



Sport Participation in Canada

Relevant Services to Increase Participation

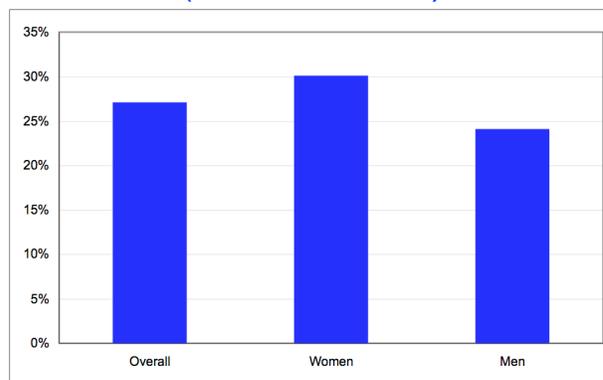
The presence or absence of support services may impact one's decision to participate in sport. The 2006-2007 Sport Monitor examined the importance of particular services (specifically those that are affordable, accessible, or instructional) aimed to increase the ease of participating in sport among Canadians. Three composite scores were created given their high ratings of internal consistency (i.e., very similar to each other) of the scale values of the variables, as described below.

Accessibility

Canadians were asked questions about accessibility, including the importance of accessing paths, trails, green spaces, accessing safe facilities and public spaces, as well as convenient public transportation. A derived score was created by summing ratings of importance across these three areas. Overall, access is very important to Canadians (25% score at least 13 on a 15 point scale). Those living in Saskatchewan are less likely than the average Canadian to indicate that access to these types of environments would be very important in encouraging them to participate in sport.

Age and sex Overall, more women than men report that these types of supports are very important to them. This can also be noted more specifically among those aged 45 to 64.

**FIGURE 1: ACCESSIBILITY, BY GENDER
(% VERY IMPORTANT)**



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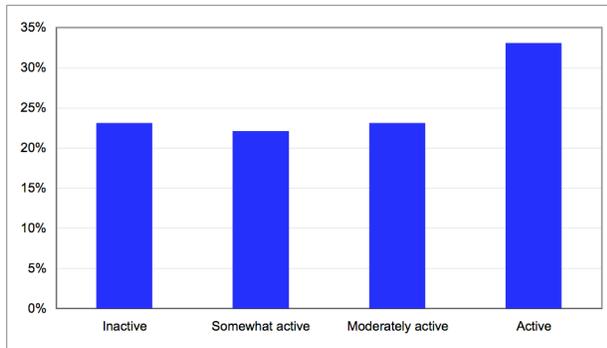
Socio-economic and demographic characteristics

Adults from the highest income households are less likely than those from the lowest income households to rate accessibility as quite or very important. Those who have never been married are less likely than those who are widowed, divorced, or separated to report that access to such spaces would be very important to them.

Sport participation and activity level Accessibility appears to be an important issue among sport participants in that they are more likely than non-participants to rate this as quite or very important. Similarly, active Canadians are more likely than those who are inactive to rate access as very important.



**FIGURE 2: ACCESSIBILITY, BY ACTIVITY LEVEL
(% VERY IMPORTANT)**



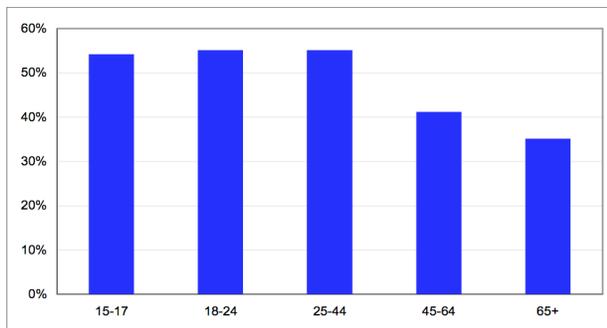
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Affordable Services

Canadians were asked a series of questions examining affordable services and were asked to rate them on importance in making it easier to participate in sport. A composite score was created by summing their ratings of importance for services such as affordable facilities, services and programs, affordable child care provisions, and affordable services that help to network or link with other people participating in sport. Overall, having these types of affordable services available is very important to Canadians (25% score at least 12 on a 15 point scale). There were few differences in ratings of importance with one exception; residents of New Brunswick are more likely than the national average to say these types of services are very important.

Age and sex Overall, women are more likely than men to say that affordable services are very important. Adults aged 25 to 44, and in particular women of this age, are generally the most likely to say these services are very important. Regardless of gender, viewing these services as important or very important decreases with increasing age.

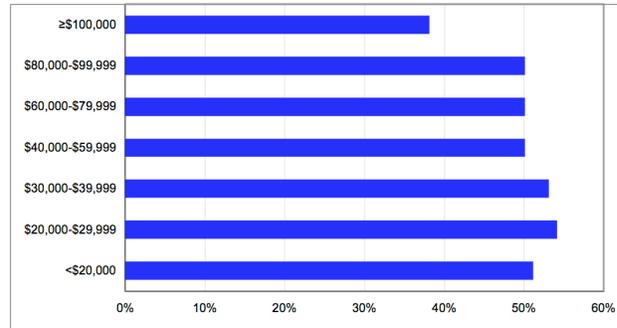
**FIGURE 3: AFFORDABLE SERVICES, BY AGE
(% IMPORTANT OR VERY IMPORTANT)**



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Socio-economic and demographic characteristics As might be expected, those with the highest incomes are generally the least likely to say that affordable services are very important. There is a similar relationship with education, whereby those with a university education are least likely to say these services are important. Retired adults are less likely than the average to say that affordable services are important or very important.

