

*ACTIVE*2010

ONTARIO'S SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY



ACTIVE2010: Ontario's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy
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A Message from the Honourable Jim Watson, Minister of Health Promotion

Lifelong participation in sport and physical activity significantly contributes to the quality of life for all Ontarians. As Minister of Health Promotion, I am very concerned that recent research is suggesting that Ontario's children and youth are increasingly becoming more overweight and obese. Equally concerning is the finding that slightly over half the adult population in Ontario is physically inactive – that is, not walking the equivalent of 30 minutes daily.

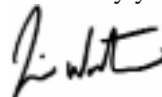
The impact of a sedentary lifestyle on our health care system is staggering. Estimates in 2001 place the economic burden of physical inactivity at \$1.8 billion in direct and indirect costs, while the costs associated with obesity are estimated at \$1.6 billion. Clearly, it is time to take meaningful action to address the issue of sedentary living.

ACTIVE2010 is Ontario's Sport and Physical Activity Strategy. Developed in consultation with stakeholders from across the province, *ACTIVE2010* sets out the key strategic approaches we will be undertaking to strengthen our capacity to deliver quality sport and physical activity programs at the community level.

ACTIVE2010 is a very ambitious undertaking. As Canada prepares to host the world at the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, we want to ensure that all Ontario athletes have every opportunity to compete at the highest level possible. This means strengthening our sport system at the community level and implementing steps that provides all our athletes with every opportunity to succeed. Similarly, we have identified an ambitious physical activity target for 2010. Through promotion and education initiatives, and the enhancing of local community opportunities to be active, we have set a course to increase the level of physical activity to 55 per cent by the end of the decade.

ACTIVE2010 is an exciting and ambitious action plan that I believe will significantly improve Ontario's sport and physical activity system. I look forward to working with all stakeholders to make Ontario the most active and healthy province in the country.

Sincerely yours,



Jim Watson
Minister

Table of Contents

<i>ACTIVE2010</i> Introduction	6	Promotion	20
<i>ACTIVE2010</i> Strategy	7	ENHANCING PARTICIPATION IN SPORT:	
<i>ACTIVE2010</i> Goals	7	School System	20
<i>ACTIVE2010</i> Vision	7	Community Sport/Recreation	21
<i>ACTIVE2010</i> Objectives	9	ACTIVE2010 – Physical Activity	23
Building the <i>ACTIVE2010</i> Strategy	11	Physical Activity and Health Benefits	23
ACTIVE2010 – Sport	13	How Active Are Ontarians?	24
ENHANCING EXCELLENCE:		How Much Physical Activity Should Ontarians Build Into Their Daily Lives?	25
Supporting Athlete Development	14	Provincial Targets	27
Funding for High-Performance Sport	14	What Strategies are Likely to be Effective?	27
Supporting Coaches	14	Areas of Action	29
Secondary Schools and Post-Secondary Institutions	15	ENHANCING PARTICIPATION IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY:	
Entry Level Participation to High Performance Competition	15	Education and Promotion	29
BUILDING CAPACITY:		Surveillance and Monitoring	30
Hosting	16	FOSTERING ACTIVE COMMUNITIES THROUGH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:	
Leadership	16	Supporting Community Efforts to Increase Participation	30
Officials	17	TARGETING SPECIFIC AUDIENCES:	
Sport Environment	17	Focusing Effort Where the Need is Greatest	31
Diversified Resource Base	18	CREATING ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS:	
ENHANCED INTERACTION:		Creating Supportive Environments	31
Government Collaboration	18	Closing Remarks	32
Sector Partnerships	19		
Track Emerging and Existing Trends	19		



ACTIVE2010 Introduction

The Province of Ontario has been a leader in developing amateur sport and is proud of the results Ontario athletes have achieved at both the national and international levels of competition. Similarly, Ontario has been at the forefront in the promotion of physical activity since the mid-1970s and has been prominent in hosting significant international conferences dealing with the health aspects of physical activity.^{1,2}

Governments, citizens, and sport and physical activity stakeholders across the province are expressing increasing concern about the inadequate level of physical activity and sport participation, and the resulting impact on health and quality of life. In the first decade of the new millennium, Ontario faces new challenges. Physical inactivity and the prevalence of obesity are on the rise, putting the future health of our citizens at risk. Youth obesity is a particular concern and is rising at a significant rate.

There are numerous benefits associated with habitual physical activity and sport participation, including: increased longevity, psychological well-being, promotion of pro-social behaviours and improved social cohesion; increased labour-force productivity; higher student achievement; and, support for the economic growth of cities. Research findings have also established strong links between regular sport participation and physical activity, and the prevention and management of certain chronic diseases, such as colon cancer, cardiovascular disease, type II diabetes, osteoporosis, obesity, and depression.

Although there are numerous documented benefits associated with leading an active lifestyle, the current rate of participation in sport and physical activity prevents society from fully realizing these benefits. The Ministry of Health Promotion recognizes the critical need to address these issues and has developed *ACTIVE2010* - a comprehensive new strategy to increase participation in sport and physical activity throughout Ontario.

There are numerous benefits associated with habitual physical activity and regular sport participation, including: increased longevity, psychological well-being, promotion of pro-social behaviours and improved social cohesion; increased labour-force productivity; higher student achievement; and, support for the economic growth of cities.

¹ Bouchard, C. et al. Exercise, Fitness and Health: A Consensus of Current Knowledge. Human Kinetics 1990

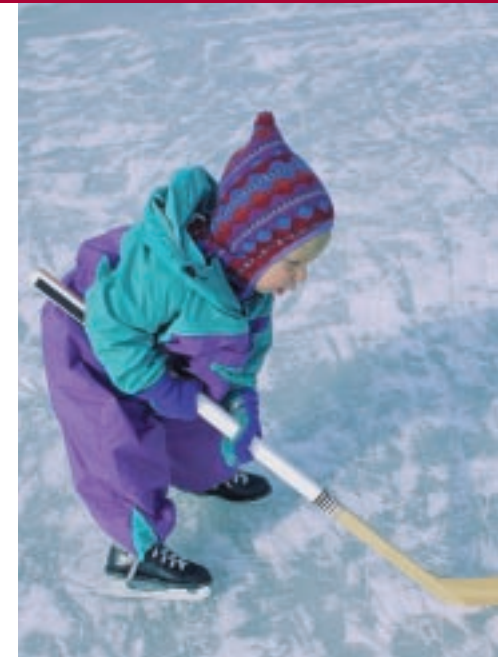
² Bouchard, C. et al. Physical Activity, Fitness and Health: International Proceedings and Consensus Statement. Human Kinetics 1994

ACTIVE2010 Strategy

ACTIVE2010 seeks to continue development of amateur sport and increase physical activity rates within the province. The strategy is a multi-faceted approach that involves government leadership and stakeholder participation in order to achieve a number of common goals. It encompasses an integrated approach to delivering affordable, accessible and sustainable programs and services that lead to long-term solutions.

