

# SportsAid Athlete Survey 2009©

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# Introduction

The SportsAid Annual Athlete Survey is sent to all athletes who have received a SportsAid Award in the most recent funding cycle.

It aims to gain feedback on how their SportsAid Award has been used and to provide insight to their life as a talented young sports person. It is the most comprehensive survey of its kind in sport.

## Executive Summary

### **Key themes:**

#### **Parent/family support**

Throughout the results there is a strong theme highlighting the importance of the family network for young athletes.

#### **Barriers to progression**

Lifestyle balance and funding remain the top barriers to progressing in sport.

#### **Disability vs non-disability**

There are some interesting trends here, for example disabled athletes were more likely to see their SportsAid Award as essential. Barriers varied greatly with access to facilities and travelling at the top of the list for disability athletes. For more information see our specific Disability Sport Results document.

#### **Consistency**

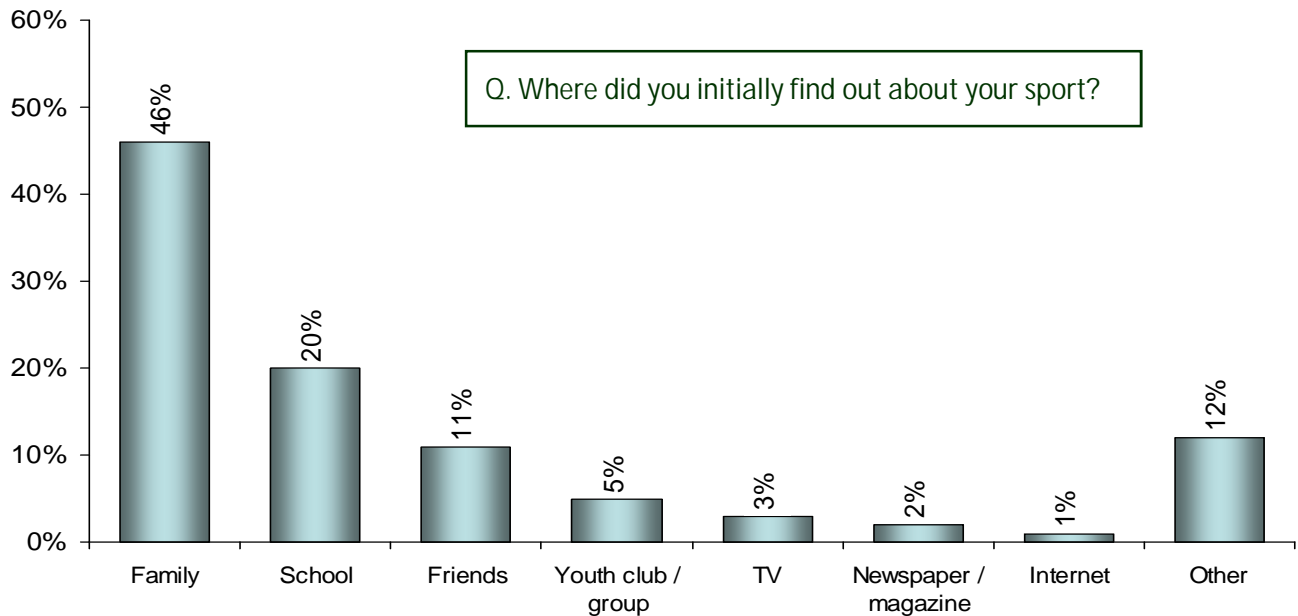
In comparing results from previous years surveys there are many areas which are proving consistent. These include spend on sport, barriers and feelings towards SportsAid.



