


Healthy Eating, Active Communities Baseline Findings

Gender differences in physical activity attitudes and behaviors



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In partnership with
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Funded by
The California Endowment

APHA 2007

Overview

1. Sample
2. Overall physical activity findings
3. Physical activity findings in schools and neighborhoods
4. Student fitness levels
5. Summary and action steps

Sample

- ❑ The California Endowment's Healthy Eating Active Communities (HEAC) student survey
- ❑ HEAC is a multi component study to improve the physical activity and nutrition environments of youth in low-income communities
- ❑ Students from 1 middle school and 1 high school in 6 intervention and 3 comparison communities throughout the state of CA participated

Sample

Students 2,495 7th graders and 2,779 9th graders from 25 schools (n=5,374)

Gender 50.5% male; 49.5% female

Ethnicity 56% Hispanic or Latino/Latina
8% Asian
6% Black or African American
11% White or Caucasian
2% American Indian or Alaskan Native
1% Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
10% Multiple
7% Other

Survey Methods

Baseline data collected Spring 2006

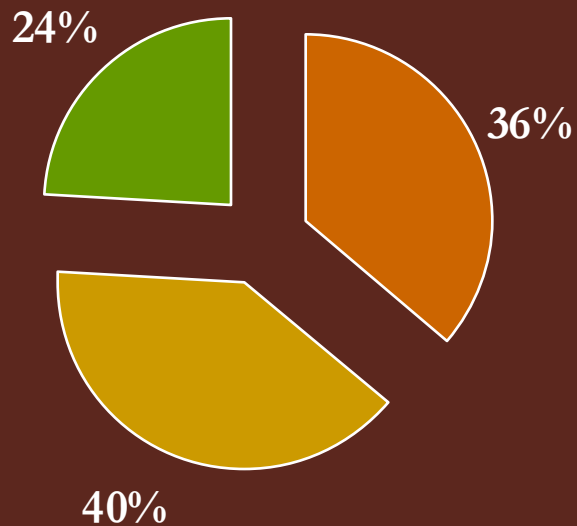
Survey questions addressed nutrition and physical activity attitudes and behaviors

