncomfortable and restricted.

Strict requirements about clothing can also prevent some black and minority ethnic women from participating. For example, swimming pools which don't allow women to wear T-shirts over their swimming costumes, and clubs which insist members wear tight-fitting and/or revealing uniforms can exclude those who follow the Muslim faith as well as those who are self-conscious of their bodies.

Using men's bodies as the norm for clothes or equipment particularly disadvantages women and girls with disabilities, who have probably overcome many hurdles to get to the point of taking part in sport. This can make sport and physical activity even less appealing to them.

Recommendations

- Coaches, instructors and leisure centre staff could wear casual clothing during activities, rather than formal or expensive sportswear.
- Make sure equipment available for women and girls is suitable (e.g. that there is a variety of sizes) and that it's suitable for women with disabilities.
- Governing Bodies of sport could expand the range of styles acceptable as team clothing, so that more women feel comfortable and able to compete.
- If using music in your venue or sessions, think about its suitability; will a group of South Asian women prefer to listen to Western pop or Bhangra? Would white women enjoy Bhangra too? Ask them!

Good Practice Example

Girls Sports Club is an initiative run by the Lottery Funded Project Stramash in Argyll and Bute aimed at providing activities after school for girls from P5-S1. The club runs for an hour and a half once a week and has approximately 60 girls turning up to try out a variety of activities such as football, gymnastics, snorkeling, shinty, cheerleading and new age curling. The girls who attend pay one pound and the money is all invested in new equipment so that participants do not need to invest in their own kit.

In the next phase golf will be introduced as an option for S3 girls and clubs are being purchased by the project for use by the girls taking part, who will initially be tutored by senior boys working as volunteers on the project. For girls that want to progress beyond the initial course, low membership fees are being negotiated with local golf clubs.

The programme is seen as a success in a predominantly rural area and will be extended to other areas of the authority in its next phase.

3 Lack of self-confidence

Plenty of research shows that girls, on average, have less self-confidence than boys and rate their performance or ability more negatively than do boys. Indeed, a boy bursting with self-confidence will be admired and encouraged while a girl similarly full of confidence can be put down as 'a little madam.'

This is linked to issues about body image; girls who don't feel good about their bodies can lack confidence in their physical abilities and may be over-negative about their performance.

Self-confidence is also linked to competition. Although most sportswomen enjoy the competitive element of sport, many girls and women are turned off sport because it's competitive. This is one of the reasons why activities such as aerobics, gymnastics and yoga, are increasingly popular amongst girls and young women, and why some traditional team sports are less popular. Girls find competitiveness is more of a problem in mixed groups, where boys raise the level of competitiveness through making negative and sexist comments and through bullying. To cater for all, there needs to be a wide variety of both competitive and non-competitive sporting opportunities.

Role models are important to inspire, motivate and encourage us all, particularly when our confidence is low. They can be particularly important for women and girls who see fewer women than men involved in sport.

Recommendations

- Provide women/girl-only sessions.
- Make sure all women/girls, regardless of skills or experience, get the chance to be an active part of activities and teams.
- Alternate the order of presentations, matches and mentions of women's and men's results and events in presentation ceremonies, fixtures and newsletters, to be sure that women's sport is not unintentionally presented as inferior to men's.
- Include women as much as men in publicity about sport and physical activity and talk about female as well as male athletes who've achieved success (male footballers are not the only athletes worth talking about).
- Equal numbers of women and men working at all levels in sport will expand the pool of role models and will mean that boys as well as girls can be inspired by women athletes, coaches and authority figures.
- Set up mentoring systems for older or more experienced girls/women to mentor those who are younger or less experienced. This can be helpful for participants of activities and for staff. For example, for female staff likely to be in the minority when attending their first sports course or conference, assign a mentor/guide to introduce them to people and help them feel more confident.
- Promote beginner and intermediate activities for girls and women as fun, open and non-competitive.
- If a conference, seminar or workshop is likely to be male-dominated, set up specific networking opportunities for female delegates.

Good Practice Example

Open all Hours is an Edinburgh initiative involving a variety of agencies working together to empower young people with leisure choices in a safe, inclusive and motivating environment. Ten facilities attract approximately 600 young people (11-17 years), including those with disabilities, every week on Friday and Saturday evenings, providing leisure choice for participants in over 20 activities. Youth workers, facility staff, disability specialists and sports coaches come together in partnership to run a multi-faceted youth club within a single venue. Youth Workers engage directly with the young people and address challenging behaviours; disability workers facilitate inclusion and leisure involvement; coaches facilitate sports sessions and promote sporting

ideals; leisure staff co-ordinate the venues whilst all gain an insight to other specialist's areas of work and receive training in youth engagement and challenging behaviour. There are a high percentage of girls taking part in the programme which is monitored closely. Young people are constantly involved in designing the programme of activities they take part in and as a result of this consultation the project has been extended to a girls only 'Open All Hours' which offers girls only swimming on Saturday afternoons. The sessions are fully staffed by female instructors and the girls have a big influence on the programming of activities. Weekly attendance figures of approximately 40 girls, including approximately ten from BME communities make this project a model of good practice.

