



The 2015 SSF National Sports-Life Survey of Children

Executive Summary
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2015

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Survey of Children



Toward the realization of “Sport for Everyone” program, the Sasakawa Sports Foundation (SSF) has been conducting the “Sports-Life Survey of Children Aged Four to Nine Years” every two years, which is designed to understand the participation rate of children in sports and physical activities after school and during holidays and the sports environment surrounding children.

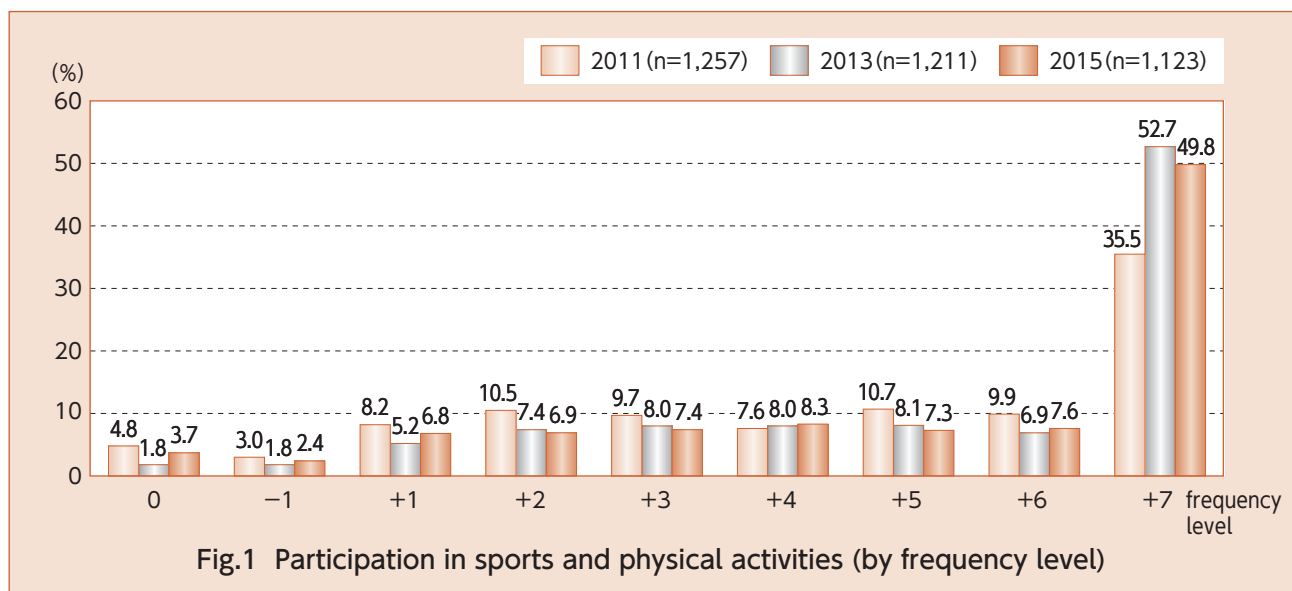
The survey was carried out from June 27 to July 31, 2015, using the household drop-off survey method with a questionnaire. The subjects were 1,800 randomly selected boys and girls aged four to nine years throughout the country. The survey questions included the current situation about sports and physical activities (such as frequency, time, and intensity), available sports facilities, sports clubs, sports spectating, sports lessons and practices, family involvement in sports and physical activities, and lifestyle habits (such as breakfast and sleeping). The number of valid responses was 1,123 (a response rate of 62.4%). The following is a summary of the main survey results.

1 Participation in sports and physical activities by frequency

Concerning the question on the frequency of participation in sports and physical activities among respondents aged four to nine years, 3.7% replied that they had not participated in any sports and physical activities at all in the previous one year, 1.9 percentage points higher than 1.8% in 2013 (**Figure 1**). The percentage of those who participated in some sports and physical activities at least seven times or more a week was 49.8%, indicating that more than a half of the respondents aged four to nine years regularly participate in sports and physical activities.

