



Aboriginal Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity Strategy

Prepared by the Aboriginal Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity Partners Council



Strategy Overview

The overall direction of the ASRPA Strategy is to contribute to a healthier future for Aboriginal communities, families and individuals by making sport, recreation and physical activity a priority. The Strategy takes a youth-centered approach because, as the largest growing population sector in Canada, they represent the future for Aboriginal communities. Youth are the sector of the population most easily attracted to participating in sport, recreation and physical activity, and for whom the opportunity to learn about a healthy, active lifestyle and achieve better health, enhanced self-esteem and self-confidence can best translate into positive life choices that, in turn, will improve health in the short and long term.

The Partners Council recognizes that the Strategy will be implemented in concert with initiatives arising from the Transformative Change Accord: First Nations Health Plan, and the Métis Nation Relationship Accord between Métis Nation British Columbia and the Province of BC. However, ASRPAPC's engagement with youth, Elders, leaders and communities affirms the need for a particular focus on sport, recreation and physical activity.

As identified in the Transformative Change Accord: First Nations Health Plan Supporting the Health and Wellness of First Nations in British Columbia, "traditional lifestyles have been altered dramatically leading to more sedentary lifestyles and reduced access to traditional foods and medicines. This has led to a disproportionately high incidence of preventable diseases among First Nations.

- First Nations in British Columbia have a diabetes rate 40 per cent higher than the rate of the general population.
- Status First Nations live 7 years less than other British Columbians.
- 49% of Aboriginal youth smoke, more than double the rate of other young people in BC
- 55% of Aboriginal children and youth living on reserve are overweight or obese and 41% of those living off reserve are overweight or obese."

Research continues to add proof to the indisputable correlation between regular physical activity and positive health benefits, including:

- its critical role in preventing and managing many chronic and non-communicable diseases including:
 - Cardiovascular disease, the leading cause of death in Canada: People regularly participating in physical activity reduce the risk of developing or dying from heart disease
 - Diabetes: Regular cardiovascular and resistance exercise helps lower the risk of type 2 diabetes and stabilizes blood sugar levels which assist in managing diabetes
 - Cancer, the second most common cause of death in Canada: Physical activity has been proven to reduce the risk of cancer by 30–40% relative to those who are less active
- decreases of obesity, smoking and reported illness
- improved quality of weight loss and psychological well-being
- promising evidence that strength training and other forms of exercise in older adults preserves the ability to maintain independent living status and reduces the risk of falling and incidence of bone fractures

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- mental health benefits, including enhanced self-esteem, improved management of stress and anxiety, and alleviation of depression
- recent breakthrough research has shown that exercise improves brain functions such as memory and learning, and reduces cognitive loss through Alzheimer's and small strokes

Research also indicates that participation in quality recreation opportunities enables children to:

- develop skills and competencies
- be exposed to program leaders and positive role models
- achieve better physical and emotional health
- develop psychosocial skills
- improve self-esteem, academic performance, and peer and family relationships
- develop life skills such as leadership, decision-making and problem-solving
- form healthy habits that can be transferred into their adult lives
- participate and take pride in their community
- have fun and be with friends

Research has also shown that recreation as part of an integrated community strategy to deal with issues arising from poverty pays for itself through reduced use of social and health services.

There is abundant and growing evidence that physical activity and recreation play central roles in a healthy lifestyle.

The 2008 True Sport Report¹ stated: "...significant disparities exist in the social, economic and cultural opportunities available to Aboriginal people and to Canadians as a whole. This is reflected in higher rates of illness, premature mortality, school leaving, unemployment, poverty and incarceration among Aboriginal populations. Sport has been identified by Aboriginal people themselves and by Canada's provincial, territorial and federal governments as an important means in helping reduce these disparities, particularly as they relate to Aboriginal youth, the fastest growing segment of Canada's population."

In developing its strategy, the Partners Council, while acknowledging the evidence from Western science about the importance of active lifestyle, gives equal value to Aboriginal experience of physical activity, recreation and sport as an integral part of culture and tradition through the history of Aboriginal peoples, and an important element in the well-being of individuals, families and communities. The result is a strategy that emphasizes the need to harmonize mainstream concepts with an Aboriginal world view of sport, recreation and physical activity that has a holistic approach drawn from traditional values.

The Strategy emphasizes the common elements that are found among effective Aboriginal sport, physical activity and recreation programs²:

- Developing good leadership and qualified, experienced coaches and program leaders
- Non-threatening environments that include non-traditional delivery models

¹ What Sport Can Do: The True Sport Report (Canadian Centre for Ethics and Sport) 2008, p. 45

² As referenced in "What Good Sport Can Do".

- Adequate and sustained human and financial resources to run programs and pay staff
- Resources directed to obtaining and maintaining facilities and equipment
- Community support and involvement in planning and delivery
- Holistic approach
- Links and/or partnerships with other programs and agencies
- Creation of local employment and volunteer opportunities for individual development, training and leadership
- Ensuring ongoing access to appropriate facilities
- Reducing financial, transportation, cultural and information barriers.

The Partners Council plan has overarching strategies, within which each community, given its particular context, can identify its own needs and draw upon available resources and expertise, as well as learn with other communities of best practices in sport, recreation and physical activity programs.