# 1. Getting into sport – the family role

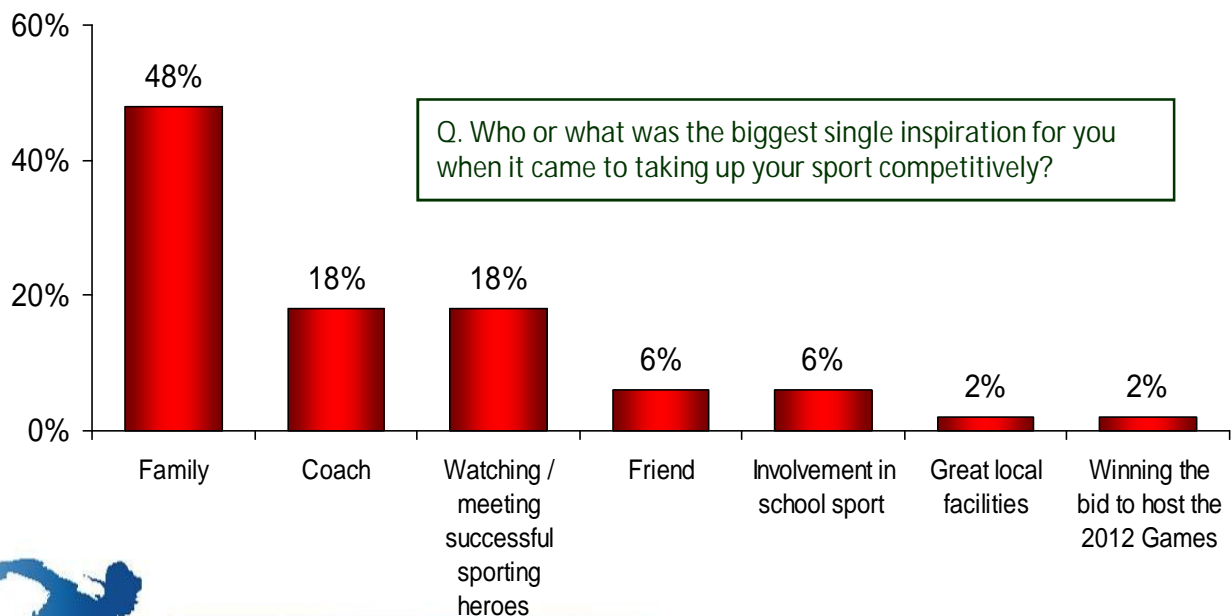
## Finding out about sport

Nearly half (46%) of currently supported SportsAid athletes found out about their sport through a family member.

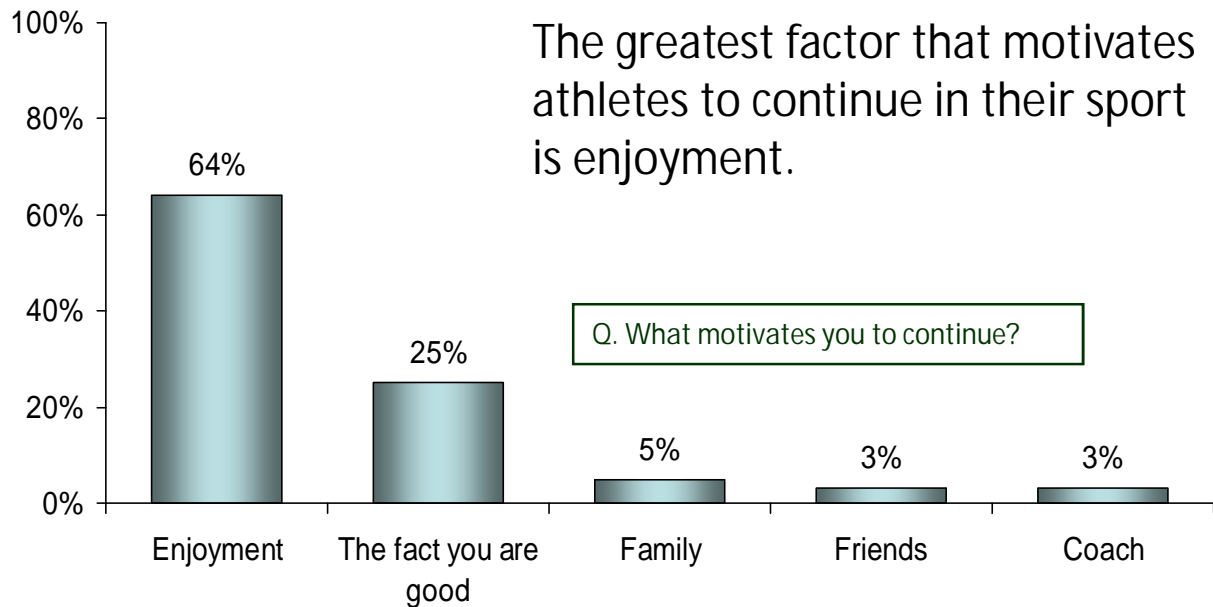


## Inspiration to compete

Nearly half (48%) of SportsAid athletes were inspired by a family member to take up their sport competitively.