Table 1 Definition of frequency level

Frequency level	Participation in sports and physical activities
0	None over the last twelve months (0 times/year)
-1	Less than once a week (1 to 51 times/year)
+1	1 to 2 times a week (52 to 103 times/year)
+2	2 to 3 times a week (104 to 155 times/year)
+3	3 to 4 times a week (156 to 207 times/year)
+4	4 to 5 times a week (208 to 259 times/year)
+5	5 to 6 times a week (260 to 311 times/year)
+6	6 to 7 times a week (312 to 363 times/year)
+7	7 or more times a week (more than 364 times/year)



2 Types of sports and physical activities

To the question on sports and physical activities they had done in the previous one year, playing tag received the highest response at 50.5%, riding bicycle was second at 36.7%, and swimming was third at 34.0%, which means that so-called playing exercises were top rated (**Table 2**).

In the order of popularity by gender, playing tag at 50.9%, soccer at 45.5%, and swimming at 37.3% were popular with boys, and playing tag at 50.0%, swing at 39.4%, and riding bicycle at 37.5% were popular with girls (**Table 3**).

Table 2 Participation rates by sports and physical activities (multiple answers permitted)

Rank	2011 (n=1,197)	%	Rank	2013 (n=1,189)	%	Rank	2015 (n=1,082)	%
1	Playing tag	34.0	1	Playing tag	49.9	1	Playing tag	50.5
2	Swimming	29.9	2	Swimming	37.7	2	Riding bicycle	36.7
3	Soccer	23.7	3	Riding bicycle	35.6	3	Swimming	34.0
4	Riding bicycle	23.1	4	Swing	29.8	4	Swing	29.3
5	Swing	18.0	5	Soccer	28.8	5	Dodgeball	28.7
6	Dodgeball	17.4	6	Dodgeball	26.7	6	Soccer	26.2
7	Skipping rope (including long rope)	14.6	7	Skipping rope (including long rope)	26.1	7	Skipping rope (including long rope)	25.1
8	Running	12.4	8	Iron bar	21.7	8	Iron bar	20.4
9	Iron bar	11.4	9	Hide-and-seek	21.1	9	Running	19.5
10	Hide-and-seek	10.4	10	Running	18.8	10	Hide-and-seek	18.9

Table 3 Participation rates by sports and physical activities (by gender:multiple answers permitted)

Rank	Boys (n=552)	%	Rank	Girls (n=530)	%
1	Playing tag	50.9	1	Playing tag	50.0
2	Soccer	45.5	2	Swing	39.4
3	Swimming	37.3	3	Riding bicycle	37.5
4	Riding bicycle	35.9	4	Skipping rope (including long rope)	33.4
5	Dodgeball	32.4	5	Swimming	30.6
6	Swing	19.6	6	Iron bar	27.7
7	Running	19.2	7	Dodgeball	24.9
8	Hide-and-seek	18.5	8	Running	19.8
9	Skipping rope (including long rope)	17.2	9	Hide-and-seek	19.2
10	Iron bar	13.4	10	Riding unicycle	11.3
	Playing catch	13.4			

3 Facilities and places

Regarding facilities and places for sports and physical activities, school/kindergarten/nursery school was ranked first at 69.2%, park/public square/open space was the second-most popular at 58.2%, and own home or friend's home ranked third at 28.9%. Gymnasium or sports ground (outside school) came fourth at 27.4%, followed by swimming school (swimming club) at 12.8%.

In terms of school attendance, in addition to park/public space/open space, school/kindergarten/nursery school, or own home or friend's home were main places for sports and physical activities among preschoolers. The utilization rate of school/kindergarten/nursery school was high among elementary school students, and they chiefly utilized school facilities as places for sports and physical activities (**Table 4**).

