



# CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION IN SPORT AND LEISURE TIME ACTIVITIES AUSTRALIA

EMBARGO: 11.30AM (CANBERRA TIME) FRI 21 DEC 2012

## CONTENTS

	<i>page</i>
Notes .....	2
List of tables and graphs .....	3

### SECTIONS

<b>1</b> Introduction .....	4
<b>2</b> Participation in organised sport and/or dancing .....	5
<b>3</b> The changing popularity of sports and dancing .....	8
<b>4</b> Participation in other activities .....	13
<b>5</b> Children who did not participate in organised sport and/or dancing .....	15

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Explanatory Notes .....	17
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## INQUIRIES

For further information about these and related statistics, contact the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070.

# NOTES

## ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

This publication compares results from the surveys of *Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities* (CPCLA) (cat. no. 4901.0) conducted in April of 2003, 2006, 2009 and 2012. While the publication primarily provides information about the participation of children aged 5 to 14 years in cultural, sporting and other leisure activities, some information on children's use of the Internet is also presented.

This publication also includes Datacubes in spreadsheet format available on the ABS website <[www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)>.

## ABOUT THIS SURVEY

The survey of *Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities* is conducted throughout Australia as part of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) Monthly Population Survey (MPS). The 2012 survey was the fifth on the topic of children's participation in culture and leisure activities, the previous surveys being conducted in April of 2000, 2003, 2006 and 2009. Information is collected from any responsible adult in the household who was asked to respond on behalf of the children in the household.

The surveys have collected information on children's participation in selected organised cultural activities and organised sports outside of school hours during the twelve months prior to interview. They also collected information on participation in selected leisure activities (such as skateboarding or rollerblading, and watching TV, videos and DVDs) outside of school hours during the two most recent school weeks prior to interview. Details were collected on the characteristics of children who participated and on the frequency and duration of their involvement in some activities.

## STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Unless otherwise specified, differences between data items highlighted in the commentary are statistically significant.

## ROUNDING

As estimates have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.



## ABBREVIATIONS

- ABS Australian Bureau of Statistics
- CPCLA Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities Survey
- DVD digital versatile disc
- LFS Labour Force Survey
- MPS Monthly Population Survey

Brian Pink  
Australian Statistician

**LIST OF TABLES** .....

*page*

**PARTICIPATION IN ORGANISED SPORT AND/OR DANCING**

**2.1** Children participating in sport and/or dancing, by sex and age group–2012 ..... 5

**2.2** Children participating in top 10 organised sports (including dancing)–2003 to 2012 ..... 6

**2.3** Children participating in sport and/or dancing, by duration in last 2 weeks–2012 ..... 6

**2.4** Children participating in sport and/or dancing, mean hours spent participating in last 2 weeks, by age–2012 ..... 7

**THE CHANGING POPULARITY OF SPORTS AND DANCING**

**3.1** Children participating in top 3 organised sports (including dancing)–2003 to 2012 ..... 8

**3.2** Children participating in top 3 organised sports (including dancing), by age and sex –2003 to 2012 ..... 9

**3.3** Children participating in top 10 organised sports (including dancing), by age–2003 to 2012 ..... 11

**3.4** Children who participated 53 times or more in last 12 months, top 5 sports (excluding dancing)–2003 and 2012 ..... 12

**PARTICIPATION IN OTHER ACTIVITIES**

**4.1** Children participating in bike riding, by sex–2003 to 2012 ..... 13

**4.2** Children participating in selected other activities, by sex–2003 and 2012 ..... 14

**CHILDREN WHO DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN ORGANISED SPORT**

**5.1** Children who did not participate in organised sport and/or dancing, selected characteristics–2012 ..... 15

CHILDREN'S  
PARTICIPATION IN  
CULTURAL AND LEISURE  
ACTIVITIES

Information about Australian children's participation in cultural, sporting and other leisure activities has been collected in April every three years as part of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) survey of *Children's Participation in Culture and Leisure Activities* (CPCLA) (cat. no. 4901.0). A responsible adult in each household participating in the survey was asked to respond on behalf of any children in the household aged 5–14 years. They provided information about the child's participation in selected organised cultural activities and organised sport outside of school hours during the twelve months prior to interview, and about their participation in selected leisure activities (such as skateboarding, reading and watching TV, videos and DVDs) outside of school hours during the two most recent school weeks prior to interview.

The most recent CPCLA survey was conducted in 2012. Scope and definitional changes to the 2012 survey has affected comparability with previous surveys. The scope of sports included in the 2012 survey has changed from previous years, with the focus now on organised sports. Physical activities that are not organised sports, such as jogging for exercise and gym workouts, are now excluded. Numerous sports have had changes to their definitions compared with previous survey iterations. The combined total categories 'other organised sport', 'at least one organised sport' and 'organised sports and/or dancing' are therefore different in 2012 compared with previous years, and time series comparisons should not be made.