ACTIVE2010 is about working together to develop a sport and physical activity system that will improve the health and quality of life of all Ontarians. Attention will be focused where the greatest benefits can be realized. *ACTIVE2010* will seek to influence specific target populations to encourage them to participate more regularly in sport and physical activity.

ACTIVE2010 has been built on collaboration. It has been developed on the premise that no one sector can bring about significant change in Ontario alone. It will require the collective action of provincial organizations, stakeholder groups and countless communities and volunteers across Ontario.



ACTIVE2010 Goals

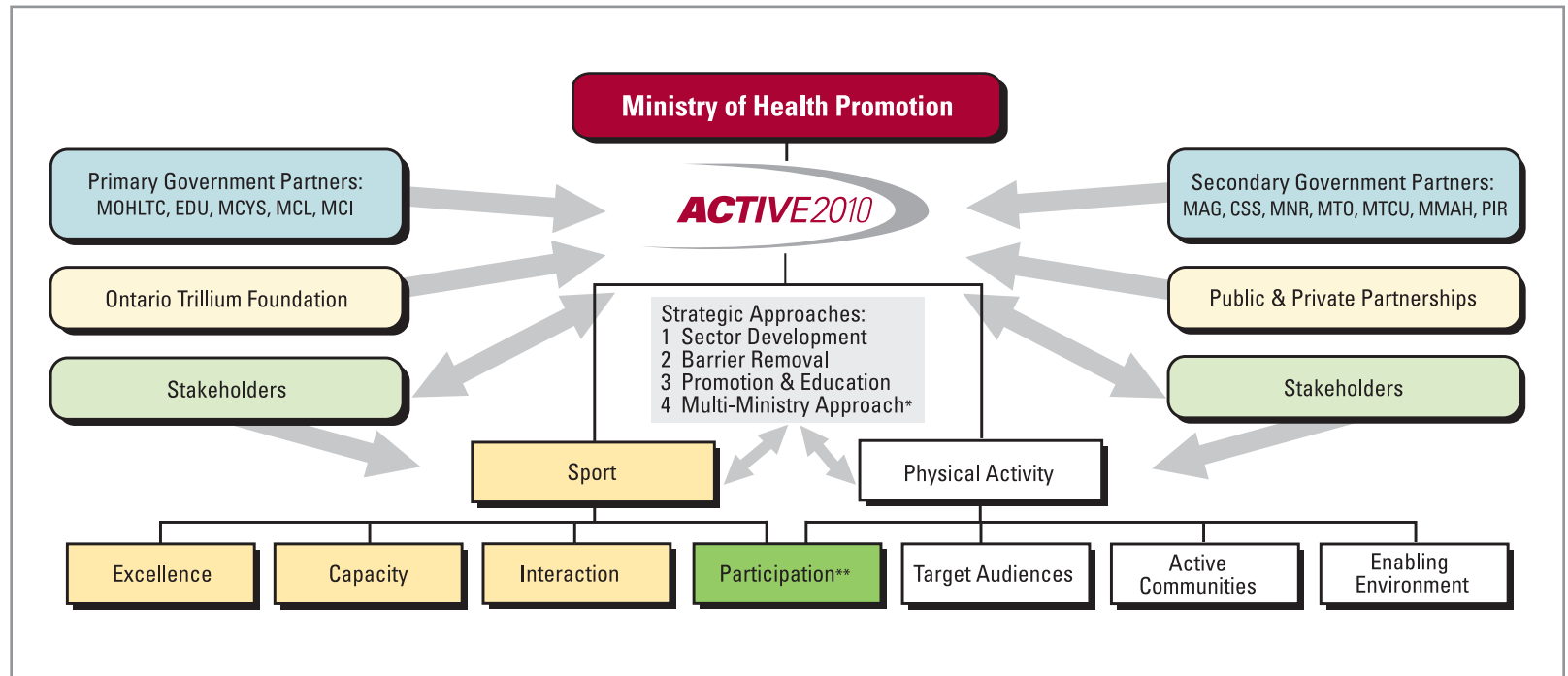
As outlined in Figure 1, *ACTIVE2010* is comprised of two components: Sport and Physical Activity. These two components have been developed by the ministry after consultations with numerous public and private stakeholder groups across the province. The two components, sport and physical activity, contribute to the committed goals of *ACTIVE2010*. These goals are:

- To create opportunities for Ontarians to become involved in quality sport activities.
- To enhance opportunities for Ontarians to participate in daily physical activity.
- To increase the number of Ontarians who value participation in sport and physical activity as an integral and essential part of life in Ontario.

ACTIVE2010 Vision

ACTIVE2010 will result in a culture of physical activity and sport participation within the province that directly contributes to healthier Ontarians, stronger communities, and reduced health care costs.

Figure 1: *ACTIVE2010* Conceptual Framework



*Assistant Deputy Ministers' Steering Committee for *ACTIVE2010*: Ministry of Children & Youth Services, Ministry of Citizenship & Immigration, Ministry of Community & Social Services, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing, Ministry of Health & Long-term Care, Ministry of Health Promotion, Cabinet Office and Management Board Secretariat.

** Action Area of Participation: where Sport and Physical Activity overlap

The sport component envisions that, by 2010, Ontario will be a prominent leader of sport development in Canada, providing the opportunity for all Ontarians to achieve a level of involvement consistent with their abilities and aspirations. All Ontarians will be able to benefit from having access to quality experiences offered through a supportive environment.

The physical activity component focuses its attention on reducing sedentary lifestyles and encouraging Ontarians to look for simple and enjoyable ways to add physical activity to their daily lives. Interventions to achieve a more physically active lifestyle may include cultural activities (dancing), personal transportation (cycling to work, walking to the bus), family recreation, and sport. We envision that Ontarians will value physical activity as an integral part of their daily lives, and that all citizens will participate individually, or with family and friends, in daily physical activity as part of a healthy, active lifestyle.

ACTIVE2010 Objectives

1. By 2010, increase to 55 per cent the proportion of the Ontario population that is active. Active is defined as performing the equivalent of 30 minutes of walking daily.
2. Enhance sport development leading up to the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games.
3. Leverage government resources through partnerships to strengthen the physical activity and sport sector.

ACTIVE2010 Strategic Framework

The ACTIVE2010 Strategy is linked to the Ontario government's key priorities of Better Health, Success for Students, and Strong People, Strong Economy. More specifically, the strategy seeks to reduce the prevalence of childhood obesity, increase the rate of physical activity among all Ontarians and increase the number of Ontarians volunteering as coaches and recreation leaders within their community.

The ACTIVE2010 Strategy identifies four strategic approaches that directly contribute to the government's priorities and are integral to the implementation of the strategy and the realization of the vision and goals.

Strategic Approaches

1. **Sector development** - strengthen provincial and community delivery systems, build capacity among local, regional and provincial sport and physical activity groups.
2. **Barrier removal** - create supportive environments for participation and address barriers that negatively impact participation in sport and physical activity, especially among low-income children and youth and under-represented populations such as ethnic minorities, women, Aboriginal communities and older adults.
3. **Promotion and education** - motivate selected populations to get active, increase awareness of the health benefits of sport and physical activity participation and help create a culture of physical activity and sport participation within the province.
4. **Multi-ministry approach** - Multi-ministry approach - an Assistant Deputy Minister's Steering Committee will co-ordinate government efforts to prevent duplication and maximize results. This multi-ministry approach will ensure:
 - Clear roles and responsibilities are defined within government;
 - Government leadership is focused towards the achievement of common goals;
 - The needed government leadership to link a fragmented sport and recreation sector, and create the critical mass to promote population-wide behavioural changes.