4 Parental and adult influence

The influence of parents, coaches and other adults affects girls and boys differently. For example, adolescent females place greater emphasis on self-comparison and comments from adults than do adolescent males, who rely more on competitive outcomes and ease of learning as their basis for personal judgement of physical competence. Adverse comments from coaches and teachers provide one of the main reasons for girls becoming discouraged from playing sport.

Given that girls rely on adults' comments, parents, coaches and teachers play a particularly important role in motivating them to participate in sport and physical activity. Girls are more likely to enjoy their sport if they think that relevant adults have realistic expectations, provide support and encouragement for their efforts and refrain from making negative evaluations of their performance.

Research shows that the mother's participation in physical activity and the father's more generic involvement and assistance are important in sustaining activity levels of adolescent girls. The physical activity levels of siblings is also influential.

Recommendations

- Encourage parents and sports staff to represent positive role models for their children, be involved in their child's sporting activities and have positive, realistic beliefs about their child's competency.
- Organise mother and daughter and/or father and daughter sessions to help create a familial culture of support for sport.
- Ensure there are female role models in your facility, club or leisure centre, both in terms of women staff, coaches, organisers and managers, and in terms of prominent publicity and images of sporting women and girls.
- Encouragement is important to girls and women. In coaching sessions and sports competitions, have incentives – certificates, T-shirts, posters, group photos, stickers – for everyone, not just those who perform best in the activity. Have quirky awards for teams and individuals – biggest smile, strongest handshake, most improved, most enthusiastic, best attitude, most consistent, best problem-solver, best player to music.

Good Practice Examples

The Dunblane Centre, is a community centre combining artistic and physical activity under one roof. This set-up encourages those who are not so sporty to try out new physical activities in a less intimidating environment. The centre features use of a computer suite, music studio, games room with TV and pool table, café as well as a games hall and an aerobics/dance studio. The centre runs a youth club which provides a variety of different activities from drama classes to ball games.

The centre has also made particular provision for girls as part of an initiative working on getting girls active through funding from the Dunblane Children Partnership. Girl-focused activities include teen aerobics and cheerleading. Some mixed activities such as yoga and karate have also proved popular with the girls. The centre operates through the work of volunteers and has approximately 70 active at the moment, of which 14 are juniors. The volunteer base provides good role models and a positive adult influence – many parents support the centre, offering their skills and time in a variety of ways.

Social and Cultural Barriers

Although these barriers stem from social and cultural factors, they are often experienced as personal or practical barriers. Understanding the broader context can help us understand an individual or group who experience the barrier and how to overcome it.

- 1 Male-dominated culture of sport
- 2 Attitudes and prejudices about sexuality
- 3 Attitudes and prejudices about disability
- 4 Attitudes and prejudices about ethnicity
- 5 Sexual harassment and abuse
- 6 Female invisibility – media representations and lack of role models in sport

Did you know?

- *The Youth Sport Trust/Nike Girls in Sport* survey showed that only 1 girl in 4 believes it's 'cool' to be sporty and only 14% of boys and 27% of girls believe that 'being good at sport' is important for girls.²⁷
- 73% of girls cite enjoyment as their main reason for taking part in physical activity and sport.²⁸
- 32% of disabled young people feel excluded from local sports opportunities.²⁹
- The national 'inequality gap' between women and men is 15% but for the other black minority groups it is 35%, for Bangladeshis it is 27%, Black Africans 26% and Pakistanis 20%.³⁰
- Less than 5% of all sports coverage in the media features women's sport.³¹

1 The male-dominated culture of sport

It might seem strange to suggest that a barrier to participation in sport is sport itself, but this idea is worth considering. Some people argue that sport has traditionally been defined, organised, promoted and constructed as a male activity. For example, some women/girls are turned off sport altogether because they see it as a male-dominated activity. It is just not seen as feminine or 'girly' to be interested in sport and, for many girls, being sporty is felt to be at odds with being feminine.

Women and girls are often reminded of this male-domination by others who are surprised to see them working, participating or competing in sport. Working in a sector where you are a minority can make you feel that you don't belong.

Many women/girls are turned off by the competitive nature of most sport, (as are some men and boys). They tend to prefer the social aspects of physical activity – having fun, making friends.

Recommendations

- Challenge sexist assumptions and behaviour inside your organisation and among participants, whether or not women/girls are present.
- If organisations are asked to send participants for courses or events, ask them to send equal numbers of men/boys and women/girls.
- Women and girls are more open to ideas about 'health' and 'well-being' than sport. Combine physical activity with health promotion; offer guest speakers on active lifestyles, nutrition, body image, smoking etc.
- Combine physical activity with expressive arts; there's scope for developing physical activities in conjunction with drama, dance and other expressive arts.
- Ensure that social activities connected to your sport or activity are likely to be enjoyed by women and men, girls and boys, rather than choosing activities which are more likely to suit either sex. e.g. theme nights, music, dancing, food, videos.
- Invite local female athletes as role models to join in and remind participants that sport needn't be male-dominated.
- Help promote female role models to break down the idea that sport is male-dominated.

