



Reasons to Believe

Survey of Canadians

on

True Sport Values

July 2005

**A Report to the
True Sport Secretariat**

**Reasons to Believe: Findings from a
Survey of Canadians on True Sport
Values**

July 2005

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I. Executive Summary

Executive Summary

The Strategic Counsel is pleased to present the findings from a survey of Canadians on values in sport to the True Sport Secretariat. Findings are based on a national telephone survey of 1,012 Canadians, aged 18 years and older, proportionately distributed across the five regions of Canada. The survey was undertaken in June 2005. National results are accurate within a margin of error of +/- 3.08%. Regional results, based on smaller sample sizes, will have a higher associated margin of error.

A. The Basis for Development of a Survey

In the course of the past year, the Secretariat has engaged in a number of strategic planning sessions with its partners, who represent all facets and dimensions of the sport community. The requirement for a survey of the general public was identified as one component of a performance measurement framework designed to assess progress in the integration and demonstration of True Sport values throughout the sport community, and ultimately the success of the Secretariat itself. It should be emphasized that the survey represents just **one** component of a comprehensive performance measurement framework which also includes ongoing data collection at the national, regional and local/grassroots levels, via various sport associations, groups and researchers. In addition, anecdotal feedback from partners and continuing work among experts in the fields of abuse, harassment and violence, for example, will contribute to a broader and more complete portrait of the state of the True Sport Movement.

The survey is intended to capture broad public perceptions with respect to the values of fun, respect, sense of community, and accessibility, among others. The relevance of survey data, taking into account views of the general public, is based on the following assumption. If the goal of the True Sport Movement is to encourage adoption of values at all levels of sport, progress will be demonstrated not only through a reduction in the number of incidents reported (e.g. violence or doping) or in the number of communities that officially adopt the True Sport philosophy, but also through a declining sense among the broader public that certain attitudes and behaviours, specifically those that run counter to the True Sport Movement, remain prevalent in sport.

The performance measures included in the survey represent the “Reasons to Believe” that True Sport values are becoming more widely cherished and adopted. These measures were determined based on an extensive and comprehensive review of existing literature both on the True Sport Movement and the key issues, such as fair play, doping, ethics, violence, harassment and gender discrimination, which are a principle focus of the True Sport mandate. This literature review relied heavily on the *Consolidated Data Research Project for CCES* undertaken in January 2004 by researchers at The University of Western Ontario. Following completion of the literature review, a series of one-on-one telephone interviews with 20 individuals representing various facets of the sport community (e.g. academics, community volunteers, representatives of national sport organizations) was undertaken. The purpose of these interviews was to obtain input into the development of the survey questionnaire. Specifically, feedback from these interviews helped to highlight

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and prioritize key areas of concern and identify a core set of indicators or “Reasons to Believe” for the work of the True Sport Secretariat. The findings from the literature review and the one-on-one interviews are provided under separate cover in a report titled *Report on Findings from Literature Review and One-on-One Consultations*, April 2005.

B. Core Indicators: The Reasons to Believe

The findings from the 2005 survey of the general public are the benchmark measures of the core indicators. The intention is to track these indicators at regular intervals. Progress will be determined via positive directional movement on these indicators. The survey also included questions to track data from a public survey conducted in 2002 as well as some additional questions which provide further insight into public perceptions on issues related to attitudes and behaviours in sport.

Core indicators include the following:

- ◆ Rating of importance attached to specific values being reinforced or reflected through sport
 - Fun, safety, competition, fairness, accessibility, commitment to excellence, diversity, courage, integrity and trust, self-esteem, respect and courtesy for others and a sense of community
- ◆ Rating of the performance of sport on reinforcing or reflecting each of the above values
- ◆ The Gap: A determination of the extent of alignment between perceptions of importance and the performance of sport in reinforcing True Sport values as based on the above two ratings. High negative ratings suggest a significant misalignment and a likely area for additional focus within the True Sport Movement. Progress over time is measured through a reduction in the gap.
- ◆ Perceptions of trends in specific behaviours (e.g. increasing or decreasing) such as cheating, yelling at players, referees or coaches, teasing of other players, forcing children to participate in sport, violence, abuse and harassment as well as inappropriate parental behaviour. Progress over time is measured by either stabilization in the perceived occurrence of such bad behaviours, or as a reduction in the percentage of those who indicate a specific behaviour is on the rise, specifically for those behaviours where the percentage is high to begin with.

Note that the results from this survey represent benchmarks for the above indicators. Tracking going forward will determine the extent and nature of progress.

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C. Key Findings

Canadians believe that sport has a positive influence on youth (90%) and that it is generally an effective vehicle for reinforcing societal values. They do, however, distinguish between the efficacy of community-based sport (90% say it reinforces broader societal values to some or a great extent), versus Olympic-level (76%) and professional sport (45%).

In general, those involved in sport in some capacity, either as participants, coaches/volunteers or parents, are more positive about the impact of sport on youth and on the reinforcement of values. In particular, coaches/volunteers are the most positive in their views of the role and performance of sport.

Canadians believe that sport is overly focused on competition to the detriment of promoting key values such as respect, accessibility, fairness, and integrity and trust. There are also some concerns about the extent to which sport promotes fun over competition and builds self-esteem within a safe environment. Not surprisingly, hockey and football are identified most frequently, hockey by a margin of three to one over football, as the most unsafe sports. The bottom line for most Canadians is that the sport we have is not the sport we want and that more needs to be done to better align sport with core societal values.

Sport participants tend to believe it is less important for values to be reinforced by sport, as compared to coaches/volunteers. This disconnect suggests that, while coaches/volunteers may be effective role models and conduits to carry the message of True Sport values to participants, there may be a need to consider alternative channels and vehicles to promote the True Sport philosophy directly to participants.

Based on perceptions of key behaviours on the rise, Canadians are most concerned about inappropriate parental behaviour; yelling at referees, coaches and players from the stands; and violence between players. In each instance, over half of Canadians polled suggested that these behaviours had been increasing over the last two to five years. At the same time, one-third or more Canadians also perceived that abuse and harassment, forcing children to participate in sport, cheating and teasing were also on the rise.

Doping does not appear to be a major concern for Canadians either at the elite or high school/university level as evidenced by the relatively few who believe Canadian athletes use banned substances to enhance their performance (less than one in four).

II. Methodology

Methodology

Nine questions, including multiple sub-items, were placed on an omnibus survey. This type of survey is employed as a relatively cost-effective tool when the number of questions may not warrant a dedicated survey. An omnibus survey generally serves a number of clients, so respondents to the survey may be asked their views on different and unrelated topics. However, care is taken to ensure that topics neither conflict with nor influence each other.

The survey was conducted between June 9 and 12, 2005 on a random sample of 1,012 Canadians, aged 18 years and older. Based on the sampling technique and sample size, the survey results for Canada as a whole are accurate within a margin of error of +/- 3.08%, 19 times in 20. The regional margins of error are larger and vary according to sub-sample sizes.

The national sample was stratified according to the distribution of the Canadian population by region, as follows:

TOTAL	Atlantic	Quebec	Ontario	Prairies	British Columbia
1,012	79	250	382	169	132

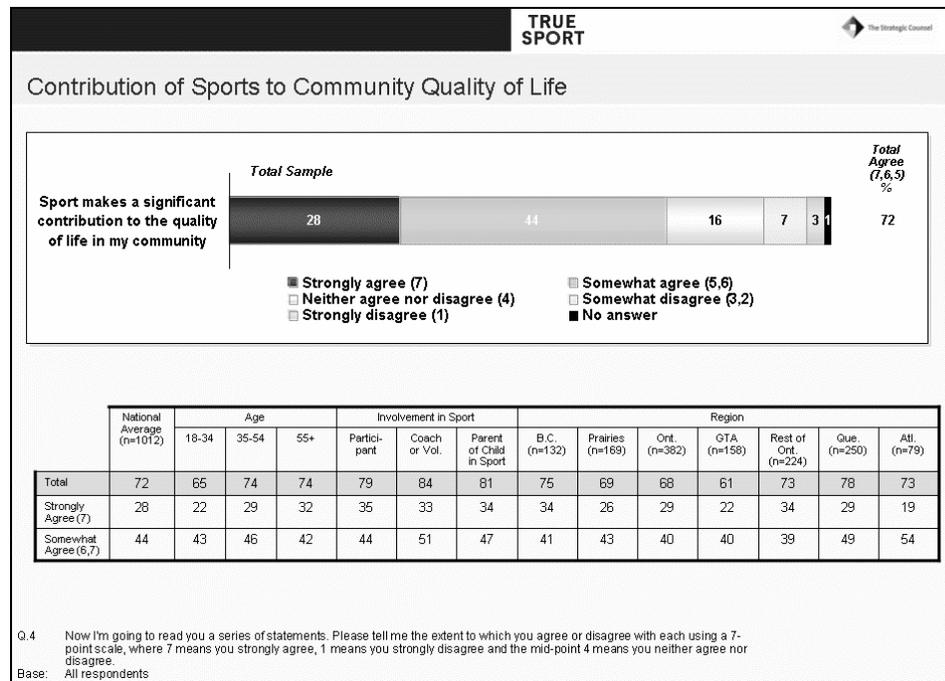
The questionnaire also included basic demographic indicators such as age, education, household income, rural/urban designation, occupation and region. A copy of the English questionnaire is contained in Section IV of this report. A full set of data tables is provided under separate cover.

