



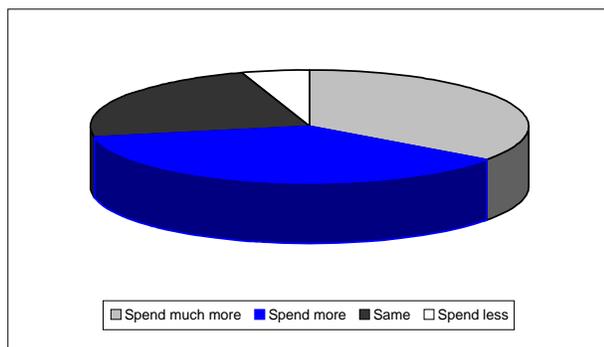
Sport Participation in Canada

Government Involvement in Sport

Government Spending

The 2006-07 Sport Monitor examined whether Canadians thought that government spending of their tax dollars towards services, facilities, and programs supporting sport should increase, decrease, or stay the same as compared to what is currently spent. The majority of Canadians support more spending on sport as compared to what is currently spent by government: 71% of Canadians report that the government should *increase* spending (of this proportion, 35% say the government should spend *much more*), while 24% state that the *same* level of spending is appropriate, and the remaining 5% state that the government should *reduce* spending on sport. Residents of Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and the Northwest Territories are more likely whereas those in Saskatchewan are less likely than the average Canadian to support *increased* public spending on sport.

FIGURE 1: GOVERNMENT SPENDING, OVERALL

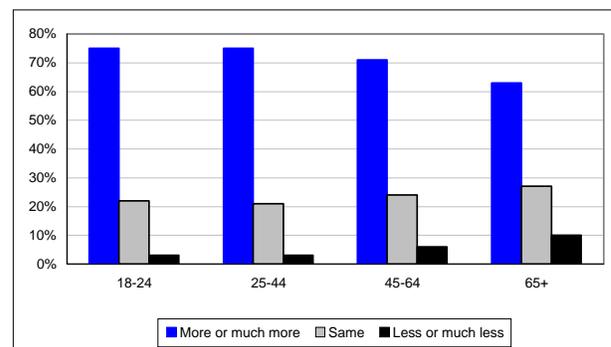


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Socio-economic and demographic characteristics Canadians aged 65 years or older are significantly less likely than the national average (and 18 to 44 year olds specifically) to

support an *increase* in spending on sport by governments. Canadians who are employed in full-time jobs are more likely than those who hold part-time jobs to support an *increase* in spending by governments on sport. No other socio-economic or -demographic (i.e., education, income level, community size, etc.) differences exist with respect to support for extra government spending on sport.

FIGURE 2: GOVERNMENT SPENDING BY AGE



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Activity level and sport participation Active Canadians are more likely to support an *increase* in spending on sport compared to those who are least active. In addition, Canadians who participate in sport are more likely than non-participants to state that they support an *increase* in government spending on sport.

Role of Government

Governments at a national, provincial, territorial, and municipal level can also affect activity behaviours through policies and initiatives, from safety standards to infrastructure and maintenance of facilities. The 2006-07 Sport Monitor examined Canadians' views on the degree of responsibility that government should assume in tax incentives related to sport, informational outreach, policy,



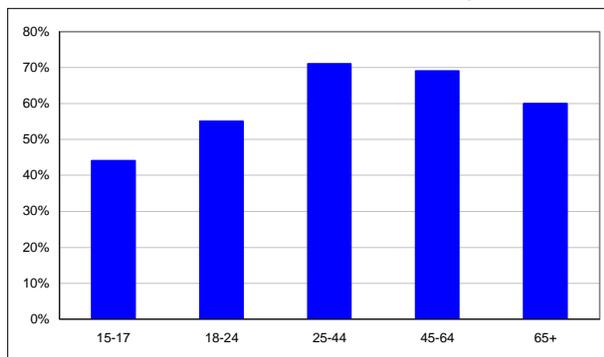
environmental change, and programs and services related to sport and physical activity.