Time series comparisons between the 2012 survey and previous iterations can be made for individual sports and leisure activities where scope and definitions have not changed. Over time the popularity of certain sports and leisure activities has changed as indicated by increases and decreases in participation rates. While many activities have remained popular, the amount of time that children are spending on them or the number of times that they participated may have changed.

The CPCLA survey collects information about children's participation in dancing separately to information about participation in organised sport, as it is generally collected as a 'cultural' activity. However, due to its popularity as a physical recreation activity for girls it is being included with organised sport for the purpose of this analysis in order to allow for a comparison of children's physical activity levels over time.

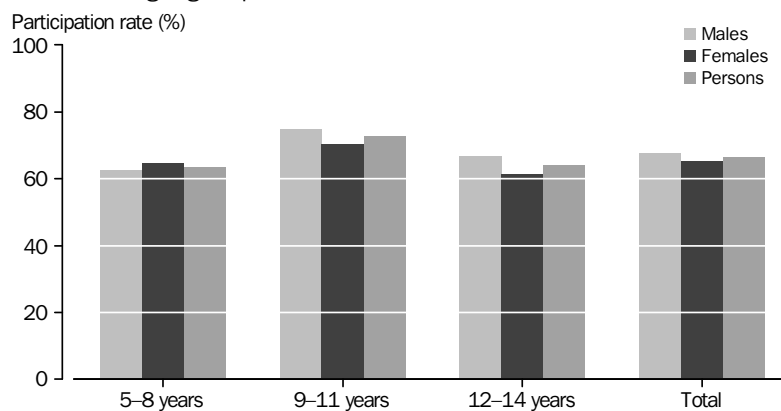
CHAPTER **2**

**PARTICIPATION IN ORGANISED SPORT AND/OR DANCING** .....

AGE AND SEX

The rate of children's participation in sport and/or dancing was 66% in 2012. The highest participation rate was for those aged 9–11 years (73%). Participation in sport and/or dancing was similar for boys (67%) and girls (65%) in 2012. However, for those aged 12–14 years participation was significantly higher for boys (67%) compared with girls (61%).

**2.1** CHILDREN PARTICIPATING IN SPORT AND/OR DANCING, By sex and age group—2012



Source: *Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia, (cat. no. 4901.0)*

PARTICIPATION IN SELECTED ORGANISED SPORTS OVER TIME

Looking at the top ten organised sports (including dancing) since 2003, the number of children participating has increased by approximately one quarter for dancing (27%) and martial arts (24%). Though participation in outdoor soccer increased by 17%, there was not enough evidence to suggest that this increase was statistically significant. Participation in tennis and netball has declined over the time period, down by 10% and 8% respectively.

PARTICIPATION IN  
SELECTED ORGANISED  
SPORTS OVER TIME

*continued*

**2.2** CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION IN TOP 10 ORGANISED SPORTS  
(INCLUDING DANCING), Persons—2003 and 2012

	NUMBER ('000)				PARTICIPATION RATE (%)			
	2003	2006	2009	2012	2003	2006	2009	2012
Swimming/Diving	439.1	462.5	502.9	492.1	16.6	17.4	18.5	17.7
Dancing	329.3	332.6	390.4	418.1	12.4	12.5	14.3	15.0
Soccer (outdoor)	355.9	351.1	360.4	397.6	13.4	13.2	13.2	14.3
Australian Rules football	193.6	200.4	235.1	226.5	7.3	7.5	8.6	8.1
Netball	241.2	225.8	228.5	222.7	9.1	8.5	8.4	8.0
Basketball	205.0	176.3	201.9	220.2	7.7	6.6	7.4	7.9
Tennis	228.5	195.1	214.8	205.2	8.6	7.3	7.9	7.4
Martial arts	129.7	120.4	154.6	161.0	4.9	4.5	5.7	5.8
Gymnastics(a)	..	..	..	134.5	..	..	..	4.8
Cricket (outdoor)	133.6	143.5	142.5	130.7	5.0	5.4	5.2	4.7

.. not applicable

(a) In 2009, callisthenics was included in the Gymnastics category. In 2012, callisthenics was excluded from organised sport altogether, and cheerleading was included in the Gymnastics category. Therefore the data are not comparable.

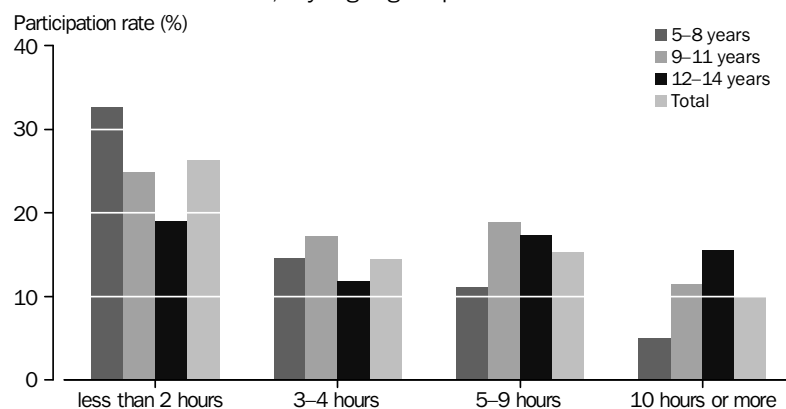
Source: Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia (cat. no. 4901.0).

