



**Women's Sports Policy
Working Group**

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – ABOUT SCIENCE AND SEX

WomensSportsPolicy.org

Q7. Are advocacy groups correct when they say that it's a myth and an outdated stereotype that females can't compete with males?

A7. No. It is a fact - not myth or outdated stereotype - that starting from the onset of male puberty, i.e., starting in middle school, there is an average 8-20% performance gap between males and females, which reaches to 50% in some sports and events. The proposition that better resources and support for female athletes can change biological imperatives and competitive results is false. Some individual females can and will outperform some individual males. But even the very best female athletes are routinely surpassed not only by the very best male athletes but also by second tier or mediocre male athletes. For example, the world records in the men's and women's shot put are nearly identical – 74'4" for the men and 74'2^{3/4}" for the women. But the women's shot is 8.8 lbs. while the men's is almost twice as heavy at 16 lbs. The same pattern holds for the women's world records in all of the races on the track from 100 meters to 10,000 meters. Indeed, not only are those records surpassed by many men each year, they are also surpassed by many high school boys. The pattern also holds for high school athletes who aren't yet superstars. With rare exceptions, from the onset of male puberty, even the best high school girls have no chance against high school boys.