III. Detailed Analysis

Detailed Analysis

A. Contribution of Sport to Quality of Life

Sport is viewed as a great contributor to Canadians' quality of life. Almost three-quarters (72%) of Canadians agree (5, 6 or 7 on a 7-point scale of agreement) with the statement "sport makes a significant contribution to the quality of life in my community."



The sense that sport is a key contributor to quality of life increases with age, although agreement is strong across all age groups. Just under two-thirds (65%) of those aged 18 to 34 agree that sport is a significant contributor to community quality of life. Agreement increases to 74% for those aged 35 and older.

Across all regions of Canada agreement with this statement is relatively strong, although it is lower in the Greater Toronto Area (61%) compared to the rest of Ontario (73%) and Quebec (78%), where agreement is strongest.

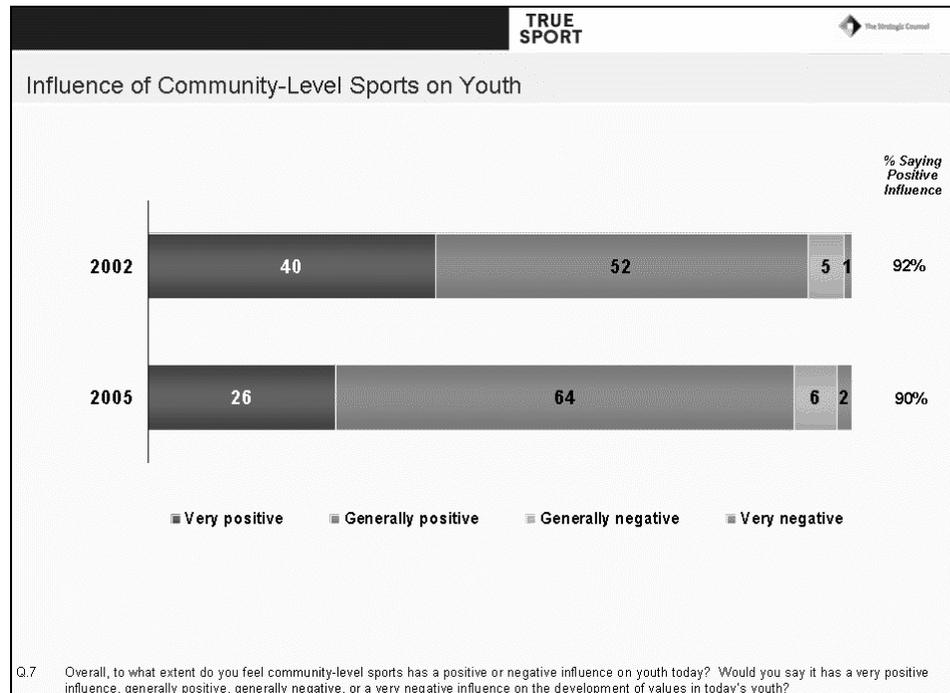
Not surprisingly, higher levels of agreement that sport strongly contributes to a community's quality of life are found among coaches/volunteers (84%), parents of children in sport (81%) and participants (60%).

B. Influence of Sport on Youth

The vast majority (90%) of Canadians believe that sport has a generally positive influence on young people. We do, however, note a decline since 2002 in the number who indicate sport has a *very* positive influence, from 40% to 26%. This may, in part, be attributed to the placement of the question in each of the two

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surveys. This question was asked early in the 2002 survey, and later in the 2005 survey, following a series of questions gauging views on possible inappropriate behaviours in sport.



C. Assessment of Sport as a Vehicle for Reinforcing Societal Values

Canadians believe that sport is a relatively effective vehicle for the dissemination of positive societal values, although the public makes a clear distinction between amateur and professional sport. The latter are viewed as significantly less effective in this regard.

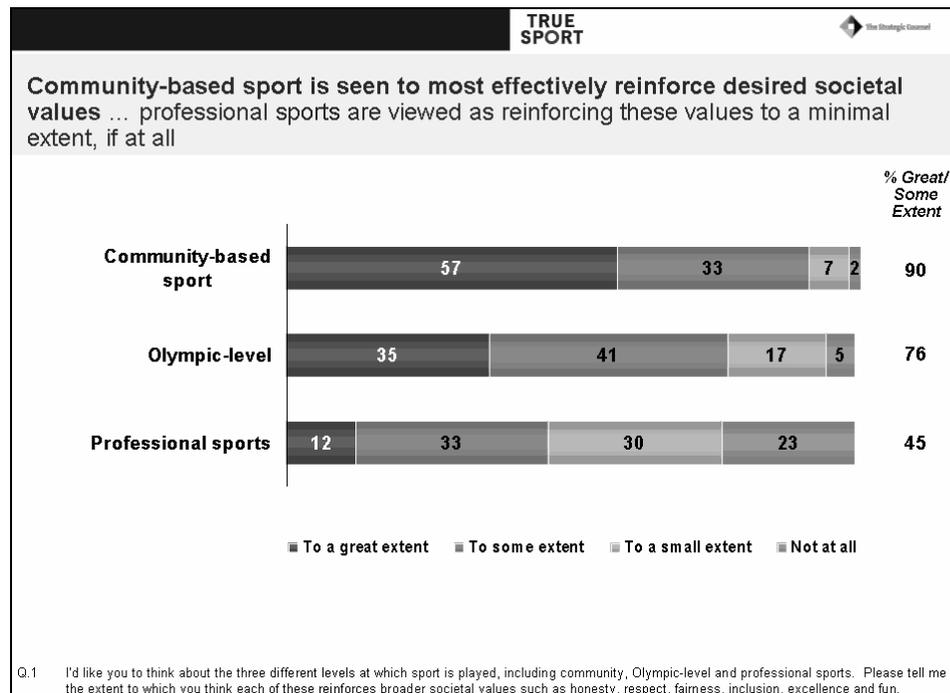
Nine in ten Canadians (90%) believe that, at least to some extent, community-based sport reinforces broader societal values and those key values promoted by the True Sport Movement, such as honesty, respect, fairness, inclusion, excellence and fun. Indeed, fully 57% say that community-based sport reinforces these types of values to a great extent while another 33% say sport at the community level reinforces such values to some extent.

A significant number of Canadians also believe that Olympic-level sport effectively reinforces societal values, although there is somewhat less consensus compared to the perceived contribution of community-based sport. Three-quarters (76%) of Canadians say that Olympic-level sport reinforces societal values to at least some extent (35% say to a great extent, 41% say to some extent).

With respect to professional-level sport, however, Canadians' views are less positive. The public levies a strong indictment of professional sport with respect to its effectiveness in promoting core values. Just 12%

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believe that professional sport carries out this role to a great extent. In total, fewer than half of all Canadians (45%) believe that professional sport reinforces broader Canadian values such as respect and honesty to either some or a great extent. In fact, almost one in every four Canadians (23%) holds the most negative view of professional sport on this question, saying it does not reinforce broader societal values at all.



There are few noteworthy variations across regions or demographic groups, although views do vary to some extent across generations and are influenced by a respondent's current involvement in sport either as a participant, coach/volunteer or a parent of a child in sport. In particular, the extent to which professional-level sport is seen to positively reinforce broader societal values declines dramatically with age, with those in the 18 to 34 age group substantially less critical as compared to those over age 35. Just over half of those aged 18 to 34 (54%) say that professional sport reinforces broader societal values to some or a great extent, dropping to 42% among those aged 35 to 54 and 43% among those aged 55 and older.

Across the regions, residents of the Greater Toronto Area are the most likely (53%) to say that professional sport positively reinforces societal values either to some or a great extent, while Quebec residents are least likely (38%) to hold this view.