Students completed surveys at school during class

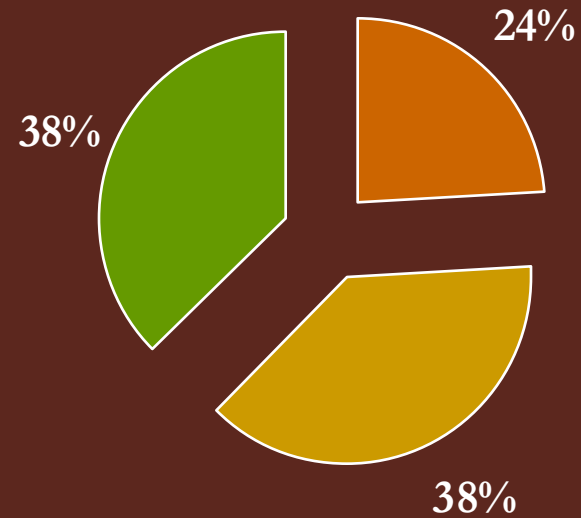
Overall Physical Activity

Females report less time engaging in vigorous physical activity

Females

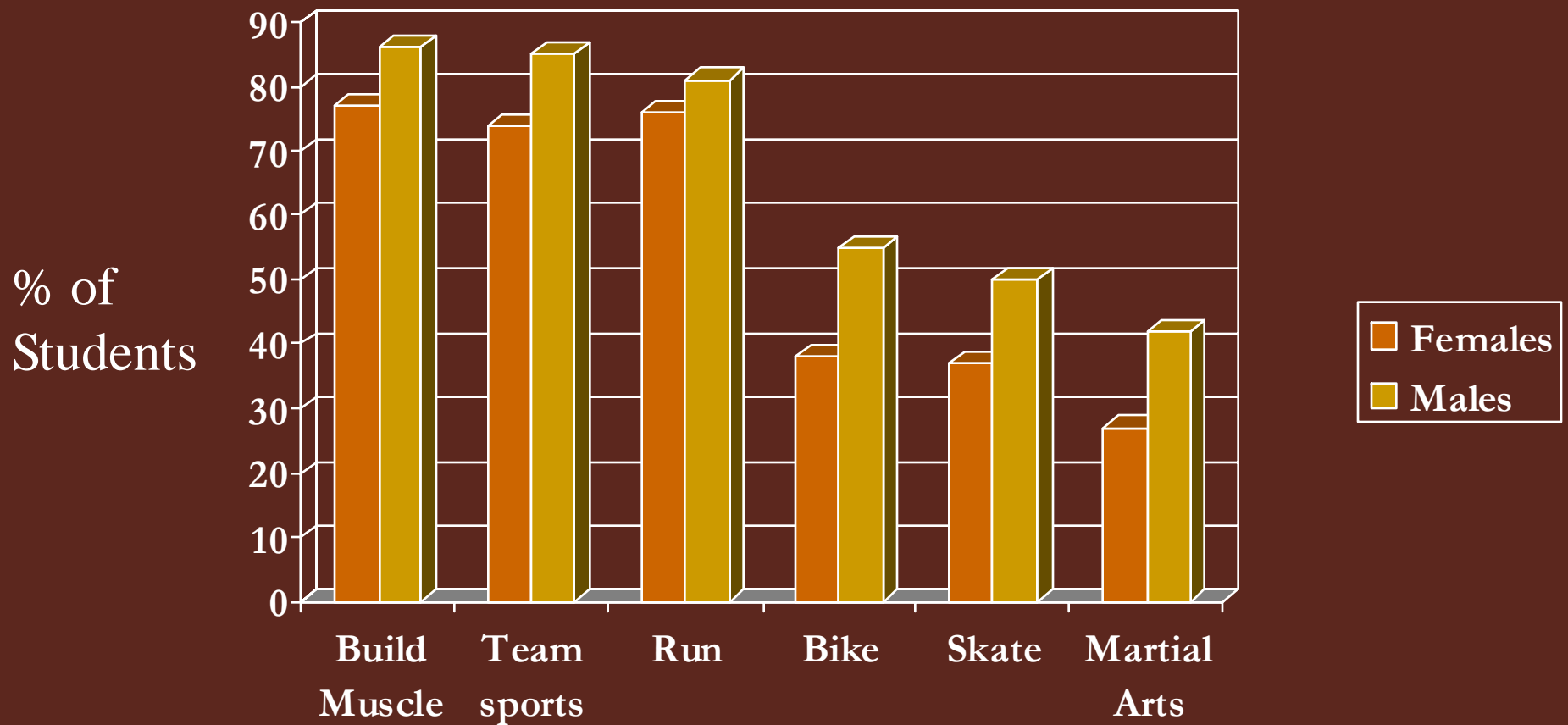


Males

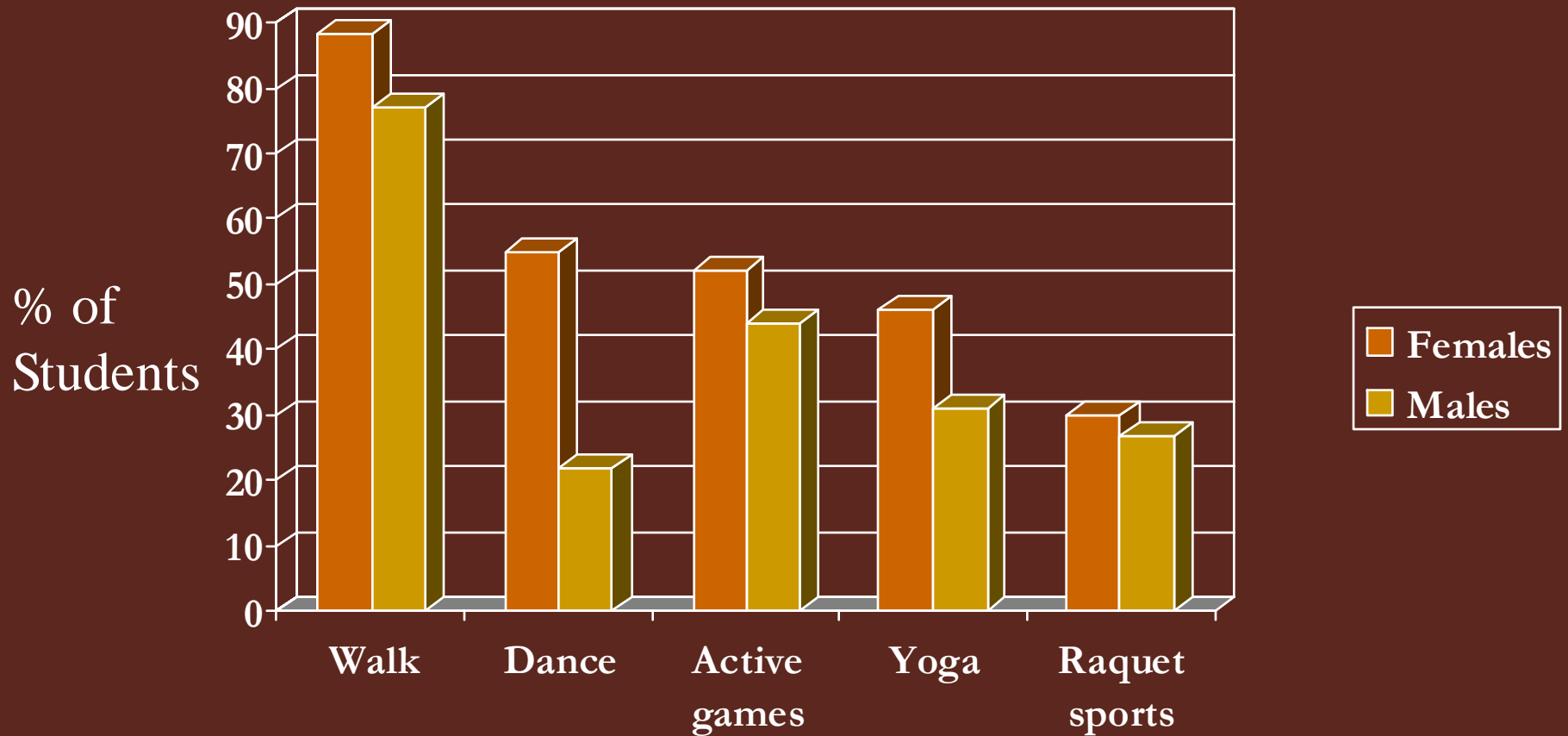