Guiding Principles

The Partners Council established the following guiding principles to serve as a point of reference in the design and development of the Strategy:

- Aboriginal peoples are an integral part of British Columbia's history and heritage
- Aboriginal peoples possess significant traditional knowledge and cultural teachings, which recognize the positive influence of physical activity and sports/games have on holistic personal development
- Aboriginal people in British Columbia live in complex geographical environments and, as such, experience unique living conditions and social realities
- Aboriginal peoples hold personal dignity and well-being as the foundation of their cultures and maintain the inherent right to live healthy and active lives
- Aboriginal protocol must be respected in all instances
- Aboriginal people with disabilities have unique challenges that must be considered within program planning and delivery
- Barriers to Aboriginal peoples' participation in sport, recreation and physical activity opportunities are compounded by a lack of financial resources and transportation options
- The BC Aboriginal Youth Sport and Recreation Declaration calls on leaders to respond collectively to the needs of Aboriginal youth and to establish youth sport, recreation and physical activity as a provincial priority
- First Nations and Métis leaders have expressed their support for creating a provincial Strategy for Aboriginal sport, recreation and physical activity
- Increasing Aboriginal peoples' participation in sport, recreation and physical activity is enhanced through partnerships with various stakeholders, both Aboriginal and mainstream

a. 5 Pillars and Priority Activities

The Strategy is organized under 5 Pillars that, through the sum of their actions, will create responsive and enduring programs for Aboriginal people across BC and as a result positively impact on the health and well-being of individuals, families and communities. The 5 Pillars include:

Pillar 1: Active Communities

Pillar 2: Leadership and Capacity

Pillar 3: Excellence

Pillar 4: System Development

Pillar 5: Sustainability

Core Priorities are identified under each Pillar. For each Core Priority, this proposal identifies Phase 1 Actions for the implementation over a three-year period (2009–10, 2010–11 and 2011–12). Phase 1 Actions set up the fundamental human and program structures necessary for the transformational change that will evolve over the span of the Strategy.

Additionally, each of the Partner's organizations will initiate or modify actions in support of the Core Priorities.

“Our support in establishing the Aboriginal Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity Partners Council reflects our commitment to improving the lives of Aboriginal people through the promotion of active lifestyles. The collaborative work of the Partners Council has led to a unified approach to address the needs of Aboriginal people across BC, including those residing in urban centres.”

Grace Nielsen,
President, BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres



Pillar 1: Active Communities

Core Priority 1

Increase access to, and participation levels in, sport, recreation and physical activity in First Nations, Métis Chartered Communities, off-reserve and urban communities, families and individuals.

a) Phase 1 ACTION

Harmonize the mainstream concept of physical activity with Aboriginal cultural and traditional practice, connection to the land, and relationship with the Creator.

- i. Harmonizing the mainstream concepts of sport, recreation and physical activity with traditional/holistic values is fundamental to increasing participation.
- ii. A distinctly Aboriginal perspective on physical activity expands how communities, families and individuals think about health and physical well-being and enables communities to choose ways of increasing physical activity that are connected with tradition, culture and language. This will result in a more sustainable approach to lifelong physical activity.
- iii. Articulating a harmonized concept needs to occur early in Phase 1, as it will be the foundation for all programs.
- iv. A harmonized concept will evolve through dialogue with Elders, leaders, youth and community members. It will be documented in visual and written ways that communicate the central ideas.
- v. Funding will support the organization of dialogue circles and the production of different communication tools that describe/illustrate the harmonized concept.

b) Phase 1 ACTION

Establish a program to enable community-based planning and implementation of sport/recreation/physical activity projects that increase opportunities and access.

- i. Aboriginal communities, families and individuals have different levels of access to a variable range of opportunities, and experience diverse barriers in accessing or initiating programs. Community-based assessment, planning and implementation of projects are essential elements in long-term sustainability.
- ii. Specific needs are identified through an assessment of existing service delivery, availability and access to programs, facilities and equipment, availability of trained leaders, and finances available to support a community's plan.

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- iii. A community plan identifies priority activities to increase access and/or opportunities for individuals, families and/or the community. Some communities have already identified needs and will be ready to propose projects.
- iv. The funding for this program would be administered through ASRPAPC. Funding would be available to communities for projects in different categories or a combination of categories, including:
 - needs assessment and planning
 - travel subsidies
 - equipment
 - registration fees
 - uniforms
 - training for coaches, instructors, officials
 - facility rental
 - minor facility modification, e.g., ramp access to a gymnasium for Elders or individuals with a disability, new backboards
- v. First Nations reserve and off-reserve communities and Métis Chartered Communities would be eligible for support.
- vi. This is an annual program that would distribute \$1 million dollars. Up to \$10,000 funding per project will enable implementation of a minimum of 100 community projects.
- vii. The application and distribution process will be worked out in detail in the first year of Phase 1 and phased in to ensure efficient, effective processes. The ASRPAPC anticipates using quarterly application cycles. This will improve the timeliness of support for individual and team needs and distribute the administrative load through the year.
- viii. There will be an ongoing assessment of the program through the early application cycles to ensure its criteria are effective, distribution of funding is timely and funding has the anticipated effect.

c) Phase 1 ACTION

Produce and make available promotional material that profiles Aboriginal people role modeling positive lifestyles through sport, recreation and physical activity.

- i. Role models present possibilities that might not otherwise be considered by individuals. This is an important element in raising awareness about opportunities for being active in different ways.
- ii. Role models will include accomplished BC Aboriginal athletes and community members who lead physically active, healthy lifestyles through recreation and physical activity.
- iii. Promotion material will be consistent with the Aboriginal view of physical activity, sport and recreation.
- iv. Promotion material will use different medium and forms in order to reach the different groups and serve different purposes, e.g., youth, Elders, schools, etc. Promotion material might include posters, interactive internet pages, speakers' notes, resources for teachers or health stations, etc.

- v. Funding will support the development and availability of material. The work will be coordinated by ASRPAPC staff.

d) Phase 1 ACTION

Produce guidelines for fitness levels necessary for a healthy life.

- i. In order to encourage a healthy lifestyle, guidelines that assist individuals and families in learning different ways to achieve the fitness level they need for a healthy life are needed. Guidelines would be developed for the continuum of Aboriginal lifelong physical activity pathway and for different conditions such as varying goals, different types of abilities and interests, preferred activities, e.g., canoeing, trail walking, use of exercise equipment, picking berries, etc.
- ii. Guidelines for fitness would assist communities, families and individuals in understanding the breadth of options that contribute to healthy levels of activity.
- iii. Guidelines would be a resource for health, band and recreation leaders in the community.
- iv. Guidelines would be produced in different media.
- v. Funding supports the development and production of guidelines.
- vi. Development of fitness guidelines would take place after the completion of the Aboriginal lifelong physical activity pathway.

