

# Professional Profile

---

Gethin has extensive experience working in active partnerships across England and Wales, collaborating with national, regional, and local stakeholders to lead strategic initiatives in physical activity, health, and behaviour change. His work has included direct engagement with the Welsh Government and Estyn, contributing to the development of policy and practice, particularly in the context of education and whole-system approaches.

Gethin's expertise spans leadership and strategy development, with a strong emphasis on physical literacy and evidence-informed behaviour change. He has led and contributed to numerous research and evaluation projects, providing insight that bridges the gap between policy and practice. His approach combines academic rigor with practical application, supporting sustainable, inclusive, and impactful change across sectors.



# **Physical Literacy:**

## **How to start well, live well and age well.**

---

Gethin Môn Thomas  
[\*\*g.m.thomas@bangor.ac.uk\*\*](mailto:g.m.thomas@bangor.ac.uk)

# Part 1

A case for change

---

**Less  
active**

Fewer than an  
average of 30  
minutes a day

**30.2%**

30.2% of children  
and young people  
(2.2m) do fewer than  
an average of 30  
minutes a day

**Fairly  
active**

An average  
of 30–59  
minutes a day

**22.8%**

22.8% (1.7m) are  
fairly active but  
don't reach an  
average of 60  
minutes a day

**Active**

An average of 60+  
minutes a day

**47.0%**

47.0% (3.5m)  
do an average of  
60 minutes or  
more a day

# Levels of activity

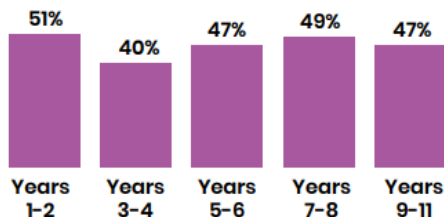


## Summary of demographic differences

Active

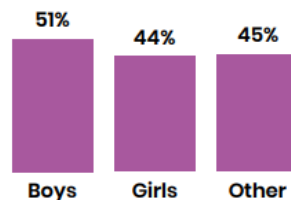
### 1 Year group

Activity levels are lowest for those in school Years 3-4 (ages 7-9, 40%).



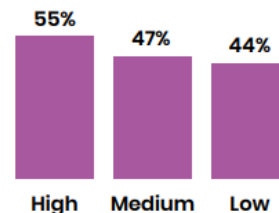
### 2 Gender

Boys (51%) are more likely to be active than girls (44%).



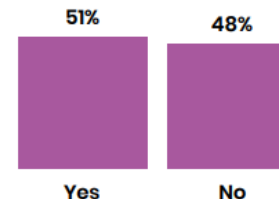
### 3 Family affluence

Those from the least affluence families are the least likely to be active (44%).



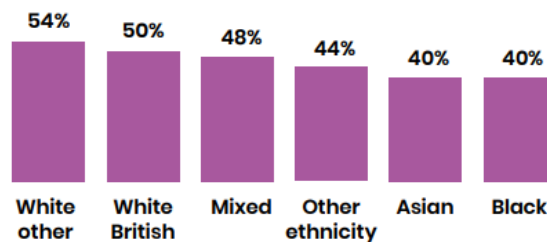
### 4 Disability and long-term health conditions

Children and young people with a disability or long-term health condition (51%) are slightly more likely to be active than those without one (48%).



### 5 Ethnicity

Children and young people of Black, Asian and Other ethnicities are the least likely to be active.