■ <10 min ■ 10 to 30 min ■ >30 min

Activities more often done by males

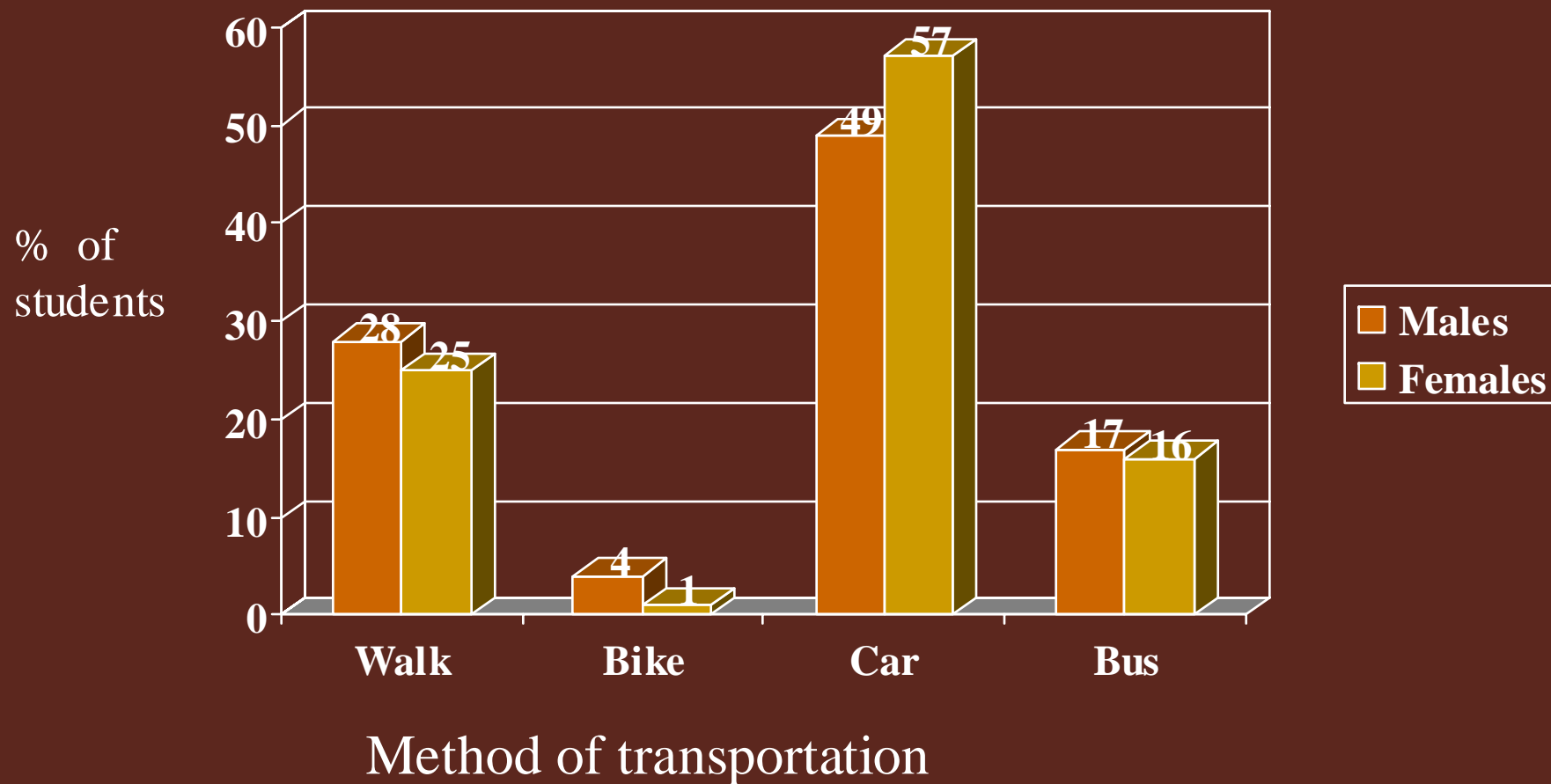


Activities more often done by females