Core Priority 2

Increase access to existing facilities for Aboriginal people living in urban communities.

e) Phase 1 ACTION

Establish partnerships with local parks and recreation departments and school districts to enable use of facilities at low or no cost.

- i. Developing partnerships is a local activity that cannot be directly implemented by the Partners Council .
- ii. Implementing this action is part of the day-to-day work of regional coordinators. As part of their responsibility, regional coordinators would identify recreation departments and school districts whose facilities are more welcoming to Aboriginal people or that have partnerships with First Nations communities, Friendship Centres or Métis Chartered Communities. Working partnerships would be used as examples in creating a convincing case for other communities to take action.
- iii. Sharing of knowledge with the leaders in Partner Council organizations would occur through regional networks and provincial leaders' forums.

Pillar 1 – Active Communities

Expected Phase 1 Outcomes

- a) There is a clearly articulated Aboriginal worldview of physical activity, recreation and sport that is holistic and values traditional and cultural activity and that serves as the foundational reference for all elements of the Strategy.
- b) Organizational and community leaders have increased their awareness of importance of physical activity in a healthy lifestyle and are actively supporting the implementation of the next phases of the Strategy.
- c) Programs designed to increase participation and access to sport, recreation and physical activity meet the specific and unique needs of individuals, families and First Nations reserve and off-reserve communities, and Métis Chartered Communities.

Long-Term Actions

Over the longer-term, actions in the Active Communities Pillar will aim to:

- a) Continue to enable community-based projects that focus increasingly on recreation and physical activity for different ages and abilities of individuals and reinforce traditional activities.
- b) Bring together individuals and families from First Nations reserve, off-reserve and urban communities, and Métis Chartered Communities, in a celebration of the increased role that sport, physical activity, recreation and culture play in a healthy Aboriginal lifestyle.

Long-Term Outcomes

- a) First Nations reserve, off-reserve and urban communities, and Métis Chartered Communities have improved health outcomes as a result of increased participation in a broad spectrum of sport, recreation and physical activity. Health outcomes will be evaluated in collaboration with Aboriginal health authorities and with the participation of the community leaders and members.
- b) Mainstream facilities throughout BC have policies and programs that are responsive to Aboriginal people.

“As an athlete, I am a passionate advocate for sport. Sport plays a critical role in improving the lives of individuals as well as whole communities. Sport, recreation and physical activity provide essential life skills. This Strategy will help to prepare and empower our people to lead healthy, active and more fulfilling lives.”

Stephanie Albiston,

MNBC Provincial Youth Chairperson & Minister Responsible for Sport



Pillar 2: Leadership and Capacity

Core Priority 1

Increase the human resource capacity of communities and organizations to develop and implement sport, recreation and physical activity programs.

a) Phase 1 ACTION

Hire eight full-time regional coordinators with working knowledge of First Nations and Métis culture to enable and support increased community participation.

- i. The Partners Council anticipates establishing regions throughout the province for planning purposes. The intent is to have these regions served by regional coordinators
- ii. Regional coordinators will be instrumental in creating connections among regional members of the Partner Council organizations and across related sectors of health and education. One of the early roles of the regional coordinators will be to create committees that link First Nations communities, Friendship Centres, Métis Chartered Communities, Aboriginal health authorities, and youth representatives within and across regions to support regional activities.
- iii. Regional coordinators will be the essential link with the communities in the implementation of the Strategy. They will:
 - Act as a community resource, able to provide information, leadership and links to programs and resources
 - Support community leaders to assess, plan and implement projects
 - Assist ASRPA staff to understand community needs in their region
 - Establish a council of community leaders to validate community directions and frame community outcomes
 - Assist communities in participating in or hosting NAIG qualifying tournaments
 - Support delivery of sport programs with a focus on athlete and coaching development
 - Assist other Partner Council organizations to implement their programs in the communities within a region.
- iv. Regional Coordinators will be hired as soon as possible and managed by the ASRPAPC.

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- v. Hiring of coordinators will take place in a staged fashion over the first and second year of Phase 1. Special attention will be given to training of regional coordinators early in their engagement, as they are essential in facilitating the community-based planning that is a core tenet of the Strategy.
- vi. The Partners Council organizations will support the regional offices by identifying possible office locations at existing sites.
- vii. Funding will support the salary, benefits, professional development, office operation and coordinator travel.
- viii. Funding will also enable the set up and functioning of the regional committee/council, and ensure all the communities and youth groups in a region on committee or council have representation

b) Phase 1 ACTION

Work with provincial universities and colleges to implement sport, recreation and wellness programs specifically designed for Aboriginal persons.

- i. One outcome that is critical in ensuring sustainable programs is the availability of trained, accredited sport, physical activity and recreation professionals. Among these professions are kinesiologists, coaches, massage therapists, recreation administrators, physiotherapists, physical education teachers, personal trainers, rehabilitation therapists, chiropractors, sport medicine doctors, nutritionists, etc.
- ii. The primary focus of this action will be to implement initiatives that ensure that Aboriginal persons can successfully enroll and complete post-secondary programs. This can involve a range of actions including:
 - securing reserved seats for Aboriginal applicants
 - transition activities that will assist students in developing the skills required to be successful in post-secondary programs
 - assistance in acquisition of necessary academic competencies or prerequisites
 - laddering programs
- iii. This action will enhance any support already provided for tuition and living expenses.
- iv. A second focus in this area will be to encourage post-secondary institutions to develop Aboriginal certification programs in relevant fields similar to those currently under development at Northwest Community College, UBC and Vancouver Island University. One of the roles of the ASRPAPC staff will be to provide input into curriculum development of these educational institutions to ensure that curricula meet the needs of those who are preparing to work in an Aboriginal community environment.
- v. Funding will be directed to programs that support enrollment and completion and are designed collaboratively with the post-secondary institutions with input from potential program applicants.

c) Phase 1 ACTION

Organize an annual provincial forum of leaders.