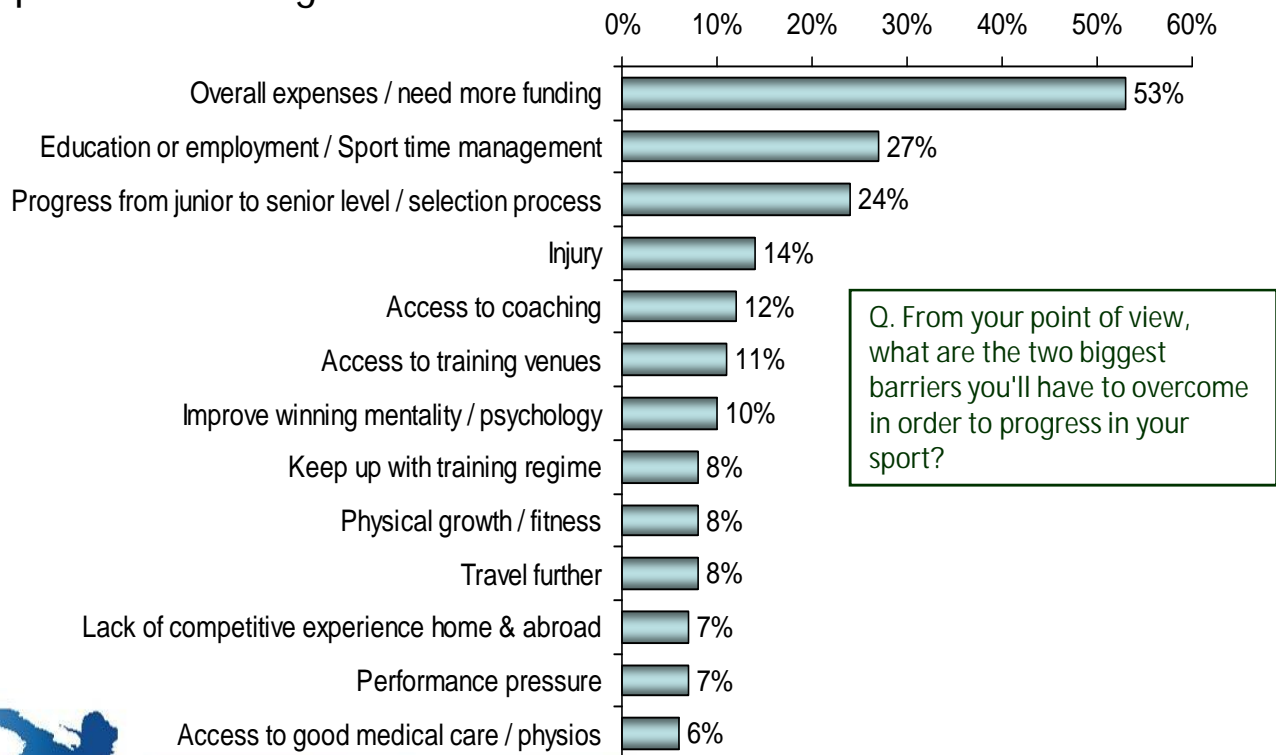


# Motivation to continue



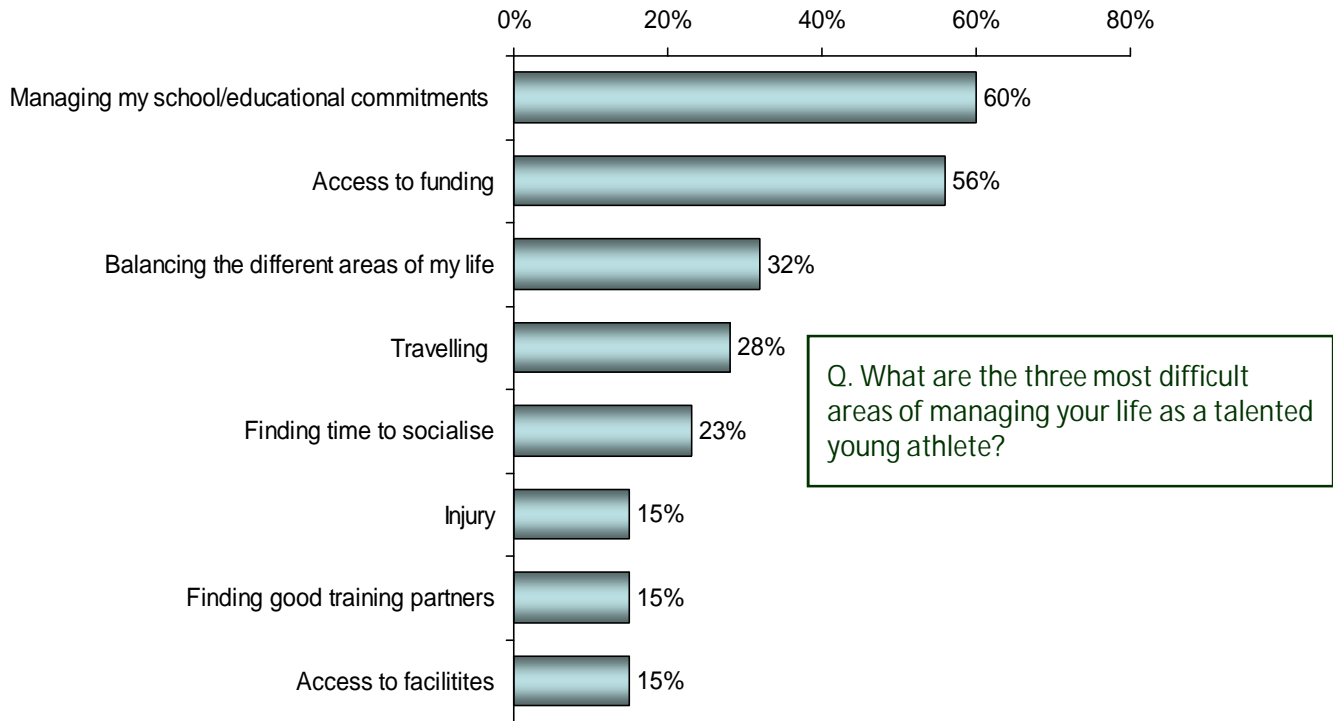
## 2. Barriers to progression

By far the biggest barrier to progression in sport is expenses/funding.