Responsibility for Sport Tax Incentives or Credits

Two-thirds (66%) of Canadians say that there should be a high level of governmental responsibility for providing tax incentives or credits for sport. Those living in Saskatchewan are less likely than the national average to say this.

Socio-economic and demographic characteristics Canadians aged 25 to 64 are most likely to indicate that a high level of governmental responsibility for providing tax incentives or credits for sport would be appropriate. Women aged 25 to 44 are more likely than younger women, as well as those 65 years or older, to agree with a high level of governmental responsibility for providing tax incentives for sport.

FIGURE 3: GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR SPORT TAX INCENTIVES/CREDITS BY AGE (HIGH LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY)



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University-educated adults are more likely than those with less than a secondary level of education to agree with a high level of government responsibility for this as well. Full-time workers are more likely whereas part-time workers are less likely than the average Canadian to support a high level of governmental responsibility for providing tax incentives for sport, and adults who have never been married are least likely to indicate this.

Activity level and sport participation There are no differences in perceptions of the degree of governmental responsibility for tax incentives for sport by activity level or sport participation.

Responsibility for Sport Infrastructure

Most Canadians support a high level of governmental responsibility for sport infrastructure, such as:

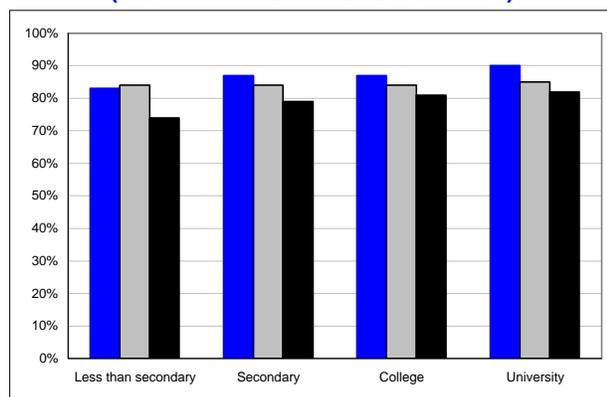
- * Ensuring that community development plans include walking and bicycling paths (88%),
- * Maintenance of existing sport facilities(84%), and
- * Ensuring that community development plans include building new sport facilities (80%).

Residents of Saskatchewan are less likely than the national average whereas those in the Northwest Territories are more likely to agree with a high level of governmental responsibility for ensuring that community development plans include building new facilities for sport and for maintaining existing sport facilities.

Socio-economic and demographic characteristics Women are more likely than men to report that a high level of governmental responsibility would be appropriate for ensuring that community development plans include walking and bicycling paths. Overall, Canadian women aged 25 to 44 are more likely than those aged 65 or older to agree with a high level of governmental responsibility for ensuring bike and walking trails are included in community development. This pattern does not appear among men. Older adults (aged 65 or older) are generally least likely to agree with a high level of government responsibility for ensuring the creation of new sport facilities in community plans and the maintenance of existing sport facilities, though again this pattern only appears for women.

University-educated adults are more likely than those who have not completed high school to cite a high level of governmental responsibility would be appropriate for ensuring community development plans include walking and bicycling paths and building new facilities for sport.

FIGURE 4: GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR SPORT INFRASTRUCTURE BY EDUCATION (HIGH LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY)



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Residents of larger cities are generally more likely than residents of the smallest communities (with fewer than 1,000 residents) to support a high level of government responsibility for ensuring community development plans include walking and bicycling paths, as well as maintaining existing facilities for sport.

Activity level and sport participation There are few differences in perception of government responsibility for sport infrastructure with activity level and sport participation, with two exceptions. Sport participants are more likely than non-participants to report agreeing with a high level of governmental responsibility for ensuring that community development plans include building new facilities for sport, and also for ensuring existing facilities are properly maintained.