In general, involvement in community sport tends to improve assessments of the extent to which both community and Olympic-level sport are seen to reinforce societal values, particularly among those who suggest sport does so to a great extent. This effect is substantially more muted for assessments of professional sport.

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Table 1
Views of Those Involved in Community Sport
% Saying Community, Olympic-level and Professional-level Sport
Reinforces Broader Societal Values to Some/Great Extent

	Average	Participant	Coach/Volunteer	Parent of Children in Sport
Community-based Sport				
To a great extent	57	65	71	64
To some extent	33	27	22	30
Olympic-level Sport				
To a great extent	35	38	42	42
To some extent	41	40	40	40
Professional-level Sport				
To a great extent	12	15	16	16
To some extent	33	34	39	32

D. Values in Sport: Assessment of Relative Importance

Respondents to the survey were asked to consider 12 values and to assess them on two dimensions: first, how important it is to reflect or reinforce these values through sport and, second, the relative effectiveness of sport in reinforcing these values. In this section, we examine the findings across each of these two dimensions, importance and performance, both separately and in combination, and analyze any gaps between them. It is important to note that the 12 values identified below were not intended as an exhaustive list, but rather reflect the values associated with the True Sport Movement.

Table 2 shows the results for each of the 12 values we examined in terms of their perceived importance. The results are shown in descending order of the percentage of Canadians who offered the highest rating of importance (7 on a 7-point scale).

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Table 2
Reflecting Values in Sport: Relative Importance of Key Values*
% Rating as Moderately/Very Important (5, 6 or 7 on a 7-point scale)

	% 5	% 6	% 7	Total % 5, 6, 7
Fun	10	17	63	91
Respect and courtesy for others	11	14	62	86
Fairness	15	15	54	84
Accessibility	11	15	54	80
Self-esteem	15	21	52	89
Safety	15	14	50	79
Integrity and trust	13	20	49	82
A sense of community	20	24	37	80
Courage	23	19	30	72
Diversity	19	20	29	67
Commitment to excellence	28	20	27	74
Competition	25	16	21	61

**Q.2: Now, I'd like to read you a list of values or principles that may or may not be important in sports. For each, I'd like you to tell me how important you feel it is that these kinds of values or principles are reflected and reinforced through sports programs and activities. Please use a 7-point scale, where 7 means it is very important, 1 means it is not important at all and the mid-point 4 means it is moderately important to reinforce this value through sports. How about ..."*

Based on findings depicted in the previous table and considering the results of those who offered a rating of 5, 6 or 7 on a 7-point scale of importance, Canadians believe that it is moderately to very important to incorporate and reinforce in sport each of the values we examined. The findings do show, however, that Canadians make some distinctions in terms of the relative level of importance between values such as fun (91% rate it as important (5, 6, 7) to reflect or reinforce this value through sport), self-esteem (89%) and competition (61%). Note the 30-point difference in the percentage of Canadians who rate fun as an important value which they believe should be reflected and reinforced in sport and those who give the same rating of importance to the value of competition.

Perhaps a truer reflection of the level of importance Canadians place on each of these values can be found by examining the percentage of the public who attached the highest rating of importance (7 on a 7-point scale) to that value. When the data is examined from this perspective, we note an even more marked delineation: we now find a 40-percentage-point spread between the percentage of Canadians who rate fun as very important (63%) and those who provide the same rating for competition (21%).

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Looking at the data in more detail, at least half of Canadians indicate that it is very important (7 on a 7-point scale) to reinforce and reflect the following values in sport:

- Fun (63%);
- Respect and courtesy for others (62%);
- Accessibility (54%)
- Fairness (54%);
- Self-esteem (52%); and
- Safety (50%).

Just under one-half (49%) offer a similar rating for the values of integrity and trust, while just over one-third (37%) say that it is very important that a sense of community be reinforced and promoted through sport. By contrast, fewer than one-third rate courage (30%), diversity (29%), commitment to excellence (27%) and competition (21%) as values which are very important to reflect in sport.

Clearly, Canadians place a premium on sport as a vehicle for enjoyment as well as for building and nurturing one's confidence and spirit. At the same time, they strongly believe that sport should be accessible to all, be conducted in a safe environment and promote fairness and respect.

As might be expected, the level of importance attached to these values varies according to one's involvement in sport and, specifically, the nature of that involvement. Cross-tabular analysis indicates that coaches and volunteers as well as parents of children in sport tend to rate many of the values examined as ones which are very important to reinforce through sport. Notably, those who identified themselves as participants in sport were not much different from the average.

Almost three-quarters (73%) of coaches and volunteers said that it was very important (7 on a 7-point scale) to reinforce fun through sport. On this value, parents (69%) and participants (68%) were also somewhat more likely than average (63%) to rate this as a very important value. We also found that coaches and volunteers were more likely (39%) to rate diversity as a very important value to be reflected in sport, 10 percentage points higher than the average (29%) and slightly higher than the numbers of parents of children in sport (39%) or participants (30%). Interestingly, involvement in sport had no effect on views of the importance of competition as a key value which should be reflected in sport. About one in five across all groups indicated the value of competition was very important.

Views on the importance of key values also vary markedly by gender, with women generally placing a higher value, as compared to men, on accessibility, fairness, safety, and integrity and trust. Indeed, the most

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pronounced differences between men and women are on the values of safety (an 18-percentage-point difference between the numbers of women who rated this as a 7 on a 7-point scale of importance as compared to men) and on accessibility and fairness (a 14-percentage-point difference in both cases). Women were also more likely to indicate that the values of courage and diversity were very important compared to the rating offered by men, however, in both cases only about one-third of women gave the highest rating of importance to these two values.

The findings were fairly consistent across age groups, although younger Canadians were somewhat less likely to rate integrity and trust as well as courage as very important values, compared to older Canadians, particularly those over 65 years of age. By contrast, those aged 18 to 34 placed more importance on diversity. About one in three (32%) of 18- to 34-year-olds indicated this was a very important value, compared to one in four (25%) of those aged 65 and older.

Results were also quite consistent across the regions of Canada, with the exception of views on the importance of accessibility. We note a marked difference in the percentage of residents of Toronto (47%) who indicated accessibility was a very important value which should be reinforced through sport compared to those residing in other parts of Ontario (59%) who, in greater numbers, attached a high level of importance to this value.

Key variations by participation in sport, gender and age are highlighted in the tables below. Incomplete or missing cells indicate there were no significant variations to report.

Table 3
Reflecting Values in Sport: Relative Importance of Key Values
Variations by Participation in Sport and Gender
% Rating as Very Important (7 on a 7-point scale)

	Average	Participation in Sport			Gender	
		Participant	Coach or Volunteer	Parent of Children in Sport	Men	Women
Fun	63	68	73	69		
Accessibility	54	54	61	61	47	61
Fairness	54	50	61	63	47	61
Safety	50	48	56	57	41	59
Integrity and trust	49	45	57	59	43	54
Courage	30				26	34
Diversity	29	30	39	34	25	33

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Table 4
Reflecting Values in Sport: Relative Importance of Key Values
Variations by Age
% Rating as Very Important (7 on a 7-point scale)

	Average	Age						
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
Integrity and trust	49	40		52			50	
Courage	30	32	33	33	26	24	25	23
Diversity	29	25	30	28	30	31	34	34

E. Core Values in Sport: Assessment of Performance of Sport

After providing rankings of importance on each of 12 values, respondents were asked to assess how well or poorly sport reinforces the same values. The results are shown in Table 5, displayed in descending order of those who offered a performance rating of either 6 or 7 on a 7-point scale, suggesting that sport does a good or excellent job reinforcing a particular value. The table also shows the combined total of those who offered a generally positive performance rating of either 5, 6, or 7 for full comparison of results against the ratings of importance shown earlier in Table 2.

The reader should note, however, that further analysis considers only those who gave a solidly positive rating (6 or 7) and gives less emphasis to those who gave a moderately positive rating (5). While there is some analytical subjectivity or interpretation of the results involved in choosing to focus only on the top two performance rating categories, it has been our experience that survey respondents are generally more muted when offering performance ratings of organizations or institutions. Examining only those who indicated 7 (the top performance rating) is overly restrictive and too narrowly defines good performance on an issue, product or service. By contrast, including those who also gave a positive rating of 5 tends to artificially raise the performance rating by including those who are borderline neutral or indifferent in their assessment of performance.