## Difficulties as an athlete

SportsAid athletes find that balancing their education commitments with sport and getting access to funding to be the most difficult areas of their lives to manage.



Difficulties vary greatly for disability athletes.

Top three comparison:

Disability	Non-disability
1. Access to funding – 68%	1. Managing education commitment – 64%
2. Travelling – 31%	2. Access to funding – 55%
3. Access to facilities – 27%	3. Balancing lifestyle – 33%

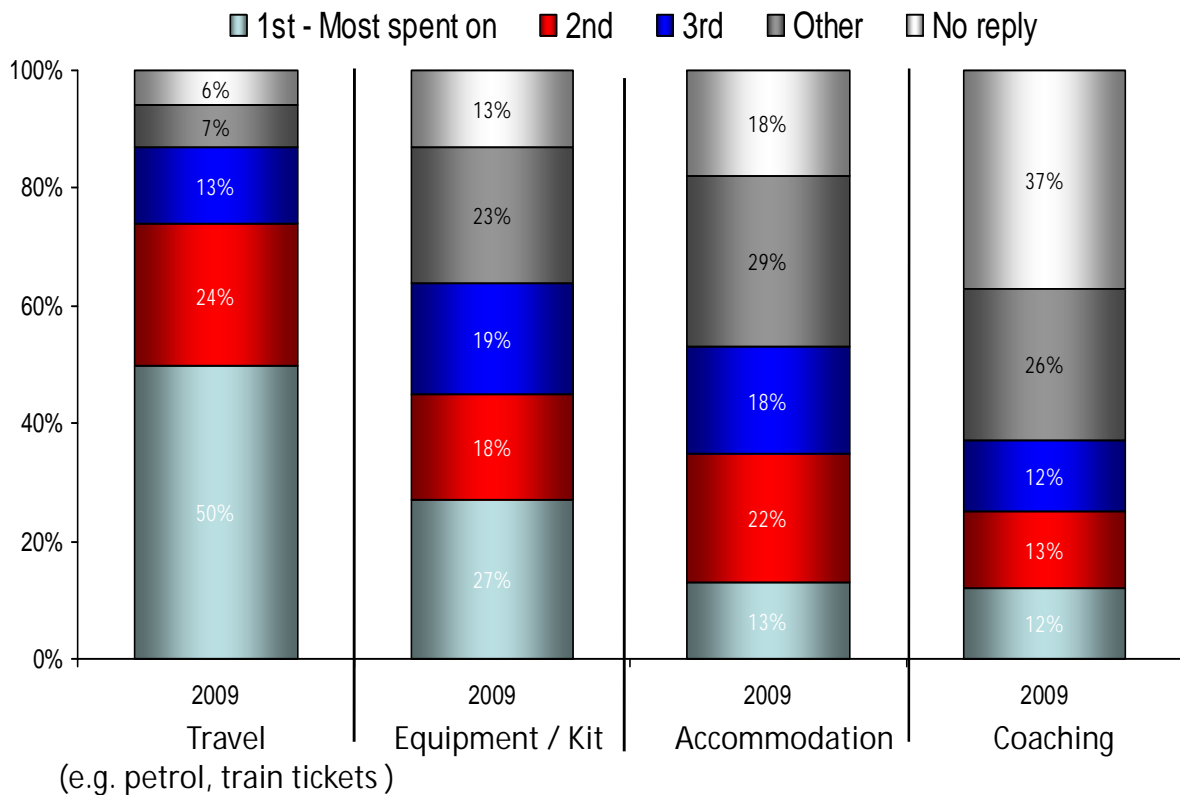


# 3. Athlete/family spend

## Overall spend

On average SportsAid athletes and their families spend around £5,000 each year on their sport. Sailing Swimming and Cycling ranked the highest.

## Major cost areas



Travel, equipment/kit and accommodation are the three highest expenditure areas for SportsAid athletes.



## 4. View on SportsAid Awards

### Importance of a SportsAid Award

100% of athletes said that their SportsAid Award was either essential or helpful.

### Meaning of the SportsAid Award

Nearly half (48%) were either motivated by or proud of receiving their SportsAid Award. The remaining 52% felt good about the recognition.