Good Practice Examples

Woodfarm High School has been awarded 'Here's Health' status for its work with physical activity and health issues and has made girls a focus of their efforts in increasing physical activity. The PE department has acknowledged the need for differentiation in terms of activities, experiences and interests of girls and as a result offers activities within their curricular programme which allow girls to develop confidence and a healthy attitude to exercise. Single sex groups for physical activity are encouraged as far as possible in the Middle School: the ethos here is that everyone has a part to play and that it would be tactically unwise for any team to ignore individual players' strengths and weaknesses. The school also matches up extra-curricular sessions with successful class activities. S4 girls enjoyed a recent block of curricular hockey so much that a club was set up after school to 'capture' anyone who wasn't already involved in extra-curricular activity. The Education Department were able to attract funding for this extra curricular activity through the Big Lottery, funding which also enabled each level of the school to pay staff to offer a range of activities out of school hours. The school also has the facility and funding to pay for staff and senior pupils to be trained as coaches; individuals who'll then encourage participation and build school ethos through their work.

Girls Football Project, Active Schools North Lanarkshire have been working closely with the NOPES (New Opportunities for Physical Education and Sport) Coordinator for North Lanarkshire to organise girls football clubs for P6 and P7 girls. Girls football clubs have been set up in five schools and mixed clubs in a further two schools. The after school clubs are staffed by both students and Bell College sports coaching students who run the clubs on a voluntary basis. In addition two festivals have been held during the year with the support of Motherwell Football Club who also allowed both the girls and mixed teams to play at Fir Park; playing in the shadow of the stadium was an inspirational and enjoyable experience for all who took part. To follow an Easter Camp was put on for the girls and this was well attended – 30 girls taking part on all three days of the camp. The aim is to continue to develop the project and link it to the work of the recently appointed womens/girls football development officer. This has already started with cluster sessions for the schools in the area for P5-P7 girls, sessions which regularly have 40-50 girls attending.



2 Attitudes and prejudices about sexuality

Homophobia is the hatred or fear of homosexuals (i.e. lesbians, bisexuals and gay men). It includes another factor which is particularly relevant to the world of sport – 'homo-negativism' – which is a fear among heterosexuals that they may be perceived as homosexual.

Women's sport (especially male-dominated sport such as football and rugby) is still regarded by some as fundamentally unfeminine. Lesbians are also regarded by some as fundamentally unfeminine. The resulting, erroneous, conclusion is that all sportswomen must be lesbians.

There are several consequences: some women/girls refrain from certain sports for fear of being perceived as unfeminine and/or lesbian; some parents discourage their daughters from taking up sport; some girls/women limit their training to avoid developing a muscular body; some lesbian athletes avoid going public about their sexual orientation in case they experience prejudice from other athletes and coaches, or lose public support and sponsorship; other sportswomen dress and behave in a traditionally feminine way to avoid attention to their sexual orientation.

Ultimately, homophobia and homo-negativism can stop girls/women from participating or excelling in sport.

Recommendations

- Confront discrimination. Be aware that homophobia can be subtle as well as open.
- Be aware of the tendency to depict sportswomen as overly feminine in a bid to counter 'homo-negativism', or as unfeminine.
- Be aware that girls and women who use your services and facilities will include straight, bisexual and lesbian people, who might like to see different kinds of images and publicity.
- Training about these issues for all staff will help improve awareness of the differing needs of different groups of women and girls.
- Positive role models can be important to help people who feel isolated because of prejudice about sexuality. A diverse workplace which prioritises equality and open-minded attitudes is more likely to enable lesbian staff to be 'out' at work, and so to become role models for others.
- There's a need for more open discussion in this area, as well as educational projects to raise awareness and stimulate debate.

Good Practice Example

Glasgow LGBT Centre has been working with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people in Glasgow for years and runs a community centre which among many other things offers physical activity for LGBT groups and individuals. They run health and leisure classes in Yoga, Body Balance and T'ai Chi which are funded by the Scottish Community Foundation. The classes are all offered in a safe and inclusive environment in the centre and are open to all abilities. The centre also offers weekly therapeutic massage sessions.

As well as offering its own programme of physical activity, the centre promotes and provides information about other opportunities for the LGBT community to become more physically active. Groups currently advertising through the centre include: The Glasgow Gay Badminton Club who meet and play twice per week; the Glasgow Gay Ramblers who meet monthly for walks; the Gay Golf Club; Caledonian Thebans, a gay friendly rugby club; Glasgow Swimming Club and the Gay Outdoor Club, who organises a range of outdoor activities.