DURATION OF  
PARTICIPATION

In 2012, over one quarter (26%) of children participated in organised sport and/or dancing for 2 hours or less in the two weeks prior to interview. This was significantly higher than for children who participated for 3–4 hours or 5–9 hours (15% for both) and those who participated for 10 hours or more (10%).

A higher proportion of children aged 12–14 years (16%) participated for 10 hours or more in the two weeks prior to interview, compared with those aged 9–11 years (11%) and 5–8 years (5%).

**2.3** CHILDREN PARTICIPATING IN SPORT AND/OR DANCING, Duration  
in last 2 weeks, by age group—2012



Source: Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia, (cat. no. 4901.0)

AVERAGE TIME SPENT

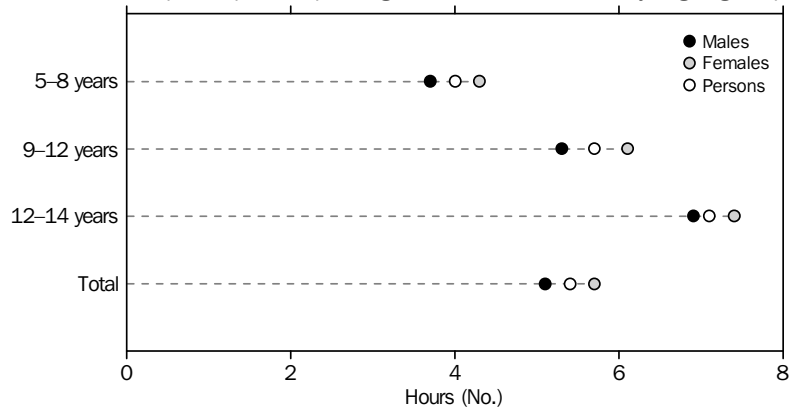
In 2012, the average time that children aged 5–14 years spent participating in sport and/or dancing in the two weeks prior to interview was 5 hours and 24 minutes.

The average time spent participating in organised sport and/or dancing was slightly higher for girls (5 hours and 42 minutes) than for boys (5 hours and 6 minutes) in 2012.

AVERAGE TIME SPENT  
*continued*

Looking at participation by boys and girls in each age group, the only significant difference was in the 5–8 year age group with girls spending more time on average (4 hours and 18 minutes) compared with boys (3 hours and 42 minutes).

**2.4** CHILDREN PARTICIPATING IN SPORT AND/OR DANCING, Average hours spent participating in last 2 weeks, By age group—2012



Source: *Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia, (cat. no 4901.0)*

Children aged 12–14 years spent more hours on average participating in sport and/or dancing than children in the younger age groups.

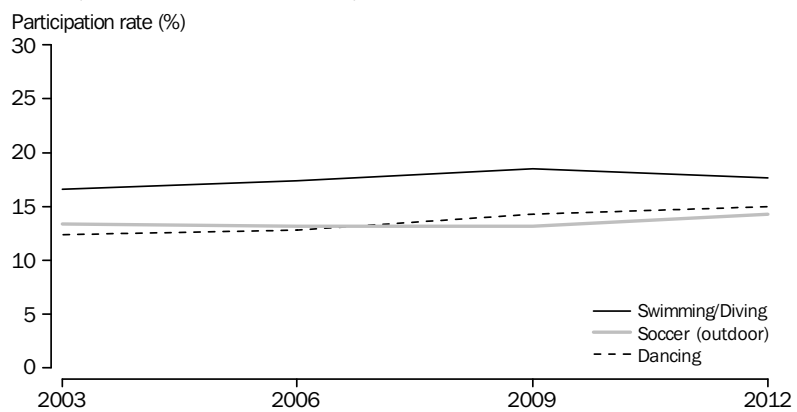
**THE CHANGING POPULARITY OF SPORTS AND DANCING** .....

MAIN SPORTS AND DANCING

Participation in different sports has changed over time with some sports becoming more popular for either boys or girls or for children in different age groups.

In 2003, the most popular sport was swimming and diving with a participation rate of 17%. It has remained as the most popular sport with an 18% participation rate in 2012. The next most popular organised physical activities for children in 2012 were dancing (15%), and outdoor soccer (14%). There was not enough evidence to suggest that the difference between dancing and outdoor soccer in 2012 was statistically significant.

**3.1** CHILDREN PARTICIPATING IN TOP 3 ORGANISED SPORTS (INCLUDING DANCING)—2003 to 2012



Source: *Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia, (cat. no. 4901.0)*

POPULARITY BY AGE

Contributing to the popularity of outdoor soccer was the increase in participation by girls aged 5–8 years (3% to 5%) and 12–14 years (5% to 8%) from 2003 to 2012. Though participation by girls aged 9–11 years also increased (from 5% in 2003 to 7% in 2012) there was not enough evidence to suggest that this difference was statistically significant. The increasing popularity of dancing was also reflected in increases in participation by girls and boys in all age groups between 2003 and 2012. The only significant difference, however, was for girls and boys aged 5–8 years with participation increasing from 27% to 32% for girls and from 1% to 4% for boys.



