

Benefit of Physical Activity in Vermont High Schools – Data Brief

Vermont 2015 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) Vermont 2016 School Health Profiles (SHP)

Background

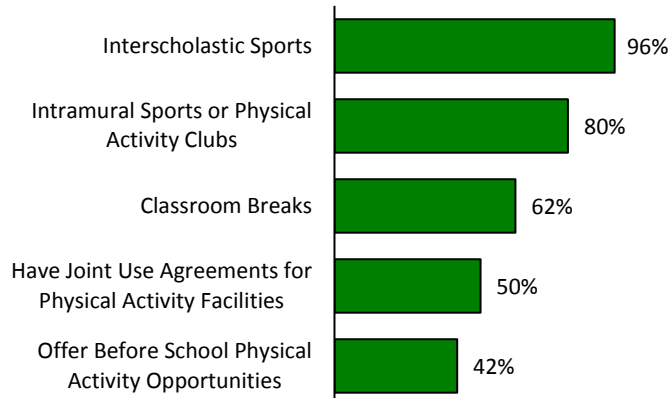
Schools are an ideal place for youth to be active and learn skills necessary to enjoy being physically active.¹ Providing opportunities for physical activity in schools increases attention, memory, learning potential, and academic performance; decreases disruptive behavior;² and increases the potential for a healthy life.³ The CDC recommends adolescents engage in at least 60-minutes of moderate to vigorous aerobic activity a day along with at least three days of muscle and bone-strengthening exercises per week.³ To help meet that guideline, Vermont schools are required to offer physical education plus 30 additional minutes of activity during the school day, outside of physical education.⁴

Environment of Physical Activity in Vermont High Schools

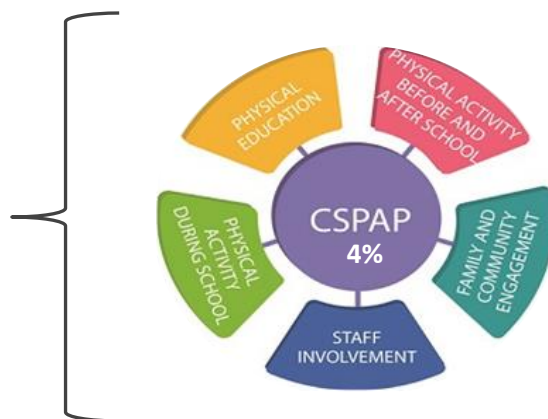
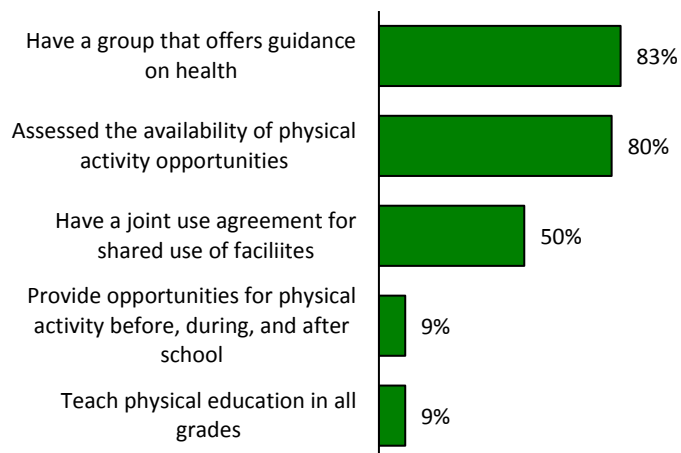
In 2016, high schools in Vermont were significantly more likely to offer interscholastic sports (96%) to students than any other opportunity for physical activity. Schools were least likely to offer physical activity opportunities before school (42%). All differences by opportunities for physical activity were statistically significant.

Only 4% of Vermont high schools in 2016 had an active Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP), a multi-component approach for physical activity recommended by CDC.⁵ One in five (20%) high schools had a written plan for the implementation of a CSPAP. Implementation of CSPAP elements varied among high schools, ranging from 9% who taught physical education in all grades or provided opportunities for physical activity before, during, and after school, to 83% who had a group that offered guidance on health issues.