3 Attitudes and prejudices about disability

One of the main visions of Sport 21, the national strategy for sport in Scotland, is to develop “a country where sport is more widely available to all”. Two of the focus groups identified within the strategy are disability and girls and women.

Girls and women with a disability are less likely than others to participate in sport at all levels and a number of reasons have been identified for these lower participation rates:³² beliefs about the role and importance of physical activity; internal barriers of individual motivation; and external barriers to participation, in particular lack of opportunity.

Physical barriers are often identified as the main area of focus to increasing physical activity and sport opportunities but removing physical barriers will not automatically increase participation. Only 5% of people with a disability are wheelchair users and although it is vital that all facilities are accessible it is not the main area that impacts on participation levels. It is important that everyone appreciates the diversity that exists within and between disabilities and can look at ways to include, as opposed to reasons to exclude.

Recommendations

- Look to promote girls and women with a disability as role models through publicity materials.
- Provide opportunities for women with a disability to become coaches or part of the staff team.
- Train all staff to be confident and competent in coaching and working with people with a disability.
- Actively involve other participants in adapting the session to include a member with a disability.
- Consult with the person with the disability on how they can be fully included.
- Ensure your venue is made accessible.
- Actively promote the activity so people with a disability feel it would be appropriate for them.

Good Practice Examples

Swimming. Anna Tizzard contracted polio at the age of three. It affected her left leg from the hip downwards and she began swimming at a club for physically and sensory impaired swimmers as a form of rehabilitation. At school she was excluded from many of her PE lessons, and was not provided with an opportunity to take part. Despite this, swimming became her passion and she attended her first British DSE Junior Swimming Championships in 1981.

She joined a mainstream swimming club in her home town of Southampton to access more training and progress in the sport but, as the club did not have an appreciation of disability swimming, she was forced to train with swimmers much younger than herself. In 1989 Anna moved to Scotland where she received high level coaching and was provided with an opportunity to train at a mainstream club with other Paralympic athletes. She went on to compete in two more Paralympic Games. Since then she has been active as a coach and as a volunteer for Disability Sport Fife as well as working in Sports and Coaching Development for Fife Council.

Achievements in swimming. Maggi McEleny from the swimming club Port Glasgow Otters is Scotland’s most successful female swimmer and a prolific Paralympian who has won medals for Scotland and Great Britain all over the world.

Maggi is quadriplegic following an accident but has the added challenge of epilepsy and difficulties with her breathing efficiency. When she trains she requires a spotter and when she travels she needs a carer, however despite these many challenges she has continued to perform at the very highest level and as a role model she is exceptional. Physical barriers have never been a problem for this high performance swimmer and her unique approach to her sport has greatly influenced the attitudes of many individuals with whom she has come in contact. She has been inspirational to so many from within and outwith disability sport.



Good Practice Examples

Black and Minority Ethnic Swimming for Girls is an activity programme suitable for the 'culturally sensitive needs' of black and minority ethnic girls in East Dunbartonshire. This programme is run by East Dunbartonshire Council's Social Inclusion Department and funded by New Opportunities Fund. It offers black and minority ethnic girls aged 9-18 the opportunity to participate in a swimming programme specifically designed to meet their needs, in a safe and friendly environment; for many this is their first chance to swim.

The instructors are a female PE teacher at the school and a qualified Swimming Coach. The group also caters for black and minority ethnic girls with special needs and carers are available to assist outside the pool, as well as a specially trained coach in the water. The programme incorporates organised swimming lessons and coaching for those who can swim with a short fun session at the end of the lessons. The Swimming sessions run from Easter until summer, start again in August and stop at Ramadan. As the girls come from a wide area transport is provided and seen as an essential component to the project as many parents have difficulties providing their own transport.

Glasgow Women's Jogging Network offer jogging groups and programmes that are designed to suit the needs of particular client groups such as women from black and ethnic minority backgrounds. These courses were designed after consultation with the women and delivered in quieter locations that suit their needs, such as city parks, at times that encourage maximum participation. These programmes encourage more women from specific cultural backgrounds to feel confident about getting started on the path of exercising and have led to regular networks being set up in their areas. Fees for these courses are often subsidised by the Council.

4 Attitudes and prejudices about ethnicity

Although many people believe that different ethnic groups share similar experiences, differences between black and minority ethnic groups are significant. For example, rates of participation in sport amongst different ethnic minorities vary from considerably lower to somewhat higher than the national average rates. Similarly, the gap between men and women's participation in sport is greater amongst some minority ethnic groups than it is in the population as a whole.

Assumptions about black and minority ethnic people – for example, that Afro-Caribbean people are good at athletics and basketball; that Asian people don't play football; that all Asian girls aren't allowed to wear swimsuits – can limit their opportunities to take up sport or to participate in the full range of sports.

Low participation rates lead to low rates of volunteering, coaching, employment and leadership in sport; black and minority ethnic women and girls are under-represented at all these levels.