- i. In the first year the provincial forum will bring together community sport, physical activity and recreation leaders; elected officials and staff from provincial government ministries for sport, health and education, and First Nations, Métis and Friendship Centre leaders. The aims of the

- first forum will be to profile the Aboriginal Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity Strategy and to discuss the ongoing roles and relationships that will be necessary to ensure success.
- ii. In the second and subsequent years, the forum will bring together community and activity leaders to network, exchange ideas and share best practices; and secondly, to provide professional development opportunities for community leaders.
 - iii. Funding would support travel for community leaders and on-site organization needs.

Core Priority 2

Support the training, development and enhanced experiences of coaches, instructors, officials and administrators.

a) Phase 1 ACTION

Establish a long-term plan for the training of coaches, instructors, officials and administrators.

- i. ASRPA will work with regional offices, Partner Council organizations, current coaches, instructors, officials and administrators to conduct a needs assessment.
- ii. ASRPA will identify existing training opportunities and programs available provincially and in the areas served by the regional offices.
- iii. The needs assessment will also identify the barriers that have limited access to training by Aboriginal coaches, instructors, officials and administrators.
- iv. A long-term plan to train, recognize and support the ongoing development of coaches, instructors, officials and administrators that ensures the approach to development is consistent with a holistic approach will be completed.
- v. The goal of the long-term plan will be to ensure that there are an appropriate number of coaches, instructors, officials and administrators to meet the needs of the regions.
- vi. Funding will be directed to completion of the needs assessment and to support training for Aboriginal coaches, instructors, officials and administrators.

b) Phase 1 ACTION

Increase the physical activity level of leaders and persons working in communities as a means of promoting healthy workplaces.

- i. One of the keys to the sustainability changes initiated through the Strategy is the support of community and organization leaders. The ASRPAPC organizations will need to encourage leaders throughout their organizations to adopt a healthy lifestyle and become role models for their members.
- ii. In Phase 1, early activity would be focused on Partner Council organizations' leaders
- iii. Partner organizations would lead initiatives to activate leaders throughout their organization
- iv. Funding would support the development of initiatives for leaders' health challenge and knowledge-sharing at the end of the challenge, and the subsequent promotion of the Community Health Challenge.

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c) Phase 1 ACTION

Support and promote outdoor recreation and the revival of traditional outdoor activities.

- i. There are existing initiatives that offer outdoor recreation and rediscovery of traditional and cultural activities. In Phase 1, ASRPA regional coordinators will look to build relationships with exchanges, leadership development activities and programs such as Tribal Journeys.
- ii. Support for individuals to attend such programs in Phase 1, e.g., youth camps, could be done through the community project funding.
- iii. Another initiative in Phase 1 would be to draw upon Elders' knowledge of traditional activities and stories to describe how their community lived in history and identify the types of traditional activities that could re-introduced as part of a healthy lifestyle.

d) Phase 1 ACTION

Develop relationships with equipment retailers and manufacturers.

- i. There are existing relationships with retailers; however the need to replace, upgrade and increase access to sport, recreation and physical activity equipment for Aboriginal people in BC requires a long-term approach with a broader network that lowers the cost of equipment for communities.
- ii. It will be the role of ASRPA to establish partnerships with retailers, manufacturers, foundations and equipment rental businesses and to build an equipment supply source network.

Pillar 2 – Leadership and Capacity

Expected Phase 1 Outcomes

- a) Communities, families and individuals are supported in increasing their physical activity by full-time coordinators in an interconnected network of regional offices.
- b) Network of health, sport, recreation and education non-government and government organizations coordinate activities, share resources and network in support of ASRPAPC Strategy.
- c) Aboriginal workers and leaders have increased their physical activity levels.
- d) Delivery of programs is effective, sustained, and responsive to community needs.
- e) Programs are in place to support Aboriginal persons to successfully enroll and complete post-secondary professional preparation.
- f) Partnerships exist that are increasing availability of sport equipment for communities and individuals.
- g) Increased numbers of communities participate in traditional outdoor activities.

Long-Term Actions

Over the longer-term, actions in the Leaders and Capacity Pillar will aim to:

- a) Expand the human resource capacity by hiring program specialists in the regional offices to meet the increased program level created by implementation of the leaders training Strategy, post-secondary education Strategy, and BC Team programs
- b) Implement the training Strategy: travel subsidy, course registration fees, development of new materials, accommodation and per diem of courses, assessment activities, community hosting of training
- c) Implement programs to support post-secondary graduates in the initial phase of their career, e.g., Apprenticeships, mentoring, field placements, etc.
- d) Introduce programs to promote healthy, active lifestyles among Aboriginal community and organization leaders

Long-Term Outcomes

- a) Increased number of Aboriginal professionals in sport, recreation and physical activity are working in community and provincial organizations.
- b) First Nations reserve, off-reserve and urban communities and Métis Chartered Communities implement fully resourced programs and opportunities that sustain increased participation in sport, recreation and physical activity by families and individuals.
- c) Aboriginal organizations are supported through a human resource investment strategy that trains, supports and employs workers at a community level.
- d) Coaches, instructors, officials and administrators have ongoing training and opportunities to gain increasing levels of experience.
- e) Communities' leaders regularly share knowledge and best practices.

“Our communities need the leadership of skilled recreation coordinators to develop ongoing programs. Our youth deserve the guidance of well trained coaches to deliver those programs in a safe and supportive environment. Together, they are the cornerstone of community based sport, recreation and physical activity programs that meet the unique needs of our communities”

Ken Edzerza,

Former Chairperson, Aboriginal Sport and Recreation Association of BC



Pillar 3: Excellence

Core Priority 1

Increase the number of organized sport programs and competitions throughout the province.

a) Phase 1 ACTION

Develop an Aboriginal lifelong physical activity pathway that reflects holistic approaches, traditional activities and cultural practices.

