



Sport Participation in Canada

Chapter 2

2.0 Introduction

When you think of sport, you think of our professional athletes excelling in their sport of choice, but you also think of the hockey practices your son attends every Saturday morning, the junior soccer team you coach, the curling club your spouse belongs to, the tennis tournament that you helped organize and that your teenage daughter competed in, as well as reading the sport section of your local newspaper and watching sports on television. Many Canadians participate in sport in one way or another, either directly as a participant or indirectly as a coach, official, volunteer or spectator. Sport touches every community across the country and everyone's life to some extent.

This report takes an in-depth look at Canadians who are either directly involved in sport as participants or indirectly involved through coaching, refereeing, officiating or being a spectator at amateur sporting events. Various socio-economic variables including age, sex, income and education will be reviewed as possible factors impacting on levels of sport participation. Were Canadians more or less active in sport in 1998 than in 1992? Who are these sport enthusiasts? What kinds of sports are we interested in playing – have our preferences changed over time? Does parental involvement in sport influence participation on the part of their kids? Why are other Canadians not involved in sport? What barriers to participation are reported, and are they different from reasons reported in 1992? Everyone agrees that sport offers many benefits, but what are they? Is there a link between participation in sport and increased life satisfaction or sense of belonging to one's community? These are the types of questions that this report will attempt to answer.