Opportunities for Physical Activity in Vermont High Schools, SHP 2016



Proportion of Vermont High Schools With Active CSPAP Policy Elements, SHP 2016



Physical Activity and Youth Assets

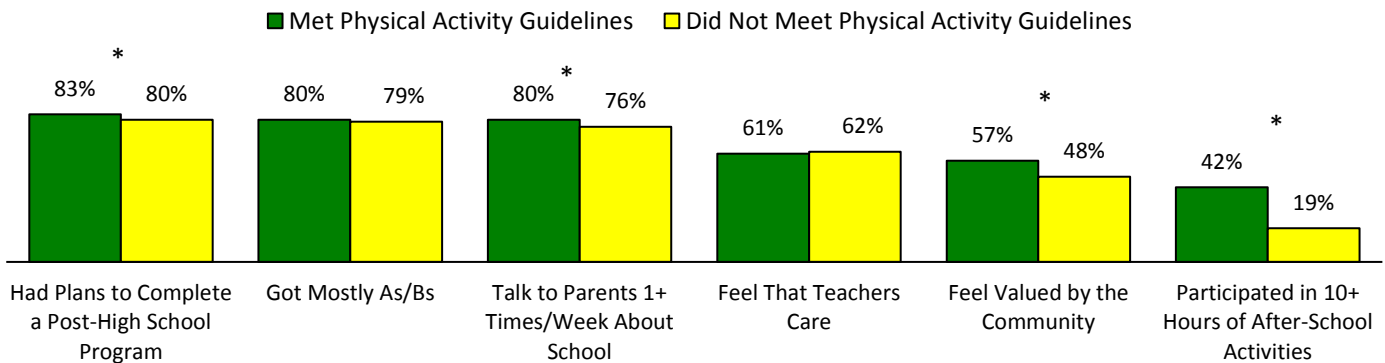
Students who met physical activity guidelines were significantly more likely to have plans to attend a post-high school program, talk with their parents one or more times per week about school, feel valued by the community, and participate in 10 or more hours of after school activities, than students who did not meet physical activity guidelines.

Physical Activity among High Schoolers

- 23% **met** physical activity guidelines.
- 14% had **no days** with at least 60 minutes of physical activity in the last week.

Data Source: YRBS 2015

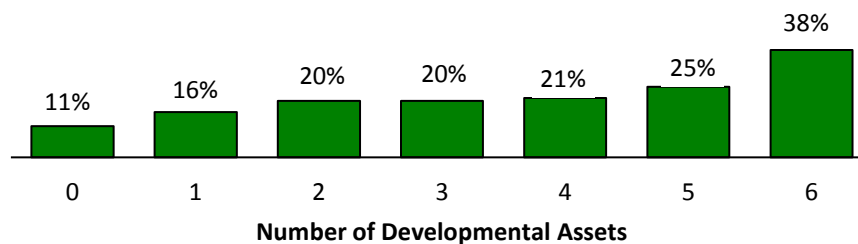
Rate of Youth Assets among High School Students Who Met Daily Physical Activity Guidelines, YRBS 2015



*Notes statistical difference between those who did and did not meet physical activity guidelines.

As the number of youth developmental assets increased, the rate of high school youth meeting physical activity guidelines increased. Developmental assets used in this scale are all those pictured in the chart above. A significantly higher rate of students with six developmental assets met physical activity guidelines when compared to students with five or fewer assets.

Percent of Youth Who Met Physical Activity Guidelines, by Number of Developmental Assets, YRBS 2015



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¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Youth Physical Activity: The Role of Schools; August 2009.

² Active Learning Research. Active Education: Growing evidence on Physical Activity and Academic Performance. January 2015.

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*, Washington, D.C.; 2008. (<https://health.gov/paguidelines/guidelines/chapter2.aspx>).

⁴ Vermont State Board of Education. Series 2000 – Education Quality Standards. CVR 22-000-003. Updated April 15, 2014.

⁵ SHAPE America. What is CSPAP? <http://www.shapeamerica.org/cspap/what.cfm>. Accessed August 2017.