## POPULARITY BY AGE

*continued***3.2** CHILDREN PARTICIPATING IN TOP 3 ORGANISED SPORTS (INCLUDING DANCING) (a)(b), By age and sex—2003 to 2012

	NUMBER ('000)				PARTICIPATION RATE (%)			
	2003	2006	2009	2012	2003	2006	2009	2012
5–8 YEARS								
<b>MALES</b>								
Swimming/Diving	126.9	126.2	134.5	141.5	23.7	23.8	24.6	24.5
Dancing	*7.3	12.9	17.0	24.6	*1.4	2.4	3.1	4.3
Soccer (outdoor)	118.7	106.6	112.4	126.9	22.2	20.1	20.6	22.0
<b>FEMALES</b>								
Swimming/Diving	117.7	128.2	145.2	134.0	23.2	25.4	28.0	24.5
Dancing	137.1	136.7	161.6	175.0	27.0	27.1	31.1	32.0
Soccer (outdoor)	13.7	22.9	26.8	28.3	2.7	4.5	5.2	5.2
<b>PERSONS</b>								
Swimming/Diving	244.6	254.3	279.7	275.5	23.5	24.6	26.2	24.5
Dancing	144.4	149.6	178.6	199.6	13.8	14.5	16.8	17.8
Soccer (outdoor)	132.3	129.6	139.2	155.2	12.7	12.5	13.1	13.8
9–11 YEARS								
<b>MALES</b>								
Swimming/Diving	64.8	64.7	74.2	65.1	15.7	15.6	17.7	15.4
Dancing	9.5	12.4	13.5	*19.3	2.3	3.0	3.2	*4.6
Soccer (outdoor)	103.7	88.2	88.6	101.9	25.1	21.3	21.1	24.2
<b>FEMALES</b>								
Swimming/Diving	75.2	75.1	79.5	84.2	19.2	19.1	19.9	20.9
Dancing	93.6	90.3	106.0	111.0	23.9	23.0	26.5	27.6
Soccer (outdoor)	21.2	29.6	23.7	28.7	5.4	7.5	5.9	7.1
<b>PERSONS</b>								
Swimming/Diving	139.9	139.8	153.7	149.3	17.4	17.3	18.8	18.1
Dancing	103.1	102.7	119.5	130.3	12.8	12.7	14.6	15.8
Soccer (outdoor)	124.9	117.8	112.3	130.7	15.5	14.6	13.7	15.9
12–14 YEARS								
<b>MALES</b>								
Swimming/Diving	21.9	34.8	31.4	28.5	5.4	8.3	7.3	6.6
Dancing	5.3	7.2	11.4	6.8	1.3	1.7	2.6	1.6
Soccer (outdoor)	78.7	73.6	76.8	80.9	19.3	17.5	17.9	18.8
<b>FEMALES</b>								
Swimming/Diving	32.7	33.6	38.1	38.7	8.4	8.4	9.3	9.5
Dancing	76.4	73.1	80.8	81.4	19.6	18.2	19.8	19.9
Soccer (outdoor)	20.0	30.1	32.1	30.8	5.1	7.5	7.9	7.6
<b>PERSONS</b>								
Swimming/Diving	54.6	68.4	69.5	67.3	6.8	8.3	8.3	8.0
Dancing	81.7	80.3	92.2	88.2	10.2	9.8	11.0	10.5
Soccer (outdoor)	98.7	103.7	108.9	111.7	12.4	12.6	13.0	13.3

\* estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution

(a) Children aged 5–14 years who participated in organised sport and/or dancing outside of school hours during the 12 months prior to interview in April of the survey year.

(b) The top 3 organised sports for children aged 5–14 years.

Source: ABS data available on request, Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia, April 2012.

Since 2003, swimming and diving has remained the most popular sport for children aged 5–8 years. For older children (aged 12–14 years), outdoor soccer, netball and dancing were the most popular sports in 2012, with participation rates of 13% for outdoor soccer and 11% for both netball and dancing.

POPULARITY BY AGE  
*continued*

The participation rate of children aged 5–8 years in dancing increased between 2003 and 2012 (from 14% to 18%).

Though the participation rate for children aged 9–11 years increased for martial arts (from 5% in 2003 to 7% in 2012) there was not enough evidence to suggest that this difference was statistically significant. Participation in tennis by children aged 9–11 years, however, decreased from 12% to 8%.

Between 2003 and 2012, the participation of children aged 12–14 years decreased for tennis (9% to 7%).

