

Trends & Tudes

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Keeping you informed of current topics in youth and education research.

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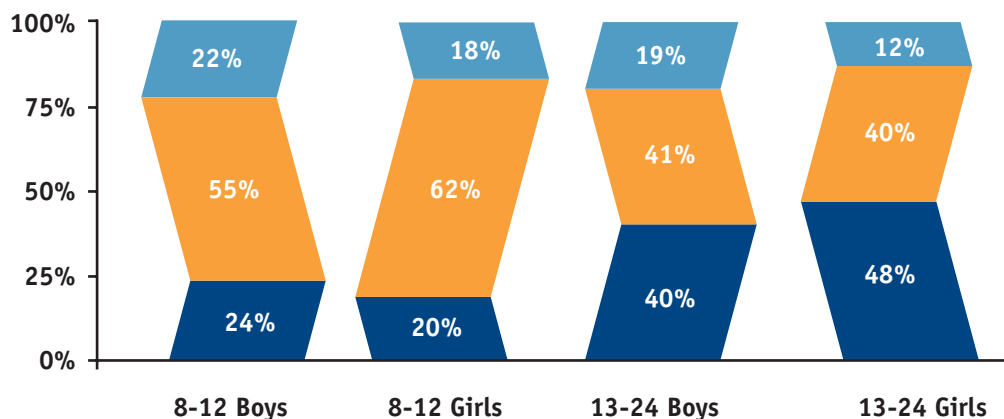
Physical Activity and Generation Y

The issue of obesity among America's children is well documented: 13% of children ages 6-11 years and 14% of adolescents ages 12-19 years are overweight according to the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. The prevalence of overweight children in the U.S. remained stable in the 1960's and 70's, but nearly doubled in the 80's and 90's. One of the national health objectives for 2010 is to reduce the prevalence of overweight children to 11%.

How fit or how inactive is Gen Y? Asked directly, young people are most likely to say they get about the same amount of exercise as their peers. According to Harris Interactive YouthPulseSM (our multi-client youth study), most 8-12 year olds seem to have a balanced view of their body – most feel they are at about the right weight and have never tried to lose weight. But, this changes quickly in the teen years, especially among girls.

Are you...?

■ Underweight
■ About the Right Weight
■ Overweight



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Teen and young adult girls tend to feel that they are overweight, and 73% are either trying to lose weight or have tried to lose weight in the past. Teen girls and young women do not have a positive image of their bodies.

Editorial: Our Take On It

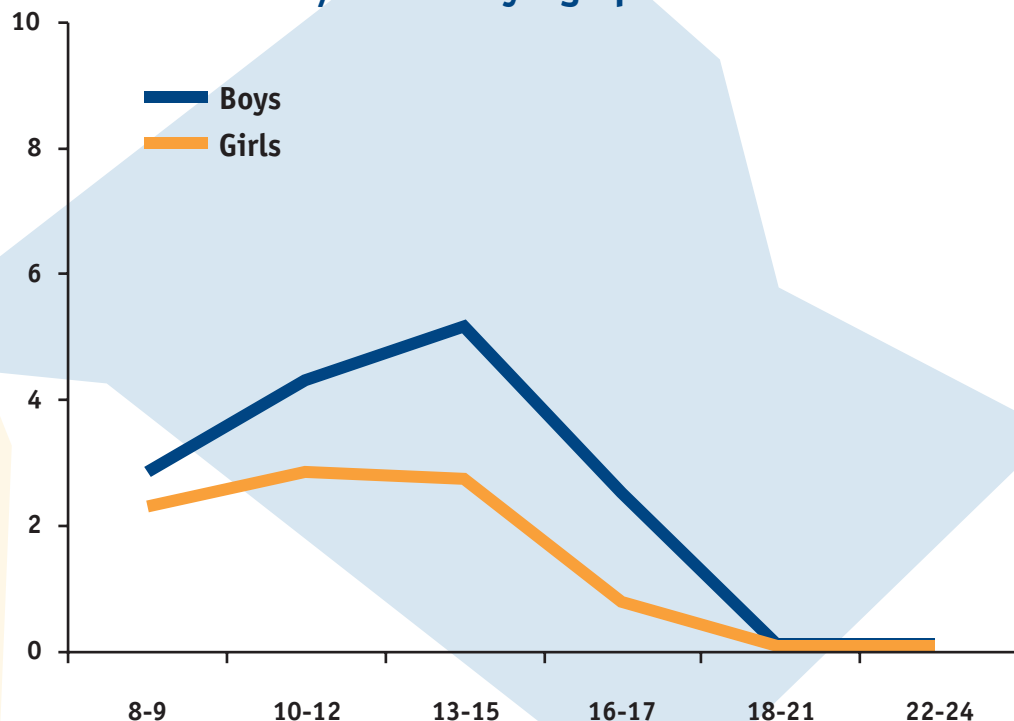
by **John Geraci**

VP Youth & Education Research

Childhood physical activity and nutrition is bound to become a bigger national health issue. Overweight children are more likely to become overweight adults, which places them at greater risk for many diseases and conditions. The causes of the obesity epidemic in the US are poor nutrition and limited physical activity. Discussions about nutrition can result in spirited debates—there is little agreement as to what works or doesn't work in terms of dieting. Because of the controversy and debate surrounding nutrition theories, we believe the better course would be to become allied with the promotion of physical activity - as everybody agrees that increased physical activity and sports participation would benefit youth. But, why do we focus on team-oriented sports and competition in PE classes instead of lifetime sports and exercise? We teach our children to become lifetime learners but not lifetime exercisers. We believe the promotion of physical activity is an excellent cause for youth marketers to become involved in, particularly food and beverage companies. It is so hard these days to reach youth through a cluttered advertising space, and allying with an issue can enhance brand equity and open up promotional channels you never thought possible!