The **ACTIVE2010 Strategy** is linked to the Ontario government's key priorities of Better Health, Success for Students, and Strong People, Strong Economy.



Areas of Action:

Seven Areas of Action have been identified within *ACTIVE2010*. Four areas are addressed in sport (these Areas are numbered 1-4 below) and four in physical activity (Areas of Action numbered 4-7). Note that area 4, *Participation*, is common to both the sport component and the physical activity component.

1. **Excellence** – expand the pool of talented athletes and teams and enhance the ability of junior athletes within the province to compete and succeed at the national level.
2. **Capacity** – support the continued development of an athlete/participant-centered delivery system including increasing the quality and quantity of trained coaches, volunteers, administrators and officials.
3. **Interaction** – increase communication and collaboration within the sport and physical activity sector.
4. **Participation** (under Sport) – achieve a significantly higher proportion of Ontarians from all segments of society that are involved in quality sport activities at all levels and in all forms of participation.
Participation (under Physical Activity) – increase from 48% to 55% the proportion of the Ontario population that is physically active.
5. **Target audiences** – support the development of initiatives to increase physical activity opportunities for Aboriginal Ontarians, ethnic minorities, women and girls, older adults, low-income families, children and youth and Ontarians with a disability.
6. **Active communities** – support a community-driven approach to planning and program implementation that best meets local needs.
7. **Enabling environments** – promote policies supporting environments that offer opportunities for safe and affordable participation.

Building the *ACTIVE2010* Strategy

The Government of Canada, in conjunction with provincial and territorial governments, launched a national sport consultation process in May 2000 to find ways to improve Canada's sport system. In April 2001, a National Summit on Sport was held in Ottawa. With the support of the sport community, this led to the development of the Canadian Sport Policy.

The Canadian Sport Policy challenges all stakeholders to open sport to every segment of Canadian society. It welcomes and seeks to involve all those who do not currently consider themselves a part of the sport community or the sport system, but have the desire to contribute.

The Canadian Sport Policy reflects a new approach to shared leadership and collaboration amongst all stakeholders in order to achieve the goals of enhanced participation, excellence, capacity and interaction in sport.

Federal and provincial/territorial ministers responsible for sport, physical activity and recreation acknowledge the key impact that sport and physical activity can have on the quality of life of Canadians and directed officials to undertake efforts to increase physical activity in Canada.

The ministry established a steering committee of provincial stakeholder representatives to develop an Ontario Stakeholder Sport Action Plan that would be linked to the Canadian Sport Policy and ultimately to *ACTIVE2010*. During the course of their deliberations, the Ontario stakeholder committee identified a number of issues and priorities requiring collaborative action, including the need to:

- Enhance participation in sport and retain participants for a longer period of time;
- Improve affordable access to community and school facilities;
- Increase the number of qualified volunteers and leaders;
- Improve the quality of coaching available to Ontarians participating in sport and recreation;
- Improve access to sport, recreation and physical activity for all Ontarians, including Aboriginals, new Canadians, girls and women, lower income groups and persons with a disability;
- Improve the capacity among local, regional and provincial sport and recreation groups to provide quality programs and services to a greater number of participants;
- Improve collaboration and partnerships within the sport and recreation sector;
- Improve support to developing athletes.

The Canadian Sport Policy challenges all stakeholders to open sport to every segment of Canadian society.



...the Government of Ontario in 2003-2004 undertook broad consultations across Ontario with stakeholders in order to develop an amateur sport and physical activity strategy.

Building on the foundation of the Canadian Sport Policy and the action plan framework, the Government of Ontario undertook consultations in 2003-2004 across the province with stakeholders to develop an amateur sport and physical activity strategy. Stakeholders had two different opportunities to provide input: 1) they were asked to respond to an online survey posted on the *ACTIVE2010* website (www.active2010.ca/); and, 2) during March and April of 2004, stakeholders were invited to attend one of ten stakeholder workshops, held in London, Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Kenora, Timmins, Sudbury, North York, Toronto, Orillia and Burlington. Over 500 athletes, coaches, officials, family members, educators, volunteers, sport organizations, staff of municipalities and provincial government employees provided input at the workshops.

ACTIVE2010 represents the shared views of Ontarians interested in the development of a provincial sport and physical activity strategy.



ACTIVE2010 – Sport

Ontario has a long history of success in sport. The province is proud to have been able to contribute to the development of safe, affordable and enjoyable amateur sport programs and services. As we move forward with *ACTIVE2010*, Ontario is confronted by new challenges requiring innovative solutions. Physical inactivity, and its impact on health and health care costs, continues to be a major issue. Recent estimates indicate that sedentary living costs our health care system approximately \$1.8 billion every year. Youth obesity is on the rise. Many Ontarians still lack the opportunities or skills to be full participants in sport and physical activity. The ministry recognizes that sport and physical activity contribute to a healthy lifestyle and strengthen our communities. Yet less than half of Ontarians are physically active. A 2004 Decima Research study found that only 29 per cent of Ontarians participated regularly in sport as an athlete. We also know that over the past 20 years a smaller percentage of Ontario athletes is being represented on Olympic, Commonwealth and Pan-American teams.

In developing *ACTIVE2010*, the Province looked at how it could contribute to the four goals of the Canadian Sport Policy and respond to the specific needs within Ontario's sport sector. This strategy provides short- and long-term solutions that meet the needs of community members by supporting community delivered services that are integrated, affordable, accessible and sustainable.

ACTIVE2010 aims to build stronger communities, promote participation in sport and physical activity, develop a strong sport system, and build a dedicated volunteer base through sport. Government recognizes that it cannot do it alone. Provincial organizations, individual stakeholders and stakeholder groups partnered to help with the development of *ACTIVE2010* to ensure its relevance and usefulness to the sport and physical activity community.

The sport component of *ACTIVE2010* has identified four goals that are linked to the Canadian Sport Policy:

- Enhancing excellence in sport.
- Building increased capacity within the sport system.
- Enhancing interaction among all levels within the sport system.
- Enhancing participation in sport.

Specific approaches have been identified through *ACTIVE2010* to address these goals.

The ministry recognizes that sport and physical activity contribute to a healthy lifestyle and strengthen our communities.



The attitudes and skill levels of sport leaders, teachers and coaches have a great influence on the sport experience of young children and developing athletes.

ENHANCING EXCELLENCE

Supporting Athlete Development

Athletes, from beginners through to high-performance amateurs and professionals, are the foundation of the entire sport system. A comprehensive athlete development stream provides young athletes with proper support and training from their point of entry into competitive sport until they have achieved their highest potential, whether it is at the community, scholastic, provincial, national or international level. Assisting athletes with their climb to provincial level competition, and then on to the national level and beyond, requires a coordinated and collaborative approach with assistance from the entire sport community.