### Athlete comments

I'm very grateful for the help I receive from SportsAid - it helps fund my training and my travel costs. I think it is a very effective organisation and many people will benefit from it.

**Male, Aged 16, South West**

The financial support that SportsAid has given me has eased the pressure considerably on my family's personal commitment to support my ongoing training and equipment needs. This has facilitated and sustained my commitment to fulfilling my potential in my chosen sport.

**Female, Aged 15, South West**

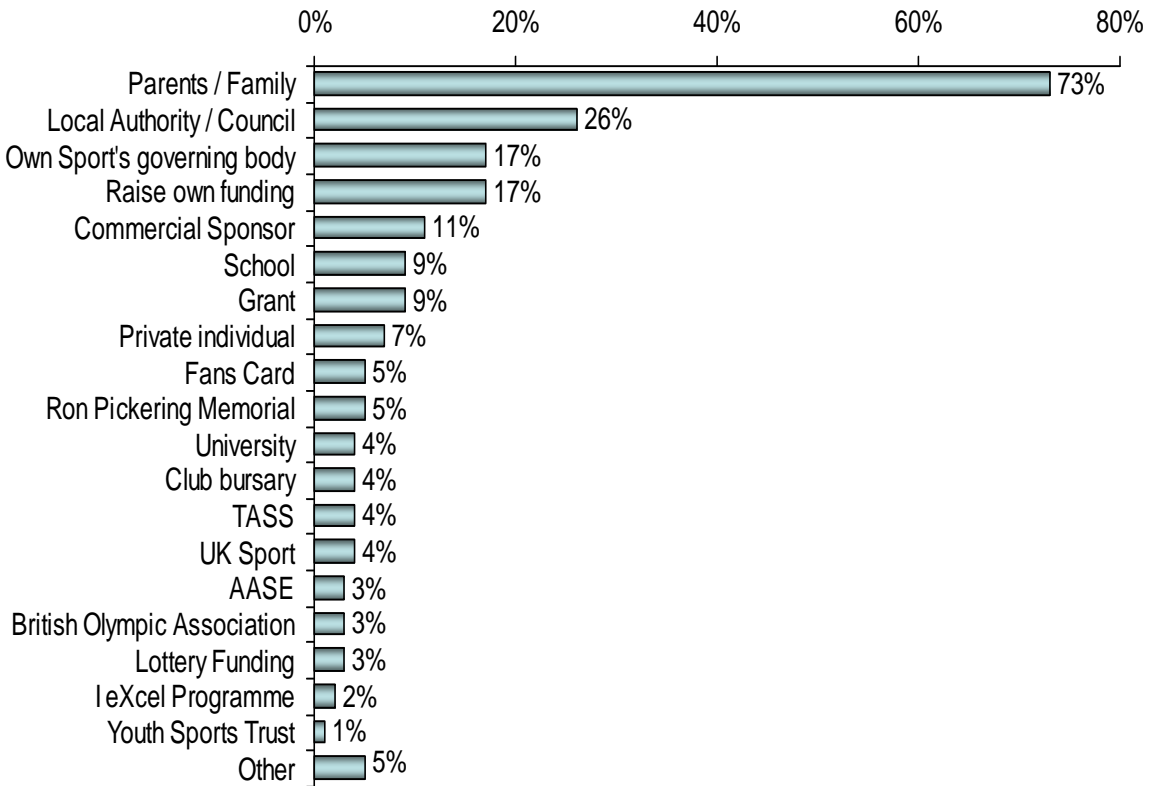
The award I received earlier this year has helped reduce the financial pressure on my parents who have had to fully fund my sport which involves a lot of traveling and I thank you very much for your valued support.

**Judo, Aged 17**

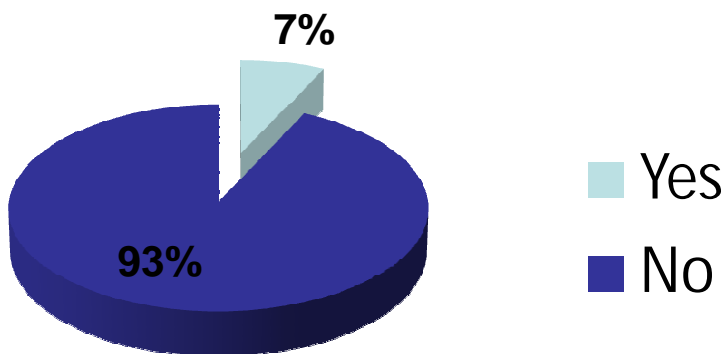


# 5. Other funding

Parents/family are seen as the main source of funding on top of help from SportsAid.



## A National Governing Body Perspective\*



93% of National Governing Bodies stated that they would not be able to offer additional support to their developing athletes if SportsAid Awards were not available.

