Physical Activity for Decision-Makers

Reasons to Support Physical Activity

**Reduces the risk of developing...**
- Heart disease
- Type 2 diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Premature death
- Dementia
- Osteoporosis
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Stroke
- Cancers

**Contributes to...**
- Reduced health care demands
  - Healthy development & growth
- Socially connected communities
- Decreased isolation and loneliness
- Reduced absenteeism
  - Improved quality of life
- Boost to the economy
- Environmental sustainability
- Increased productivity
  - Optimal health
- Decreased risk of falling
- Enhanced mental well-being
- Longer independent living
- Life-long health and well-being
- Reduced criminal activity and vandalism
- Improved memory and task performance

**ACHIEVING**

![](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

150 MINUTES of MVPA weekly for adults

&

60 MINUTES of daily MVPA for children and youth

MVPA = Moderate-to-Vigorous Physical Activity

Policy Decisions to Support Physical Activity

**Built Environment Policies**

- Changing the built environment can be a cost-effective way to increase physical activity
  - Support community design features that can promote being active to get to work or other places, such as connected streets, sidewalks, bike paths, good public transit, and a mix of residential, commercial, educational, and employment areas.
  - Encourage the development of green spaces, waterways, walking paths, trails and recreation facilities that promote recreational physical activity.
  - Have commercial building codes that require stairways to be more accessible and visible.

**School Policies**

- Active kids do better - in academic performance, behaviour, and overall health
  - Support the provision of daily physical activity opportunities and programs for staff and students from K-12.
  - Support policies that include the development of safe routes to school using active transportation.
  - Support inclusion of a playground when the school is being built.
  - Support after-hours use of schools for physical activity through Joint Use Agreements.
Education and Awareness Campaigns

- Support campaigns that develop clear and consistent messages across various media outlets and methods.
- Develop messages that support and inspire the population to be physically active in their everyday life.
- Provide resources and create awareness of the many ways and places the population can be physically active in their homes, schools, workplaces, and communities.

Transportation Policies

- Reducing dependence on personal motor vehicles can increase physical activity, improve health, decrease air pollution, build community, and enhance social connections and social equity
  - Support policies focused on improving access to active modes of transportation and interconnected systems of public transportation.
  - Support incentive programs that encourage people to use person-powered transport more and cars less.
  - Provide secure bicycle parking close to transit stations and throughout city.

Workplace Policies

- The workforce spends a substantial proportion of their waking hours at work
  - Change organizational culture by encouraging employees to sit less and move more in and around the workplace.
  - Support active modes of transportation to the workplace.
  - Improve access to stairways and encourage their use.
  - Develop workplace challenges and events to encourage employees to engage in an activity and reduce their sedentary time.

Health Care and Health Education

- Physical activity is an investment capable of delivering valuable individual and social returns
  - Support programs that promote and encourage participation across the lifespan.
  - Offer affordable active living, active recreation, and sport opportunities.
  - Create parks, sport fields, playgrounds, recreation and sport facilities, trails, pathways and other active transportation corridors.

Changing social norms can increase the acceptance of engaging in physical activity

- Most people trust health care providers and listen to their advice
  - Make assessment and advice about physical activity a routine part of health care services.
  - Increase knowledge of the preventative and treatment benefits of physical activity by including it as a core component of training for all health professionals.
  - Support integration of physical activity into the practices of long-term care facilities.
  - Support regular surveillance and monitoring of levels of physical activity and chronic disease, and evaluation of training programs and practice.

Support Sport, Recreation, and Active Living

- Ways to be active
  - www.centre4activeliving.ca

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