To support Ontario's athletes who seek to compete at the highest levels, the ministry will:

- Provide enhanced training support through sport medicine and sport science services.
- Support regional sport mechanisms throughout Ontario to enhance and facilitate increased training opportunities.

ENHANCING EXCELLENCE

Funding for High-Performance Sport

To capitalize on the support for athlete development and coaches, and to ensure that Ontario athletes achieve excellence at the highest level, the ministry will provide additional funding for the Canadian Sport Centre – Ontario. This funding will be used to directly increase the level of support and services currently provided to Ontario's high-performance athletes.

The ministry is providing the Canadian Sport Centre – Ontario with significant funding support over four years, and will focus on the areas of individual athlete support, coaching, training groups and sport science.

ENHANCING EXCELLENCE

Supporting Coaches

The attitudes and skill levels of sport leaders, teachers and coaches have a great influence on the sport experience of young children and developing athletes. Therefore, it is imperative that coaches at all levels (community, educational, club and high performance) have the competencies to instruct/coach athletes through fair and ethical means. Coaches also need to be recognized and applauded for their efforts and commitment to Ontario's athletes.

Well-trained coaches are essential to the sport system and, in the end, greatly enhance and contribute to the overall experience of sport. Therefore, as a component of *ACTIVE2010*, the ministry will:

- Conduct an analysis of coaching in Ontario to determine future training and development requirements.

- Continue to develop a strong provincial delivery system for coach education and accreditation, based on the revised National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) under a Competency Based Education and Training (CBET) Model.

ENHANCING EXCELLENCE

Secondary Schools and Post-Secondary Institutions

Secondary and post-secondary educational institutions in Ontario provide unique opportunities for athletes to develop and compete in accordance with their abilities and aspirations at intra-mural, inter-school, provincial or national levels. Combining a secondary school education with the rigour of high-intensity training associated with elite athlete development presents unique challenges for secondary school students. In addition, many of Ontario's post-secondary student athletes continue their athletic training in other provinces or abroad.

To support Ontario's athletes within an educational environment, the ministry will:

- Explore with the Ministry of Education the feasibility of developing adaptive/flexible academic programs that will accommodate the unique needs of highly accomplished athletes.
- Explore with the Ministry of Education new and innovative ways to increase sport participation in elementary and secondary schools.
- Enhance sport sector partnerships with the Ontario Colleges Athletics Association, Ontario University Athletics and Ontario Federation of School Athletic Association.
- Support sector initiatives to increase the number of coaches and sport specialists in schools certified through the National Coaching Certification Program.

ENHANCING EXCELLENCE

Entry Level Participation to High Performance Competition

Ontario is committed to providing opportunities for athletic participation from the playground to the highest levels of amateur athletic achievement. This progression will provide access points for athletes at any and every level of competition. An entire sport development continuum will provide Ontario athletes with the opportunity to access tools, resources and training to compete at any level. Enhancing the development of athletes through proper support and training from the point of entry into competitive sport will enable Ontario athletes to achieve their highest potential.

Through *ACTIVE2010*, the ministry will:

- Encourage Provincial Sport Organizations to establish a transparent "Developmental Blueprint" that would outline a comprehensive approach to athlete development (coordinated with, and supported by National Sports Organizations) taking athletes from the "playground to the podium".



Ontario is committed to providing opportunities for athletic participation from the playground to the highest levels of amateur athletic achievement.



The hosting of major national and international sport events has a positive impact on sport and community development.

- Explore the feasibility of restructuring the Ontario Games program to link it with the revised Canada Games program and addressing priorities identified for excellence in the Canadian Sport Policy and the Ontario Sport Strategy.
- Support legacy development plans (i.e. all events, games and championships supported by the Ministry of Health Promotion will include a plan setting out how hosting the event is expected to benefit athlete and sport development in that community).

BUILDING CAPACITY

Hosting

The hosting of major national and international sport events has a positive impact on sport and community development. Communities are strengthened through positive economic impact, increased tourism, a stronger volunteer base and improved infrastructure. Sport can benefit by increased profile, improved infrastructure, program legacies and trained volunteers. In 1999, participation in sport events generated \$3.2 billion in tourism expenditures in Ontario; attendance at sport events generated a further \$872 million.

To strengthen Ontario's capability to host major athletic competitions, the ministry will:

- Implement the national sport event hosting strategy in Ontario.

BUILDING CAPACITY

Leadership

Sport leaders play a critical role in the development of sport at the community level. It is imperative that sport leaders are ethical, competent and accountable and that they are educated and trained to the highest standards possible. To enhance sport participation and provide positive sport experiences for all athletes, sport leaders need to be capable of developing safe, high-quality programs across Ontario.

To ensure that Ontario's sport leaders and administrators have the necessary background and training, the ministry will:

- Increase and enhance the resources and tools available for sport and recreation leaders and organizations.
- Assess the feasibility of establishing a website providing information, resources and online training opportunities.

BUILDING CAPACITY

Officials

The role of the official is to ensure that sport is played safely, that the rules of the sport are followed in a fair and ethical manner, and that the levels of all participants are accommodated. Every effort should be made to develop high quality officials at the community, educational, club and high performance levels of sport. Officials are instrumental in upholding the integrity of the sport and should always be recognized for demonstrating impartiality, fairness and courage.

To ensure that officials in Ontario are adequately trained, the ministry and its partners will:

- Share best practices for the recruitment, training and retention and recognition of officials.

BUILDING CAPACITY

Sport Environment

It is clear that sport and recreation facilities affect participation in sport. The development and maintenance of safe and attractive recreational facilities and programs is a key factor in achieving increased levels of participation in sport in Ontario. Sport and recreation facilities need to be physically accessible, safe and properly maintained to attract athletes, coaches and recreational participants. In 2004, the Ontario government introduced legislation ensuring that the province will be barrier free for persons with a disability within 20 years. Increased accessibility ensures that all those who wish to participate in sport and physical activity will be given the opportunity to do so.

To address issues related to the safe management of sport and physical activity facilities, *ACTIVE2010* will:

- Promote safety and broaden the reach and scope of the SafeOntario website.
- Promote best practices and support training opportunities for coaches and leaders.
- Develop recommendations with Sport Canada for an infrastructure program that will target sport and recreation facilities to help them to meet the needs of the physically challenged.

The development and maintenance of safe and attractive recreational facilities and programs is a key factor in achieving increased levels of participation in sport in Ontario.



The differing roles of the federal, provincial/territorial and local governments are maintained through regular interaction among government officials.

BUILDING CAPACITY

Diversified Resource Base

A leading-edge sport environment requires ongoing development and long-term funding. Government resources alone cannot adequately sustain the sport sector. A diversified public and private resource base must be created to ensure the sustainability of amateur sport in the future.

To address issues related to the long-term funding of sport, the ministry will:

- Explore the possibility of working with other potential partners to strategically align funding available to the sport sector with the priorities of *ACTIVE2010*.
- Explore the possibility of forming partnerships with private-sector organizations.