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Table 5
Reflecting Values in Sport: Assessment of How Well Sport Performs*
% Saying Sport Does a Good/Excellent Job (5, 6 or 7 on a 7-point scale)
At Reinforcing These Values

	% 5	% 6	% 7	Total 5, 6, 7	Total 6, 7
Competition	22	26	28	76	54
Fun	22	21	27	71	48
Self-esteem	27	20	21	67	40
Commitment to excellence	29	22	18	69	40
Safety	24	20	19	64	39
A sense of community	28	22	17	66	38
Courage	27	17	16	61	33
Respect and courtesy for others	24	14	17	55	31
Fairness	24	17	13	54	30
Diversity	23	17	13	53	30
Integrity and trust	26	15	14	55	29
Accessibility	19	11	16	46	27

**Q.3: And, now, I'd like you to tell me how good or poor a job sports programs and activities actually do at reinforcing these values or principles. Please use a 7-point scale, where 7 means sports does an excellent job reinforcing these principles, 1 means they do a terrible job and the mid-point 4 means they do neither a good nor a poor job at reinforcing this principles. How about ..."*

Of note is the fact that few Canadians assessed sport the top rating of excellent (7 on a 7-point scale) on any of the 12 values we examined. In all cases, well under three in ten Canadians, and in most cases just over one in ten, gave sport the top rating in reinforcing these values.

When we examine those who offered a rating of 6 or 7, suggesting that sport reinforces a particular value well, we find relatively positive assessments with respect to reinforcing competition, fun, self-esteem and commitment to excellence. Nevertheless, across all of the remaining values we tested except competition, less than half of Canadians offered a strongly positive assessment of sport. Canadians were least impressed with sport's reinforcement of the values of accessibility, integrity and trust, diversity, fairness, respect and courtesy as well as courage, while they were moderately positive about how well sport performs in reinforcing the values of sense of community and safety.

There are fewer significant variations by region or demographic subset with respect to assessments of the performance of sport in reinforcing these values than we found on the question of the importance of these same values. Involvement in sport appears to be less an influence on assessments of the performance of

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sport. The one marked exception is on assessments of the performance of sport in reinforcing the value of competition. Two-thirds (66%) of coaches/volunteers rated sport as good or excellent at reinforcing the value of competition, compared to 61% of participants and 60% of parents of children in sport. In all cases, a higher percentage of those involved in sport either as coaches/volunteers, parents or participants gave a rating of good or excellent with respect to the performance of sport in reflecting the value of competition as compared to the national average (54%).

We also note some age variations on assessments of sport's reinforcement of the value of competition with younger Canadians: those 18 to 34 years of age (61%) are more likely to rate sport as good or excellent, compared to those in the 35 to 54 age category (54%) or older (49%).

There were few differences between men and women with the exceptions of their assessment of sport in reinforcing self-esteem (36% of men gave a rating of 6 or 7 compared to 44% of women) and courage (29% of men gave a rating of 6 or 7 compared to 37% of women).

Across the regions, we note a tendency of those from the Prairies to offer slightly lower assessments of the performance of sport compared to other parts of the country.

Finally, on assessments of the performance of sport in reinforcing accessibility, 34% of Quebec residents offer a rating of good/excellent, just slightly above the average of 27%, while residents of Ontario (24%) and British Columbia (23%) are least likely to rate sport highly on this value.

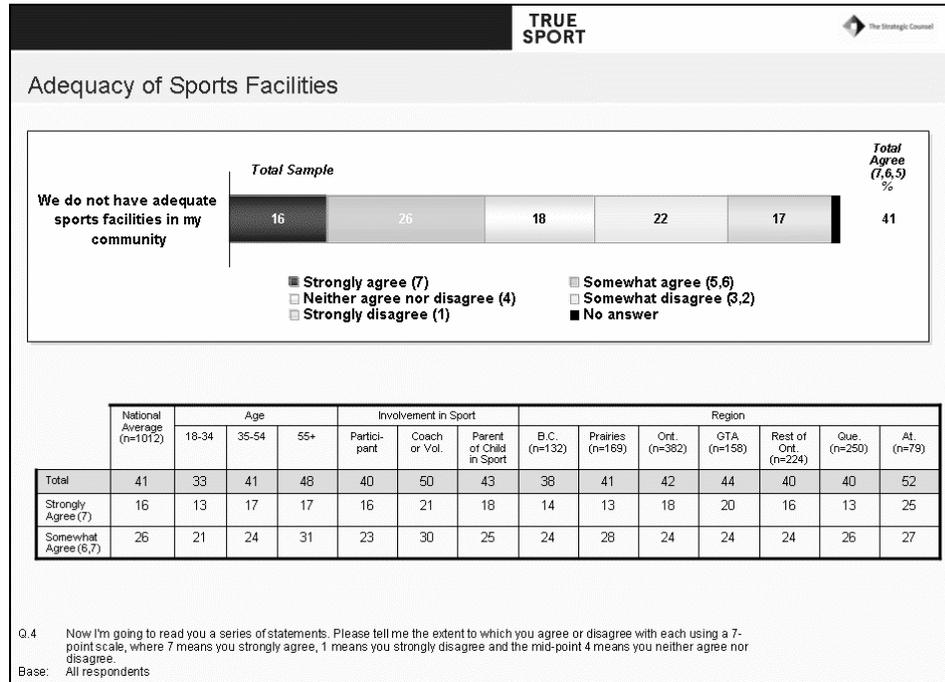
1. Accessibility of Sport

To further examine attitudes with respect to the issue of accessibility, respondents were asked their level of agreement with three statements about the adequacy of sport facilities within their community and how their cost and location impacts participation in sport. Results of an earlier set of questions reported above suggested that Canadians place a relatively high importance on promoting accessibility in sport. At the same time, they rate sport rather poorly in terms of its performance in reinforcing and reflecting this value. When asked specifically about the issue of the state and location of sport facilities as possible limiting factors to participation, however, we note modest but not overwhelming concern on these issues. By comparison, cost is viewed as a significantly greater concern. The findings suggest that the issue of accessibility should be broken out more precisely to further probe views on the impact of race, income, gender and physical ability in addition to possible logistical and infrastructure challenges that may prevent access to sport.

About the same number of Canadians agree (41%) as disagree (39%) that they “do not have adequate sports facilities in my community.” Concern about the adequacy or availability of sport facilities heightens with age. Just under half (48%) of Canadians aged 55 and older agree that the sport facilities in their community are not sufficient. Coaches and volunteers are also most likely to be critical of the adequacy of sport

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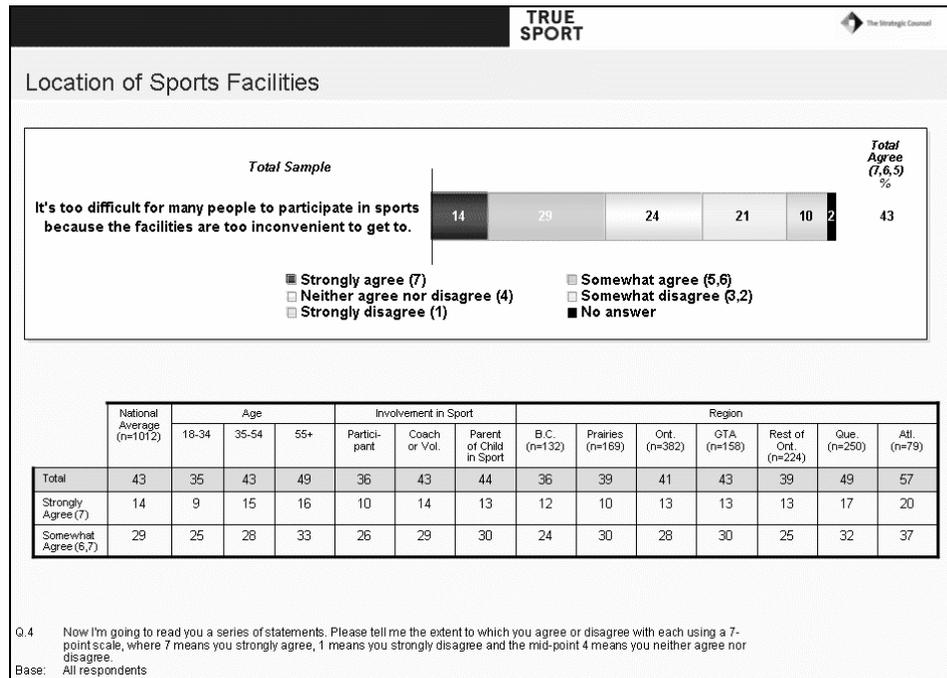
facilities (50%). There are no significant regional variations, with about four in ten across all regions agreeing that facilities within their community are less than adequate.



