

# SPORTS FOR GIRLS' SUCCESS

**Title IX** requires that girls have **equal opportunities** to play school sports, and **equal treatment and benefits** in federally funded schools, including secondary schools and colleges. California passed **AB 2404** in 2004, requiring **equity in local youth athletics**, expanding Title IX mandates to publicly funded sports programs such as ones run by your local Parks and Recreation Department.

## Why are Title IX and the Fair Play Act important?

Substantial research reveals a direct link between better educational opportunities, positive health outcomes, and improved employment results for girls who participate in sports. **Sports are crucial** for girls to succeed!



### EDUCATION

- Girls who participate in sports are **significantly more likely to graduate** compared to non-athletes. The correlation is particularly strong for African American and Latinx girls.<sup>1</sup>
- At the collegiate level, girls who receive sports scholarships **graduate at higher rates** than female students generally.<sup>2</sup>
- Overall, young girls who play sports have **higher grades and score higher on standardized tests** than non-athletes.<sup>3</sup>



### HEALTH

- Girls who played sports were **half as likely to get pregnant** as young adults than girls who did not.<sup>4</sup>
- Female athletes are more likely than female non-athletes to **postpone sexual activity, and use contraceptives**.<sup>5</sup>
- Girls who participate in regular exercise experience **lower rates of depression**.<sup>6</sup>
- Girls who participate in sports possess **higher self-esteem**.<sup>7</sup>
- Females who were most physically active in adolescence and young adulthood were **20% less likely to get breast cancer** later in life.<sup>8</sup>



### EMPLOYMENT

- Executive business women report that **involvement with sports contributed to their success** by providing them with **leadership skills, discipline, and the ability to work in a team**.<sup>9</sup>
- A 2013 study of 821 senior managers and executives found that **94% of female executives reportedly played organized sports** after primary school.<sup>10</sup>
- Girls who participate in high school sports have **higher rates of labor force participation and earn 7% higher wages**.<sup>11</sup>

# REFERENCES

## EDUCATION

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- <sup>2</sup> Finishing Last: Girls of Color and School Sports Opportunities, NAT'L WOMEN'S LAW CTR. 7 (2015); Title IX and Race in Intercollegiate Sport, WOMEN'S SPORTS FOUND., 6 (June 2003).
- <sup>3</sup> Benefits - Why Sports Participation or Girls and Women, WOMEN'S SPORTS FOUND. (2011), [http://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/home/advocate/foundation-positions/mental-and-physical-health/benefits\\_why\\_sports\\_participation\\_for\\_girls\\_and\\_women](http://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/home/advocate/foundation-positions/mental-and-physical-health/benefits_why_sports_participation_for_girls_and_women)

## HEALTH

- <sup>4</sup> Finishing Last: Girls of Color and School Sports Opportunities, NAT'L WOMEN'S LAW CTR. 6 (2015); Sport and Teen Pregnancy, WOMEN'S SPORTS FOUND. 7 (May 1998); The Decade of Decline, WOMEN'S SPORTS FOUND. 36 (October 2012).
- <sup>5</sup> Sport and Teen Pregnancy, WOMEN'S SPORTS FOUND. 8, 10 (May 1998). Note: this pattern was not the same for male athletes, who become sexually active earlier than male non-athletes.
- <sup>6</sup> Benefits - Why Sports Participation or Girls and Women, WOMEN'S SPORTS FOUND. (2011), [http://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/home/advocate/foundation-positions/mental-and-physical-health/benefits\\_why\\_sports\\_participation\\_for\\_girls\\_and\\_women](http://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/home/advocate/foundation-positions/mental-and-physical-health/benefits_why_sports_participation_for_girls_and_women)
- <sup>7</sup> Finishing Last: Girls of Color and School Sports Opportunities, NAT'L WOMEN'S LAW CTR. 6, 7 (2015); Benefits - Why Sports Participation for Girls and Women, WOMEN'S SPORTS FOUND. (2011), [http://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/home/advocate/foundation-positions/mental-and-physical-health/benefits\\_why\\_sports\\_participation\\_for\\_girls\\_and\\_women](http://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/home/advocate/foundation-positions/mental-and-physical-health/benefits_why_sports_participation_for_girls_and_women); Empowering Women in Sports, in The Empowering Women Series, No. 4, FEMINIST MAJORITY FOUND. (1995) <http://feminist.org/research/sports/sports6.html> (last viewed on June 23, 2015).
- <sup>8</sup> Physical Activity in Adolescence and Young Adulthood and Breast Cancer Risk: A Quantitative Review, NAT'L CTR FOR BIOTECH INFO. (February 2004). <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15075782>.

## EMPLOYMENT

- <sup>9</sup> New Nationwide Research Finds: Successful Women Business Executives Don't Just Talk a Good Game ... They Play(ed) One MASSMUT. FIN. GRP. (Polling Firm: Ziment) (February 2002), [www.massmutual.com/mmfg/pdf/boardroom.pdf](http://www.massmutual.com/mmfg/pdf/boardroom.pdf) (last viewed September 8, 2003).
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- <sup>11</sup> Betsey Stevenson, Beyond the Classroom: Using Title IX to Measure the Return to High School Sports, NBER Working Paper No. 15728, (February 2010). <http://www.nber.org/papers/w15728>.



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