ENHANCED INTERACTION

Government Collaboration

The three levels of government provide direct support and assistance to the sport sector. The differing roles of the federal, provincial/territorial and local governments are maintained through regular interaction among government officials. All three levels of government will work together to ensure that objectives, policies and communications strategies are consistent and complimentary across all jurisdictions.

Ontario ministries with an interest in the future advancement of sport are committed to working cooperatively with one another, by promoting policies and programs that support and develop sport and physical activity. This coordinated inter-ministerial approach also addresses common policy and program issues related to sport, recreation and physical activity.

To ensure maximum cooperation between governments, the ministry will:

- Develop bilateral agreements with the federal government to further develop sport.
- Collaborate on common goals with municipal and federal programs (e.g. Canadian Sport Policy).
- Establish an inter-ministerial coordinating mechanism to advance the goals and objectives of *ACTIVE2010*.



ENHANCED INTERACTION

Sector Partnerships

There is a need to increase cooperation and collaboration among sector organizations if sport in Ontario is to maintain and improve on its national and international success. Sector partnerships connect the sport and recreation sector for common purposes through national, provincial and municipal organizations and committees. These partnerships will help reduce fragmentation and ensure sport and recreation organizations are working together at the local level.

To achieve this, the ministry will:

- Forge better links between communities, provincial sport organizations, provincial recreation organizations, multi-sport organizations, and national sport organizations.
- Encourage modifications to federal and provincial funding guidelines to promote collaboration between provincial and national sport organizations on the one hand, and community sport organizations on the other.
- Encourage organizations to work with other non-profit organizations outside the sport sector, such as crime-prevention groups.

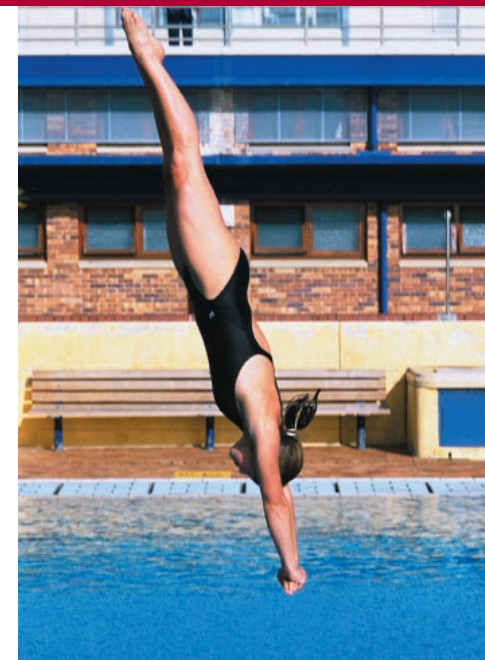
ENHANCED INTERACTION

Track Emerging and Existing Trends

A resource database that collects and manages information would improve the sector's understanding of current and future sport trends in Ontario. Conducting appropriate research and collecting accurate data ensures that Ontario is able to adequately plan for the future. Research will provide insights into provincial demographics and issues related to specific target groups, trends in Provincial Sport Organizations funding, sport participation levels and much more. By measuring trends and making better use of research, Ontario will have a better understanding of how to provide appropriate programs and services to its citizens.

To strengthen the research capacity in the area of sport, the ministry will:

- Assess current trends in sport.
- Conduct comprehensive surveillance studies in Ontario to determine participation levels in sport.
- Analyze other sport models at the national and international level.



There is a need to increase cooperation and collaboration among sector organizations if sport in Ontario is to maintain and improve on its national and international success.

Research indicates that students who participate in daily physical activity exhibit improved memory, concentration, communication skills, problem-solving ability, and leadership capabilities.

ENHANCED INTERACTION

Promotion

More than 50 per cent of Canadians, including a similar proportion of Ontarians, have become accustomed to sedentary living. Positive reinforcement of the benefits of sport can alter this behaviour and promote sport participation as a vital part of everyday living. Ontarians need to be aware of the positive physical, mental and social benefits associated with sport participation and physical activity.

To promote the many positive aspects of sport and physical activity, the ministry will:

- Educate Ontarians about the values and benefits of sport and physical activity.
- Coordinate promotional efforts with the federal government to increase sport participation.
- Develop a youth sport campaign to encourage young people to participate in sport.

ENHANCING PARTICIPATION IN SPORT

School System

Schools have long been identified as the first setting where children are exposed to organized sport. *ACTIVE2010* will enhance participation in school athletics and promote its benefits through education. The focus of our efforts will be to increase student sport and physical activity opportunities and participation in all Ontario schools.

Increasing participation in sport and physical activity in Ontario schools will lead to healthier students, who will realize the benefits of participation through increased health, decreased absenteeism, increased self-esteem, improved health and lifestyle choices, and an increased tendency to participate in their community. Research indicates that students who participate in daily physical activity exhibit improved memory, concentration, communication skills, problem-solving ability, and leadership capabilities.



To increase sport participation in Ontario's schools, the ministry will:

- Seek to develop community partnerships that will increase the number of students participating in interschool sports.
- Provide training opportunities to school staff and volunteers, so that the number of trained teacher/coaches can be increased to deliver a greater number and range of programs.
- Support creating school environments that encourage recreational sport as well as high-performance sport.
- Seek opportunities to develop innovative program-funding partnerships to support school sport.
- Explore with the Ministry of Education alternative approaches to increasing sport and physical activity in Ontario elementary and secondary schools.

ENHANCING PARTICIPATION IN SPORT

Community Sport/Recreation

ACTIVE2010 is about increasing participation in sport and physical activity at the community level, and better supporting our athletes who reach the highest level of competitive athletics. At any level and at any age, participation in sport and recreation can teach meaningful life skills, such as: leadership, teamwork, discipline, hard work, fair play and respect for others. At an early age, sport has the potential to become a constructive outlet for youth at risk, keeping them engaged in positive and productive activities. Sport participation promotes health benefits, such as increased resistance to heart disease, cancer, diabetes, osteoporosis, arthritis, obesity and mental health disorders. Sport participation also plays a key role in the development of social and interpersonal skills and contributes to the development of a child's self-confidence and feelings of self-worth.

Quality sport and recreational programs delivered in local communities are extremely effective in enhancing sport participation. Research suggests that individuals and families are more likely to participate in sport and physical activity if they have access to affordable and safe parks, trails and recreation programs and community facilities.

Sport participation promotes health benefits, such as increased resistance to heart disease, cancer, diabetes, osteoporosis, arthritis, obesity and mental health disorders.





Recognizing these benefits and the necessary community supports, the ministry will:

- Establish a new provincial funding model for Provincial Sport Organizations.
- Enhance and develop programs and services to address accessibility and equity issues for under-represented groups.
- Work with the Provincial Sport Organizations to enhance sport programs to ensure appropriate competition levels are available within various skills levels.
- Continue to develop programs to address affordable access to school facilities by community sport and recreation groups.
- Reduce barriers to participation in sport among Aboriginal Ontarians.
- Aid in the establishment of local planning tables to support community sport development.