Table 4 Utilization rates of facilities and places for sports or physical activities (by circumstance of school attendance)

Rank	Preschoolers (n=275)	%	Rank	1st or 2nd grade elementary school students (n=364)	%	Rank	3rd or 4th grade elementary school students (n=441)	%
1	Park/public square/open space	68.4	1	School/kindergarten/nursery school	67.3	1	School/kindergarten/nursery school	78.5
2	School/kindergarten/nursery school	57.5	2	Park/public square/open space	59.9	2	Park/public square/open space	50.3
3	Own home or friend's home	36.0	3	Gymnasium or sports ground (outside school)	30.8	3	Gymnasium or sports ground (outside school)	32.4
4	Gymnasium or sports ground (outside school)	14.9	4	Own home or friend's home	27.7	4	Own home or friend's home	25.2
5	Swimming school (swimming club)	9.1	5	Swimming school (swimming club)	14.3	5	Swimming school (swimming club)	14.1
6	Swimming pool	5.5	6	Swimming pool	8.0	6	Swimming pool	7.9
7	Ocean/beach/port	3.6	7	Sports club (including fitness club, boys sports group)	4.9	7	Skiing ground	5.7
	Places near their own home or friend's home	3.6	8	Places near their own home or friend's home	3.6	8	Ocean/beach/port	5.0
9	Skiing ground	2.9	9	Skiing ground	3.3	9	Streets	4.1
10	Sports club (including fitness club, boys sports group)	2.5	10	Ocean/beach/port	3.0	10	Places near their own home or friend's home	3.4
	Streets	2.5						

4 Membership of sports clubs

Looking at membership status of the respondents in sports clubs at schools, private-sector sports clubs, and sports clubs in local communities, as a whole, 52.7% of them were current members of sports clubs (Figure 2). Broken down by gender, 58.2% of boys and 46.9% of girls were current members of sports clubs. The membership rate of boys exceeded the girls' by 11.3 percentage points. In the types of sports clubs, private-sector sports clubs (such as swimming clubs and gymnastic clubs) were the highest at 37.9%, local community sports clubs (such as local sports activity groups, sports schools, and sports training halls) were the second-most popular at 15.6%, and sports clubs at schools came third at 9.0%.

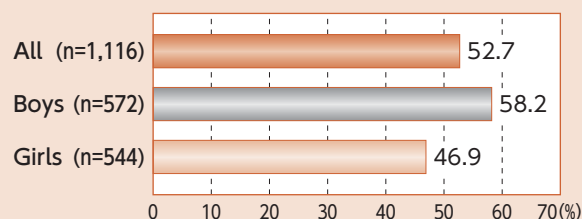


Fig.2 Sports club membership (overall, by gender)

5 Sports, physical exercises, or playing exercises with family

When parents of respondents were asked about how often their family, including themselves, did sports, physical activities, or playing exercises with their children who were asked to answer the 2015 survey, 13.2% of them answered frequently, 50.8% responded sometimes, 28.5% replied rarely, and 7.5% answered not at all. The results indicated that more than 60% of children aged four to nine years did sports, physical activities, or playing exercises with their families (Figure 3). In terms of frequency by gender, the combined rates of frequently and sometimes were 69.1% and 58.7% in boys and girls, respectively. The boys' rate exceeded the girls' by 10.4 percentage points.

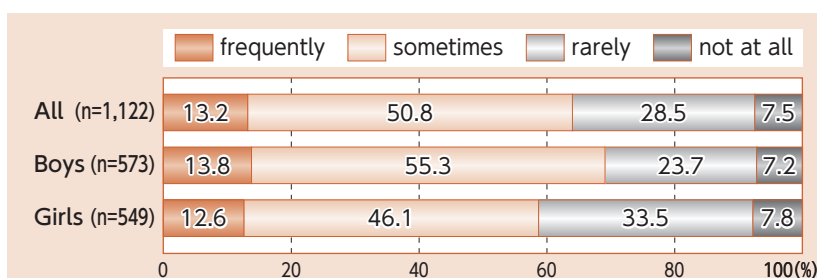


Fig.3 Circumstances on sports, physical activities, or playing exercises with family (overall, by children's gender)

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Established: March 1991

Purpose: To promote Sport for Everyone

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