

**Advocacy**  
**Reasons to Invest in Sport and Physical Activity**

**Health Benefits of Sport**

- Physical inactivity can cause premature death, chronic disease and disability (1)
- Sport and physical activity reduces stress, strengthens the heart and lungs, increases energy levels, helps maintain and achieve a healthy body weight and it improves a person's outlook on life (1)
- Sport and Physical activity improves people's well being and quality of life (1)
- Physical activity reduces boredom, which has shown links to depression, distractibility and loneliness (2)
- About 80 per cent of adults active participants in 2004—more than 6.2 million people—rated sport as very important in improving their physical fitness and health (3)

**Child/Youth Benefits of Sport and Physical Activity**

- Sport helps to create peace and provides individuals with a variety of development and life skills (3)
- Sport has been shown to improve emotional and cognitive skills including self-esteem and problem solving abilities (2)
- Sport has been used to reduce violent and antisocial behaviors in youth (2)
- Sport is important in developing social relationships and teaching core values of everyday life (4)
- It's important to encourage and motivate children to participate in regular physical activity because the habits they establish in childhood carry over to adulthood (5)

**Community Development Benefits of Involvement in Sport**

- Sports bring individuals and communities together, highlighting what people have in common, it teaches discipline, leadership, confidence, tolerance, cooperation, and respect (3)
- Nearly half of active participants – and more than 40 per cent of volunteers and attendees – rate sport as very important for them in meeting new friends and acquaintances and in providing venues for socializing beyond the immediate family or household (4)
- Sport has been proven to act as a “universal language that can bring people together no matter what their origins, background, religious beliefs or economic status (3)

**Worldwide Benefits of Sport Activities**

- Sports is more and more being experimented with as a popular, affordable and effective tool for engendering development, effect social inclusion and arresting and subduing extreme poverty (6)
- The astronomical success of such global brand names as Manchester United, Nike and David Beckham has only heightened this growing interest in “the power of sports” (5)
- Sports can be used as a vehicle in “bridging boundaries, connecting cultures, breaking barriers” (7)
- The “Peace Through Sport” Campaign was launched in Jordan “recognizing the increasing important role played by sport in providing stability and social cohesion in the life of young people in the region. (8)
- Bilateral agreements allow us (countries like Canada) to share our expertise and best practice on the international scene; Canada currently has international bilateral agreements in sport with seven countries including Russia, Brazil, Cuba, China, South Africa, France and Tunisia (9)
- In Countries where females are given less opportunity, sport gives them the chance to be leaders and improve their confidence and self-esteem; sport also helps them to acquire new interpersonal links and access to new opportunities, allowing them to become more engaged in school and community life (10)

## Benefits of Physical Education in Schools

- Quality Physical Education Programs will enhance physical activity opportunities and benefit student health (11)
- Daily Physical activity has positive effects on student performance and academic achievement (12)
- Physical education is an integral component of quality education (10)

## Economic Benefits of Having Parks and Recreation in the Community (13)

- Recreation and fitness improve work performance – increased productivity, decreased absenteeism, decreased staff turnover, reduced “on the job” accidents
- Recreation and sport attract businesses to the community which can act as prime economic development and relocation magnets
- Recreation and sports are attractions that draw tourism, the third largest and one of the fastest growing industries in the world today
- Recreation, fitness, and sports are significant economic generators on their own which provide many jobs
- Small investments in recreation, sport and arts/culture often yield large economic returns – money generated by events, capital development and providing ongoing services is spent several times in the community

## Health Care, Social service and Justice Benefits of Recreation (13)

- Fitness and well-being reduce both the incidence and severity of illness and disability – lowering healthcare costs
- Recreation support families – reducing costs of social service intervention and foster care
- Recreation reduces crime and social dysfunction – reducing police, justice and incarceration costs

### **Footnotes:**

1. Health Canada. (2007) Physical Activity. Retrieved August 6, 2007 from [http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/physactiv/index\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/physactiv/index_e.html)
2. Morris et al. (2003). Sport, Physical Activity and Antisocial Behavior in Youth. Retrieved August 6, 2007 from <http://www.sportdevelopment.org.uk/AICTIPaper249.pdf>
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4. SOS Children Villages-Canada. (n.d.) Sport For Development and Peace. Retrieve August 8, 2007 from <http://www.soschildrensvillages.ca>
5. Janz, Dawson, & Mahoney. (2000). Posters. Saskatchewan Sports Net. Retrieved August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2007 from <http://www.sasksport.sk.ca/simtag.php>
6. Mathare. (2007) The East African Community: Forging Unity Through Sports. International Platform on Sport Development. Retrieved August 14, 2007 from <http://www.sportanddev.org/en/news/the-east-african-community-forging-unity-through-sports.htm>
7. Trent University International Students Association. (2007). First Ever Tisalympics: Unity Through Sports. Retrieved August 14, 2007 from <http://www.trentu.ca/news/daily/archive/051006tisalympics.html>
8. IOC. (2007) “Peace Through Sport” Campaign Released in Jordan. Olympic News. Retrieved August 14, 2007 from [http://www.olympic.org/uk/news/olympic\\_news/full\\_story\\_uk.asp?id=2138](http://www.olympic.org/uk/news/olympic_news/full_story_uk.asp?id=2138)
9. Canadian Heritage. (2006). Sport Agreement With Other Countries. *Canada and International Sport*. Retrieved August 14, 2007 from [http://www.pch.gc.ca/special/olym-paralymp2006/sport\\_e.cfm](http://www.pch.gc.ca/special/olym-paralymp2006/sport_e.cfm)
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11. Fishburne & Hickson (n.d.) What is the Relationship BETWEEN Physical Education and Physical Activity. CAHPERD. Retrieved August 14, 2007 from [http://www.cahperd.ca/eng/advocacy/tools/documents/PE\\_PA.pdf](http://www.cahperd.ca/eng/advocacy/tools/documents/PE_PA.pdf)
12. Shaphard, R.D. (n.d.) [www.saskatchewaninmotion.ca](http://www.saskatchewaninmotion.ca) Retrieved August 15, 2007 from <http://www.sasksport.sk.ca/simtag.php>
13. Canadian Parks and Recreation Association. (n.d) Benefits of Parks and Recreation. Retrieved August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2007 from <http://www.cpra.ca/EN/main.php?action=cms.initBeneParksRec>