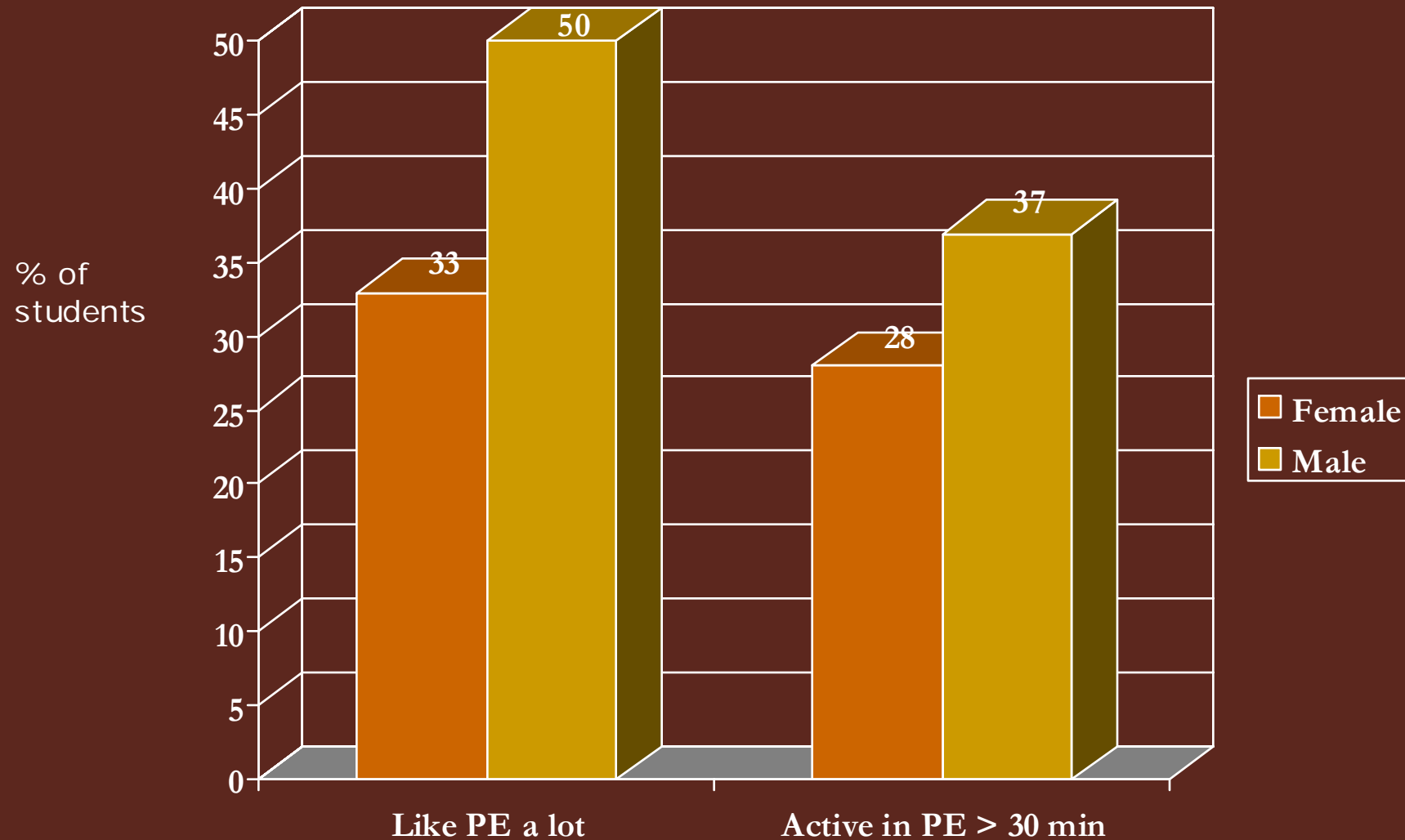


Physical Activity at School

While few students report active transport to school, of those that do, more are males