## POPULARITY BY AGE

*continued***3.3** CHILDREN PARTICIPATING IN TOP 10 ORGANISED SPORTS AND/OR DANCING IN 2012(a), By age—Persons—2000 to 2012

	NUMBER ('000)				PARTICIPATION RATE (%)			
	2003	2006	2009	2012	2003	2006	2009	2012
5–8 YEARS								
Swimming/Diving	244.6	254.3	279.7	275.5	23.5	24.6	26.2	24.5
Dancing	144.4	149.6	178.6	199.6	13.8	14.5	16.8	17.8
Soccer (outdoor)	132.3	129.6	139.2	155.2	12.7	12.5	13.1	13.8
Tennis (indoor and outdoor)	66.0	59.8	69.5	84.3	6.3	5.8	6.5	7.5
Australian Rules football	71.3	69.8	77.8	83.5	6.8	6.7	7.3	7.4
Gymnastics(b)	..	..	..	75.3	..	..	..	6.7
Martial arts	51.7	49.3	68.0	66.5	5.0	4.8	6.4	5.9
Basketball (indoor and outdoor)	48.0	36.3	43.3	48.2	4.6	3.5	4.1	4.3
Netball (indoor and outdoor)	46.0	44.7	39.1	47.0	4.4	4.3	3.7	4.2
Cricket (outdoor)	28.5	36.2	37.8	37.7	2.7	3.5	3.6	3.4
9–11 YEARS								
Swimming/Diving	139.9	139.8	153.7	149.3	17.4	17.3	18.8	18.1
Soccer (outdoor)	124.9	117.8	112.3	130.7	15.5	14.6	13.7	15.9
Dancing	103.1	102.7	119.5	130.3	12.8	12.7	14.6	15.8
Basketball (indoor and outdoor)	75.8	64.3	65.8	87.6	9.4	7.9	8.0	10.6
Netball (indoor and outdoor)	94.6	99.5	96.5	85.0	11.7	12.3	11.8	10.3
Australian Rules football	59.6	73.5	76.7	78.0	7.4	9.1	9.4	9.5
Tennis (indoor and outdoor)	94.0	71.9	75.8	65.9	11.7	8.9	9.2	8.0
Martial arts	41.7	39.3	57.4	55.5	5.2	4.9	7.0	6.7
Cricket (outdoor)	48.1	47.9	52.4	44.2	6.0	5.9	6.4	5.4
Rugby league	29.0	38.8	33.9	40.5	3.6	4.8	4.1	4.9
12–14 YEARS								
Soccer (outdoor)	98.7	103.7	108.9	111.7	12.4	12.6	13.0	13.3
Netball (indoor and outdoor)	100.6	81.6	92.9	90.7	12.6	9.9	11.1	10.8
Dancing	81.7	80.3	92.2	88.2	10.2	9.8	11.0	10.5
Basketball (indoor and outdoor)	81.2	75.8	92.8	84.4	10.2	9.2	11.1	10.1
Swimming/Diving	54.6	68.4	69.5	67.3	6.8	8.3	8.3	8.0
Australian Rules football	62.7	57.1	80.5	65.1	7.8	6.9	9.6	7.8
Tennis (indoor and outdoor)	68.5	63.5	69.5	55.0	8.6	7.7	8.3	6.6
Cricket (outdoor)	57.0	59.3	52.3	48.9	7.1	7.2	6.2	5.8
Martial arts	36.3	31.8	29.2	39.1	4.5	3.9	3.5	4.7
Rugby league	29.9	36.8	40.7	37.6	3.7	4.5	4.9	4.5

.. not applicable

(a) Children aged 5–14 years who participated in organised sport and/or dancing outside of school hours during the 12 months prior to interview in April of the survey year.

(b) In 2009, callisthenics was included in the Gymnastics category. In 2012, callisthenics was excluded from organised sport altogether, and cheerleading was included in the Gymnastics category. Therefore the data are not comparable.

Source: Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia (cat. no. 4901.0).

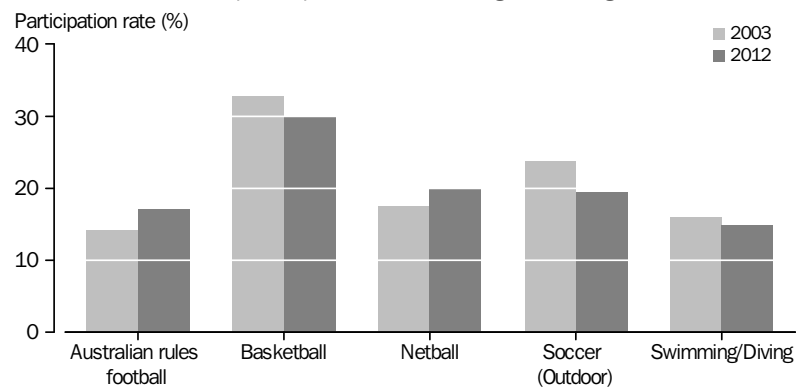
## FREQUENCY OF PARTICIPATION

The frequency of participation by children in up to three sports has been collected in each CPCA survey. The frequency of participation by children in the following sports is therefore based on that sport being one of the three main sports that the child participated in during the twelve months prior to interview.

