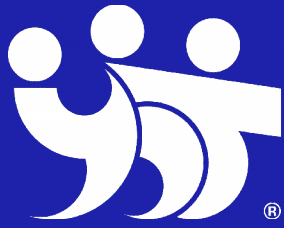


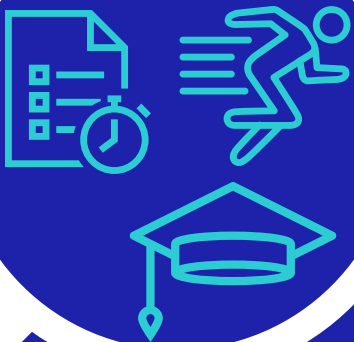
May 2025



**YOUTH  
SPORT  
TRUST**

# Key facts about...

the role of  
physical activity in  
supporting revision  
and exams



For more facts, please visit [here](#) to access the Youth Sport Trust's Knowledge Bank.

A single bout of physical activity can improve academic outcomes, including mathematics and language performance (Muntaner-Mas et al., 2023).

Click [here](#) for the full report.

Fitter children demonstrate better cognition compared with children with lower fitness (Hatch et al., 2021).

Click [here](#) for the full report.

Sports participation is a significant predictor of self-belief and mental toughness and is associated with higher levels of wellbeing in children (Denovan and Dagnall, 2023).

Click [here](#) for the full report.

Children participating in organised team sports have fewer mental health difficulties compared with children not participating in organised team sports (Hoffman et al., 2022).

Click [here](#) for the full report.

Physical activity improves on-task behaviour (e.g., sustained attention) in children. Evidence also shows physical activity to have a moderate improvement on creativity and a smaller benefit for intelligence and memory (Vasilopoulos et al., 2023).

Click [here](#) for the full report.

Continuation in sport participation was associated with better performance on attention, and working memory, higher numeracy and literacy scores, higher end of school academic performance, and higher odds of studying at university (Owen et al., 2023).

Click [here](#) for the full report.

Participating in physical activity and exercise can aid sleep in school children (Larrinaga-Undabarrena et al., 2023).

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Participating in team sport was associated with better attention and working memory, while participating in individual sport was associated with better literacy scores and end of school academic performance (Owen et al., 2023).

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An individual bout of physical activity before a stressful situation can reduce stress hormones in response to the situation (Caplin et al., 2021).

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Physical activity levels of 90 min plus per week were associated with improved academic performance. The optimal duration of physical activity was 30–60 min per session (James et al., 2023).

Click [here](#) for the full report.