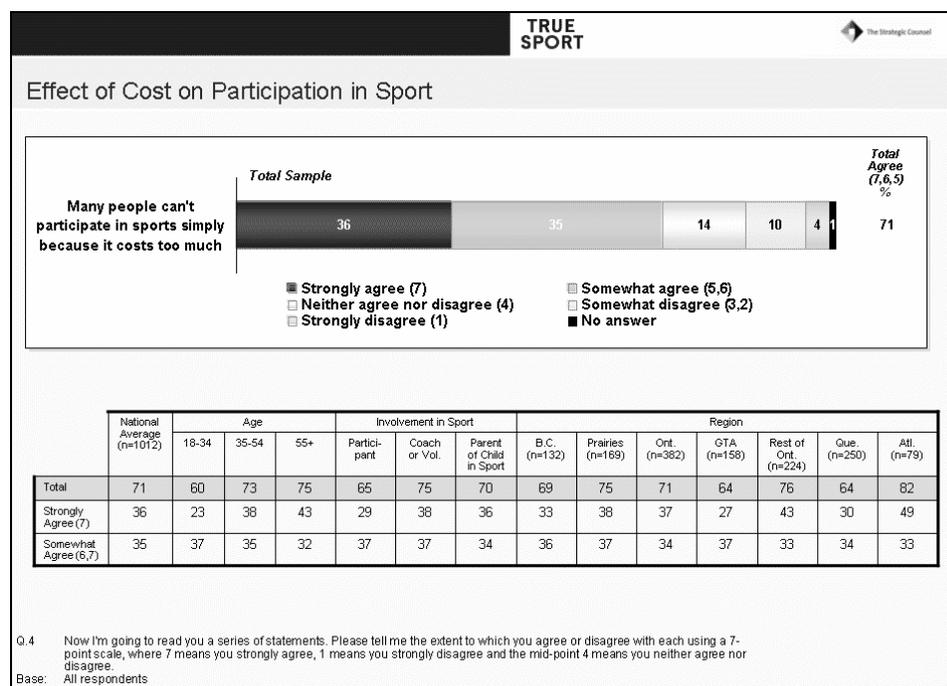
Four in ten Canadians (43%) also agree that “it’s difficult for many people to participate in sport because the facilities are too inconvenient to get to.”

Younger people aged 18 to 34 (35%), residents of British Columbia (36%) and those who identified themselves as current participants in sport (36%) are less likely to agree that the inconvenience of getting to sport facilities has a limiting effect on participation.

Detailed Analysis



There is somewhat greater public consensus that cost, rather than issues such as logistics or the physical assets, is a more significant barrier limiting participation in sport. Almost three-quarters (71%) of Canadians agree that “many people can’t participate in sports simply because it costs too much.” Indeed, over one-third (36%) strongly agree with this statement.



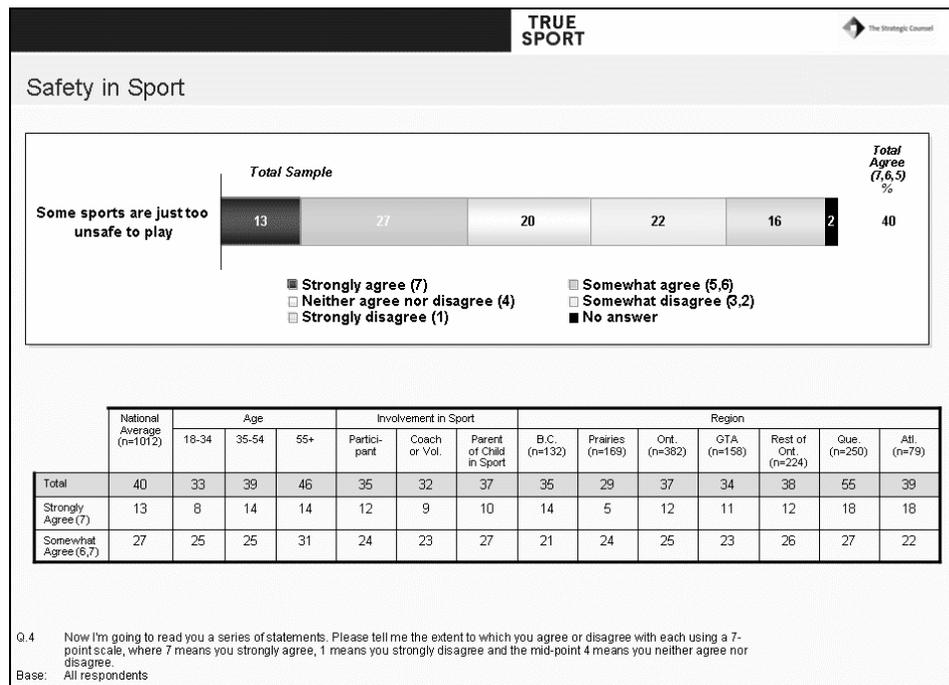
Detailed Analysis

Agreement that cost prohibits participation is more pronounced among those over 35 years of age, although there is a significant increase in concerns about the prohibitive nature of costs starting as early as age 25. While 53% of those aged 18 to 24 agree that cost prohibits participation, this figure jumps to 64% among those aged 25 to 34.

Interestingly, concern about financial impediments to participation in sport is high, regardless of household income status. Of those with annual household incomes of \$100,000 or more, 69% agree that cost is an issue (26% strongly agree), compared to 71% of those with household incomes of under \$50,000 (39% strongly agree), although, as noted, the intensity of agreement is stronger among those with lower household incomes.

2. Safety in Sport

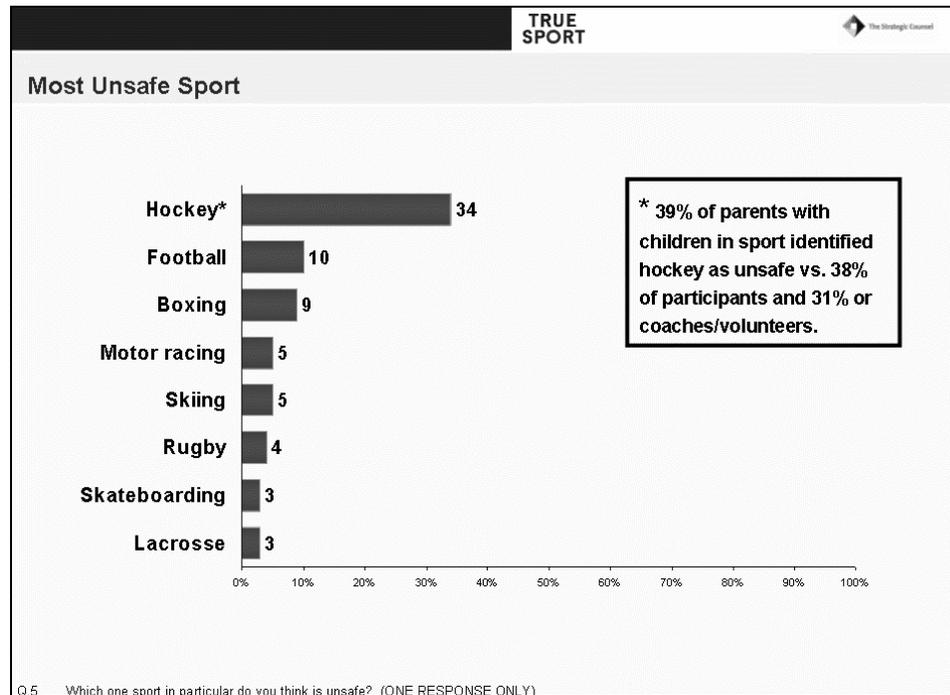
Canadians place a relatively high level of importance on ensuring safety in sport and they indicate that sport does a relatively good job at reinforcing this value. It is not surprising that about equal numbers agree (40%) as disagree (38%) that “some sports are just too unsafe to play.”



Notably, the level of concern about safety in sport is higher among women (44% agree with the statement) than men (35% agree). It is also higher among those 55 years of age and older (46%). Residents of Quebec, however, exhibit a higher level of concern (55%) about safety in sport, while those from the Prairies are less likely to suggest that some sports are simply too unsafe to play.

Detailed Analysis

When asked to identify which sport in particular is unsafe (asked only of those who agreed with the statement), hockey was identified most frequently by 34% of respondents, followed by football (10%).