FREQUENCY OF PARTICIPATION  
*continued*

Compared with 2003, the only significant difference in frequency of participation was for outdoor soccer with 20% having participated 53 times or more in 2012 compared with 24% in 2003.

**3.4** CHILDREN WHO PARTICIPATED 53 TIMES OR MORE IN LAST 12 MONTHS, Top 5 sports (excluding dancing)—2003 and 2012

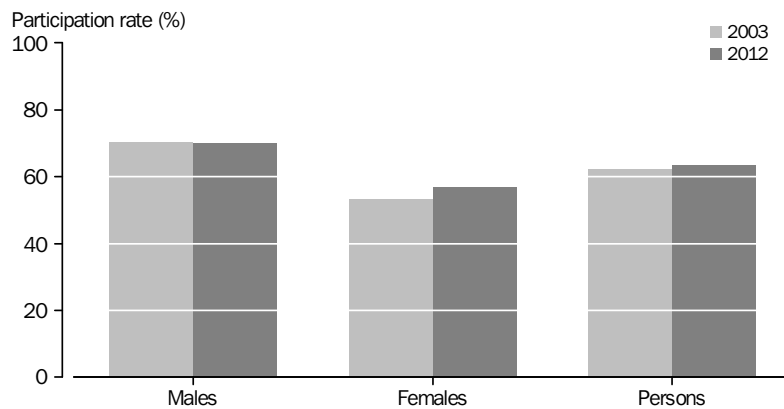


Source: ABS data available on request, *Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia*, (cat. no. 4901.0)

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Though children's participation in bike riding increased from 62% in 2003 to 64% in 2012, there was not enough evidence to suggest that this difference was statistically significant. However, girls' participation in bike riding significantly increased from 53% in 2003 to 57% in 2012. The average time that children spent bike riding decreased from 5 hours and 36 minutes in 2003 to 4 hours and 54 minutes in 2012. The average time that girls spent bike riding decreased from 4 hours and 36 minutes in 2003 to 4 hours and 12 minutes in 2012. The average time boys time spent bike riding was also higher in 2003 (6 hours and 24 minutes) than 2012 (5 hours and 30 minutes).

**4.1** CHILDREN PARTICIPATING IN BIKE RIDING—2003 and 2012



Source: Children's participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia (cat. no. 4901.0)

SCREEN-BASED ACTIVITIES

Since 2003 the proportion of children who watched TV, videos or DVDs outside of school hours in the two weeks prior to interview has decreased from 98% in 2003 to 96% in 2012. A decrease was seen for both boys (99% to 96%) and girls (98% to 96%) over this period.

The average number of hours that children spent watching TV, videos or DVDs decreased from 22 hours in 2003 to 15 hours in 2012.

The proportion of children accessing the Internet, either during school or outside of school hours, has increased from 64% in 2003 to 90% in 2012.

**4.2** CHILDREN PARTICIPATING IN SELECTED ACTIVITIES, By sex—2003 to 2012

	NUMBER ('000)				PARTICIPATION RATE (%)			
	2003	2006	2009	2012	2003	2006	2009	2012
<b>MALES</b>								
Other activities(a)								
Watching TV, videos or DVDs	1 338.6	1 333.5	1 354.2	1 372.0	98.6	97.6	97.0	96.0
Reading	919.2	940.8	901.9	931.0	67.7	68.8	64.6	65.1
Bike riding	957.4	1 003.0	922.5	999.8	70.5	73.4	66.1	69.9
Recreational art and craft(b)	..	..	..	472.3	..	..	..	33.0
Organised cultural activities(c)								
Playing a musical instrument	179.0	240.0	260.7	228.8	13.2	17.6	18.7	16.0
Singing	31.6	39.2	43.3	36.3	2.3	2.9	3.1	2.5
Drama	31.5	38.6	38.6	50.1	2.3	2.8	2.8	3.5
Organised art and craft(b)	..	..	..	66.7	..	..	..	4.7
Accessed the Internet(d)	846.7	892.1	1 116.5	1 278.4	62.4	65.3	80.0	89.4
<b>FEMALES</b>								
Other activities(a)								
Watching TV, videos or DVDs	1 262.4	1 262.5	1 296.2	1 297.0	97.9	97.3	97.7	95.6
Reading	1 061.8	1 043.3	1 063.9	1 050.3	82.3	80.4	80.2	77.4
Bike riding	687.4	803.2	721.1	770.6	53.3	61.9	54.4	56.8
Recreational art and craft(b)	..	..	..	735.7	..	..	..	54.2
Organised cultural activities(c)								
Playing a musical instrument	266.5	280.6	274.7	261.4	20.7	21.6	20.7	19.3
Singing	90.9	107.8	121.4	106.9	7.0	8.3	9.2	7.9
Drama	81.0	80.5	88.2	80.2	6.3	6.2	6.6	5.9
Organised art and craft(b)	..	..	..	123.2	..	..	..	9.1
Accessed the Internet(d)	846.6	838.6	1 046.5	1 221.3	65.6	64.6	78.9	90.0
<b>PERSONS</b>								
Other activities(a)								
Watching TV, videos or DVDs	2 601.0	2 596.0	2 650.4	2 669.0	98.2	97.4	97.4	95.8
Reading	1 981.0	1 984.0	1 965.8	1 981.3	74.8	74.5	72.2	71.1
Bike riding	1 644.8	1 806.2	1 643.6	1 770.4	62.1	67.8	60.4	63.5
Recreational art and craft(b)	..	..	..	1 208.0	..	..	..	43.4
Organised cultural activities(c)								
Playing a musical instrument	445.5	520.5	535.4	490.2	16.8	19.5	19.7	17.6
Singing	122.5	147.0	164.7	143.2	4.6	5.5	6.1	5.1
Drama	112.6	119.1	126.7	130.3	4.3	4.5	4.7	4.7
Organised art and craft(b)	..	..	..	189.9	..	..	..	6.8
Accessed the Internet(d)	1 693.3	1 730.7	2 162.9	2 499.7	64.0	64.9	79.4	89.7
<b>Total population aged 5–14 years</b>	<b>2 647.5</b>	<b>2 664.7</b>	<b>2 722.5</b>	<b>2 786.1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