Recommendations

- Use positive role models of black and ethnic minority women and girls taking part in a range of sports and a range of roles in sport. Role models should be enthusiastic, positive, encouraging and accepting.
- Be aware of religious and cultural festivals such as Eid and Ramadan when arranging events and courses.
- Ensure all your staff are trained in issues about ethnicity and diversity and are able and confident to be inclusive in their practice.

5 Sexual harassment and abuse

Sport-based research on this topic is lacking but recent studies indicate that sexual harassment and abuse is just as much a problem in sport as it is elsewhere in society. Research shows that the vast majority of perpetrators of sexual harassment and abuse are men and that women and girls are more frequent victims than men and boys. Sexual abuse by strangers is rare. Instead, figures in authority, such as coaches, team managers or trainers, who are in a close, trusted relationship, are more likely to abuse because they have the alibi of status and the power to force their victims to maintain secrecy. Many females drop out of sport rather than continue being subjected to the undermining effects of constant harassment and abuse; others endure the sexual attention of their male coaches or peers because of fear, desire for athletic reward, low self-esteem or ignorance of who to turn to for help. Typically, abused athletes keep quiet because they fear that they will either be accused of consenting or of inventing the whole thing.

Sexual harassment is unwanted, often persistent, sexual attention, which may include:

- written or verbal abuse or threats;
- sexually oriented comments;
- jokes, lewd comments or sexual innuendoes;
- taunts about body, dress, marital status or sexuality;
- shouting and/or bullying;
- ridiculing or undermining of performance or self-respect;
- sexual or homophobic graffiti;
- practical jokes based on sex;
- intimidating sexual remarks, invitations or familiarity;
- domination of meetings, training sessions or equipment;
- condescending or patronising behaviour;
- physical contact, fondling, pinching or kissing;
- offensive telephone calls or photos; and
- bullying on the basis of sex.

Sexual abuse often occurs after careful 'grooming' of the athlete so that she believes the sexual involvement with her abuser is acceptable, unavoidable or a normal part of her training or everyday behaviour. It may include:

- exchange of rewards or privileges for sexual favours;
- groping;
- indecent exposure;
- rape;
- forced sexual activity; and
- sexual assault.

Risk of sexual harassment or sexual abuse arises from a combination of factors such as weak organisational controls within sport clubs, dominating and controlling behaviour by coaches, and vulnerability, low self esteem and high ambition amongst athletes. Particular dangers arise when such athletes become emotionally reliant on or obsessed with their coaches and when their coaches are not subject to independent monitoring.

Recommendations

- Establish codes of ethics and conduct for all staff and volunteers, whether they work with adults or children. Staff and volunteers should be required to sign up to the code, showing that they agree to abide by its content.
- Ensure all your staff and volunteers who work with children are trained in Child Protection and are disclosure-checked.
- Distribute information about sexual abuse/child protection for all parents, athletes, coaches and volunteers and put up signs stating that, as a service provider, you expect respect for all.
- Use contracts or checklists for parents, athletes, coaches and volunteers, setting out what's expected of each party.
- Foster a climate of open discussion about issues of sexual harassment and abuse so that athletes feel confident enough to speak out if they experience them.
- Get involved in coach education programmes which inform and advise about the ethical and interpersonal issues of sexual harassment and abuse and about the technical aspects of physical touch in coaching the sport.
- Adopt athlete and parent education programmes which inform and advise athletes on their rights and how to maintain their integrity and autonomy.
- Ensure that parents are fully informed of the whereabouts of their children at all times and are involved as fully as possible in supporting the work of coaches.
- Adopt rigorous screening procedures for the appointment of all personnel, whether coaching staff or voluntary workers.
- Be constantly vigilant and avoid complacency; expect and demand the highest standards of accountability at all levels of the sport.
- Celebrate the good work of athletes and coaches on a regular basis.

For further information on policies and procedures to protect children and vulnerable adults in sport please refer to **sportscotland's** Children and Vulnerable Adult Protection Policy which can be found at www.sportscotland.org.uk.





6 Female invisibility – media representations and lack of role models in sport

Women and girls have been less involved in sport than men and boys through the centuries. At all levels and in all roles – community participation, elite athletics, coaching, managing and leading sports organisations – women, especially those from marginalised groups, have been under-represented. This situation is gradually changing in some areas because of the concerted efforts of individuals and groups (such as the Women’s Sports Foundation, the International Working Group on Women and Sport, the International Association of Physical Education and Sport for Girls and Women, and the International Olympic Committee’s Women and Sport Commission). But change is slow. In 2004, fewer than 25% of all representatives on strategic sports boards and committees were women and there are no women sports editors of national papers.