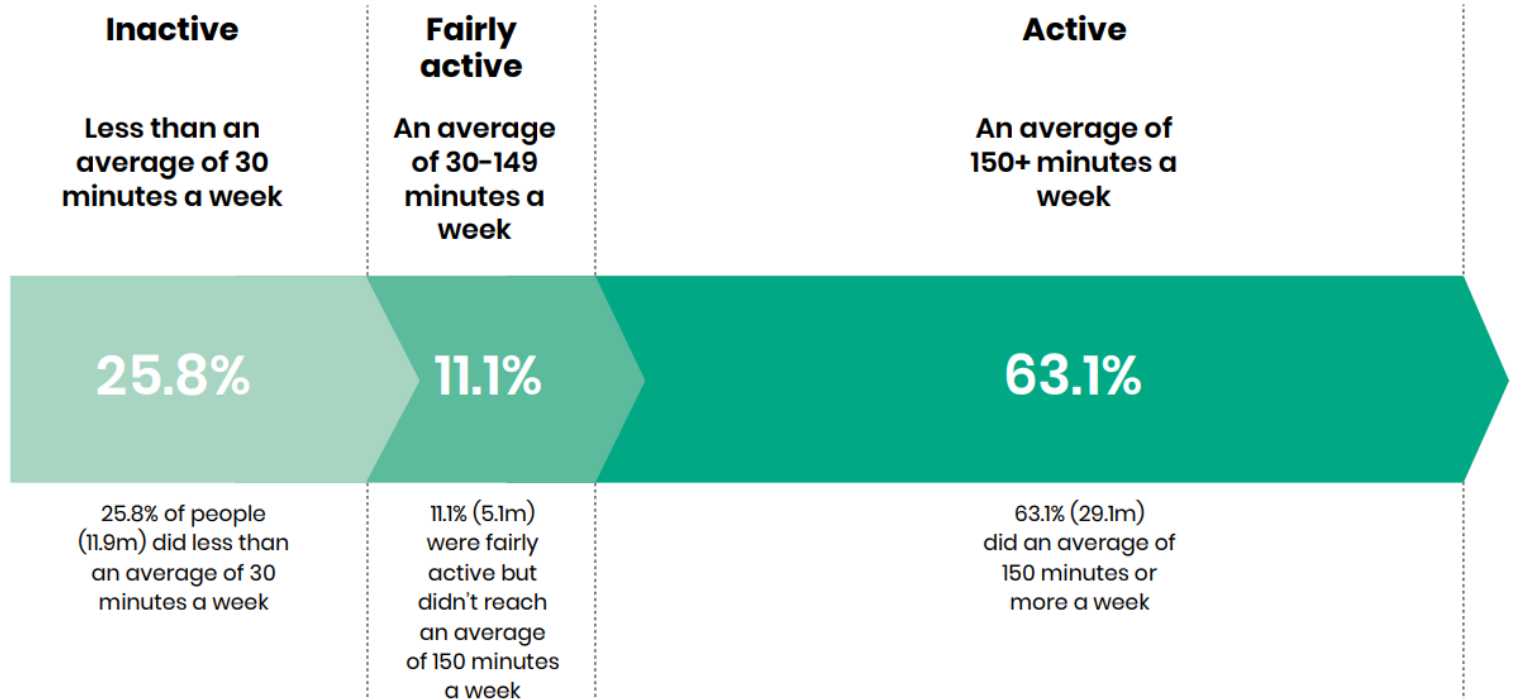


# Meeting recommended levels of Physical Activity



- Boys are more active than girls.
- Activity levels generally decrease with age.
- You are more likely to be active if you are from a higher S-E group (Swimming!).
- You are more likely to be active if you reside in a rural area.
- You are less likely to be active if you are from the ethnically diverse community.

# National Physical Activity Data (Adults)



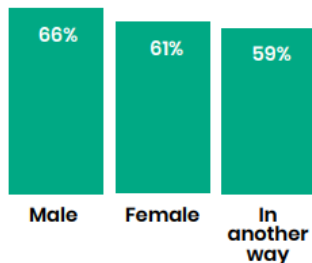
# Levels of activity

## Summary of demographic differences

Our data shows there are significant inequalities:

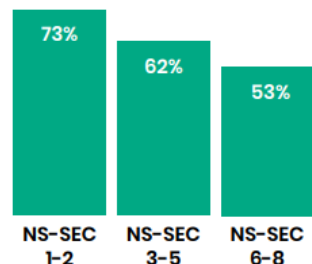
### 1 Gender

Men (66% or 14.7m) are more likely to be active than women (61% or 14.2m) and those who describe themselves in another way (59% or 0.2m).



### 2 Socio-economic groups

Those from lower social groups (NS-SEC 6-8\*) are the least likely to be active (53%).



[Link to data tables](#)

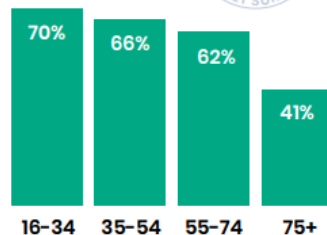
\*See our definitions page for the full definition of each demographic group.

Active



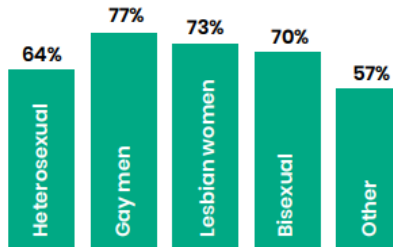
### 3 Age

Activity levels generally decrease with age, with the sharpest decrease coming at age 75+ (to 41%).



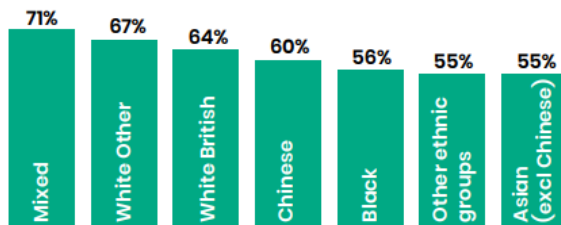
### 4 Sexual orientation

Gay men, lesbian women and bisexual adults are all more likely to be active than heterosexual adults.



