

## Girls' interest in physical activities declining

Girls are taking to organised sports in a big way, but their participation in physical activities outside this area is declining.

A study has found that poverty limits many girls' access to and participation in physical activity and sports, especially those belonging to lower socio-economic groups.

Besides, outdated, stereotypical standards of femininity and masculinity continued to influence girls to shun physical activity, not to speak of their trivialisation as sexual objects by the popular media.

Lastly, their participation rates in physical activities consistently lag behind those of boys.

These findings, presented by University of Minnesota, summarises the latest research bearing on physical, psychological, social and cultural benefits girls derive from participation in sport and physical activity.

The report affirms that regular physical activity can improve health and reduce girls' risk of obesity and chronic diseases such as Type II diabetes, osteoporosis and cardiovascular disease.

Girls' participation in physical activities can result in positive youth development, including social, psychological and motor skill benefits.

Athletic girls perform better academically and have lower dropout rates than their non-athletic counterparts.

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