F. The Expectations/Performance Gap: Comparing Perceived Importance with Performance

Taken together, the difference between the perceived effectiveness of sport at reinforcing a value and its importance represents the public expectations/performance gap. A positive gap denotes that sport is viewed as performing well, or possibly outperforming, on a particular value, while a negative gap suggests that sport is underperforming on reinforcing that value.

Overall, the findings indicate that, although sport is generally meeting public expectations at delivering fun, building self-esteem and creating a safe environment, it could do a much better job reinforcing the values of respect, accessibility, fairness, and integrity and trust. In particular, Canadians believe that sport is overly focused on competition to the detriment of instilling and reinforcing other values that are considered to be substantially more important.

Table 6 ranks the 12 values according to the extent of the gap between perceptions of the value's importance and assessments of sport's performance in reinforcing or reflecting it. Items are ranked from highest positive to highest negative gap. Thus, those values listed at the bottom of the table reflect key issues which the sport community needs to address.

Detailed Analysis

Table 6

**The Public Expectations/Performance Gap:
How Well Does Sport Reinforce Key Values?**

	% Saying “Very Important” (7 on a 7-point scale) to Reinforce Value in Sport	% Rating Sport as Doing an “Excellent/Good” Job (6, 7 on a 7-point scale) at Reinforcing Value	GAP (Rating of Performance – Rating of Importance)
Competition	21	54	+33
Commitment to excellence	27	40	+13
Courage	30	33	+3
A sense of community	37	38	+1
Diversity	29	30	+1
Safety	50	39	-11
Self-esteem	52	40	-12
Fun	63	48	-15
Integrity and trust	49	29	-20
Fairness	54	30	-24
Accessibility	54	27	-27
Respect and courtesy for others	62	31	-31

G. Perceived Trends in Undesirable Behaviours

A series of behavioural indicators were measured in the context of this survey and are integral to developing the “Reasons to Believe” benchmark measures for True Sport. Respondents were asked their impressions as to whether certain behaviours (such as cheating, abuse, violence, and poor parental conduct) were increasing, decreasing or staying the same over the last two to five years. Under ideal conditions, we would have preferred to include some measure of the extent to which these issues or behaviours were considered problematic in sport. In this manner, a two-dimensional picture of these behaviours could have been produced, categorizing the issues as “problem/increasing,” “problem/declining,” “not a problem/increasing,” etc. Those issues that were categorized as “problem/increasing” could be considered as priority areas for sport and for the True Sport Movement. Nevertheless, the extent to which certain inappropriate behaviours are seen to be on the rise provides some measure of the magnitude of these issues and the degree to which they must be tackled by the sport community. The reader should note that the data reported below reflects impressions and perceptions, not necessarily the reality as reflected in statistics based on recorded incidents. At the same time, perception often mirrors or is the reality for the individual expressing the opinion. As

Detailed Analysis

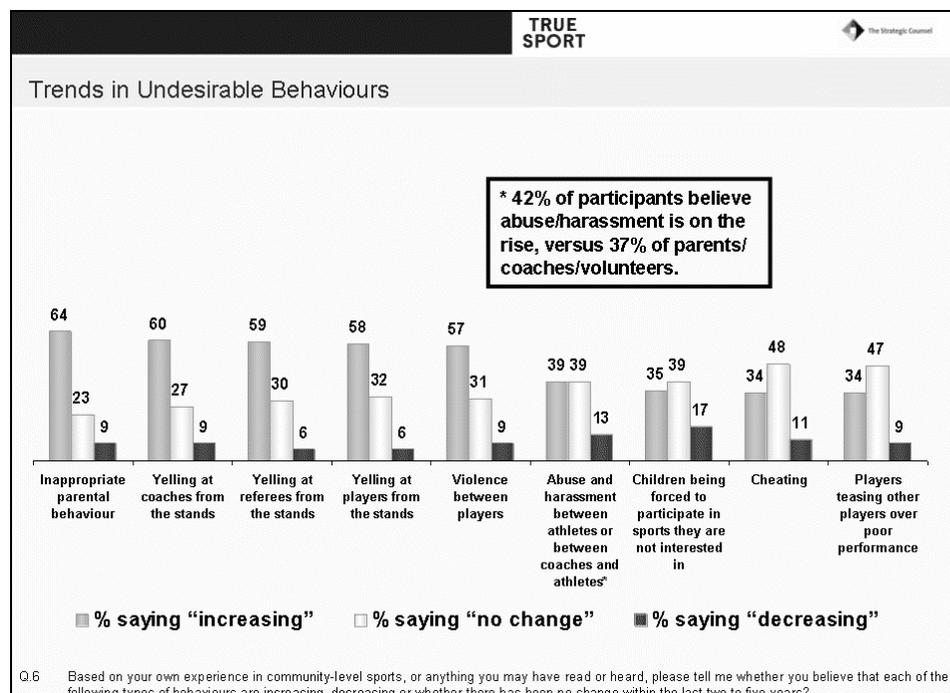
such, these behavioural indicators are important to track over time. A decline in the percentage of those suggesting that these behaviours are increasing will reflect some measure of success that could be attributed to the broader inculcation of True Sport values within the sport community.

A majority of Canadians believe that behaviours such as inappropriate parental behaviour (64%), yelling at coaches (60%), referees (59%) and players (58%) from the stands, as well as violence between players (57%) are on the rise.

About equal numbers say abuse and harassment between athletes, or between coaches and athletes, is on the rise (39%) as say there has been no change (39%). The same is generally true with respect to the issue of children being forced to participate in sport they are not interested in (35% say this behaviour is increasing, 39% say there has been no change). It is worth noting that slightly more participants in sport (42%) as compared to parents, coaches and volunteers (37%) say that abuse and harassment is increasing.

By contrast, almost half of Canadians say there has been no change in the extent of cheating (48%) or in players teasing each other over poor performance (47%), while fewer in each case (34%) believe these behaviours are on the rise.

Of note is the fact that, for all the behaviours examined, less than two in ten Canadians, and in most cases less than one in ten, indicated the behaviour was decreasing. Clearly, these results suggest that, whether or not incident reports and other anecdotal evidence support the contrary, Canadians perceive that many bad behaviours continue to be demonstrated in sport.

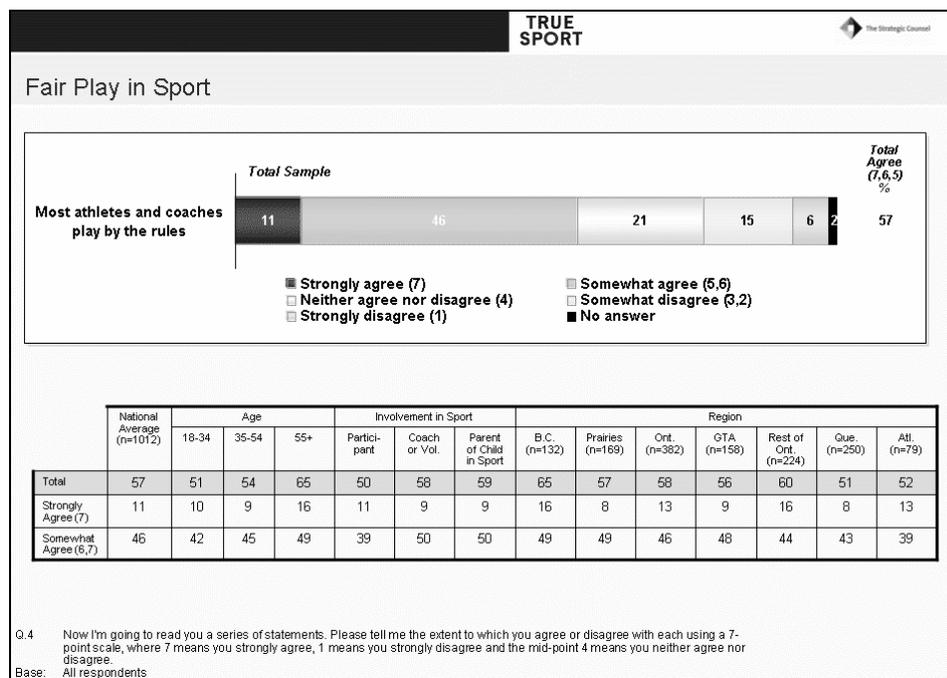


Detailed Analysis

1. Fair Play in Sport

We supplemented the above series of questions with an additional agree/disagree statement to gauge the extent to which Canadians believe the notion of fair play underpins most sport activities. In general, Canadians (57%) agree that “most athletes and coaches play by the rules.” This result seems at odds with the earlier data that suggests a significant gap between views of the importance of promoting fairness in sport and the performance of sport in reinforcing this value. However, clearly, playing by the rules is simply one element of fair play or fairness in sport. Fairness may also be associated with some aspects of accessibility, such as opportunities to play regardless of skill level. A wider interpretation of the notion of fairness, not just “playing by the rules,” may account for the seeming disconnect in the findings.