Research suggests that individuals and families are more likely to participate in sport and physical activity if they have access to affordable and safe parks, trails and recreation programs and community facilities.

ACTIVE2010 – Physical Activity

The health benefits of physical activity have been conclusively demonstrated over the past 40 years. Research suggests that substantial improvements in health and quality of life are achieved when sedentary segments of the population adopt a physically active lifestyle. Most developed countries have adopted policies and programs designed to enhance physical activity among their citizens. The Government of Ontario seeks to address this issue through one of its key priorities, "Better Health". Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health in her 2004 report, "Healthy Weights, Healthy Lives", identified the increasing prevalence of overweight and obesity as a major public health issue. She recommended that the Government of Ontario develop an innovative comprehensive, multisectoral plan to address healthy weights, healthy eating and physical activity. The Ontario Physical Activity initiative will contribute to reducing the rate of childhood and youth obesity by increasing the rate of physical activity among all Ontarians."

Physical Activity and Health Benefits

In 1988 and 1992, two international consensus building conferences were held in Toronto to examine the evidence regarding the role of regular physical activity, physical fitness, and their interactive contribution to health^{1,2}. During the two conferences, internationally respected researchers in the physical activity sciences considered over 70 different topics. They agreed that the relationships among physical activity, physical fitness and health are highly complex, as outlined in the model depicted in Figure 2. The model suggests how the components are related to one another and gives an insight into the challenges confronting officials seeking to increase the level of physical activity within a population.

Following the 1992 International Consensus Conference in Toronto, the Office of the U.S. Surgeon General prepared the first Surgeon General's report on physical activity and health. Released just prior to the Atlanta Olympics, the report concluded, in part, the following³ :

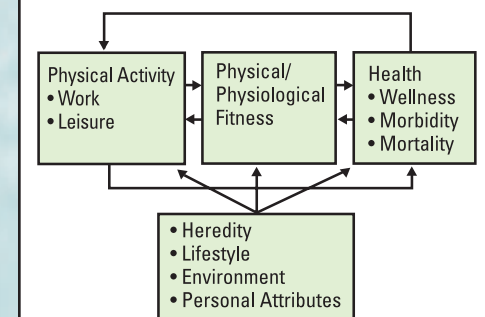
1. Physical activity has numerous beneficial physiological effects. Most widely appreciated are its effects on the cardiovascular and musculoskeletal systems, but benefits on the functioning of metabolic, endocrine, and immune systems are also considerable.
2. Many of the beneficial effects of exercise training – from both endurance and resistance activities – diminish within 2 weeks if physical activity is substantially reduced, and effects disappear within 2 to 8 months if physical activity is not resumed.
3. People of all ages, both male and female, undergo beneficial physiological adaptations to physical activity.
4. Higher levels of regular physical activity are associated with lower mortality rates for both older and younger adults.

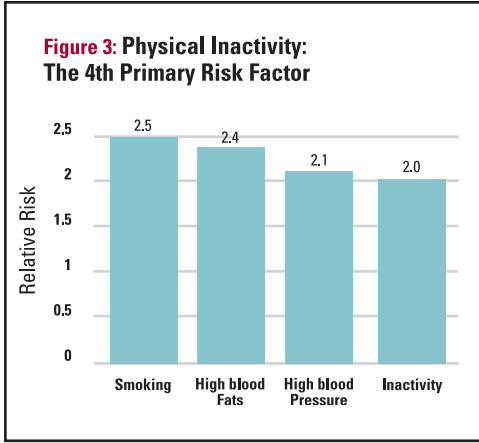
¹ C. Bouchard, R.J. Shephard, T. Stephens, J. Sutton, B. McPherson: Exercise, Fitness and Health – A Consensus of Current Knowledge. Human Kinetics, 1990.

² C. Bouchard, R.J. Shephard, T. Stephens: Proceedings of the International Conference on Physical Activity, Fitness and Health. Human Kinetics, 1994.

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Physical Activity and Health: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA 1996

Figure 2: A Model of the Relationships Among Physical Activity, Fitness and Health





- Even those who are moderately active on a regular basis have lower mortality rates than those who are least active.
- Regular physical activity or cardiovascular fitness decreases the risk of cardiovascular disease mortality in general and of coronary artery disease mortality in particular. Physical Inactivity is considered the 4th primary risk factor for heart disease along with smoking, elevated blood pressure and elevated cholesterol (Figure 3).
- The level of decreased risk of coronary heart disease attributable to regular physical activity is similar to that of other lifestyle factors, such as keeping free from cigarette smoking.

How Active are Ontarians?

National surveys have been conducted in Canada since 1981 to determine what proportion of Canadians are active and to identify what the incentives and barriers are that contribute to participation in physical activity. Since 1995, the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute (CFLRI) has published annual surveys as part of its Physical Activity Monitor (PAM). This provides federal and provincial/territorial officials and physical activity promoters with insights into the changing physical activity participation patterns across the country. Figure 4 shows the reduction in physical inactivity in each province and territory between 1998 and 2001.⁴

The 2001 CFLRI Physical Activity Monitor reported that:

- As many as 57 per cent of Ontarians are insufficiently active for optimal health benefits. (National Population Health Survey, 1998/99)
- Across Canada, physical activity has increased significantly since the early 1990s, going from 38 per cent in 1994 to 45 per cent in 1998. (NPHS, 1998/99)

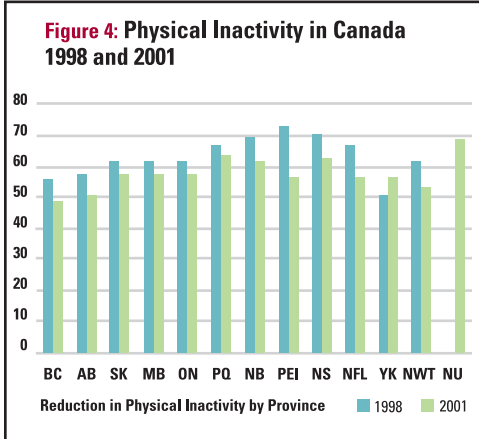
The most popular physical activities for adults over 20 are (as a percentage of adults involved in each):

Walking for exercise	69%	Swimming	26	Golf	14
Gardening, yard work	47	Social dancing	23	Jogging, running	13
Home exercise	31	Bicycling	21	Weight training	12

- Fifty-seven per cent of youth aged 12-19 are not active enough for optimal growth and development. For the purpose of these analyses, the term physically inactive is equivalent to an energy expenditure of less than three kilocalories per kilogram of body weight per day (KKD). This level of physical activity can be achieved by a half hour of martial arts plus walking for a total of at least one hour throughout the day. (1998/99 NPHS)

The most popular physical activities for youth are:

Walking for exercise	60%	Jogging, running	42%	Social dancing	38%
Bicycling	49%	Basketball	38%	Home exercise	37%
Swimming	46%				



⁴ C. Craig: Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute. Unpublished report, 2003.

