



**PRESS RELEASE**  
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**FINDINGS OF FITSPIRIT'S MAJOR RESEARCH PROJECT ANNOUNCED**  
FitSpirit's impact on teenage girls and high schools

**Montréal, October 18, 2023** – FitSpirit unveils the results of its research project that was conducted from 2017 to 2022. In collaboration with the Université de Montréal and other Canadian universities, FitSpirit spent five years collecting data with the goal of evaluating the benefits of its approach for teenage girls and school environments.

While all youth would benefit from acting on the recommendations, large-scale surveys show that teenage girls are not only less active than boys, but they are also more likely to give up the practice of sports during adolescence. In fact, only 14% of teenage girls meet the recommended guidelines for physical activity, compared to 34% for boys.\*

**Encouraging results for teenage girls and school environments**

Results specific to teenage girls (excerpt from the report)

- Thanks to this program adapted to teenage girls – *notably to offer non-competitive multisport teams* – we observed real changes. While teenage girls met the recommended guidelines for physical activity an average of 2.6 days per week at the beginning of the school year, this average increased to 3.2 days per week by the end of the school year, a statistically significant increase of 23%. In concrete terms, this amounts to 30 additional days on which they met the recommended physical activity guidelines. (see reference on p. 14)
- Turning our attention to the most inactive among them, we observed that 32% succeeded in increasing their level of physical activity between the beginning and the end of the school year. *Encouraging anyone to make changes to their lifestyle habits is no small feat, and FitSpirit has certainly taken on a tough mission.* This result shows that the FitSpirit approach really does motivate girls who are not active on a regular basis to take action, and it makes all the difference for those who need it the most! (see reference on p.15)
- The number of teenage girls who met the recommended weekly guidelines for physical activity was significantly higher among girls who were registered in the program for at least three years. This result is particularly remarkable when we consider the generalized drop in the practice of physical activity among teenage girls during the course of their adolescence. Moreover, after two years of registration in the program, twice the number of girls meet the recommendations pertaining to physical activity. (see reference on p.16)

## Results specific to schools environments

- We asked school staff the following question: “If cameras were installed at your school before your partnership with FitSpirit and they filmed everything that happened since then, what would they have shown?” School staff attested to certain changes in the atmosphere at school. They noted greater sensitivity in the way that physical activity was presented to girls, which in turn led to greater enjoyment, participation and motivation. (see reference on p. 19)
- In order to gain a more complete picture of the benefits of FitSpirit on school environments, we looked at the impacts perceived by staff on physical and health education classes (PHE) and found that 56% among them noticed that the girls had a more positive attitude towards the PHE class. (see reference on p. 21)
- As for the benefits on the determinants of quality of life at school, some 90% of staff attested to the FitSpirit team’s positive impact on the sense of belonging among the girls in their respective schools. (see reference on p. 22)

*“FitSpirit has the distinction of being one of the rare programs to promote a non-competitive multisport offer in a school setting. These research findings send a clear signal concerning the effectiveness and relevance of developing an in-depth knowledge of your target audience so that you can tailor an offer to their needs and specificities. In the interest of teenage girls, and possibly other youth groups, we need to continue promoting this non-competitive multisport offer, which is practically non-existent,”* said Geneviève Leduc, Ph.D., senior program advisor at FitSpirit and an expert on physical activity among youth.

The results presented in this report serve to confirm that in Québec’s healthy active living promotion ecosystem, FitSpirit is one of the only, if not the only program **that has demonstrated scientifically that it is leading teenage girls to become more active.**

### **To find out more:**

- Please consult the [research report](#).

**Thank you to our partners:** RBC, Saputo

### **About FitSpirit**

FitSpirit is a Quebec-based charitable organization whose mission is to get teenage girls active for life by inviting them to practice sports and physical activity in a whole new way. Offering extracurricular activity in 300 high schools across Quebec, FitSpirit reaches over 9,000 teenage girls aged 12 to 17 annually, and has had a positive impact on over 220,000 girls since its founding in 2007. To learn more, visit [fitspirit.ca](http://fitspirit.ca).