



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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New Team Spirit Programs for Aboriginal Girls and Young Women Announced

Ottawa, ON . . . *Team Spirit: Aboriginal Girls in Sport* is a national project to increase community sport opportunities for Aboriginal girls and young women. *Team Spirit* is a partnership between the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity (CAAWS) and the Aboriginal Sport Circle. The project is funded by Sport Canada, a branch of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Now in the final year of project funding, CAAWS and the Aboriginal Sport Circle have selected four new programs to participate in *Team Spirit*. Each will receive \$3,000 in program funding and benefit from a consultation and planning meeting in their community. The Hamlet of Chesterfield Inlet (Nunavut) will develop a recreational gymnastics program. *Paddle Power*, a partnership between the Pender Harbour Community School Society and the Sechelt Indian Band, will provide a dragon boat and kayak program on the Sunshine Coast (British Columbia). The *Girls Sports Circle*, delivered by Eskasoni Culture Recreation Youth (Nova Scotia), will introduce participants to soccer, rugby and volleyball. Eel Ground First Nation (New Brunswick) will develop a girls' volleyball club. These new programs will join others led by Joe Duquette High School and the University of Saskatchewan, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Winnipeg, the Ahkwasahsne Mohawk Board of Education, the Nawash Board of Education, and the Aboriginal Friendship Centre of Calgary.

Virginia Doucett, Executive Director of the Aboriginal Sport Circle, spoke about the reach of the project. "With the addition of the new programs, the Aboriginal Sport Circle and CAAWS have an opportunity to learn from a diverse group of communities about the unique needs, interests and experiences of Aboriginal girls and young women, and the realities of providing community sport programs to this target group." CAAWS Chair, Janice Forsyth, commented on the continued need for work in this area. "The significant response to this year's Call for Proposals indicates a need at the community level for expertise and human and financial resources to address physical inactivity amongst Aboriginal girls and young women."

During 2007/2008, CAAWS and the Aboriginal Sport Circle will work with *Team Spirit* communities to build partnerships and secure funding to sustain the programs after the funding period. CAAWS is also seeking funding to build on *Team Spirit* and continue this important work in other communities across Canada. Organizations interested in contributing to *Team Spirit* or collaborating on new initiatives for girls and young women are encouraged to contact CAAWS.

For more information about *Team Spirit: Aboriginal Girls in Sport* visit:
<http://www.caaws.ca/onthemove/e/aboriginal/index.htm>.

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