Responsibility for Sport Information and Services

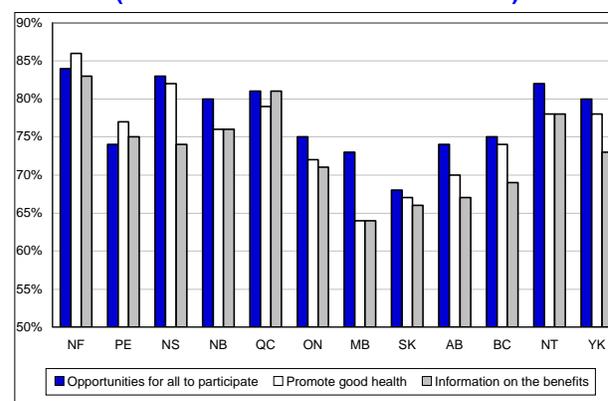
Provision of information and services regarding health, physical activity, and sport is considered to be a key responsibility of government by most Canadians. These services, and the proportions of Canadians agreeing with a high level of governmental responsibility for them, include:

- * Providing services, programs, and facilities to help everyone participate (76%),
- * Promoting good health (74%), and
- * Providing public information on the benefits of physical activity and sport (73%).

Residents of Newfoundland and Labrador are more likely than the national average to attribute high governmental responsibility to all three of

these activities. Residents of Quebec are more likely than the average to attribute high governmental responsibility to providing information on benefits. Residents of Saskatchewan are less likely than average to support a high level of governmental responsibility for providing opportunities to help everyone to participate. Manitobans are less likely than the national average to support a high level of governmental responsibility for promoting good health or providing information on the benefits of activity and sport.

FIGURE 5: GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR SPORT INFORMATION AND SERVICES BY PROVINCE (HIGH LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY)



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Socio-economic and demographic characteristics Canadian women aged 25 to 44 are more likely than their older counterparts to attribute a high level of governmental responsibility to providing opportunities that encourage everyone to participate. This age relationship does not exist for men. There are no income- or education-related differences with respect to perceptions of governmental responsibility for information and services. There are differences in perceptions of governmental responsibility for providing information on benefits by community size; however, the pattern is not clear. Widowed, divorced, and separated adults are more likely than adults who have never been married to agree with a high level of governmental responsibility for promoting good health, and are more likely than married adults to attribute governmental responsibility to providing information on the benefits of activity and sport. Students are more likely than the national average to support governmental responsibility for the promotion of good health.

Activity level and sport participation There are no differences regarding perceptions of governmental responsibility for information and services with activity level. Sport participants are more likely than non-participants to attribute high governmental responsibility to providing opportunities that encourage everyone to participate, though participants and non-participants do not differ in their perceptions of government responsibility for promoting good health and providing information on benefits.

Responsibility for Policy and Regulation

Most Canadians (89%) report that a high level of governmental responsibility would be appropriate for ensuring mandatory daily physical education in schools. Similarly, 84% of Canadians attribute a high level of governmental responsibility to setting safety standards in sport, including protective equipment worn by participants. About three-quarters (77%) of the population attribute a high level of government responsibility to ensuring certification and training for coaches and other sport leaders. Residents of the Northwest Territories are more likely than the national average to agree with a high level of governmental responsibility for setting safety standards in sport and for ensuring certification and training of sport leaders.

Age and sex Canadians aged 25 to 44 are more likely than those aged 65 or older to report a high level of governmental responsibility would be appropriate for ensuring daily physical education at school, and women aged 25 to 44 are generally most likely to indicate this.

Women are more likely than men to support a high level of governmental responsibility for setting safety standards in sport (specifically among those aged 25 to 64) and for certifying and training coaches and sport leaders (specifically among those aged 25 to 44).

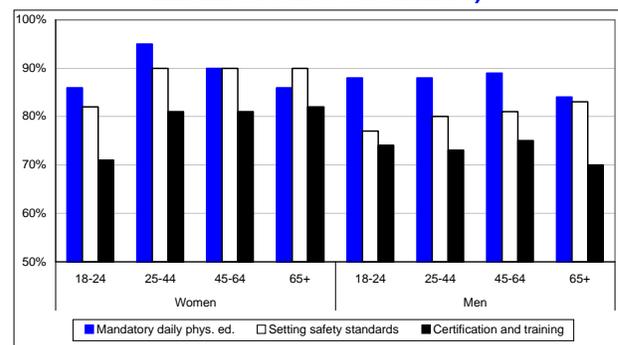
Socio-economic and demographic characteristics

There are few socio-economic or demographic differences in perceptions of government responsibility, with two exceptions. Widowed, divorced, and separated adults are most likely to support a high level of governmental responsibility for certification and training of

coaches and sport leaders, and for setting safety standards in sport.