We hear a lot in the news about the inactivity of today's youth, and it can be difficult to separate the fact from fiction as to how "fit" a nation we are. YouthPulse finds that sports participation plummets precipitously after age 15, and that by age 18 very few young adults are participating in sports at all.

Median Hours/Week Playing Sports



In fact, we find that the decline in sports participation parallels a rise in the behavior of watching sports on TV. At age 16, U.S. youth begin to watch sports more than they play them. Young people move from being participants to being spectators in a very short time.

Recent Research for Public Release

From time-to-time, the Harris Interactive youth team is fortunate enough to work with leading foundations and non-profit organizations, and we often are able to release the results of these studies publicly.

We recently worked with the National Safe Kids Campaign on a poll with tweens (kids aged 8-12) to look at their attitudes and behaviors toward helmet use on all wheel-related activities (bikes, skateboards, scooters). Results were released at a press event in Washington DC and hosted by Dr. Koop. The study found that more than three-quarters of children said that a brain injury could occur while riding on wheels, but 63% thought it unlikely that they themselves could suffer a head injury.

More information about this study can be found at www.safekids.org.

About Harris Interactive

Harris Interactive is a worldwide market research and consulting firm, best known for *The Harris Poll*® and its pioneering use of the Internet to conduct scientifically accurate market research. Our youth and education research team has conducted more than one million interviews among members of Generation Y and combines a youth research expertise with the strength of the Internet to provide insights to leading youth marketers and researchers. You can learn more about us at www.harrisinteractive.com.

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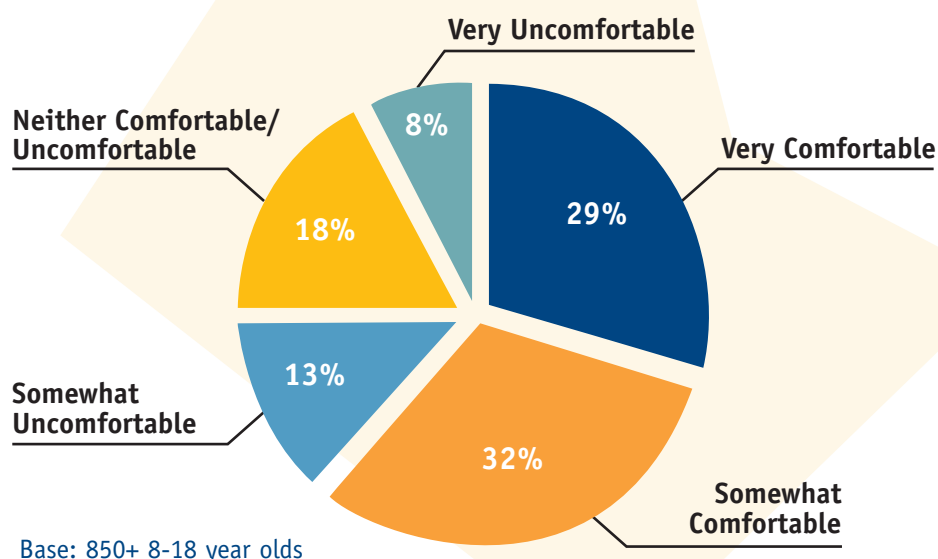
Ask a Question...

Have a burning question you would like to ask kids and teens? Here's your chance to submit a free question into our monthly YouthQuerySM omnibus. Just send us an email at HI_youth_research@harrisinteractive.com with your suggestion. We will pick one question each month and publish the results in the next edition of this newsletter.

...Get an Answer

Dirk Commandeur from Procter & Gamble/Tremor submitted the following question...

How comfortable are you expressing your opinion in front of others, even if it might not be an opinion they are likely to agree with?



Your Invited...

September 9, 2002, from 3:30pm – 5:30pm Eastern time.

A digital town hall meeting: "How has September 11, 2001 changed the lives of America's teenagers?"

- How have teens reacted to 9/11? Has it affected them emotionally? Spiritually?
- How have their relationships with parents, friends and their community changed?
- How has 9/11 affected teenagers as consumers?

The session will be moderated by our youth research experts. Teen participants will be recruited from the Harris Poll Online database.

This session can be viewed live, worldwide from any computer with an Internet connection. Or, come join us in our NYC offices for a group viewing and discussion of the proceedings.

Please RSVP! There is no charge for the session, but you need to sign up to observe.

Contact **Larry Brown**, Manager of Client Development, at **585.214.7135** or send email to **lbrown@harrisinteractive.com**.