- i. Using the Aboriginal holistic model for physical activity and the mainstream model of long-term athlete development as starting points, engage sport leaders, traditional advisors and Elders and other types of experts from Aboriginal and mainstream sport to gain a better understanding of what the Long-term Athlete Development Model represents and then add to it in order to create an Aboriginal pathway.
- ii. Funding is directed to:
 - Forums and meetings of experts
 - Consulting support to coordinate the development of the pathway
 - Consulting support to develop specific guidelines for community fitness levels and sport and athlete development programs
 - Preparation of material to support the use of the pathway by communities and other organizations in designing physical activity programs
- iii. Initially, the Aboriginal lifelong physical activity pathway will be used as a reference by ASRPAPC and regional offices in the design of new programs; ultimately the pathway should influence all community program planning in the areas of sport, physical activity and recreation.

b) Phase 1 ACTION

Develop a campaign to increase the number of Aboriginal athletes participating in school athletic programs at the secondary and post-secondary level.

- i. Develop baseline information about the number of Aboriginal athletes in BC secondary and post-secondary programs.
- ii. Research participation of Aboriginal athletes in school athletic programs and why some are able to participate successfully while others are not.
- iii. Develop role model athletes based on research. (Links back to role model campaign in Pillar #1)

- iv. Engage the Aboriginal education units within the Ministries of Education and Advanced Education and the BC School Sports Association to develop an approach in school sport that addresses inequality of access to sport opportunities; barriers to involvement in recreational and physical activities; appropriate methods to recruit Aboriginal students into school sport; and design of school sport programs that take a holistic approach and reinforce traditional values

Core Priority 2

Create a strong, coordinated system to select Aboriginal Teams and prepare athletes to participate in NAIG and other elite competitions.

a) Phase 1 ACTION

Establish a consistent, comprehensive Aboriginal Team BC program that results in increased participation and better preparation.

- i. The first step towards a comprehensive program is the establishment of a three-year planning process at community and provincial levels that addresses the selection, preparation and travel of Aboriginal Team BC.
- ii. The creation of an open, transparent, inclusive selection process that is based on merit is a priority action. The following actions will be implemented as part of the selection process:
 - Establishment of provincial championships in sports where there is widespread participation and an existing base of participants
 - Support for communities to bid and host provincial championships
- iii. It is also imperative to develop a coherent team qualification and preparation program that ensures that individuals residing in First Nations reserve, off-reserve and urban communities and Métis Chartered Communities have equitable access to:
 - Talent identification systems that maintain community participation by athletes and coaches up to provincial championships level
 - Support for coaches to gain appropriate levels of training and receive ongoing athlete preparation
 - Annual Aboriginal Team BC training camps and competition schedule
 - Financial support to identified Aboriginal Team BC athletes/coaches for training and competition
 - Support for identified Aboriginal athletes to compete outside Canada
- iv. Building relationships with mainstream sport organizations that have existing training and competition resources will be essential to the success of the Aboriginal Team BC program. Access to these resources will enhance the preparation of Aboriginal athletes and coaches.
- v. While Aboriginal Team BC may be the final level of sport participation that some athletes and coaches choose, it is nevertheless a natural stepping stone for athletes and coaches to mainstream sport, including provincial and national championships, BC Games and Canada Games. Participation in mainstream training activities or competitions as part of Aboriginal Team BC preparation will facilitate the move for athletes and coaches.

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- vi. Funding will be directed to:
 - Travel subsidies for provincial championships and qualifying tournaments
 - Development and implementation of Aboriginal Team BC training and competition programs
 - Coaching and participation by other specialists
 - Training camps
 - NAIG participation by Aboriginal Team BC

Core Priority 3

Advance athletes and coaches to high performance training and competition.

a) Phase 1 ACTION

Establish an athlete assistance program for emerging Aboriginal high-performance athletes.

- i. This action establishes an annual subsidy for 20–25 athletes who become eligible through an objective qualification process. The program would enable athletes to enhance their training and competitive program and help them transition into mainstream sport.
- ii. The details of the qualification process will be developed in Phase 1.
- iii. It is anticipated that the program will be introduced with a small number of athletes to allow assessment of the qualification process and initial impact.

Core Priority 4

Develop partnerships with mainstream provincial sport and multisport service organizations to enhance the Aboriginal sport system.

a) Phase 1 ACTION

Develop links with provincial sport and multi-sport service organizations that enhance the development of Aboriginal athletes.

- i. There is a publicly funded and coherent mainstream sport system that is available to support the ongoing improvement of Aboriginal athletes.
- ii. A priority in Phase 1 will be to work with provincial sport organizations to facilitate access to mainstream programs, training camps and competitions for Aboriginal athletes.
- iii. Similar to the education strategy, it will be important to implement a support system for Aboriginal athletes so that they successfully enter and benefit from these experiences.
- iv. This action will also seek improved access to integrated support services, including sport science (biomechanical analysis, physiological testing), medical and paramedical (massage therapy, chiropractic, etc.) services offered through MSOs like Pacific Sport, which are funded by provincial and federal governments and Sport BC.

b) Phase 1 ACTION

Develop links with provincial sport and multi-sport service organizations that enhance development of Aboriginal coaches and officials.

- i. It is equally important to develop linkages that serve to support Aboriginal coaches and officials.
- ii. For coaches, linkages would be established to improve their access to diploma and professional development programs through National Coaching Institutes and provincial and national mentoring opportunities.
- iii. For officials, linkages would be established to improve their access to national training, evaluation and accreditation programs delivered by mainstream sport organizations.
- iv. As with athletes, it will be necessary to provide tools that support successful enrollment and program completion.

Pillar 3 – Excellence

Expected Phase 1 Outcomes

- a) Excellence programs are consistent with the Aboriginal lifelong physical activity pathway.
- b) There is participation in the qualifying tournaments of all NAIG sports by individuals living in First Nations reserve, off-reserve and urban communities and Métis Chartered Communities.
- c) The total number of people trying out for all teams is significantly increased over 2008 levels.
- d) There is increased participation over 2008 of off-reserve and urban Aboriginal populations in Team BC competing at the 2011 NAIG.
- e) Aboriginal Team has a solid base program with enhanced preparation and improved results.
- f) An increased number of Aboriginal athletes compete successfully in mainstream provincial sport and secondary/post-secondary school competitions.
- g) An increased number of Aboriginal coaches participate in NCCP Competition Introduction and Competition Development and achieve certification.
- h) An increased number of Aboriginal officials participate in PSO training and successfully complete the necessary experience and evaluation standards for accreditation.

