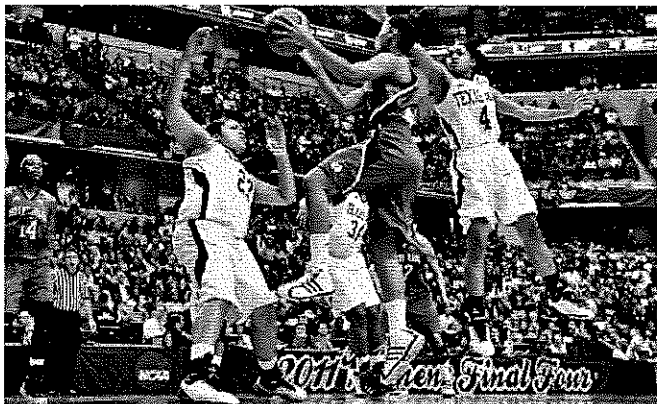


Women's Sports Foundation

Title IX Myths and Facts



Danielle Adams #23 of the Texas A&M Aggies and Sydney Carter #4 of the Texas A&M Aggies defend against Skyilar Diggins #4 of the Notre Dame Fighting Irish during the 2011 NCAA Women's Final Four championship game at Conseco Fieldhouse on April 5, 2011 in Indianapolis, Indiana. (Photo by: Jamie Sabau/Getty Images)

MYTH: Title IX has done its job and is no longer needed.

FACT: In the past five years, the gap between male and female athletic participation at the high school level has grown.

- Female high school athletes receive 1.3 million fewer athletic participation opportunities than their male counterparts (3.2 million female vs. 4.5 million male).
- Female athletes receive 63,000 fewer opportunities at NCAA Institutions (193,000 female vs. 256,000 male).
- Female college athletes receive \$183 million less in NCAA athletic scholarships (\$965 million female v. \$1.15 billion male).
- In addition, female high school and college athletes continue to lag behind males in the provision of equitable resources such as equipment, uniforms and facilities.

MYTH: Title IX has resulted in the loss of athletic opportunities for men's sports.

FACT: Overall, men's athletic opportunities since Title IX's passage have increased. Title IX has been wrongly blamed by its critics for cuts to some men's sports teams at some educational institutions.

- Schools choose to support, eliminate or reduce particular sports opportunities on both men's and women's specific teams for a variety of reasons, including varying interests in specific sports and choices about how to allocate budget resources among the sports teams the school decides to sponsor or emphasize. The number, competitive level and quality of sports programs are individual institutional decisions, just as the number and quality of academic programs are institutional prerogatives. The government cannot dictate that particular varsity sports be added, retained or discontinued for men or women.
- Opponents of Title IX have tried to mislead the public into believing that the loss of men's wrestling and a few other sports at some schools is a sign of massive loss of men's participation opportunities overall when exactly the opposite is true – men's sports participation continues to grow. Athletic programs add and drop teams all the time. Men are not losing.
- This misinformation campaign takes the focus away from the facts that (1) women continue to be significantly underrepresented among high school and college athletes, (2) the gap between men's and women's sports participation and support is not closing and (3) it is the wealthiest athletic programs in NCAA Division I-A that are dropping men's minor sports, typically because they are shifting these monies to compete in the football and men's basketball arms race.

MYTH: Title IX's three-part test imposes a strict quota.

FACT: The three-part test imposes no numerical requirement even remotely analogous to quotas.

- A three-part test for participation opportunities determines if institutions provide female and male students with equal athletic opportunities. In order to comply, institutions must pass one of these three tests:
 - a) Proportionality-male and females participate in athletics in numbers substantially proportional to their respective enrollments in school, or
 - b) History and Continued Practice of Program Expansion-the institution shows a history and continuing practice of program expansion which is demonstrably responsive to the developing interests and abilities of members of the underrepresented sex, or
 - c) Full Accommodation of Interests and Abilities- the institution demonstrates that the interests and abilities of the underrepresented sex (females) are fully and effectively accommodated by the existing programs.
- Because athletic teams are gender-segregated, individual educational institutions must decide how many athletic opportunities they will allocate to each sex. Thus, schools are required to make gender-conscious decisions related to allocation of opportunities. Far from imposing quotas, the three-part test is merely a measurement, a benchmark for determining whether schools distribute sex-segregated athletic participation opportunities fairly. Courts have repeatedly recognized that the three-part test in no way creates quotas.