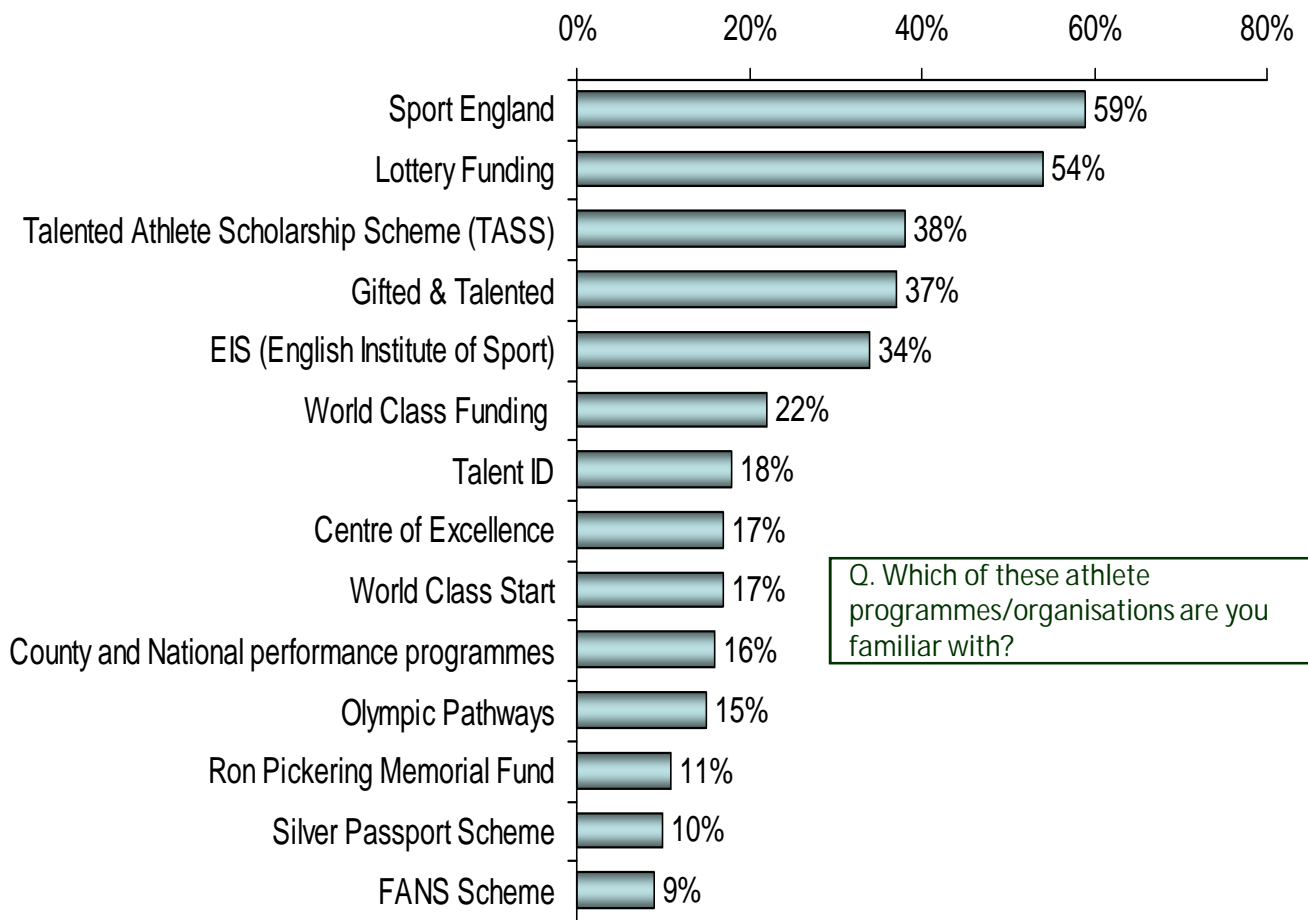
Q. If SportsAid Awards were not available would your NGB be able to offer additional financial support for your developing athletes?