The Physical Activity Monitor reported the following barriers to physical activity:

- Lack of time due to work (50%);
- Constant tight deadlines (42%);
- Roads that are too busy are preventing Ontarians from being physically active (34%)
- Lack of pleasant places to walk and/or bicycle (28%);

How Much Physical Activity Should Ontarians Build Into Their Daily Lives?

Numerous groups and organizations, including the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada, the American College of Sports Medicine, the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology, and the World Health Organization (WHO), have made recommendations on how physical activity can improve health. In the 1960s through to the mid-1980s, recommendations were based primarily on the “FITT” formula that was developed by exercise physiologists to improve aerobic power, or maximum oxygen uptake (a measure of personal physical fitness). The Frequency, Intensity, Time and Type of activity required to improve aerobic power, however, was often considered to be too strenuous by habitually sedentary individuals. More recently, epidemiologists have determined that many positive health outcomes accrue when more modest activity is undertaken on a daily basis. In 1993, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) released a recommendation that “every American adult should accumulate 30 minutes or more of moderate intensity physical activity over the course of most days of the week.” The CDC/ACSM recommendation went on to suggest that incorporating more activity into the daily routine is an effective way to improve health. Activities that can contribute to the 30-minute total include walking up stairs (instead of taking the elevator), gardening, raking leaves, dancing, and walking all or part of the way to and from work.

In October of 1994, the WHO and the International Federation of Sports Medicine (FIMS) released a statement to governments around the world concerning physical activity and health⁵. The WHO and FIMS urged governments to promote and enhance programs of physical activity and fitness, as part of public health and social policy, centred on the following aims:

- Daily physical activity should be accepted as the cornerstone of a healthy lifestyle and should be integrated into the routine of everyday living.



More recently, epidemiologists have determined that many positive health outcomes accrue when more modest activity is undertaken on a daily basis.

⁵ Exercise for health. WHO/FIMS Committee on Physical Activity for Health. World Health Organization 1995: 73(2):135-6



For children and youth, the Canadian guidelines are more aggressive. They recommend that, over several months, children and youth try to participate in at least 90 minutes of physical activity per day, and decrease by at least 90 minutes per day the amount of time spent on non-active activities, such as watching videos and sitting at a computer.

- Children and adolescents should be provided with facilities and the opportunity to take part in daily programs of enjoyable exercise so that physical activity may develop into a lifetime habit.
- Adults should be encouraged to increase habitual activity gradually, aiming to carry out daily at least 30 minutes of physical activity of moderate intensity, (e.g., brisk walking and stair climbing). More strenuous activities such as slow jogging, cycling, field and court sports (e.g. soccer, tennis, etc.) and swimming could provide additional benefits.
- Women must be offered a variety of opportunities and more encouragement to engage in healthy exercise.
- The elderly, including the oldest citizens, growing in numbers worldwide, should be encouraged to lead physically active lives so as to maintain their independence of movement and personal autonomy, to reduce the risks of body injury, and to promote optimal nutrition.
- People with disabilities and those suffering from chronic disease should be provided with exercise advice and facilities appropriate to their needs.

The WHO/FIMS report notes that the responsibility for personal health ultimately lies with the individual and family, but government action is required to create a social and physical environment that is conducive to the adoption and maintenance of physically active lifestyles.

In 1995, the National Institutes of Health released a consensus statement in which they recommended, “that all people increase their regular physical activity to a level appropriate to their capacities, needs, and interest. We recommend that all children and adults should set a long-term goal to accumulate at least 30 minutes or more of moderate-intensity physical activity on most, or preferably all, days of the week. Intermittent or shorter bouts of activity (at least 10 minutes), including occupational and non-occupational, or tasks of daily living, also have similar cardiovascular and health benefits if performed at a level of moderate intensity (such as brisk walking, cycling, swimming, home repair, and yard work) with an accumulated duration of at least 30 minutes per day”.

In October of 1998, Health Canada and the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology launched Canada’s Physical Activity Guide to Healthy Active Living. The guide and its recommendations were supported by all provinces and territories and reinforce the importance of integrating physical activity into daily living. It is based on scientific and medical evidence and is designed to help inactive Canadians to learn how to include physical activity in their daily lives. The guide recommends starting slowly and progressing gradually towards performing 30 to 60 minutes of daily activity.

For children and youth, the Canadian guidelines are more aggressive. They recommend that, over several months, children and youth try to participate in at least 90 minutes of physical activity per day, and decrease by at least 90 minutes per day the amount of time spent on non-active activities, such as watching videos and sitting at a computer.

Provincial Targets

The available evidence indicates that there will be important gains in public health if regular participation in moderate intensity physical activity is promoted. As mentioned previously, activity such as brisk walking for at least 30 minutes every day (or an equivalent activity) can provide substantial health benefits. The promotion of moderate intensity physical activity must therefore be the cornerstone of a provincial physical activity policy and strategy.

Federal and provincial/territorial ministers responsible for sport and recreation recognize the importance of continuing to promote physical activity and set a new national target for physical activity participation. Less than half of all adults in Ontario currently meet the minimum recommended guidelines for healthy active living. To address this issue the Ontario government aims to increase to 55 per cent by 2010 the number of adults of age who will walk a minimum of 30 minutes daily (or participate in some other equivalent activity). To ensure that progress is being achieved to meet the 2010 target of 55 per cent, an intermediate target has also been identified: that, by 2007, 50 per cent of Ontarians will be classified as active.

Broad strategies are being developed to reach those who currently do not participate regularly in moderately intense physical activity, and to raise awareness and increased understanding of the benefits of physical activity.

What Strategies are Likely to be Effective?

Ontarians have understood for many years that physical activity is closely linked to improved health. The 1985 Active Health Report demonstrated that 66 per cent of Canadians had taken steps in the previous year to improve their health. Increasing exercise was the most frequent change that Canadians reported, being cited by 29 per cent of respondents, followed by improved eating habits at 12 per cent.

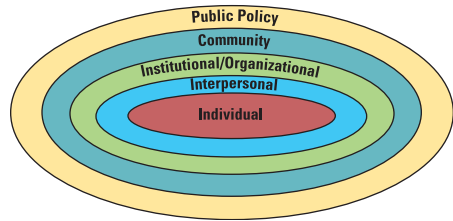
The fact that over 50 per cent of Ontarians still do not achieve an adequate amount of daily physical activity demonstrates the complexity of the issue and the challenges that confront public health officials. Caroline Schooler⁶, in a report to the ministry, noted that “the complexity of changing people’s habits and behaviours calls for a public health perspective which considers multiple determinants of behaviour (individual, social and environmental) and comprehensive intervention strategies to improve the health of the entire population”.

The fact that over 50 per cent of Ontarians still do not achieve an adequate amount of daily physical activity demonstrates the complexity of the issue and the challenges that confront public health officials.



⁶ Caroline Schooler, Physical Activity Interventions: Evidence & Implications. Report to the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation November 1995

Figure 5: A Social-Ecological Model for Levels of Influence



The physical activity component of *ACTIVE2010* is based on the understanding that it requires not only educational and promotional activities targeting the individual, but also efforts to reform organizations, policy development, economic support and environmental changes. This “ecological” perspective highlights the importance of approaching the problem of low physical activity participation rates at multiple levels and stressing interaction and integration of factors within and across levels.