MYTH: Girls are not as interested as boys in playing sports.

FACT: The dramatic increase in girls' and women's participation in sport since Title IX was passed in 1972 (by 560% at the college level and 990% in high schools) demonstrates that it was lack of opportunity – not lack of interest – that kept females out of high school and college athletics for so many years.

- Before Title IX, women were told that they were not as interested in law or medicine as men were. But given equal opportunity to pursue these interests, women thrive in these fields. Similarly, given equal athletic opportunities, women will rush to fill them; the remaining discrepancies in sports participation rates are the result of continuing discrimination in access to those opportunities.
- Additionally, it simply defies reality for colleges to claim a lack of interest in sports participation on the part of female athletes. With almost 3.2 million girls playing high school sports and hundreds of thousands more participating in Olympic sports not offered in schools and colleges – and with only 193,232 female participation opportunities available at the NCAA level – it is clear that there are more than sufficient numbers of women interested in playing on college teams. The single factor depressing female sports participation and Title IX compliance is the failure of schools to add more women's teams.
- To accept the stereotyped notion that women are inherently less interested in playing sports has been repeatedly rejected by courts. Gender-based stereotypes used to justify limits on women's opportunities are illegal.

MYTH: It is not fair that Title IX requires equal spending on men's and women's programs because the men's programs bring in all of the school's money.

FACT: Title IX does NOT require equal spending on men's and women's programs, and less than 12% of college athletic programs actually make a profit.

MYTH: Football should be taken out of the Title IX equation because women do not play football.

FACT: No matter how you cut it, football players are male participation opportunities, not a third sex. They must count.

- Men don't play field hockey in this country and few men play volleyball...should we eliminate those sports too? Title IX recognizes that men and women may be interested in different sports. It simply says, that you have to provide them with comparable opportunities to play sports. You cannot pretend that 100 male football players are not receiving the benefits of the athletic department- benefits that the school is obligated to provide to women as well.

MYTH: The American public is not supportive of Title IX.

FACT: Eight in 10 voters (82%) support Title IX with agreement across all political parties and among voters with and without children.

- The American public believes that sports participation is as important for our daughters as it is for our sons.

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EXPLORE FURTHER

[A Practical Guide to Gender Equity \(/en/sitecore/content/home/athletes/for-athletes/know-your-rights/parent-resources/step-by-step-guide-school-sports.aspx\)](/en/sitecore/content/home/athletes/for-athletes/know-your-rights/parent-resources/step-by-step-guide-school-sports.aspx)

We know that as you uncover inequities, you may want to correct them with the determination of athletes striving for victory. To guide you on your path, we have developed this step-by-step playbook to move you through your gender equity event.

[Title IX and Race \(/en/sitecore/content/home/research/articles-and-reports/school-and-colleges/title-ix-and-race-in-intercollegiate-sport.aspx\)](/en/sitecore/content/home/research/articles-and-reports/school-and-colleges/title-ix-and-race-in-intercollegiate-sport.aspx)

An analysis of participation increases in college sports by race and gender demonstrating the underrepresentation of racial minorities in many college sports and severe underrepresentation of females of color.

[Race and Sport \(/en/sitecore/content/home/advocate/title-ix-and-issues/title-ix-positions/race_and_sport.aspx\)](/en/sitecore/content/home/advocate/title-ix-and-issues/title-ix-positions/race_and_sport.aspx)

Sports participation is critical for a female of color just as it is for all females. Opportunities for female athletes of color have grown exponentially since the passage of Title IX.

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Founded By Billie Jean King

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