Activity level and sport participation There are no activity level or sport participation differences in perceptions of governmental responsibility for ensuring daily physical education in Canada's schools, setting safety standards in sport, and ensuring certification and training of coaches and sport leaders.

FIGURE 6: GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR POLICY AND REGULATION BY AGE AND SEX (HIGH LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY)



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Recommendations for action

Results of this bulletin indicate that Canadians favour an increase in spending on sport, although Canadians were not asked specifically how the increase in spending should be directed.

Canadians were, however, also asked about their views as to what they believe would require a high level of government responsibility in various aspects related to sport. Given the relatively high proportion found for virtually all listed activities, a multi-factor approach including policy and environmental change strategies should be considered. The Task Force on Community Preventive Services recommends a number of interventions based on available scientific evidence (see <http://www.thecommunityguide.org/pa/index.html>). In these recommendations, a number of approaches are suggested:

Environmental and policy approaches include those in the physical environment, social environment, and norms and policies. These can be addressed through community-scale urban design and land use policies, which include

proximity of recreational and sport opportunities to residences. The creation of or enhanced access to places for physical activity and sport combined with outreach activities and street scale urban design and land use policies, which include policies such as those for building codes, roadway design, or design factors such as street crossing, improved lighting, traffic calming, and improved streetscape, are also recommended. These are important factors in providing training or cross-training opportunities (e.g., cycling, running) for sport participants.

Clearly, Canadians see a role for government in modifying or enhancing environmental and policy considerations, as at least eight out of ten adults attribute a high level of government responsibility to ensuring the creation of walking or bicycling paths and new sport facilities in community development, as well as the maintenance of existing sport facilities. Recommendations pertaining to this topic are discussed in further detail in another research bulletin (see Bulletin # 10 of the 2007 Physical Activity Monitor Series: Environments supporting physical activity).

Social and behavioural approaches can include behaviour change and skill development, as well as social support. Given these approaches, the Task Force recommends three approaches:

- (1) Individually adapted health behaviour change programs that include skill development for incorporating physical activity into daily life. These programs should be tailored based on interest, preference, and stage of change.
- (2) Social support interventions in the community, which are programs that look at changing activity behaviour by building supportive social networks, such as buddy systems and linking up with others in the community.
- (3) Enhanced school-based physical education that would make classes longer and would increase activity time.

This bulletin shows that a very high proportion (89%) say that government should be highly responsible for ensuring mandatory daily physical education, and this is rated highest among women

aged 25 to 44. Moreover, the majority of Canadians also state that the provision of information and services, and the certification of coaching and sport leaders, should be key governmental responsibilities that can help contribute to skill development.

Interventions and strategies focusing on individual-based behaviour change can incorporate instruction and skills development, goal setting and progression toward these goals, social support for these goals, reinforcement of the behaviour through positive incentives, issue resolve for maintaining the behaviour, and preventing relapse.¹ Recent research indicates that women are more likely than men to say that help or advice in choosing appropriate activities is important for helping them be more active (see Bulletin # 9 of the 2007 Physical Activity Monitor Series: Informational Outreach for Promoting Physical Activity), suggesting that the promotion of activities that are currently prevalent or popular among this particular population segment may help skill development and promote self-efficacy. In addition, social networking and interaction, as well as the promotion of the benefits of physical activity, may be useful. This bulletin (i.e., Bulletin # 9 of the 2007 Physical Activity Monitor Series) also states that women are more likely to say that advice on how to incorporate physical activity into daily life would be helpful, possibly reflecting the role of women in several caretaking roles. Physical activity opportunities that are specialized for women^{2,3} or that consider different barriers in different stages of life⁴ can be examples of tailoring physical activity and sport opportunities.

References

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