

"I believe in the  
power of sport to..."

Federal Election Campaign for Sport - 2008



I believe in the power of sport to... **increase our enjoyment of life**

## FACT SHEET

Sport plays an important part in the enjoyment of life for millions of Canadians who find their involvement highly rewarding on a personal level. Sport significantly strengthens society by developing skills that individuals can use to become more productive and it builds social cohesion and social capital, which are important to development and prosperity.

- 79% of active participants in sport, or almost 6.1 million adult Canadians, rank sport as a *very* important source of fun, recreation and relaxation (Conference Board, 2005).
- An overwhelming proportion (96%) of both sport volunteers and people who attend sporting events rank sport as a very or somewhat important source of fun, recreation and relaxation (Conference Board, 2005).
- More than 85% of active participants, volunteers, and attendees believe sport is important for providing their family/household with activities to share (Conference Board, 2005).
- A strong majority (more than 84%) of sport participants, volunteers, and attendees regard sport as an important vehicle for making new friends and socializing (Conference Board, 2005).
- 72% of Canadians agree that "sport makes a significant contribution to the quality of life in my community" (The Strategic Counsel, 2005).
- A large majority of Canadian youth aged 12-21 believe that playing sports has many benefits—improves their health (99%), helps them make new friends (87%), makes them feel better about themselves (85%) (Ipsos Reid, 2003).
- Physical activity and lifelong physical exercise help to prevent depressive symptoms and maintain positive self-esteem in older age (Lampinen, 2002).
- Participation in sport leads to a more positive self-image, as well as higher self-esteem and self-confidence, in girls (Shultz, 1999).
- Participation in physical activity is a normalizing experience for children with disabilities, providing a setting in which social networks with peers are enhanced and legitimating their social identity as children (Taub, 2000).

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