### 5 Ethnicity

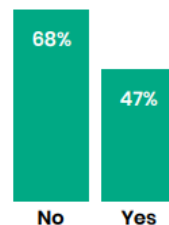
There are differences in activity levels based on ethnic background.



### 6

### Disability and long-term health conditions

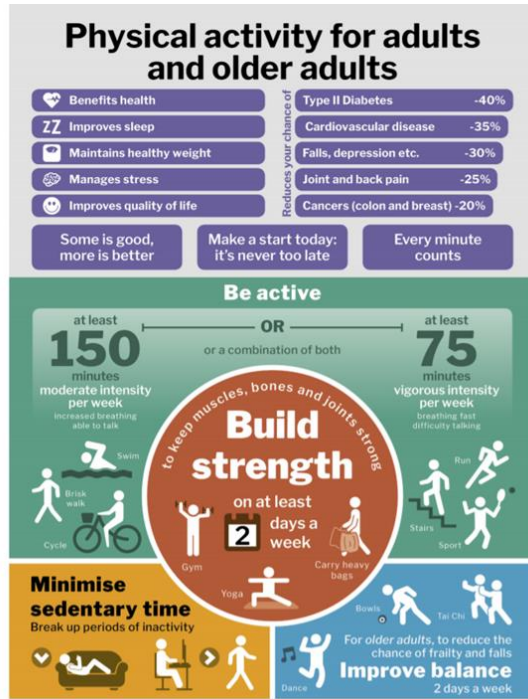
Activity is less common for adults with a disability or long-term health condition\* (47%) than those without (68%).



Additional demographic breakdowns for faith, working status and education stage can be found in the data tables.



# Meeting recommended levels of Physical Activity



- Men typically move more than women
- Activity levels generally decrease with age (exception e.g., white, rural, retirees)
- You are more likely to be active if you are from a higher S-E group
- You are more likely to be active if you are affluent and reside in a rural area
- You are less likely to be active if you are from the ethnically diverse community
- Adults with a disability move less again

# Our relationship with Movement and Physical Activity

---

# What is Physical Literacy?

Physical literacy is our relationship with  
movement and physical activity  
throughout life.

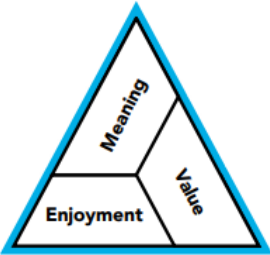
Our consensus statement

Physical literacy  
is our relationship  
with movement  
and physical activity  
throughout life.

Sport England consensus statement (2023)

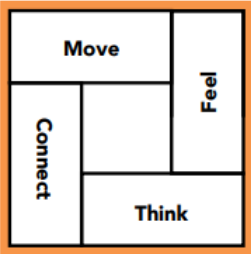
A personal relationship

Having a positive and meaningful association with movement and physical activity.



Movement and physical activity

How we move (physical), connect (social), think (cognitive) and feel (affective) during movement and physical activity plays a crucial role.



Throughout life

Influenced across the lifecourse by individual, social and environmental factors.



# Understanding Physical Literacy

Physical literacy refers to **the degree to which we have a positive and meaningful relationship** with movement and physical activity. **It's a complex and ever-changing relationship.**

It reflects our connection and commitment to movement and physical activity, influenced by various factors such as **our thoughts, feelings, engagement, and experiences.**

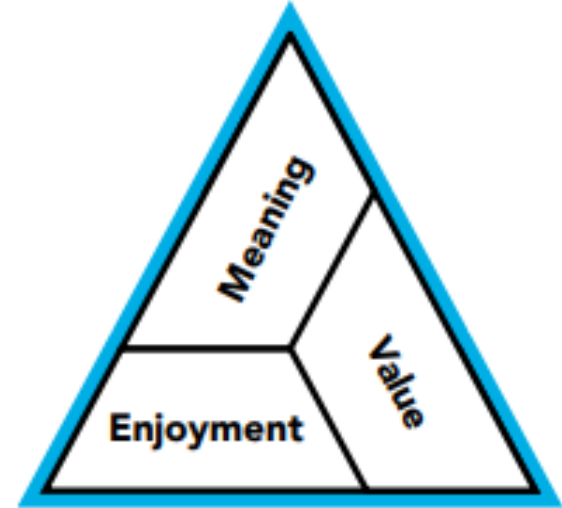
Sport England consensus statement (2023)

# Physical literacy is personal

Everyone has their own **strengths, needs, circumstances, and past experiences** that affect their relationship with movement and physical activity.

Our physical literacy is therefore unique, and **changes over our lifetime.**

Sport England consensus statement (2023)





# Underpinned by philosophy

## Monism

**Developing  
the whole  
person**

Our experiences are Physical  
Social and Emotional, occur  
simultaneously and are  
interconnected.



