The World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry (WFSGI) is the global authoritative body for the sporting goods industry. Our members include sporting goods brands, manufacturers, suppliers, retailers, national/regional federations, industry and trade associations and other sporting goods industry related businesses. The WFSGI plays an important role as a resource for its members and as a platform for sharing best practice. We work to understand emerging and ongoing issues of relevance, assist our members to stay current with those developments, and advocate for appropriate laws and practices.

THE GLOBAL INACTIVITY CRISIS

The world is facing a physical inactivity crisis. As modern societies develop, physical activity is being engineered out of everyday life. Levels of activity are falling so fast in so many countries around the world that the crisis is now being termed a global pandemic, affecting both developed and emerging economies. The situation for young people is particularly alarming.

Today’s generation of children is the least active generation in history, with World Health Organisation data showing that over 80% of the world’s 11 to 17 year olds fail to meet the minimum requirements of activity.

The lack of daily physical activity is a growing concern worldwide and the consequences of this crisis are severe. Physical inactivity is now the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality and is responsible for over 5.3 million deaths a year, more than smoking.

The economic cost of inactivity is staggering. Recent research suggests that physical inactivity costs the world economy between $67 billion and $145 billion per year in healthcare and lost productivity alone. These figures are likely to increase as the crisis deepens.

---

2 http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs385/en/
3 http://www.who.int/topics/physical_activity/en/
THE BENEFITS

Despite the gravity of the crisis, the benefits of physical activity are more far-reaching than people generally realise.6

Being active is associated with a 20% fall in all-cause mortality7 and significantly reduces the risks of cardio-vascular disease, diabetes, breast and colon cancer.6 For the first time in history life expectancy is expected to fall, with children potentially living up to five years less than their parents.9

The benefits extend beyond physical health. People who are active are 48% less likely to suffer from mental health problems, contribute more to their community, are more productive in the workplace and tend to earn more over their careers.10

The benefits of physical activity compound over a lifetime, so it is particularly important for children to be active.

Active children are healthier, happier and do better in school. As many behavioural habits are formed at an early age, if children enjoy being active when they are young, they are more likely to retain these good habits and be active for life.11 Physical activity is a formative part of a kid’s development and learning. It is key to incorporate quality physical activity into every kid’s school experience, before, during and after school.12

Ensuring the next generation gets moving is, therefore, critical to reversing the current trends and tackling the inactivity crisis.

References:
8 http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs385/en/
12 Bailey, R. (2016) ’Sport, physical activity and educational achievement – towards an explanatory model’ Sport in Society, DOI: 10.1080/17430437.2016.1207756
OUR POSITION

The World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry and its membership have long recognized the benefits of physical activity. We know that the proven benefits of physical activity are significant and far reaching. Active lifestyles contribute to the intellectual, physical, social and emotional well-being. People who are active have longer, healthier, happier and more productive lives contributing to strong communities and economies.

We recognise that the benefits of physical activity and sports can be realised by everyone, regardless of background, ability or age. However, it is particularly important for children and young people to participate in a range of fun sports and activities. Children who enjoy being active at an early age are more likely to be active for life.

We also understand that the inactivity crisis is real with severe consequences for the society, it is a systemic global challenge. Everyone has a role to play in the solution including governments, education institutions, the medical field, civil society, businesses as well as individuals. It will require multi-sector collaboration to reverse the current trends and create a world where sport and physical activity are not only highly valued, but an expected and enjoyable part of life.

We believe that the Sporting Goods Industry has a unique role in creating a more active world. Our passion and energy inspires people around the globe; we bring to life the joy of sport and unlimited potential associated with active lifestyles. We have significant technical expertise and experience in the field, as well as great reach. The industry currently supports a wide range of local, national and international initiatives to get people active. Collectively, we reach billions of consumers through our products, communications and brands, and enhance the wellbeing of our employees by offering opportunities to engage in active, healthy lifestyles. We have a track record of creating opportunities and experiences which showcase the power of sport to the world.

We also recognise that a more active world is good for society, the future of our children and is fundamental to the continued economic success of our industry.

THE COMMITMENT:
The Sporting Goods Industry, supported by the WFSGI’s Physical Activity Committee, commits to:
1. Raise awareness of the benefits of physical activity and sport
2. Increase levels of physical activity and sports participation, especially among children.

This commitment will be realised through collective advocacy through the WFSGI as well as the initiatives of individual members.