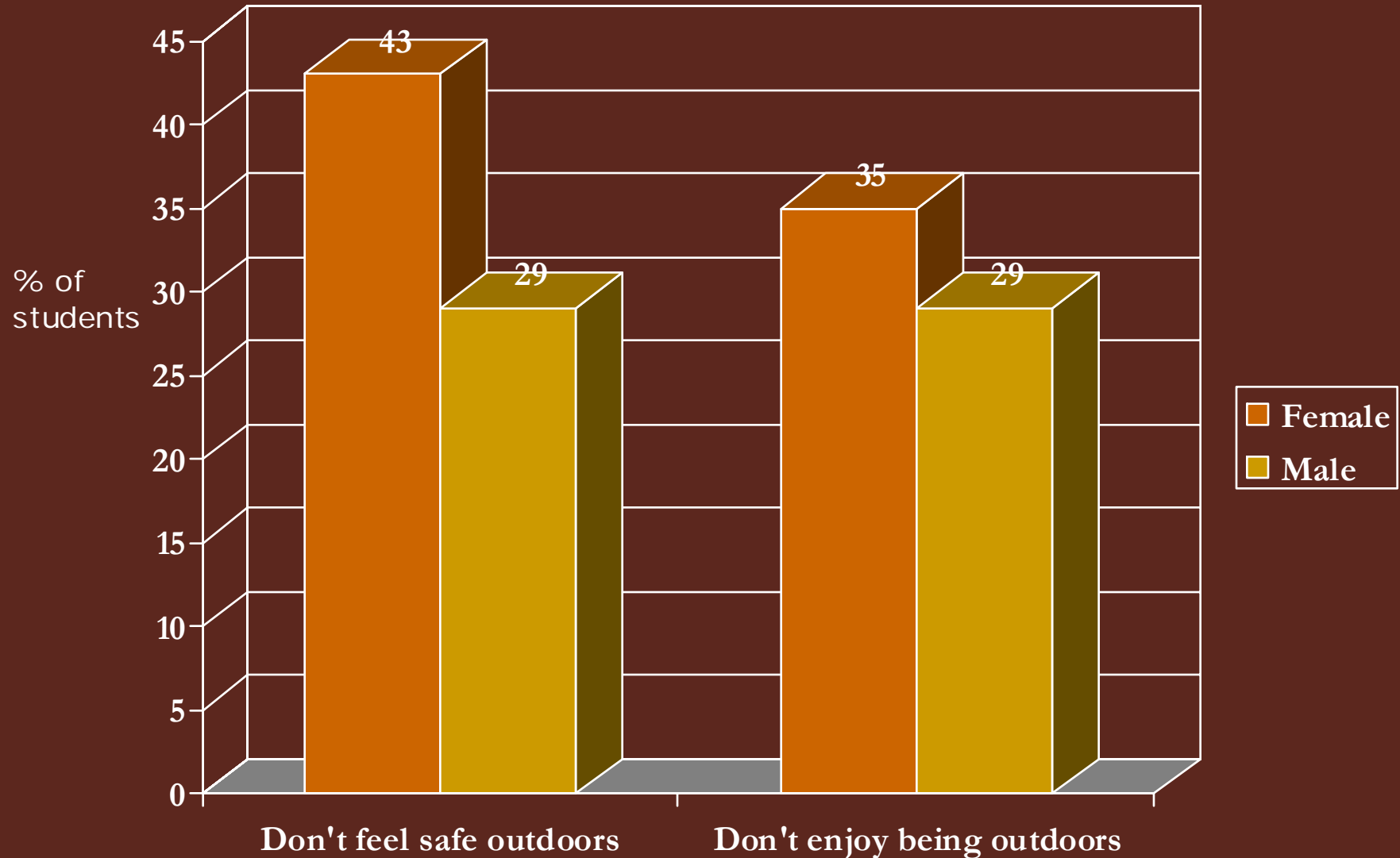


More males report liking PE and being more physically active during PE class

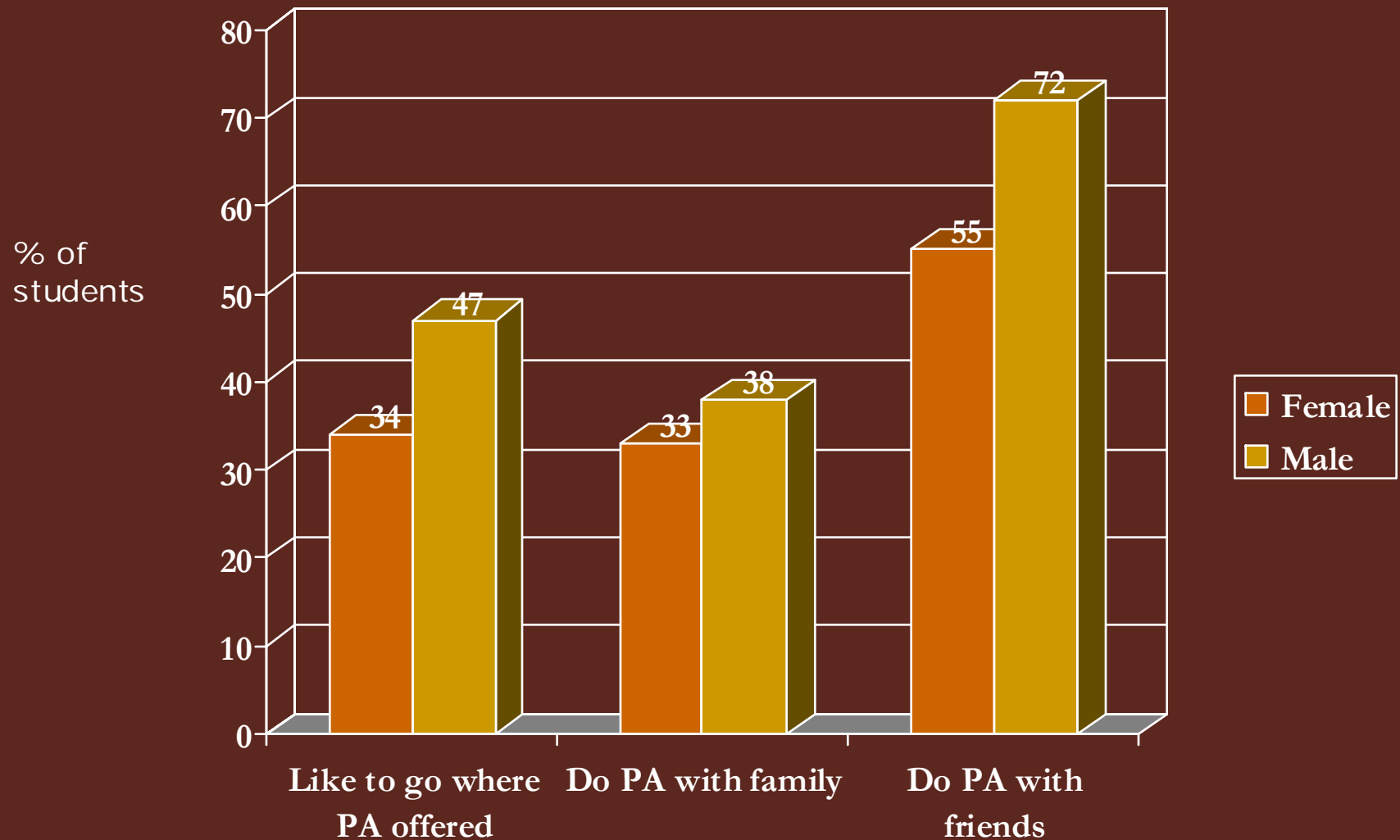


Physical Activity in neighborhoods

How do students feel about being outdoors in their neighborhoods?

