

AT A GLANCE

Youth sports are becoming increasingly expensive, while many children lack access to safe fields, parks, and school play spaces. These barriers disproportionately affect low-income families, limiting opportunities for physical activity that supports better health, emotional well-being, and academic performance.



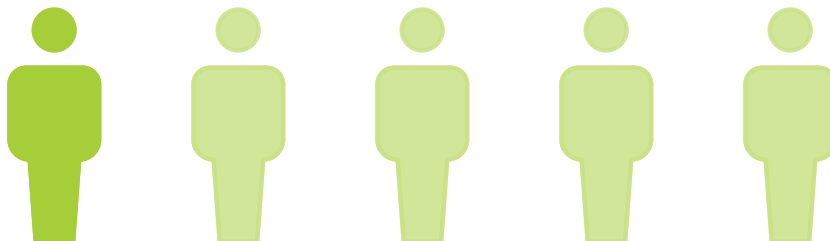
Physical inactivity is associated with:

- Cardiovascular disease
- Type 2 diabetes
- Depression and anxiety
- Reduced academic performance
- Long-term chronic disease risk

Source: U.S. Centers For Disease Control and Prevention | Type: Benefits of Physical Activity

<https://www.cdc.gov/physical-activity-basics/benefits/index.html>

1 in 5 children are classified as obese



Source: U.S. Centers For Disease Control and Prevention | Type: Childhood Obesity Facts
<https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/childhood-obesity-facts/childhood-obesity-facts.html>

Youth sports are increasingly structured around pay-to-play, with the average family spending upwards of **\$1,000 per child** annually to participate.



Source: Aspen Institute | Type: Project Play survey: Family spending on youth sports rises 46% over 5 years
<https://projectplay.org/news/2025/2/24/project-play-survey-family-spending-on-youth-sports-rises-46-over-five-years>

Children from low-income families are **six times** more likely to stop participating in sports due to costs.



Source: Aspen Institute | Type: Survey: Low-income kids are 6 times more likely to quit sports due to costs

<https://projectplay.org/news/low-income-kids-are-6-times-more-likely-to-quit-sports-due-to-costs>



MILLIONS OF CHILDREN ARE ALREADY LIVING IN “PLAY DESERTS” WITH NO ACCESS TO PLAYING FIELDS OF ANY KIND.

Decades of peer-reviewed research demonstrate that regular physical activity is associated with reduced risk of multiple cancers, cardiovascular disease, metabolic disease, and cognitive decline.



When recreational access decreases, physical activity decreases. When physical activity decreases, chronic disease risk increases.

Source: National Library of Medicine | Type: Physical activity, exercise, and chronic diseases: a brief review
<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9219321/>



In LA ~205 schools have <10% green space for play

Source: Los Angeles Public Press | Type: Eight LA Schools will get green spaces over asphalt- if they can get the money
<https://lapublicpress.org/2025/07/la-green-schools-environment/>

Students who engage in regular physical activity demonstrate:



Improved attention and concentration



Enhanced executive function



Higher academic achievement



Improved classroom behavior



Better attendance rates

Conversely, sedentary behavior is associated with:

1. Lower academic performance

2. Increased behavioral challenges

3. Reduced classroom engagement

Source: National Library of Medicine | Type: Physical activity, Fitness, and Physical Education: Effects on Academic Performance
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK201501/>

In New York City it's estimated that 371 public schools (est. 199,000 students) lack outdoor physical education space.

Source: New York City Comptroller | Type: The Right-of-Play: Expanding “School Streets” Access in NYC
<https://comptroller.nyc.gov/reports/the-right-of-play-expanding-school-streets-access-in-nyc/>