Long-Term Actions

Over the longer-term, actions in the Excellence Pillar will aim to:

- a) Organize provincial championships in sports established as priorities by communities
- b) Enable ongoing improvement of Aboriginal Team BC program elements: talent identification, training, coaching, support services and competition program
- c) Ensure consistent application of a three-year NAIG planning cycle in all Aboriginal communities
- d) Implement a province-wide program to involve Elders in organized sport competitions, including Seniors Games, Masters events, etc.
- e) Introduce new sport competitions for Elders, e.g., curling, seniors' hockey

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Long-Term Outcomes

- a) There is a strong, stable system of coordinated tournaments and events throughout BC.
- b) All athletes who qualify for Aboriginal Team receive travel support to 2011 and subsequent NAIG.
- c) The team composition of Aboriginal Team BC reflects Aboriginal populations: First Nations living on reserve, off reserve, and in urban communities; and Chartered Métis Communities.
- d) Aboriginal Team athletes have access to a full range of coaching and integrated services specialists that support their continuing performance improvement.
- e) An increased number of Aboriginal athletes compete successfully in provincial, national and international levels of mainstream sport competitions.
- f) An increased number of Aboriginal tournaments include cultural celebrations and participation by mainstream athletes.
- g) An increased number of Aboriginal coaches graduate from NCIs and are members of coaching staffs of mainstream clubs, and provincial and national teams.
- h) An increased number of Aboriginal officials are working in mainstream competitions.

“Sport has played such a vital role in my life. It has shaped and influenced who I am in every way. It’s that personal connection that has kept me focused on the need to provide more opportunities for our youth through sport. We must focus more resources towards the development and delivery of wide ranging programs across the Province that will eliminate barriers and inspire youth to train and compete at the highest levels.”

Grand Chief Ed John,
First Nations Summit & First Nations Leadership Council



Pillar 4: System Development

Core Priority 1

Establish partnerships with mainstream sport, recreation and physical activity organizations such as Sport BC, multi-sport service organizations, BC Parks & Recreation Association, Union of BC Municipalities and BC School Sports to address issues of equity and access, and to reduce barriers to participation for Aboriginal people in sport, recreation and physical activity.

a) Phase 1 ACTION

Establish a framework and resources to support the implementation of policy, decision-making and resource allocation that enable mainstream organizations to deliver programs and services that fit an Aboriginal context and result in meaningful Aboriginal participation in an organization.

- i. The development of a framework for change and supporting resources are essential tools for the systemic change that will transform mainstream organizations' ability to fulfill their mandates for the entire population of BC.
- ii. The framework would enable an organization to look at how they are currently organized with respect to policies, decision-making, resource allocation, membership practices and programs, and how they might better serve Aboriginal populations.
- iii. Resources would include good practice examples that could be adapted; Implementation guides to support introduction and management of the necessary changes; education material and evaluation templates.

Core Priority 2

Increase the capital infrastructure in First Nations communities to improve access to sports, recreation and physical activity opportunities.

a) Phase 1 ACTION

Complete a provincial assessment of availability of facilities on reserve or close by off reserve.

- i. A Strategy to address development of capital infrastructure is not possible without a comprehensive understanding of the availability and accessibility of existing facilities. No such province-wide inventory exists at this time.

- ii. The priority would be to determine the facilities that are available on reserve or accessible close by off reserve. The assessment would classify the type, age, use, status, etc., of every facility. The assessment would incorporate any facility assessments that have been previously done by individual reserve communities.
- iii. The final assessment report would also identify the facilities available through Friendship Centres.

Funding would support the contracted preparation of assessment. Regional coordinators would assist with the identification of facilities to be assessed.

This action may be accelerated if there are opportunities to access the federal government's recently announced investment to address the long-standing infrastructure deficit in sport and recreation.

Pillar 4 – System Development

Expected Phase 1 Outcomes

- a) There is a prioritized assessment of capital infrastructure needs for on-reserve facilities and required capital improvements for facilities owned by Aboriginal organizations.
- b) Discussion has been initiated by ASRPAPC with provincial and federal government departments with mandates for infrastructure development.
- c) There is a framework and resources to support provincial mainstream organizations in better serving Aboriginal populations and a prioritized timetable for developing partnerships with provincial organizations.
- d) Priority mainstream PSOs are establishing baseline levels and tracking Aboriginal participation.

Long-Term Actions

Over the longer-term, actions in the System Development Pillar will aim to:

- a) Secure the participation of the federal and provincial governments in addressing capital infrastructure needs.
- b) Establish formal relationships with Aboriginal organizations and groups in relevant and related sectors.
- c) Network with elementary schools and high schools, community colleges, universities, leisure services, pow-wow grounds, parks, etc., to improve coordination of activities, sharing of resources and networking.

Long-Term Outcomes

- a) There is a cross-sector network of Aboriginal organizations and groups that support the implementation of the Strategy through coordination of activities, sharing of human and financial resources, and enhanced networking.

- b) PSOs are delivering programs to Aboriginal populations and there is increased Aboriginal participation by Aboriginal athletes, coaches, officials and competition organizers in all mainstream sport organizations.
- c) Existing on-reserve facilities are safe and accessible, and resources are available for ongoing upgrades and repair.
- d) The capital infrastructure inventory on reserve has increased and meets the program needs of community, families and individuals.

“Aboriginal youth from across the province have called on our leaders and government to respond to our critical need for greater opportunities in the area of sport, recreation and physical activity. We know how essential it is to our health and person growth. Our call to action through the BC Aboriginal Youth Sport and Recreation Declaration is reflected in this Strategy and we applaud the Aboriginal Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity Partners Council for their commitment to establishing a system that will respond to our needs.”