Women are still so under-represented in decision-making positions in sports organisations that, at times, it can seem that the sports sector is run by men for men. Working in a sector where they are in the minority can give women the sense that they don’t belong in the world of sport. Women need additional confidence, commitment and perseverance when they feel excluded. One result of this historic imbalance is that the media coverage of sport focuses almost entirely on the activities of men. On average, only 5% of sports coverage in national and local print media is dedicated to women’s sport, and sportswomen suffer from a media focus on their personal lives and appearances rather than their performances and achievements.³³

This is significant because TV, radio and the newspapers play a central role in informing our knowledge, opinions and attitudes about women and sport, which, in turn, influence participation levels. The media provide us with our role models. Although a handful of stars, such as Kelly Holmes and Paula Radcliffe, have high media profiles, in general, a lack of coverage of women’s sports leads to a dearth of female role models to inspire sportswomen and create the next generation of healthy, active women.

Recommendations

- Use press releases and good relations with your local journalists to promote girls and women's as well as boys and men's sports achievements. Make sure you seek media coverage of your club or organisation's achievements at all levels and regardless of the gender of the athletes. Include representatives of all your local community by including people with disabilities, women and girls from black and ethnic minority groups, different age ranges and social groups, for example, in any press coverage.
- Follow the general tips on using the media on the Women's Sports Foundation (WSF) website (www.wsf.org.uk) when promoting the activities and achievements of your sportspeople or participants.
- Join the WSF and help campaign for improved media coverage! Details of the Campaign for Coverage can be found at www.wsf.org.uk.
- Plan opening and closing ceremonies of conferences and sporting events in which women/girls feature as significantly as men/boys.
- Think about which local women or girls you could promote as role models – they could be coaches, volunteers or athletes at any level. Work with them to help inspire and motivate other girls and women. This can be an important part of the sportswoman's development as an ambassador for sport.
- Ensure an equal balance of men and women, boys and girls as coaches, organisers, participants, workshop leaders etc. 40% is the suggested minimum for either gender.

Women's and Girls participation rates in various activities and sports³⁴

Women's top activities

Walking	33%
Swimming	21%
Keep Fit/Aerobics	11%
Dance	9%
All team Sports	3%

Girls top activities

Swimming	47%
Cycling	40%
Dance	31%
Football	29%
Running	21%
Badminton	11%
Gymnastics	10%
All team sports	39%

Good Practice Examples

Campaign for Coverage, the Women's Sports Foundation (WSF) are campaigning to increase the coverage of women's sport in the media and ensure that women's sport is given the respect and coverage that it deserves. The media campaign is distributed through the members of the WSF through their enquiries to their local as well as national press on the coverage of women's sport. This grassroots method is also accompanied by the political lobbying and higher-level negotiations undertaken by the WSF head office. The aim is to ensure more equality in the media coverage of sport and an increased profile of women's sport in the UK.

The '**Women, Get Set Go Programme**', has been re-launched by Sports Leaders UK. The programme, developed by the WSF, is based on a successful Norwegian model, to give women the skills and confidence in a female-only environment to become involved in leading and to be used as a spring board to further opportunity.



03 Support

“...ensuring sport is equitable is no longer optional; the contemporary legal framework requires not only that public bodies avoid discrimination, but also that they promote equality”

Support for Good Practice

Ensuring sport is equitable is no longer optional; the contemporary legal framework requires not only that public bodies avoid discrimination, but also that they promote equality. But this is not an onerous task, it's an opportunity to increase and widen participation in sport.



“Women are under-represented in decision-making positions... it can seem that the sports sector is run by men for men”

sportscotland is committed to achieving equity and inclusion and increasing diversity in our organisation, and also encouraging and supporting our key partners in sport to do the same. This commitment is set out in our recently published *Equity Strategy, Working Towards Diversity and Inclusion in Sport (2005)*, which sets out how we will implement the *Equity Standard: A Framework for Sport*. Our *Women and Girls Equity and Diversity Strategy* sets out how we will take steps specifically to increase women and girls' participation in sport, and again this is based on the framework of the *Equity Standard*.

sportscotland strongly believes that working towards a more equitable culture of sport is something which should concern everyone involved in sport. That is why we are so committed to ensuring that we and our key partners in sport implement the *Equity Standard*. There are many forms of support available to sports organisations to help them take positive steps in this area. Organisations such as **sportscotland**, Women's Sports Foundation and other equity partners in Scotland and the UK can provide help and advice. The *Equity Standard* itself is one practical tool which provides a framework and suggested steps which you can take to begin to increase equity and diversity in your organisation and sport. **sportscotland** will be happy to provide advice on how to implement the *Equity Standard* and how to have this achievement recognised.

Copies of the *Equity Standard: A Framework for Sport* and **sportscotland**'s *Equity Strategy Working Towards Diversity and Inclusion in Sport* can be obtained from **sportscotland** or are available at www.sportscotland.org.uk/ethics.

This section highlights the key principles of equitable practice, aimed at helping you to help achieve the highest standards of inclusive practice.