.. not applicable

- (a) Children aged 5–14 years who were involved in selected other activities outside of school hours in the last two weeks of school prior to interview in April of the survey year.
- (b) Data for this category is not comparable as the 2012 survey collected data on organised art and craft separately to recreational art and craft.

- (c) Children aged 5–14 years who participated in selected organised cultural activities outside of school hours during the 12 months prior to interview in April of the survey year.
- (d) Children aged 5–14 years who used the Internet during or outside school hours during the 12 months prior to interview in the survey year.

## CHILDREN WHO DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN ORGANISED SPORT AND/OR DANCING .....

## INTRODUCTION

Over one-third (34%) of children did not participate in any organised sport or dancing in 2012.

### 5.1 CHILDREN WHO DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN ORGANISED SPORT AND/OR DANCING(a), Selected characteristics—2012

	Number (’000)	Non-Participation Rate (%)
Country of birth		
Born in Australia	814.1	32.5
Born in main English-speaking country(b)	40.4	30.9
Born in non-main English-speaking country(c)	82.6	55.7
Total born overseas	123.0	44.1
Area of usual residence		
State Capital Cities	570.2	32.9
Rest of Australia	367.0	34.9
Family type		
One-parent families	282.8	45.7
Couple families	654.3	30.2
Country of birth of parents		
One-parent families		
Parent born in Australia	217.7	44.6
Parent born in main English-speaking country(b)	21.8	47.1
Parent born in non-main English-speaking country(c)	43.3	51.5
Couple families		
Both parents born in Australia	325.3	24.8
Both parents born in main English-speaking countries(b)	30.0	26.3
Both parents born in non-main English-speaking countries(c)	179.6	55.0
Other(d)	119.5	28.9
Employment status of parents		
One-parent families		
Parent employed	125.1	35.0
Parent not employed	157.7	60.5
Couple families		
Both parents employed	316.8	23.0
One parent employed	252.3	38.2
Neither parent employed	85.2	66.3
<b>Total non-participants</b>	<b>937.1</b>	<b>33.6</b>

- (a) Children aged 5–14 years who did not participate in organised sport and/or dancing outside of school hours during the 12 months prior to interview in April of the survey year.
- (b) Includes Canada, Republic of Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, United Kingdom and United States of America.
- (c) 'Non-main English-speaking country/countries' is termed 'other country/countries' in Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities (cat. no. 4901.0).
- (d) Includes could not be determined.

Source: ABS data available on request, Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia, April 2012.

AREA OF USUAL  
RESIDENCE

The percentage of children living in state capital cities who did not participate in organised sport or dancing was 33% in 2012. This was similar to the percentage of children who lived in the rest of Australia who also did not participate in organised sport or dancing (35%).

COUNTRY OF BIRTH

In 2012, 56% of children who were born in non-main English-speaking countries did not participate in sport or dancing.

In 2012, children from couple families where both parents were born in main English-speaking countries had a similar non-participation rate (26%) as those whose parents were born in Australia (25%). This rate was significantly lower compared with children with parents born in non-main English-speaking countries and single parent families.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF  
PARENTS

The majority of children who did not participate in organised sport or dancing in 2012 were from couple families where neither parent was employed (66%) and from single parent families where the parent was not employed (60%). The lowest percentage of children who did not participate in 2012 were from couple families where both parents were employed (23%).



## EXPLANATORY NOTES .....

### INTRODUCTION

**1** This publication contains results from the 2003, 2006, 2009 and 2012 Surveys of Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, conducted throughout Australia as supplements to the Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS). Respondents who were in scope of the supplementary surveys were asked further questions.