Figure 5 highlights a social-ecological model incorporating five successively more complex “levels of influence”⁷ :

- Individual factors – characteristics that influence behaviour such as knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and personality traits.
- Interpersonal factors – interpersonal processes and primary groups that include family, friends and peers, all of which provide social support, identity and role function.
- Institutional factors – rules, regulations, policies, and informal structures, which may constrain or promote physical activity.
- Community factors – social networks and norms or standards, which exist formally or informally among individuals, groups, and organizations.
- Public policy – local, provincial, and federal policies and laws that regulate or support healthy actions and practices.

Community planners have found that physical activity promotion succeeds best when initiatives are undertaken keeping in mind these “levels of influence”. Governments alone will not be successful in creating a physically active society. It will take the combined efforts of many partners, including the health sector, the volunteer recreation sector, education, amateur sport, social services, business and industry, and municipalities to build an active, healthy Ontario.

⁷ K. R. McElroy, D. Bideau, A. Streckler, K. Glanz: An Ecological Perspective on Health Promotion Programs. *Health Education Quarterly*, 15: 1988

Areas of Action

The physical activity component of *ACTIVE2010* has identified four Areas of Action that are linked to the national Healthy Living Strategy:

- Enhancing participation in physical activity
- Fostering active communities through community planning and development
- Targeting specific audiences
- Creating enabling environments

In order to create and support physically active communities throughout the province the following initiatives will be explored:

ENHANCING PARTICIPATION IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Education and Promotion

Regular participation in physical activity is an important component of a healthy lifestyle and a key factor in maintaining a healthy weight. Ontarians need and want to be educated about the benefits of physical activity and the risks associated with remaining inactive. They need to know how much and what kinds of physical activity will ultimately permit them to achieve their health goals. Ontarians also need to know how to begin an activity program and how to remain active over an extended period of time. In order to enhance participation in physical activity the ministry will:

- Brand *ACTIVE2010* in such a way that provincial, regional and local physical activity and sport initiatives are identified as part of the broader provincial initiative.
- Promote a new attitude to physical activity through social marketing including the use of mass communication techniques.
- As a major theme, focus attention on the many reasons to participate in physical activity.
- Develop and launch a program to promote regular walking.
- Develop and launch a winter *ACTIVE2010* month.
- Expand the availability of internet-based educational and promotional physical activity resources.
- Support the implementation of 20 minutes of daily physical activity in elementary schools.





ENHANCING PARTICIPATION IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Surveillance and Monitoring

Tracking progress towards the 2010 target of 55% of Ontarians being classified as physically active on a daily basis is a critical component of *ACTIVE2010*. In order to track our progress and make informed decisions in the future concerning new programs and initiatives, the ministry will:

- Continue to monitor physical activity patterns in Ontario, evaluate program effectiveness, and research new and innovative strategies to advance *ACTIVE2010* goals.
- Through the Inter-provincial Sport and Recreation Council support the Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute's Physical Activity Monitor.
- Establish and implement a surveillance strategy to determine the physical activity level of Ontario children and youth.

FOSTERING ACTIVE COMMUNITIES THROUGH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Supporting Community Efforts to Increase Participation

Ultimately all physical activity takes place at the community level. Whether it is through opportunities within the community recreation and parks system, through private fitness/athletic clubs, through the school system or simple taking the opportunity to go for a walk or cycle around the neighbourhood, the facilities or parklands must be affordable and accessible to all. To foster the development of active communities, the ministry will:

- Support *ACTIVE2010* physical activity initiatives at the community level through various provincial funding programs.
- Continue to assume a leadership role in addressing the "Community Use of Schools" issue, concerning increasing public access to school gymnasiums and playing fields.
- Collaborate with major urban centres undertaking initiatives to enhance physical activity.
- Fund physical activity leadership training programs for community leaders.

TARGETING SPECIFIC AUDIENCES

Focusing Effort Where the Need is Greatest

Research examining the physical activity patterns of Ontarians has indicated that opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity are not afforded equally to all segments of society. To address this issue, the ministry will:

- Strengthen the capacity of leaders at the community level to plan and deliver quality and safe physical activity programs to non-active audiences.
- Provide coaching and physical activity leadership training opportunities for volunteers within ethnic communities.
- Encourage the planning and development of volunteer training programs for physical activity leaders in Aboriginal communities.
- Expand funding programs to meet the physical activity needs of low-income children and youth.
- Actively work with and support the Ministry of Children and Youth Services' Best Start initiative on the Directors' Best Start Implementation Committee and other horizontal initiatives. There will be significant opportunities to increase active, healthy living for children 0-6 and their families through collaboration with Best Start Networks throughout the province. The Best Start initiative is consistent with *Active2010's* population based health promotion approach and a focus on very young children through and with their parents is an important strategic aspect of that.

CREATING ENABLING ENVIRONMENTS

Creating Supportive Environments

In order to increase participation in walking, jogging, cycling and other forms of activity it is necessary to ensure that the community environment will support and accommodate such activities. In order to address this issue, the ministry will:

- Fund the development of physical activity plans that will lead to an increase in the number of physical activity programs available at the community level.
- Develop and implement the provincial trails strategy.
- Support alternative transportation initiatives to encourage cycling and walking (and reduce automobile emissions).
- Research and disseminate "Best Practices" in the area of alternative transportation and urban planning.
- Support programs and campaigns that encourage walking or cycling to school.

Target audiences: Aboriginal Ontarians, ethnic minorities, women and girls, older adults, low-income families, children and youth and Ontarians with a disability.





Closing – Remarks

There can be little doubt that an active lifestyle is an essential component of healthy living. As more Ontarians become active their health and well-being improves, as does their quality of life. This is what *ACTIVE2010* is all about. By working with our partners at the national, provincial and local level, the Ministry of Health Promotion seeks to reverse the trend of increasing inactivity associated with modern living. The *ACTIVE2010* strategy outlines the ministry's direction and sets priorities for the future. Our *ACTIVE2010* target, to increase to 55 per cent the proportion of the Ontario population that is physically active, is an aggressive target that will require that we work through partnerships with others who share the view that sport and physical activity can make a positive contribution to the quality of life in Ontario.

The Ministry of Health Promotion would like to thank the various stakeholder groups and sector organizations that assisted in the development of *ACTIVE2010*. These organizations contributed their time, effort and valuable insight in order to improve the sport and recreation environment in Ontario. We will look forward to working with the sport and physical activity sector in the months and years ahead in order to create opportunities for Ontarians to become involved in quality sport activities; enhance opportunities for Ontarians to participate in daily physical activity; and increase the number of Ontarians who value participation in sport and physical activity as an integral and essential part of life in Ontario.

Should you wish to obtain further information regarding *ACTIVE2010*, or to monitor our progress on the various initiatives, please visit our website, at www.active2010.ca.

Notes

Notes



www.active2010.ca



Ministry of Health Promotion