\* Taken from the 2008/09 SportsAid NGB Feedback Survey



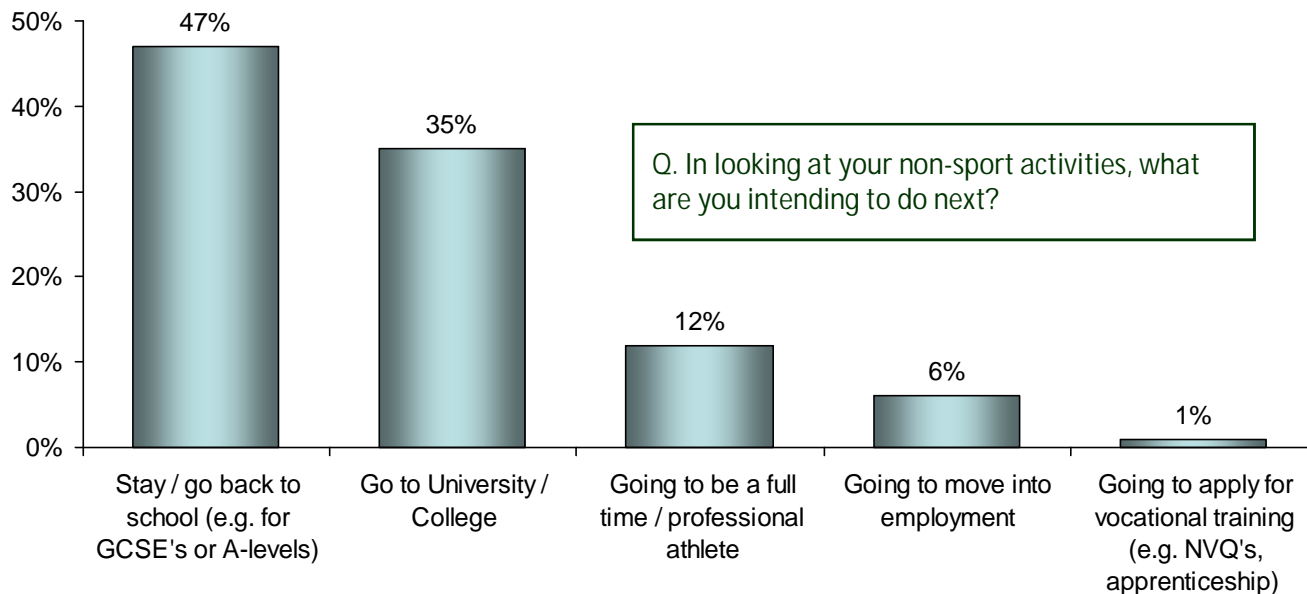
# Awareness of other support programmes

Sport England and Lottery Funding were by far the most recognised programmes/organisations amongst the athletes; TASS, Gifted & Talented and the EIS also recorded good awareness levels.



# 6. Education

## Plans outside of sport



Over 80% of SportsAid athletes intend to continue in education.

## Institute support

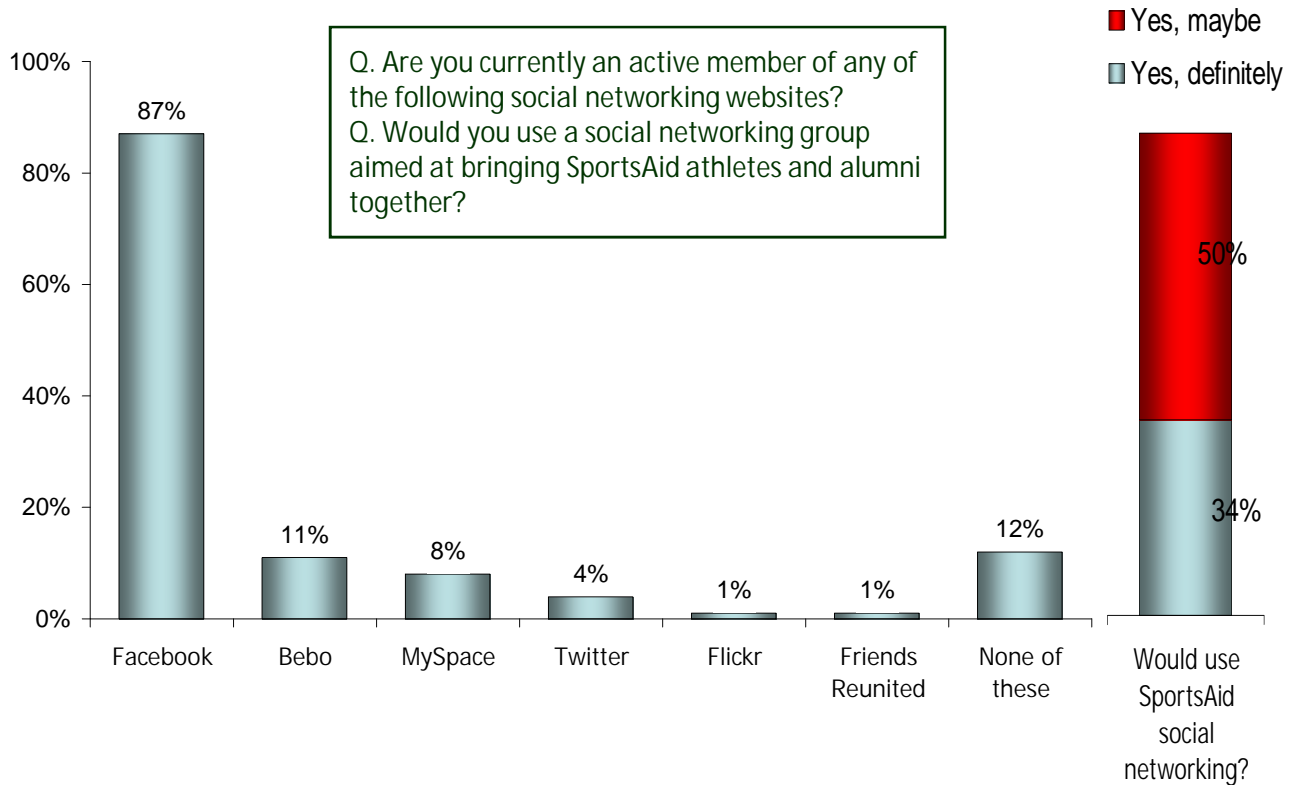
Overall 82% of athletes stated that their school/college/university adopts a flexible and supportive approach towards their sporting commitments.