There are few variations across demographic or other sub-groups, although those aged 55 and older (65%) are more likely to agree that coaches and athletes abide by the rules, compared to those aged 18 to 34 (51%). Interestingly, participants (50%) are slightly less likely than coaches/volunteers (58%) or parents (59%) to feel that most athletes and coaches follow the rules.



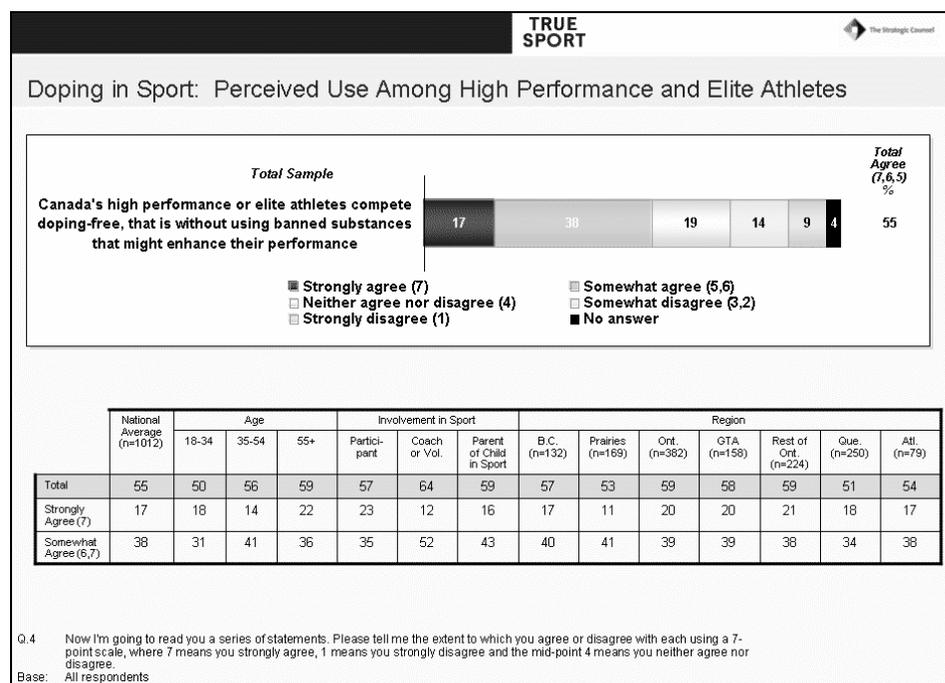
Detailed Analysis

2. Doping in Sport

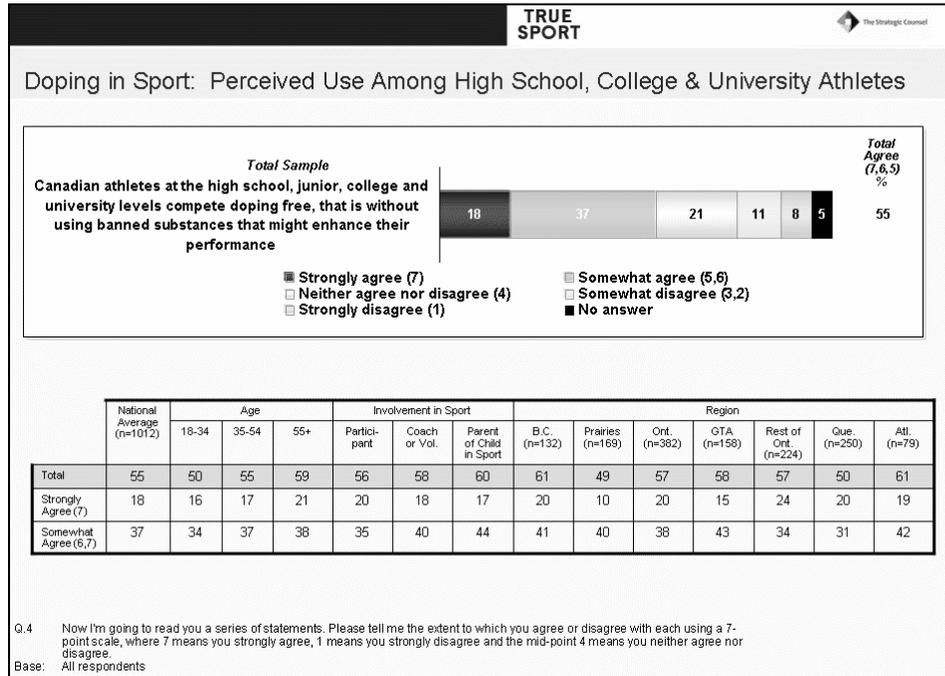
We included two agree/disagree statements among a battery of similar statements to examine perceptions of the extent of doping at both the high school/college levels as well as among elite or high-performance athletes. In general, just over half of Canadians (55%) believe that athletes compete doping-free. Notably, however, Canadians' conviction with respect to the use of banned substances by Canadian athletes, whether at the elite or high school/university level, is more moderate than strong. In both cases, fewer than two-in-ten Canadians strongly agree (7 on a 7-point scale) that Canadian athletes compete doping-free. These findings contrast to some extent with the findings from the 2002 survey which suggested that two-thirds (64%) of Canadians view the use of a performance-enhancing drugs as a somewhat (22%) or very serious (42%) problem in sport. The current findings clarify earlier results, suggesting that Canadians attach great importance to the issue of doping in sport; however, they do not see it as a critical issue among Canadian athletes.

Older Canadians are more likely to be convinced that Canadian athletes are competing without using banned, performance-enhancing substances. Nevertheless, even among those aged 18 to 34, half (50%) agree that Canadian athletes, both elite and high school/university-level, are competing doping-free.

Interestingly, coaches and volunteers (64%) express the highest levels of conviction that elite athletes are competing doping-free, while parents of children in sport (60%) are most likely to agree that high school, junior-level, and college/university athletes are competing without using performance-enhancing substances.



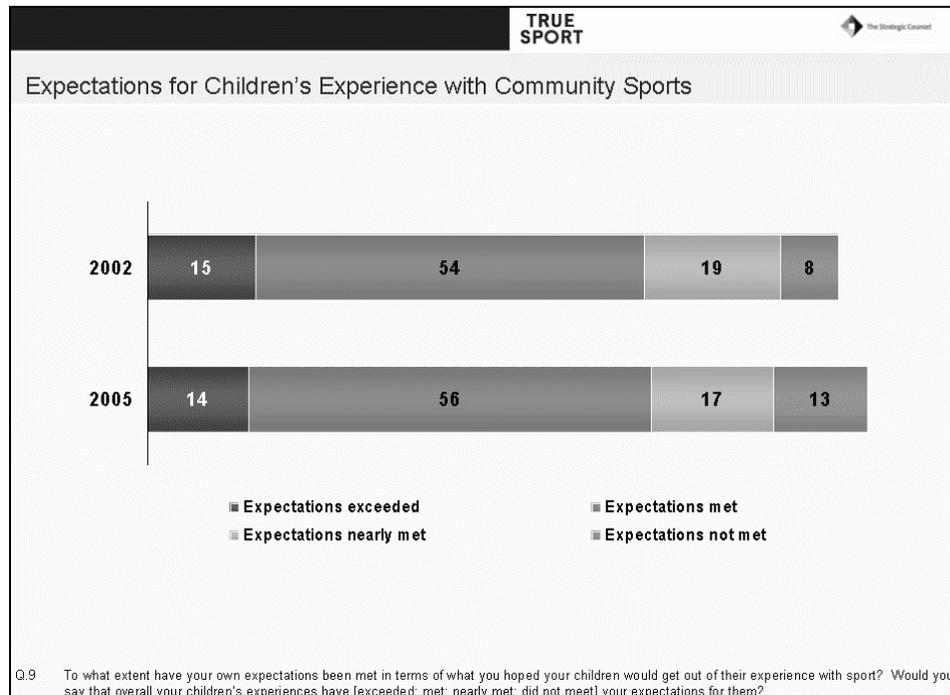
Detailed Analysis



Detailed Analysis

H. Children's Participation in Sport

Almost two-thirds (64%) of Canadians aged 18 and older report having children involved in sport, either currently or in the past. In keeping with the findings from the 2002 survey of public attitudes, the majority (70%) of parents with children involved in sport say their expectations have been met (56%) or exceeded (14%).