**FIGURE 4: AFFORDABLE SERVICES, BY INCOME
(% IMPORTANT OR VERY IMPORTANT)**



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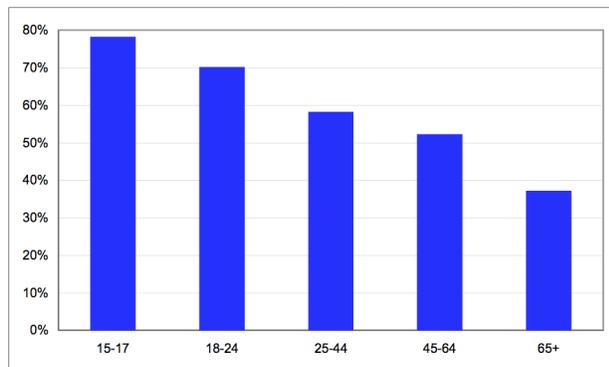
Sport participation and activity level Canadians who participate in sport are more likely than non-participants to say that affordable services are important or very important in making it easier to participate in sport, however, there are no differences by activity level.

Instructional or Information Services

Canadians were asked a series of questions regarding the importance of information and instruction in order to make it easier to participate in sport. A composite score was created by summing ratings of importance for information and instructional services such as specific coaching and instruction, helping in planning activity and sport into daily living, professional help in choosing appropriate activities, and the provision of information on sport, physical activity, health and well-being. Overall, instruction and information services are moderately or very important to Canadians (25% scoring at least 14 on a 20 point scale). Residents of Prince Edward Island and the Yukon are less likely than the average Canadian to say that these types of services are important in making it easier for them to participate in sport.

Age and sex Women aged 25 to 44 are more likely than men in the same age group to find these types of services moderately or very important, and similarly women aged 45 to 64 are more likely than men of the same age to say that it is important to some degree. Regardless of gender, the younger a person is, the more likely they are to report that these types of services are important for making sport participation easier.

FIGURE 5: INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTION SERVICES, BY AGE (% IMPORTANT)

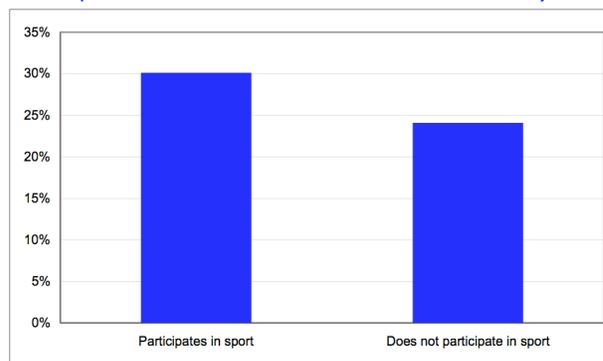


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Socio-economic and demographic characteristics Canadians who have never been married are the most likely to say that these types of instructional or information services are important. Relatively more adults with less than a high school education say these services are important compared to those with a university education. A similar relationship exists with household income, whereby adults from low income households are more likely than those from the highest income households to say that these types of services are moderately or very important. Retired individuals are less likely, whereas students are more likely than the average to say that these types of services are important.

Sport participation and activity level As expected, sport participants are more likely than non-participants to say that instructional and information services are moderately or very important for making it easier to participate in sport, however, there are no differences by activity level.

FIGURE 6: INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTION SERVICES, BY SPORT PARTICIPATION (% MODERATELY OR VERY IMPORTANT)



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Recommendations for action

Perceived importance of services is likely influenced by several individual factors and may in turn affect an individual's preference for participating in sport activities. Individuals may not participate in sport due to a host of barriers, including competing obligations, time away from family, cost, lack of appropriate facilities nearby, and lack of instruction or coaching (see Bulletin #7 in this series). In order to target the most important factors for increasing sport participation among Canadians, the following should be considered:

- * **Supporting sex-specific services that target women's needs** With respect to information, differences between men and women are restricted to certain age groups, but affordability and other types of supports are issues rated as highly important to women overall more than it is to men. Because affordable services (including affordable childcare resources and others) are more important specifically to women aged 25 to 44, it may be that they are mothers or in other care-taking roles, and thus have an interest in low-cost ways of participating in sport for themselves and their families. Home-based activities or simple sporting activities in one's community can be affordable and a means through which mothers can participate alone or with children.¹

Informational services are reportedly more important to women aged 45 to 64, which may reflect a stage of life change and a

resulting interest in information on sporting activities best suited to one's health and priorities. Resources targeted to such women that acknowledge and address their specific concerns^{2,3} may motivate them to participate in sport. Addressing other resources such as safety issues, availability of outdoor spaces, and convenient transportation are concerns for women of all ages in this bulletin, and in other literature.^{4,5} For example, engaging individuals to patrol paths to increase feelings of safety among women in particular who wish to use paths to jog or engage in other forms of physical training.

✧ **Addressing age-specific needs for sport services** The relative importance of a given service varies considerably by age, with younger Canadians rating affordability and information or instruction as important. Acknowledging the potential cost barriers faced by young adults, as well as their potential preference for more competitive or challenging sports that may require specific coaching or instruction (see Preferences bulletin in this series), may be a prudent response to the importance they place on related services.

✧ **Addressing economic disparities** Canadians with lower education and income are generally more likely than others to attribute high importance to these types of supportive services, in particular those related to affordability, information and instruction. Addressing these disparities, including offering assistance to people in lower socio-economic groups such as fee assistance, transport, improved access, and knowledgeable service providers can be useful.⁶ In addition, offering a variety of programs and services within the community that include a range of skill, fee, and equipment requirements may be useful.

References

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