This varied quite considerably for disabled athletes.

66% of disabled athletes found their institute was supportive in comparison to 83% of able bodied athletes.



# 7. Social networking



Facebook is by far the most used social networking site.

Over four-fifths (84%) of respondents indicated they would use a SportsAid social networking group aimed at bringing athletes and alumni together.



## 8. Fun facts

### SportsAid Cyclists:

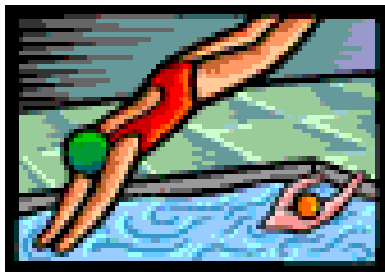
On average they cycle 181km in training per week, the equivalent of going from London to Birmingham – while still fitting in their school work!

To train to the required standard they own five bikes ranging from Road and Mountain Bikes to Track Bikes.



### SportsAid Swimmers:

On average they swim 49km per week – that's 1960 lengths of your local 25m swimming pool.



They go through around 10 swimming costumes per year and with a decent racer costume costing in the region of £100 it's an expensive business.

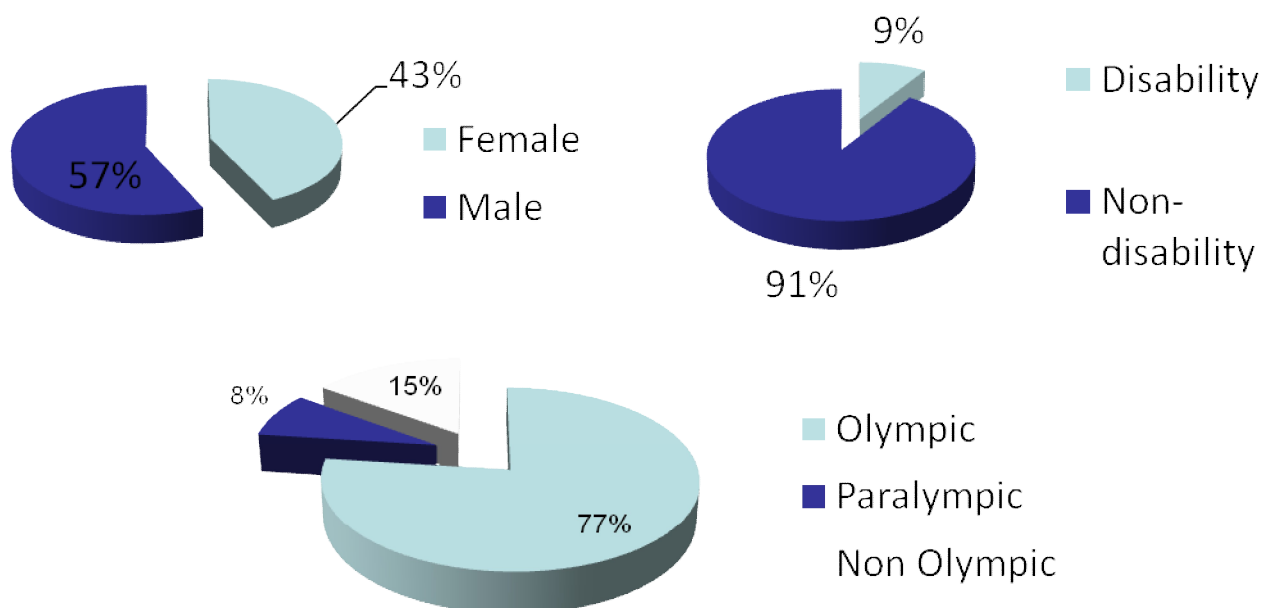


# Base

The SportsAid Annual Athlete Survey 2009 was completed by:

852 SportsAid Award Recipients

The breakdown of this group is:



For further information contact:

Lynne Baird on [lynne@sportsaid.org.uk](mailto:lynne@sportsaid.org.uk)

Data is available per sport and per region.

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[www.sportsaid.org.uk](http://www.sportsaid.org.uk)

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