

Volleyball shows huge growth in popularity among young New Zealanders.

The popularity of volleyball is booming among secondary school students, with playing numbers growing exponentially over the past year.

Volleyball is now the 4th most popular sport in the country, with the latest School Sport NZ Census data showing more than 22,000 young people are playing at secondary school level.



It represents a massive 26% growth in playing numbers and bucks the trend of many traditional team sports which were impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic and saw a drop in participation. The numbers show that, when given the opportunity, students are keen to take up the dynamic game.

Volleyball New Zealand Chief Executive Toni-Maree Carnie is thrilled with the increase in participation numbers and believes the ultimate “team nature” of volleyball, where each player is always in action, is an important factor in its popularity.

“As we know access and visibility of the sport remain barriers to more young people participating,” she says. “We continue to work hard to ensure there are more opportunities for those young people still wanting to participate in volleyball to be able to play.

Girls continue to flock to volleyball with the sport now having the second highest participation rate among young women. 14,081 girls are playing at secondary school, making it second only to netball in terms of popularity.

“Young women are coming to the sport in droves,’ says Toni-Maree Carnie. “We know they love having fun, playing with their friends and being in an environment that is not weather dependent.”

Outside of the combined wider Auckland region, Canterbury has the highest participation rate, while volleyball is also proving popular in Wellington, Bay of Plenty, Otago and Manawatu.

Volleyball New Zealand (Poirewa Aotearoa) is committed to becoming the number one participation sport in New Zealand and provides a dynamic yet non-contact

game where celebrating is a part of play. Both genders play together and are treated equally.

Full details of the School Sport NZ 2020 census can be found here:

[School Sport New Zealand - School Sport NZ Census Reports \(sporty.co.nz\)](https://www.sporty.co.nz/school-sport-nz-census-reports)

BY THE NUMBERS:

Overall volleyball playing numbers 22,141

Girls: 14,081

Boys: 8060