Emotional commitment to sport at age 11-16 is linked to forming a sporting habit for life

Detailed findings

- Participation in sport at age 25-34 is linked to stronger interest in sport at a younger age
  Current once a week participants are more likely to agree (than non-sporty people) that at age 11-16:
  
  **Commitment**
  - “I knew I would carry on participating in sport after school”
  - “I would have felt a real loss if I was forced to give up playing sport”
  - “Sport was a big part of my life”

  **Enjoyment**
  - “Taking part in sport was fun”
  - “I enjoyed meeting new people and making friends through sport”

  **Motivated**
  - “I was motivated by improving my performance and learning new skills”
  - “I took part in sport to keep fit and healthy”

  **Spectating**
  - “I loved attending live sporting events”
  - “I loved watching sport on TV”

  **Friends**
  - “Most of my friends took part in sport”

  **Competence**
  - “I was told by others I was good at sport”

  Factors listed in order of importance

- People are more committed to sport and activity generally than one specific sport
  77% of current once a week participants are confident they would still take part in some sport if they were unable to continue participating in the sport(s) they currently do

- Those who have experienced more ‘transitions’ (e.g. moving schools, attending university/college, having children, taking a gap year, moving area, having a period out of education/training/employment) are more likely to have lower levels of participation

School is part but not all of the picture:

- 37% of sporty people agreed that “school age experiences have contributed to how much sport I play now”. Over half (52%) disagreed, saying that school age experiences are less important

- 48% of non sporty people thought that “if my experience of sport when at secondary school age had been better, I’d be playing more sport now”. 37% disagreed. (sporty means at least once a week)

What we did

- 4,000 online interviews of 25-34 year olds from YouGov’s panel examining attitudes and behaviour at age 11-16 in relation to current levels of participation. Results are representative by region and gender

Further information

- A full report will be made available on the research section of the Sport England website shortly.