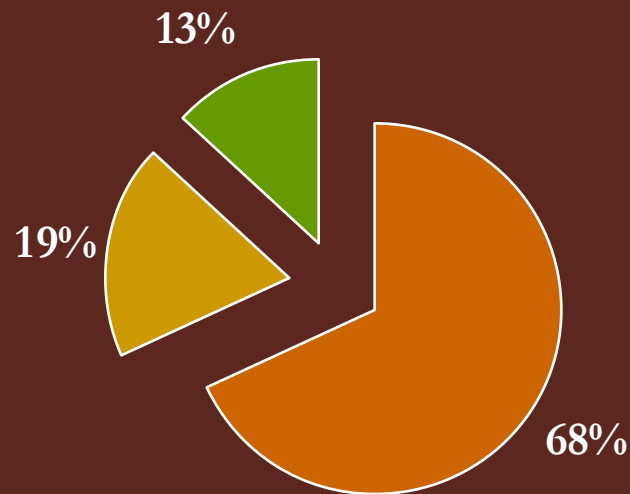


Few students like the places where physical activities are offered or are active with their families... of those that are, more are **male**



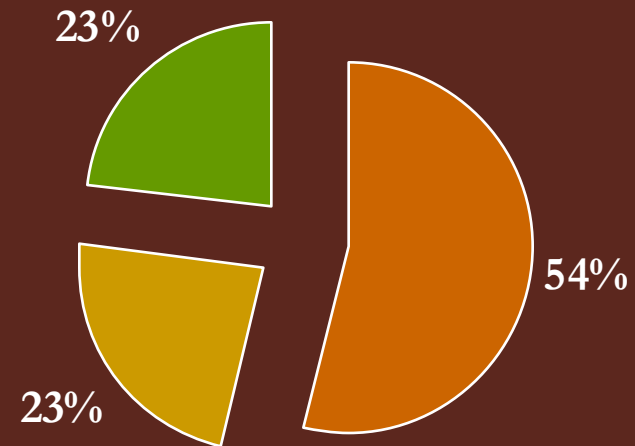
Males report more sports team participation than females

