

Gender Equality in Sports

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Swimming pool in Iceland Men Only



Swimming lessons for boys only in Iceland until 1908



Boston Marathon 1972 - Kathrine Switzer

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 was a giant leap for womankind because it **prohibited discrimination based on sex in federally-funded educational programs and activities**. This opened many doors for women and girls to participate in athletic opportunities, which were not accessible for them before



Around 90% of boys and girls at the age of 12 participate in organised sports in Iceland



Benefits of Participating in Sports...

Women's Sports Foundation's report:

- » prevent chronic diseases such as heart disease
- » lower rates of substance abuse
- » reduce risky behaviors
- » better mental health
- » higher self-image and confidence levels
- » improved teamwork and communication skills
- » increased graduation rates
- » Increased leadership skills that can lead to achievement opportunities in school and at work.

- » According to [a global study](#) by Ernst & Young, 61% of female executives said sports contributed to their career success



Sports contribute to building confidence; teaching girls about teamwork, winning and losing; and push them physically and mentally.

Sports can help girls getting ahead.



Drop out after puberty.... Retaining Women in Sports



Drop Out Rates

- » **Icelandic Study:** After the age of 13 up to 20, more girls than boys drop out of organised sports, majority in the age of 13-15.
- » In the age between 16-20 year old, 30% of girls and 45% of boys in senior high schools participate in organised sports.
- » **US research:** By the age of 14, girls are *dropping out* of sports *at* twice the rate of boys, according to the Women's Sports Foundation. And by age 17, *after* most girls have gone through *puberty*, more than half of girls -- 51% -- will have quit sports, according to a survey sponsored by Always, a maker of sanitary pads.



Reasons - US study:

- » Social stigma
- » Lack of access
- » Safety and transportation issues
- » Costs
- » Lack of positive role models: 7 out of the 10 girls who quit sports during puberty said they didn't feel like they belonged in sports, according to the survey of more than 1,000 girls ages 16 to 24.
- » 67% said they felt that society doesn't encourage girls to play sports.
- » Less media coverage of women in sports



Reasons – Icelandic studies

- » The law governing sports from 1998 is gender blind, as well as policies and funding while Article 23 of the gender equality law stipulates gender mainstreaming of all policies and decision making in education including sports – more or less missing

The actual situation regarding organised sports and gender equality is good in some areas such as in terms of training time and access to sports facilities while it is less equal in others such as media coverage and sponsorships which have implications for the need of young girls for role models – lack of profiling and funding.

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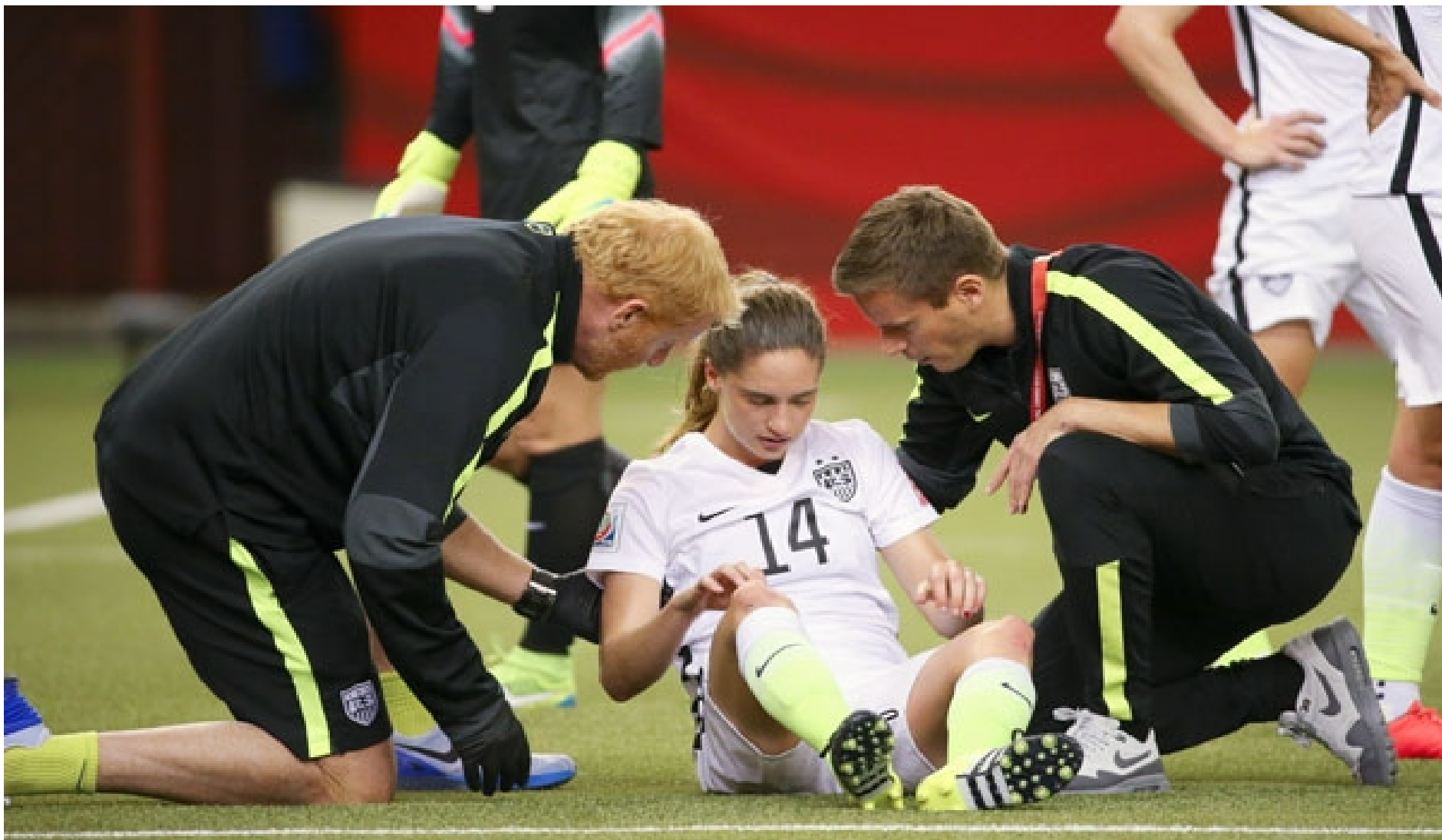
Reasons – Icelandic Studies

- » Key reason for both boys and girls: loss in interest

Reasons behind girls' drop out of organised sports:

- » Too time consuming and competes with the other priorities such as studying or other interest and forms of socialisation
- » Girls tend to appreciate less the competition and performance pressure around sports compared to boys – socialisation?
- » Girls are less happy with their performance compared to boys – the latter rating their performance as being relatively or very good while girls rate their performance as average or poor – socialisation or related to the last point?
- » **Negative relationship with trainers** and training needs neglected or not met





What to Do – Reforms – Walk the Talk

- » Training and education on gender equality in schools and within the sports movement including empowerment of girls (and boys) in understanding their rights, setting personal boundaries, etc.
- » Setting targets and monitor, create positive incentives
- » Collection of sex disaggregated data to get a clear overview and picture to monitor and evaluation gender equality in sports
- » Gender mainstreaming of laws, regulations, policies, plans and funding
- » Gender Equality Plans – Formulation, Introduction, Activation, Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability
- » Special interventions to prevent drop out and create gender balance within different types of sports
- » **Zero Tolerance and Accountably:** Action plans on how prevent and respond to sexual harassment, intimidation, abuse and violence, enforcement and monitoring.



- » <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Emawq64b0DU>
- » <https://en.ru.is/gender-and-sport>









