

# Fair Play

## FOR GIRLS IN SPORTS

Ensuring Equality in Athletics for Girls in California through Title IX and the Fair Play Act

Fair Play for Girls in Sports is a project of



Legal Aid Society—  
Employment Law Center

a 501(c)(3) non-profit

## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

### What Is Title IX?

Title IX, a federal law passed in 1972, gives female athletes the right to **participate equally in sports** in public schools, including **elementary, middle, and high schools**, colleges and universities.

**Example:** At your local public high school, the number of team slots and the quality of facilities, uniforms, scheduling and coaching must be equal for boys and girls; **tight budgets are no excuse for inequality.**

### What Is the Fair Play Act?

The Fair Play in Community Sports Act (AB 2404 or the “Fair Play Act”) is a California law passed in 2004, requiring **equity in local youth athletics**, such as sports programs run by your park and recreation department. The law is **much like Title IX** in calling for equal athletic opportunities, facilities, publicity, and more. But, only a handful of California’s 500+ park and recreation departments are applying the law!

**Example:** Where leagues for boys’ baseball and girls’ softball are offered by local parks, field space **must be equitable.**

This includes the quality of lighting, dugouts, and storage space for equipment.



## DID YOU KNOW?

### Progress

- \* Prior to Title IX, fewer than 300,000 girls competed in high school sports; now there are **over 3 million**.
- \* California was the **first state** to pass gender equity legislation for park and recreation athletics.

### Education

- \* Overall, young women who play sports have **higher grades** and **score higher** on standardized tests than non-athletes.
- \* African American female athletes are 15% **more likely to graduate from college** compared to their non-athletic peers; Latina females who play sports are **more likely to graduate from high school and attend college** than those not playing.

### Health

- \* Females who had the highest physical activity during adolescence and young adulthood were **20% less likely to get breast cancer** later in life.
- \* Women and girls who participate in regular exercise experience **lower rates of depression**.

### Employment

- \* Girls who play sports in high school go on to earn **7% higher annual wages** than their non-athlete peers.
- \* Title IX directly **increased women’s participation in the labor force**, while opening paths to higher-skill, previously male-dominated positions.



## WHAT WE DO

### Our Mission

Ensure **all** girls—regardless of race, income level, and geography—receive **equal opportunities, treatment, and benefits in athletics** offered by schools and park and recreation programs.

### Education

Give **Presentations, Workshops & Trainings** on Title IX and the Fair Play Act for:

- \* Girls
- \* Parents and Families
- \* Coaches
- \* Park and Recreation Departments
- \* K-12 Schools
- \* Community Organizations
- \* Youth Advocates, Mentors & Teachers

### Technical Assistance

Assess **schools and park and recreation** departments to help them implement Title IX and the Fair Play Act and ensure equality.

### Strategic Litigation

When necessary, represent clients in court to **enforce the law** where girls lack equal opportunities.



## IN HER OWN WORDS

“Playing softball has helped me in school. If I didn’t play sports, I’m not sure that I would have the drive to stay in school and pursue a career. Playing softball helps me to set my priorities regarding my grades, not only for myself but for my team.”

— Veronica Ollier, California high school softball player  
Fair Play for Girls in Sports client

# Fair Play

FOR GIRLS IN SPORTS

Want to **learn more** about Title IX and the Fair Play Act, or **get answers** about what is happening in your school or park and recreation department? **CONTACT US!**

- \* E-mail: [fairplay@las-elc.org](mailto:fairplay@las-elc.org)
- \* Toll-Free Phone #: 877-593-0074
- \* Web: [www.las-elc.org/fair-play](http://www.las-elc.org/fair-play)
- \* Facebook: [www.facebook.com/fairplay4girlsinsports](http://www.facebook.com/fairplay4girlsinsports)
- \* Twitter: @fairplay4girls
- \* Address: 180 Montgomery Street, Suite 600 San Francisco, CA 94104
- \* Support: Donate via our Fair Play web-site, or contact us directly.

### Collaborators

- \* American Association of University Women
- \* Bay Area Women’s Sports Initiative (B.A.W.S.I.)
- \* Coaching Corps
- \* California Women’s Law Center