Female



Not at all 1-3 days 4-7 days

Male



Not at all 1-3 days 4-7 days

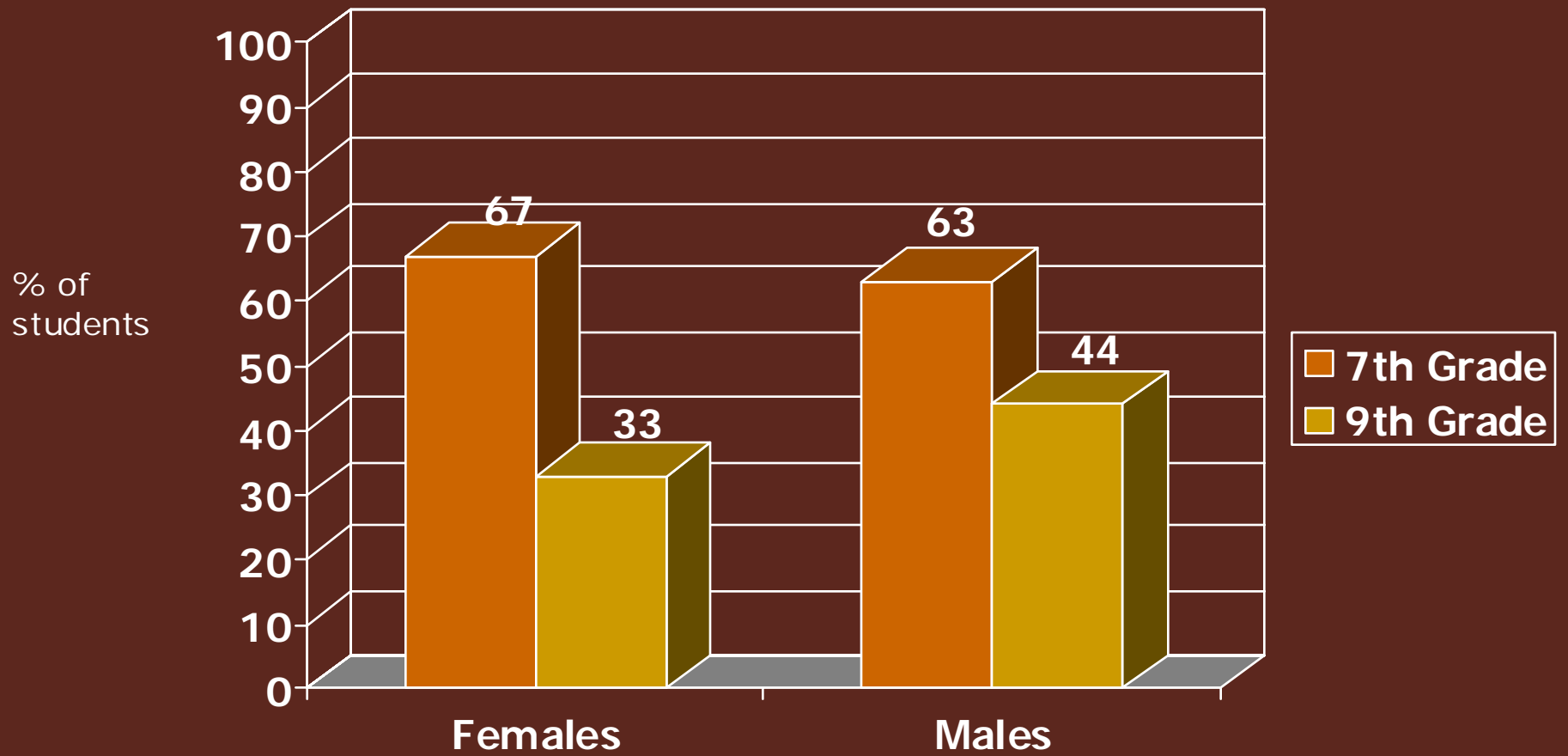
Males report higher rates of utilizing community resources for physical activity

Had used the following for physical activity at least once in the past week...	Female	Male
An <i>outdoor</i> park, field, court, etc.	61%	72%
An <i>indoor</i> rec center, court, gym, etc.	37%	45%
Neighborhood streets or yards	61%	70%
Walking, biking, jogging trail, path, track	63%	72%

Fitness level of students

Aerobic capacity fitness levels are poor and drop significantly at 9th grade, especially for females

Figure 8



Conclusions

- ❑ Males report being more physically active than females
- ❑ Males report fewer barriers to physical activity
- ❑ Males report stronger enjoyment of PE and more active time during PE
- ❑ Students' fitness levels decrease dramatically at 9th grade, especially for females

Conclusions

Clearly all students can benefit from additional support for physical activity

Attention to the particular needs of females is needed

When designing programs, it is critical to think carefully about the diverse needs of all youth

What can be done?

- Foster a physical, social, and political environment that promotes and facilitates physical activity in order for students to achieve their potential and be protected from poor health outcomes.
- Redesign communities— neighborhoods, schools, etc.— to promote physical activity
- Improve PE in schools
 - Change the perception of PE as an “extra”
 - Increase the amount of active time during PE
 - Train teachers to engage all students and offer activities that appeal to all students
- Work with students and community leaders to increase safety and access to resources for activity
- Examine local programs offering physical activity and gain more understanding of what appeals to students

Thank you...

- Thank you to all of the students who completed our questionnaires
- Thank you to the many leaders in the HEAC communities who worked with us on the data collection and are working to improve the environments of youth
- And thank you to all of you for your time and interest