Ken Watts

Youth Representative, BC Assembly of First Nations



Pillar 5: Sustainability

Core Priority 1

Build the capacity of the Aboriginal Sports, Recreation and Physical Activity Partners Council and establish a new provincial agency to implement the Aboriginal Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity Strategy.

a) Phase 1 ACTION

Establish the human resource capacity of the ASRPAPC.

- i. This is the highest initial priority for Partners Council because it provides the essential capacity to implement the Strategy.
- ii. An early task of the ASRPAPC will be to endorse a decision-making framework and management model that delineates the roles and responsibilities of the Partner Council and its member organizations (FNHC, MNBC, and BCAAFC).
- iii. The first necessary step in Phase 1 is to hire a Director.
- iv. The primary roles of the Director will be to coordinate the implementation of Phase 1, manage core staff and support the Partners Council.

b) Phase 1 ACTION

Establish appropriate governance and management processes and practices to ensure implementation of Phase 1.

- i. The ASRPAPC will establish a new provincial agency for ASRPA. This requires processes that define the relationship between the Partners Council and the new agency and their roles and responsibilities in order to ensure the efficient execution of Phase 1 and to maximize the long-term impact of the ASRPA Strategy.
- ii. The Partners Council is the steward of the Strategy and will rely on the new ASRPA agency to implement the Strategy. The new ASRPA agency will be accountable to the Partners Council to implement Phase 1 and achieve the long-term outcomes.

There are a few basic principles that will guide the process of incorporating a new ASRPA agency. Its bylaws must clearly address the following:

- establish a solid interim structure to ensure that the vision, foundational role and accountability to the Partner Organizations is in place as they continue to lead, guide and be responsible for the overall direction of the Strategy.
- allow for the addition of balanced community/regional representation at the decision-making level to ensure that the varied community/regional perspectives are heard and reflected in the direction and work of the agency, while maintaining the leadership and provincial stewardship role of the Founding Partners.

These decision-making structures and principles will provide the necessary provincial leadership and community/regional perspectives necessary to direct and facilitate the work of the new agency in the years ahead.

c) Phase 1 ACTION

Establish appropriate accountability and management processes and practices to ensure implementation of Phase 1.

An accountability framework between the Partners Council and the new ASRPA agency will move the Partners Council into a more formal decision-making structure, reconcile the existing Terms of Reference, transition host agency employment agreements, day to day operational accountability/reporting arrangement for staff, and establish reciprocal and clear operational and decision-making accountabilities among the partner agencies.

The foundation for creating a new provincial agency, with clear roles and accountabilities for managing and dispersing funds and a regionally inclusive Board structure will be established.

Core Priority 2

Through the new ASRPA agency, establish partnerships with private sector and community organizations that expand opportunities and resources for sport, recreation and physical activity.

a) Phase 1 ACTION

Explore opportunities for corporate partnerships in the early stages of Phase 1 implementation.

- While corporate sponsors are more easily secured when there are successful programs in place, it is possible that there are organizations that would be interested in a relationship that evolves as the Strategy is implemented.

b) Phase 1 ACTION

Establish a fund development Strategy and sponsorship program.

- The work of developing corporate sponsors will begin in earnest once there is a solid program foundation and some history of success.
- In Phase 1, marketing and communications will emphasize communication with Aboriginal communities and partner organizations.

Aboriginal Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity Strategy

Core Priority 3

Establish partnerships with Provincial and Federal Governments to develop a sustainable funding framework to resource the implementation of the Aboriginal Sports, Recreation and Physical Activity Strategy.

a) Phase 1 ACTION

Lead the Partners Council participation in a coordinated effort with Provincial Ministries, including Healthy Living & Sport, Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, Health Services, Children and Family Development, Housing and Social Development, Education, Attorney General and appropriate non-government organizations in the development of a provincial policy on Aboriginal sport, recreation and physical activity, inclusive of an implementation and funding plan.

- i. Support for Phase 1 will create the foundation from which to work toward a long-term funding framework.
- ii. The opportunity for dialog about the importance of establishing a sustainable funding framework within a policy context will arise from the earliest stages of Phase 1.
- iii. Focused action will begin once the new agency is operational; establishing a strong program foundation is a first priority.

b) Phase 1 ACTION

Pursue the development of an Aboriginal Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity Legacy Fund.

- i. It will be critical in Phase 1 to identify resources necessary to implement the Strategy.
- ii. One of the means that will be explored is the establishment of a legacy fund as a source of ongoing revenue for the new ASRPA agency.

c) Phase 1 ACTION

Lead the involvement of the Partners Council in developing a multi-lateral agreement with the Provincial and Federal Governments.

- i. This action will also begin in the later stages of Phase 1, as it will be necessary to ensure there is a strong program foundation in place as a first priority.

Pillar 5 – Sustainability

Expected Phase 1 Outcomes

- a) A new provincial agency is delivering broad based ASRPA programs and is accountable to the Partners Council for meeting the objectives of the ASRPA Strategy.

- b) A long-term funding framework enabling the full implementation of the Strategy is established through the combined support of Provincial Ministries.
- c) A Provincial policy on Aboriginal Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity is being developed based on the 5 Pillars within the ASRPA Strategy.

Long-Term Actions

Over the longer-term, actions in the Sustainability Pillar will aim to:

- a) Ensure ongoing effectiveness and efficiency in the decision-making structure and management of the new ASRPA agency.
- b) Operational aspects of the ASRPA continue to be guided by comprehensive program, communications and marketing plans that advance the Strategy and strengthen the partnerships and relationships among the ASRPAPC organizations and other Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal stakeholder groups.

Long-Term Outcomes

- a) There is a strong, accountable and responsive provincial ASRPA agency that is supported through a number of provincial and federal funding sources.
- b) There is a provincial policy on Aboriginal Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity, implementation plan and funding.
- c) Partnerships with corporate, industry and community business partners contribute financially to the support of sport, recreation and physical activity programs/events at community and provincial levels.
- d) Community and provincial events are delivered in partnership with health and educational organizations.
- e) An Aboriginal Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity Legacy Fund exists and contributes to implementation of the Strategy.

