

Press Release

New Stats Canada Report Indicates Fewer Canadians Are Exercising

Government Tax Incentive Would Get More Canadians Off the Couch

Edmonton - A new Stats Canada report that highlights declining physical activity rates among Canadian adults is another reason the Federal Government should expand the Children's Fitness Tax Credit to include adults, Dave Hardy, President of the Fitness Industry Council of Canada (FIC) said today following the reports release.

"The Stats Can report shows the trend is headed in the wrong direction. As a nation we need more people exercising, not less," said Hardy. "Extending the children's fitness tax credit to include adults will get more Canadians active, will result in less of a burden on our health-care system and as a result, will save the government money."

The Stats Canada report suggested an aging population, more entertainment options such as TV and the internet, and household income, have all played a roll in a declining number of physically active Canadians. Last week, FIC released an economic report that detailed how the federal government would save \$2.5 billion over the next 21 years by extending the benefits of the current Children's Fitness Tax Credit program to adults.

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The economic report conducted by the Centre for Spatial Economics on behalf of FIC concludes that it would take just three years for the health care cost savings resulting from a more active and healthier population to outweigh the net personal tax losses incurred by the government. The credit takes the form of a non-refundable tax credit on eligible amounts of up to \$500 per person. Projecting 21 years outward, the report's findings show the government would see cumulated health care savings of \$9.1 billion and cumulated net personal tax losses of \$6.6 billion.

"With the Children's Fitness Tax Credit, the federal government already agrees that a financial incentive is an appropriate way to increase physical activity among Canadians," said Hardy. "Extending the program to include adults is not only good for the personal health of Canadians but also the financial health of the country. We urge the government to act quickly on this important initiative."

As an industry association, FIC represents more than 2,000 Canadian fitness facilities with more than two million members. FIC is a not for profit organization formed to promote the Canadian fitness industry.

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