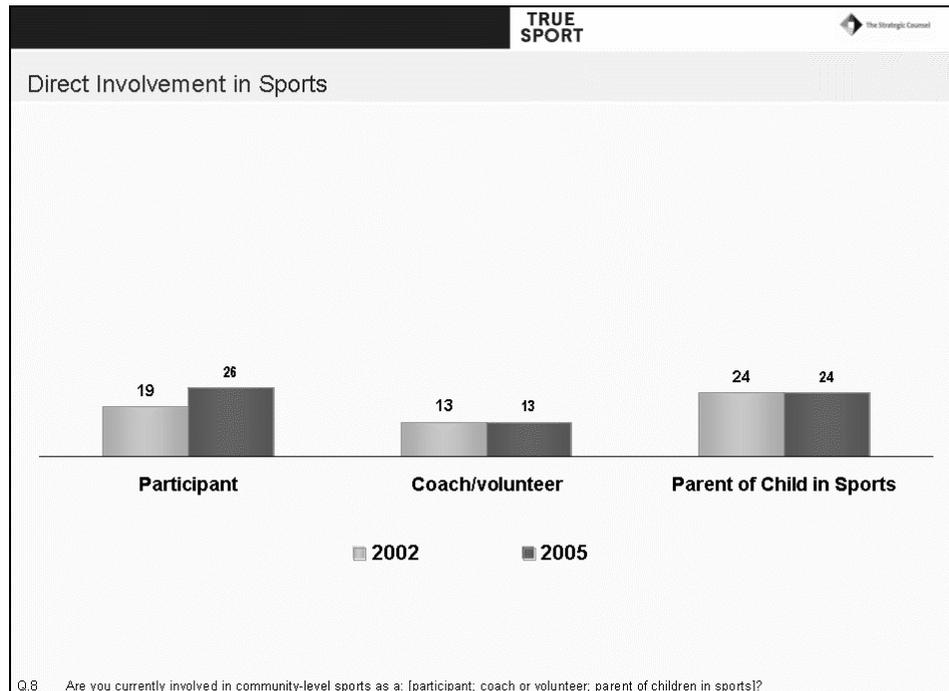


I. Type of Involvement in Sport

Respondents were asked a series of questions about the level and nature of their involvement in sport. These questions are repeated from the 2002 survey and are intended both to track any increase or decrease in involvement as well as to analyse attitudes towards True Sport values and behaviours, reported earlier in this document, on the basis of involvement in sport.

More Canadians now than in 2002 (26% versus 19%) are reporting direct participation in sport. The numbers of those reporting involvement in sport either as parents of children in sport (24%) or as volunteers or coaches (13%) remains unchanged from three years ago.

Detailed Analysis



Not surprisingly, the number of Canadians who identify themselves as participants declines with age, from 37% among those aged 18 to 34, to 27% among 35- to 54-year-olds, dropping off significantly among the 55 and older age group (16%). The most precipitous decline in participation occurs around age 45 at which point participation drops by about 10 percentage points, from 33% among the 35 to 44 age cohort to 22% among those aged 45 to 54.

Men (30%) are also more likely than women (21%) to identify themselves as participants.

There is also a clear income effect on participation rates. Fewer Canadians with household incomes of under \$50,000 annually (20%) identify themselves as participants than do those with household incomes of \$50,000 or more (30%).

Similar age and income patterns are also found among those identifying themselves as coaches or volunteers. While 15% of those aged 18 to 34 and 18% of those between the ages of 35 and 54 indicate they are currently participating in sport as coaches or volunteers, just 5% of those aged 55 and older say the same. Participation as coaches or volunteers jumps from just 7% among Canadians with annual household incomes under \$50,000 to 18% among those with household incomes of \$50,000 or more. A more detailed analysis of participation rates by income levels reveals that the highest rates of participation are among those with household incomes of \$80,000 or more (22%).

IV. Questionnaire

Questionnaire

Now, I'd like to switch topics and ask you a couple of questions about your views on sports.

1. I'd like you to think about the three different levels at which sport is played, including community, Olympic-level and professional sports. Please tell me the extent to which you think each of these reinforces broader societal values such as honesty, respect, fairness, inclusion, excellence and fun? What about ... (READ AND ROTATE)? Would you say that it reinforces these values to a great extent, to some extent, only to a small extent, or not at all? And what about ...?
 - a. Community-based sports
 - b. Professional sports
 - c. Olympic-level sports

2. Now, I'd like to read you a list of values or principles that may or may not be important in sports. For each, I'd like you to tell me how important you feel it is that these kinds of values or principles are reflected and reinforced through sports programs and activities. Please use a 7-point scale, where 7 means it is very important, 1 means it is not important at all and the mid-point 4 means it is moderately important to reinforce this value through sports. How about ... (READ AND ROTATE)
 - a. Fun
 - b. Safety
 - c. Competition
 - d. Fairness
 - e. Accessibility to anyone who wants to participate
 - f. Commitment to excellence
 - g. Diversity
 - h. Courage
 - i. Integrity and trust
 - j. Self-esteem
 - k. Respect and courtesy for others
 - l. A sense of community

3. And, now, I'd like you to tell me how good or poor a job sports programs and activities actually do at reinforcing these values or principles. Please use a 7-point scale, where 7 means you believe sports does an excellent job reinforcing these principles, 1 means they do a terrible job and the mid-point 4 means they do neither a good nor a poor job at reinforcing these principles. How about ... (READ AND ROTATE)
 - a. Fun
 - b. Safety

Questionnaire

- c. Competition
 - d. Fairness
 - e. Accessibility to anyone who wants to participate
 - f. Commitment to excellence
 - g. Diversity
 - h. Courage
 - i. Integrity and trust
 - j. Self esteem
 - k. Respect and courtesy for others
 - l. A sense of community
4. Now I'm going to read you a series of statements. For each, please tell me the extent to which you agree or disagree using a 7-point scale where 7 means you strongly agree, 1 means you strongly disagree and the mid-point, 4, means you neither agree nor disagree. The first is ... (READ AND ROTATE ITEMS A-G, ASK H LAST)
- a. Sport makes a significant contribution to the quality of life in my community.
 - b. We do not have adequate sports facilities in my community.
 - c. Most athletes and coaches play by the rules.
 - d. It's difficult for many people to participate in sports because the facilities are too inconvenient to get to.
 - e. Many people can't participate in sports simply because it costs too much.
 - f. Canada's high performance or elite athletes compete doping-free, that is without using banned substances that might enhance their performance.
 - g. Canadian athletes at the high school, junior, college and university levels compete doping-free, that is without using banned substances that might enhance their performance.
 - h. Some sports are just too unsafe to play. (IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS "SOMEWHAT/STRONGLY AGREE:" ASK Q.5, OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q.6)
5. Which one sport in particular do you think is unsafe? (ACCEPT ONE RESPONSE ONLY)
6. Based on your own experience in community-level sports, or anything you may have read or heard, please tell me whether you believe that each of the following types of behaviours are increasing, decreasing or whether there has been no change within the last two to five years? The first one is ... (READ AND ROTATE) ...
- a. Cheating
 - b. Yelling at players from the stands
 - c. Yelling at coaches from the stands

Questionnaire

- d. Yelling at referees from the stands
 - e. Players teasing other players for poor performance
 - f. Children being forced to participate in sports they are not interested in
 - g. Violence between players
 - h. Inappropriate parental behaviour
 - i. Abuse and harassment between athletes or between coaches and athletes
7. Overall, to what extent do you feel community-level sports has a positive or negative influence on youth today? Would you say it has a very positive influence, generally positive, generally negative, or a very negative influence on the development of values in today's youth? (Tracking from Decima 2002)
8. Are you currently involved in community level sports as a: (Tracking from Decima 2002)
- a. Participant (yes/no)
 - b. coach or volunteer (yes/no)
 - c. parent of children in sports (yes/no)
9. To what extent have your own expectations been met in terms of what you hoped your children would get out of their experience with sport? Would you say that overall your children's experiences have ... your expectations for them? (Tracking from Decima 2002)
- a. Exceeded
 - b. Met
 - c. Nearly met
 - d. Did not meet
 - e. Have not had children involved in sport (volunteered)