## Existentialism

Our experiences shape us, who we  
are our attitudes and values. and  
our relationship with physical  
activity

**High quality,  
positive  
experiences.**



## Phenomenology

Based on our previous experience and our unique relationship  
with physical activity, we either choose to seek opportunities  
to be active or avoid being active.



**Person/Learner centered approach**



# Discussion

1. What do positive experiences look like?
2. What contributes to positive experiences?
3. What do negative experiences look like?
4. What contributes to a negative experience?

# When considering positive experiences:

How can these factors be both enablers and barriers?



How can we influence these through leadership to become a positive experience?

The experience itself is more important than the activity

WHY?



**Why does physical literacy matter?**

---

# Physical literacy matters because:

The **quality of our relationship** with movement and physical activity **profoundly influences** our choice to be active.

Having a positive and meaningful relationship with movement and physical activity makes us more likely to be and stay active, benefiting our health, well-being and quality of life.

Sport England consensus statement (2023)

Understanding physical literacy can inform our policies, strategies, influence our behaviours and our approaches to providing opportunities and experiences in physical activity and sport!

# What policy areas can be informed by PL?

Active environments	access, and design of open spaces/buildings etc
Education Sector	e.g., active schools, physical education, school sport
Community Sport	e.g., club culture and practice, leisure facilities, youth groups and organisations (guides/scouts)etc
Health Sector	e.g., social prescribers, NERS, health visitors (1 <sup>st</sup> 1000 days) etc
Public Health e.g.	active workplaces, active communities, specific population groups e.g., (ethnically diverse communities etc)
Social Care e.g.	care homes, community

Consultation to  
identify organisation  
needs within a  
sector

- Sectors include, Education and Youth Services, Community Sport and Physical Activity, Health, and Health Care Settings, planning and the design of public spaces etc.

Develop sector  
specific  
understanding

- Sector specific messages to develop fidelity of understanding, challenge misconceptions and establish common language through training, coaching/mentoring.

Translation into  
applied practice

- Develop through organisational collaboration, translation materials in support of e.g., change in practice/culture through applied practice.

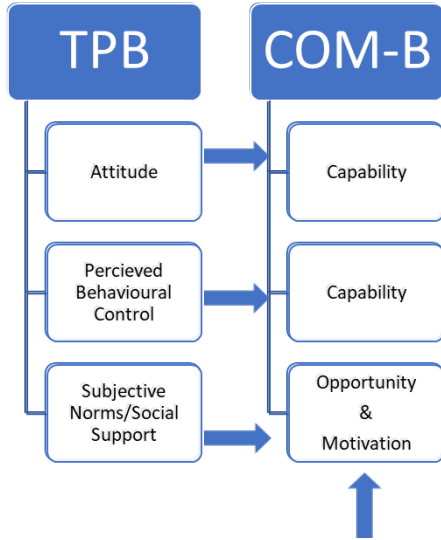


# Positive experiences through design!

Models of behavior change informed strategy.

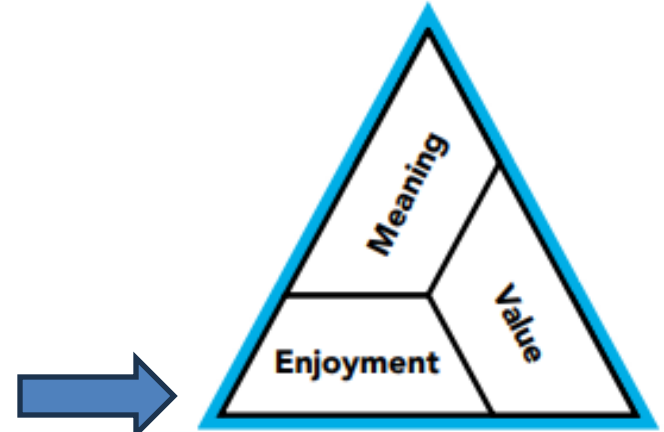
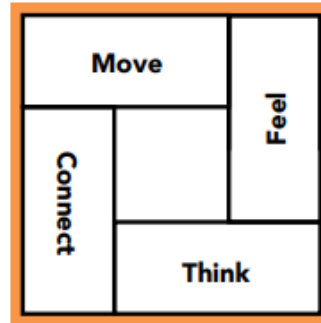
---

# Positive Experiences



**Motivation:**  
**Self Determination Theory**

- **Autonomy**
- **Relatedness/Belonging**
- **Perceived Competence**



**A thriving relationship with movement and physical activity**

# Group Discussion:



Diolch yn fawr / *Thank You*

Manylion Cyswllt / *Contact details*

[g.m.thomas@bangor.ac.uk](mailto:g.m.thomas@bangor.ac.uk)