

S15-2: Changes in Physical Activity and Sport Club Membership in Finnish Adolescents With Disabilities

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Purpose: It is well established that physical activity (PA) levels in people with disabilities are typically lower than in same age peers without disabilities, yet few studies have observed if there is a closing of the gap. The aim of this study was to analyse changes in moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA) and sport club membership of Finnish adolescents with disabilities.

Methods: Secondary data analyses (logistic regressions) from pooling Finnish School-age Physical Activity (FSPA) 2016, 2018, 2022, and 2024 studies. FSPA is a national monitoring study of PA of adolescents (11y-, 13y-, and 15y-olds), with questions on functional limitations, self-reported physical activity, and sport club membership. After establishing the year of data collection, disability type was entered into logistic regression models, one for PA using four categories with 0–2 days as the reference, and one for binary (reference = not member), after controlling for gender and age. Odds ratios (ORs) and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) were used.

Results: After pooling the data, 24,795 adolescents (51% female; 37% 11y-, 34% 13y-, 29% 15y-olds; 19% disabilities) were in the sample. Daily and 5–6 days of MVPA both increased between 2024–2016 (OR= 1.4, CI 1.1–1.8), and a decline in 3–4 days of MVPA (OR = 0.7, CI = 0.5–0.9) between 2018–2016 for adolescents with disabilities was observed. However, sport club memberships reduced each cycle from 2018, 2022, and 2024 (OR = 0.7–0.8, CI = 0.5–0.9) compared to 2016 for adolescents with disabilities.

Conclusions: Although PA levels have improved between 2016 to 2024, rates of sport club memberships have declined, suggesting daily PA for adolescents with disabilities takes place in other environments than sport clubs. More inclusive clubs are needed to ensure quality movement among adolescents with disabilities.

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Keywords: Organised sport, functional limitations, time trends