**2** The aims of the surveys were to: identify characteristics of children who participated in organised sport, cultural activities and selected activities undertaken for recreation and leisure; identify characteristics of children who attended selected cultural venues and events; monitor the use of the internet by children; and identify children who have a mobile phone. The focus on activities outside of school hours is to elicit information on activities that are more likely to be undertaken by children by choice rather than those that are part of the school curriculum.

**3** The publication *Labour Force, Australia* (cat. no. 6202.0) contains information about survey design, sample redesign, scope, coverage and population benchmarks relevant to the monthly LFS, which also apply to supplementary surveys. It also contains definitions of demographic and labour force characteristics, and information about computer assisted and telephone interviewing which are relevant to both the monthly LFS and supplementary surveys.

### SCOPE

**4** The scope of the surveys was children aged 5-14 years who were usual residents of private dwellings except:

- children of certain diplomatic personnel of overseas governments, customarily excluded from censuses and surveys
- children of overseas residents in Australia
- children of members of non-Australian defence forces stationed in Australia
- children living in Indigenous Communities (excluded for operational reasons).

### COVERAGE

**5** The coverage of the surveys was the same as the scope except that the following populations were not enumerated for operational reasons:

- children in households where all persons aged 15 years and over were members of the Australian permanent defence forces
- children in households where all persons aged 15 years and over were out on scope for the LFS for any other reason.

**6** The estimates in this publication relate to persons covered by the survey. In the LFS, coverage rules are applied which aim to ensure that each child is associated with only one dwelling, and hence have only one chance of selection in the survey. See *Labour Force, Australia* (cat. no. 6202.0) for more details.

### DATA COLLECTION

**7** Information was collected from any responsible adult in the household who was asked to respond on behalf of the children in the household. In each selected household, information on cultural, sporting and selected recreational activities was sought for a maximum of three children. In households with four or more children aged 5-14 years, three children were randomly selected for the survey. For the additional children in these households only selected demographic information was collected.

DATA COLLECTION *continued*

**8** Data were collected on children's cultural and sporting activities undertaken outside of school hours over a 12 month period. Data on the frequency of participation relates to the 12 months before interview, while data on the number of hours of participation refers to the last two weeks of school (the most recent two school weeks prior to the interview, including weekends and public holidays). School weeks are weeks during the school term (i.e. not school holidays) including weekends and public holidays. Data were also collected on children's participation in selected recreational activities during the last two weeks of school.

**9** Supplementary surveys are not always conducted using the full LFS sample. Since August 1994 the sample for supplementary surveys has been restricted to no more than seven eighths of the LFS sample.

## RELIABILITY OF THE ESTIMATES

**10** All sample surveys are subject to error which can be broadly categorised as either sampling error or non-sampling error.

**11** Sampling error is the difference between the published estimates, derived from a sample of children, and the value that would have been produced if all children in scope for the survey had been included.

**12** Non-sampling error may occur in any collection, whether it is based on a sample or a full count such as a census. Sources of non-sampling error include non-response, errors in reporting by respondents or recording answers by interviewers, and errors in coding and processing data. Every effort was made to reduce the non-sampling error by careful design and testing of the questionnaire, training and supervision of interviewers, follow-up of respondents, and extensive editing and quality control procedures at all stages of data processing.

## DATA QUALITY

**13** Information recorded in these surveys is essentially 'reported' by respondents and hence may differ from that which might be obtained from other sources or via other methodologies. This factor should be considered when interpreting the estimates in this publication.

## DATA COMPARABILITY

**14** The Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities Survey was conducted in 2000, 2003, 2006, 2009 and 2012 as supplements to the Labour Force Survey. Computer assisted telephone interviewing was introduced during 2003 and while information was collected using a paper form for the majority of households in 2003, computer assisted interviewing was used for all survey interviews in the 2006, 2009 and 2012 surveys. This change in the methodology is not expected to impact on the comparability of the data between the surveys.

**15** Changes between the 2003 and 2006 surveys are described in 'Comparability with previous ABS surveys' of the Explanatory Notes (paragraphs 13-20) in *Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, April 2006* (cat. no. 4901.0). Changes between the 2006 and 2009 surveys are described in 'Comparability with previous ABS surveys' of the Explanatory Notes (paragraphs 12-13) in *Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, April 2009* (cat. no. 4901.0). Changes between the 2009 and 2012 surveys are described in 'Comparability with previous ABS surveys' of the Explanatory Notes (paragraphs 23-27) in *Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, April 2012* (cat. no. 4901.0).

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**16** ABS publications draw extensively on information provided freely by individuals, businesses, governments and other organisations. Their continued cooperation is very much appreciated, without it, the wide range of statistics published by the ABS would not be available. Information received by the ABS is treated in strict confidence as required by the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*.



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*EMAIL*                      [client.services@abs.gov.au](mailto:client.services@abs.gov.au)

*FAX*                              1300 135 211

*POST*                          Client Services, ABS, GPO Box 796, Sydney NSW 2001

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