“The health of our communities, especially that of our youth, requires a new approach and renewed commitment from First Nations and Métis leaders and Government. Sport, recreation and physical activity is central to our wellbeing. The strength of this Strategy is its focus on building capacity within our communities and getting them the resources they so desperately need to deliver programs. We are calling on Governments to help make this a reality”

National Chief Shawn Atleo,
BC Assembly of First Nations

BC Aboriginal Youth Sport and Recreation Declaration

We Declare that:

We, the Aboriginal youth of British Columbia are committed to improving the health and lives of all Aboriginal people through Aboriginal and mainstream sports, recreation, and traditional physical activities within our communities.

We, as Aboriginal people, hold dignity, survival, and well being as the foundation of our culture and we have the inherent right to live healthy and active lives.

We are a strong, healthy, and resilient people that are connected to our lands and culture through the teachings and wisdom of our elders.

We will:

Improve the health of our People, reduce the number of suicides amongst our youth, and strengthen our families and communities through increased sports, recreation, and physical activity.

Counter the inequality that exists in our society in the areas of health, violence, addictions, racism, and poverty by increasing our health and strength through sports, recreation, and physical activity.

Play our traditional Aboriginal sports and recreational activities and nurture our mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health.

Create more opportunities for our youth to participate in healthy and fun activities.

Call to Action:

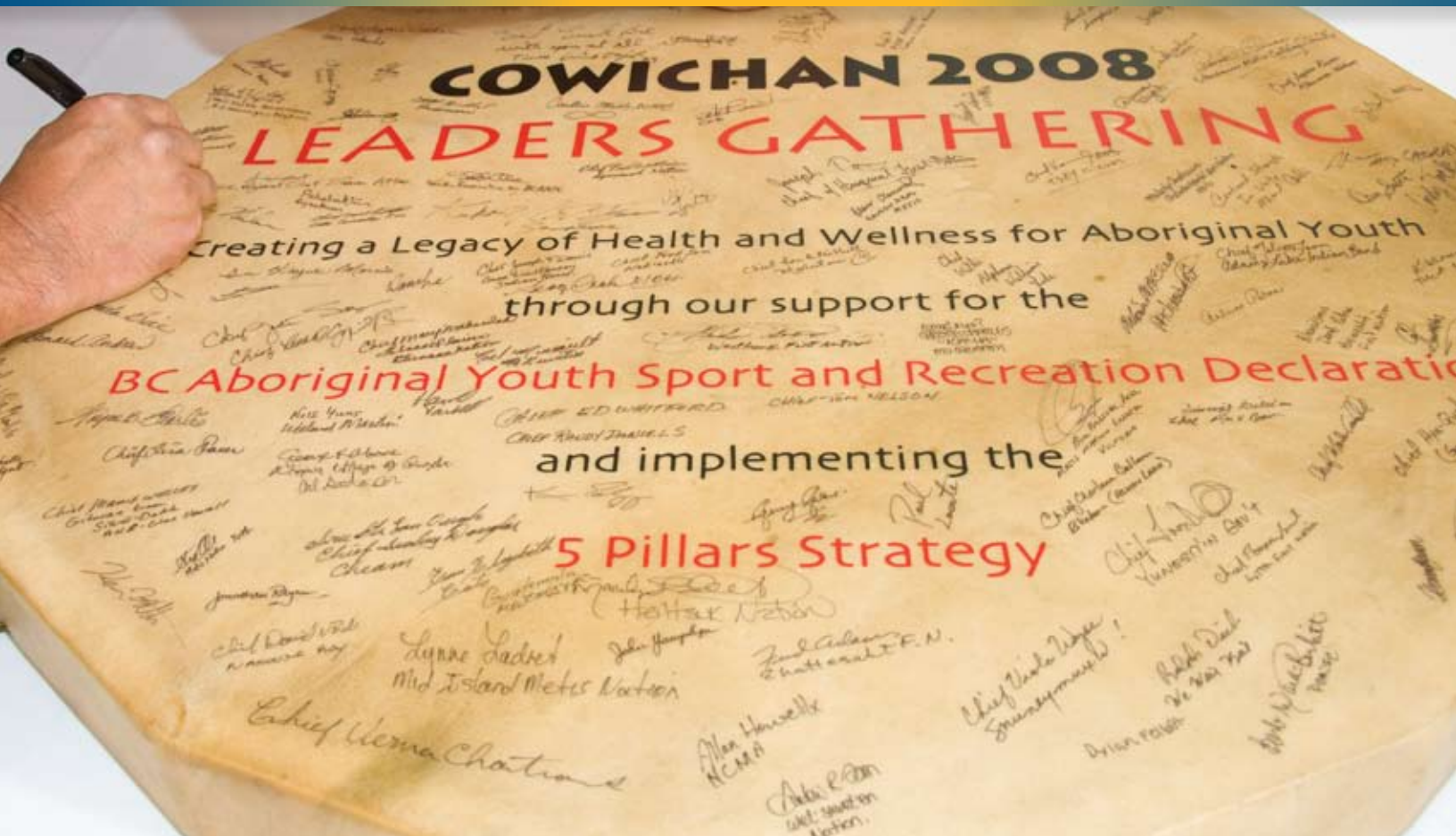
We call on the Federal and Provincial Governments to work with the Aboriginal youth of British Columbia to implement the spirit of this declaration.

We call on our First Nation Governments to lead the way in building a healthier future for Aboriginal youth by making sports, recreation, and physical activity a priority.

We call on all governments and Aboriginal organizations to work together to support and implement the spirit of this Declaration.

We call on ourselves, the Aboriginal youth of BC, to implement this Declaration, to strengthen our Nations, and to create a healthier future for our People.





Prepared by the Aboriginal Sport, Recreation and Physical Activity Partners Council