- 1** Principles of equitable practice
- 2** The legal framework for equality
- 3** Relevant legislation
- 4** Useful terminology

1 Principles of equitable practice

- Good Practice in sport and physical activity shouldn't be burdensome. If you follow these principles of good practice, you'll find you're an important member of a growing band of individuals and groups helping to raise women and girls' participation and thus to improving the health of the nation.
- Consult and review.
- Don't assume you know more than the women and girls with whom you're trying to engage; they, and the organisations which work with them, have valuable expertise, which will help you achieve your goals. Before projects start, and throughout their delivery, consult and review with the target groups to see, from their point of view, what's working and what's not. Successful projects tend to be those which properly involve the participant group, delivering services with rather than simply for participants.
- Provide single-sex sporting opportunities but ensure that you are following legal guidelines.
- Girls and women need an opportunity to participate in physical activity in their own ways. The presence of males, as staff or participants, changes how girls and women participate and therefore alters their experience.

Mainstream

Single-sex provision of sporting opportunities is needed and called for by many women and girls and should be provided in the right circumstances and with regard to relevant legislation. However, it is not the only way to meet their sporting needs and it creates the danger that sports for women and girls become marginalised. An equitable long-term aim is to 'mainstream' sports for women and girls, that is, ensure that all services, funding and so on are available for both sexes. Ultimately, what's needed is the choice of both single-sex and mainstreamed activities. If organisations are asked to send representatives or participants, request that they send equal numbers of boys and girls/men and women. This single strategy could make a significant difference to the world of sport.

Use equal, positive publicity

On publicity material and when talking about sports, use gender-neutral language and include material and examples from both women and men's sport. Make sure that notice-boards reflect the whole population of sporting people; ensure there's a 50:50 ratio of images and activities promoted for men and women. Make sure that black and minority ethnic and disabled women/girls are represented in your publicity. However, be aware that some cultures don't support the use of images of people; using inanimate objects such as a star may be more appropriate. Consult to find out what's best.

Challenge prejudice, take action

Leaving abusive or prejudiced attitudes and behaviour unchallenged is as good as condoning them. Talk about the issues which are raised by abusive and prejudiced attitudes, rather than ignoring them in the hope they'll go away. It is everyone's responsibility to do this, not just those who are the victims of prejudice.

Train all staff

So that they know about and understand the kinds of issues discussed in this guide and so that they are confident in helping to break down the barriers.

Promote gender balance in decision-making

Gender imbalances in decision-making lead to gender imbalances in service delivery, and contribute to the exclusion of women and girls from sport. Including equal numbers of women in decision-making will help develop a more equal workforce, which will help increase the number of women role models. Address the possible barriers to women playing a role in leading and decision-making in your organisation. When do meetings take place? Is childcare provided? Are meetings at venues which are convenient and accessible by public transport? Is the culture of the organisation male-dominated and unfriendly to women? Are women excluded because there are no women in senior positions?

Not all women are the same!

While many have similar experiences, girls and women are not a homogeneous group. What works for one age group, one community, one ethnic group might not work for others. Ask participants what they want to do, rather than assuming you know what they want.

Don't treat women/girls as the problem

Their low participation rates are a result of the way that sport has been organised and delivered, not of women and girls themselves.

2 The legal framework for equality

The legal framework for equality has developed differently for each area – gender, ethnicity and disability – which means that each of these groups has slightly different protection from discrimination under the law. The details in the next section list the relevant pieces of legislation and their key features.

A significant new development is the Government's plans for a single equality body – the Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR) – to build on and extend the work of the existing equality commissions – the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality and the Disability Rights Commission. A key feature of the CEHR is that regulatory powers will be extended to the new areas of religion, sexual orientation and age. It is likely that this will be supported by new equality legislation.

The CEHR will have a basic remit to:

- promote equality of opportunity;
- challenge discrimination;
- promote human rights; and
- promote citizenship and a cohesive society.

A significant development within equality legislation is the move to place a duty on public bodies and larger private bodies not only not to discriminate but also to promote equality of opportunity. This key change puts a positive duty on organisations to be equitable; it will affect almost all sporting organisations in the future.

3 Relevant legislation

Employment Equality (Religions or Belief) Regulations (2003) outlaws discrimination (direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation) in employment and vocational training on the grounds of religion or belief. The regulations apply to discrimination on grounds of religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief.

Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (2003) outlaws discrimination (direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation) in employment and vocational training on the grounds of sexual orientation. The regulations apply to discrimination on the grounds of orientation towards persons of the same sex (lesbians and gays), the opposite sex (heterosexuals) and the same and opposite sex (bisexuals).

Sex Discrimination (Election Candidates) Act (2002) enables political parties, if they wish, to adopt positive measures to reduce inequality in the numbers of men and women elected as representatives.

Race Relations (Amendment) Act (2000) outlaws discrimination (direct and indirect) and victimisation in all public authority functions not previously covered by the Race Relations Act. It places a general duty on specified public authorities to promote race equality.

European Union Employment Directive (2000) covers employment and vocational training. It prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, religion or belief, disability and age.

European Union Race Directive (2000) prohibits race discrimination in employment and training, the provision of goods and services (including housing), education and social protection.

Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations (1999) prevent discrimination against transsexual people on the grounds of sex in pay and treatment in employment and vocational training.

The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) prohibits discrimination against disabled people in employment, education, transport and access to goods and services, the management, buying or renting of land or property. It requires service providers to make reasonable adjustments to physical features of premises to remove barriers to disabled people accessing their services. It introduces a positive duty on public bodies to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people, covers all functions of public authorities, not just services, and covers larger private members' clubs (i.e. those with 25 or more members).

The Race Relations Act (1976) makes it unlawful to treat a person less favourably than another on racial grounds. These cover grounds of race, colour, nationality and national or ethnic group.

The Sex Discrimination Act (1975, amended 2005) (which applies to women and men of any age, including children) makes sex discrimination unlawful in employment, vocational training, education, the provision and sale of goods, facilities and services and premises. It also prohibits discrimination against someone on the grounds that a person is married or, from December 2005, a civil partner, or on the grounds of gender reassignment. The SDA prohibits direct and indirect discrimination and victimisation. Case law has established that harassment/sexual harassment and discrimination because a woman is pregnant or on maternity leave are unlawful.

The Equal Pay Act (1970) makes it unlawful for employers to discriminate between men and women where they are doing the same or similar work; work rated as equivalent; or work which is of equal value though different in nature. It covers pay and other terms and conditions (e.g. piecework, output and bonus payment, holidays and sick leave, redundancy payments, travel concessions, employers' pension contributions and occupational pension benefits).

4 Useful terminology

Prejudice

Judgements about individuals or people based on the group to which they belong – e.g. white people, lesbians, people with disabilities, children etc – which are not supported by evidence. Prejudice is often based on stereotypes.

Stereotyping

Grouping or labelling people because they share a particular trait, which is regarded as a characteristic of that group. Stereotyping is usually negative and is often used to try to justify discrimination.

Discrimination

The action people take on the basis of their prejudices. Discrimination occurs when a prejudiced individual or organisation has the power to put their prejudices into action, which results in unfair and unjust treatment. The legislation listed above makes discrimination illegal.

Direct discrimination

Occurs when someone is treated worse than other people in the same or similar action (e.g. a man and a woman are paid differently for the same work).

Indirect discrimination

Occurs when there is a rule or condition that applies to everyone, but will affect people from a certain group more, when there is no justifiable reason for having that rule (e.g. setting criteria that members of a golf club committee must have been members of a golf club for 10 years, if membership to women has not been open for that period of time).

Positive action

Action taken to address discrimination and inequality (e.g. advertising in the gay press as well as mainstream press to encourage applications from gay and lesbian people; establishing a mentoring programme for women to address the under-representation of women in senior management).

Positive discrimination

This is illegal in the UK as it is discrimination (e.g. appointing a woman rather than a man because of her gender rather than her greater suitability for the job).



Committed to good practice

sportscotland and the Women's Sports Foundation (WSF) are committed to promoting Good Practice in sport and physical activity to ensure that more women and girls in Scotland benefit from all the advantages of an active life. There are plenty of resources to support you in your work with women and girls. On the WSF website you'll find information about the guides, fact sheets and research reports, as well as the WSF Magazine 'Women in Sport' which is a great way to keep up to date with lots of the issues discussed in this Guide. For more advice, information and examples of good practice go to the website: www.whatworksforwomen.org.uk.

We can support you further by providing additional training and advice – just contact us at:

Women, Girls and Sport Officer
Caledonia House
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Useful organisations

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Tel: 0131 317 7200
www.sportscotland.org.uk

Women's Sports Foundation
Head Office
3rd Floor, Victoria House
Bloomsbury Square
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WC1B 4SE
Tel: 020 7273 1740
www.wsf.org.uk

Women's Sports Foundation
North East Region
c/o Sport England
Aykley Heads
Durham
DH1 5UU
Tel: 0191 384 9595
www.wsf.org.uk

NHS Health Scotland
Woodburn House
Canaan Lane
Edinburgh
EH10 4SG
Tel: 0131 536 5500
www.hebs.scot.nhs.uk

Scottish Disability Sport
Caledonia House
South Gyle
Edinburgh
EH12 9DQ
Tel: 0131 317 1130
www.scottishdisabilitysport.com

Sports Coach UK
114 Cardigan Road
Headingley
Leeds
LS6 3BJ
Tel: 01132 744802
www.sportcoachuk.org

Youth Sport Trust
National Development Officer
Caledonia House
South Gyle
Edinburgh
EH12 9DQ
Tel: 0131 317 7200
www.youthsporttrust.org

Sport Leaders UK
Clyde House
10 Milburn Avenue
Oldbrook
Milton Keynes
MK6 2WA
Tel: 01908 689180
www.bst.org.uk

Scottish Health Promoting Schools
Gardyne Road
Dundee
DD5 1NY
Tel: 01382 443 631
www.healthpromotingschools.co.uk

UK Sport
40 Bernard Street
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