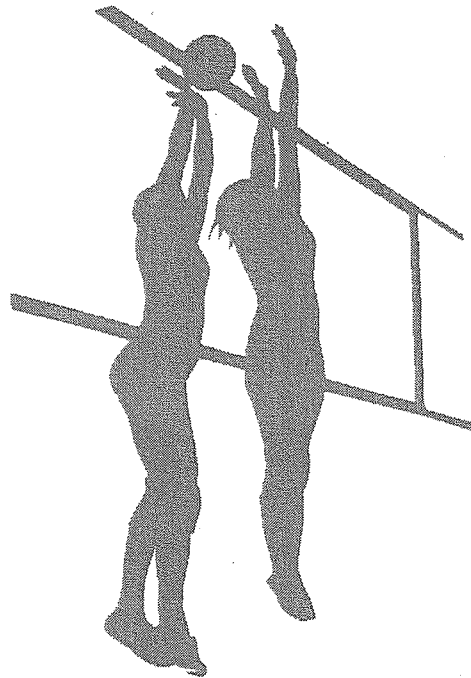


PART ONE:

***GENDER EQUITY
FOR WOMEN
IN SPORT***



GENDER EQUITY FOR WOMEN IN SPORT

WHAT IS GENDER EQUITY?

Equity is a rather broad term that can be described in a variety of ways. For the purposes of this Handbook, equity is the belief and practice of fair and just treatment for individuals and organizations. To be equitable means to be fair, and to appear to be fair. (Appendix Five)

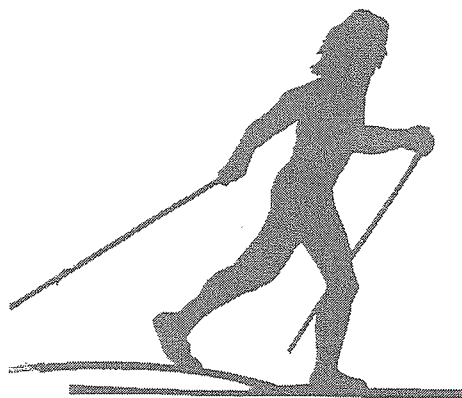
Equity is the broad terminology that includes gender equity along with other equity programs. As well as women, groups traditionally disadvantaged in the public arena include racial and ethnic minorities, aboriginal peoples, and people with a disability. As these groups and the individuals within them seek to participate more fully in sport, sport is changing for the better.

Gender equity is the principle and practice of fair and equitable allocation of resources and opportunities to both females and males. The implementation of gender equity eliminates discriminatory practices that prevent the full participation of either gender. Opportunities, resources, and power become equally accessible to all.

In our society, continuous systemic reinforcement has benefited those groups that have historically enjoyed an advantage. Equity programs are being developed to eliminate some of the barriers to full participation for disadvantaged groups. For example, barriers to full participation for girls and women in sport and physical activity need to be eliminated in order to achieve gender equity.

Equity does not necessarily mean that all persons must be treated exactly the same. Where discrimination exists, people may need to be treated **differently** in order to be treated **fairly**. In other words, because girls and women live their lives in different conditions from those of males, the creation of equal access may require different treatment. That is why human rights legislation, including the 1982 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, has affirmed the principles of equality while making provisions for affirmative action programs to eliminate disadvantages. (Appendix Four).

**Equality focuses on creating the same
starting line for everyone.
Equity has the goal of providing everyone
with the same finish line.**
— Bruce Kidd



**WHY IS
GENDER
EQUITY
IMPORTANT?**

SPORT'S SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

The current reality is that women are under-represented at all levels of sport in Canada — in participation rates, in positions of power and influence, in public recognition.

In sport, fewer women than men participate; when they do participate, they lack equal opportunities. Most sport organizations possess a distinctive gender structure with men typically occupying the more powerful positions.

Organized sport in Canada has a social responsibility. As an essential part of our national identity, sport is a primary way for us to express our culture. The importance of sport and physical activity to mental and physical health is widely accepted; nevertheless, girls and women do not participate fully, are afforded much less access, and derive far less benefit from sport than do boys and men. In a fair and equitable society, women — who constitute 52 percent of our population — would participate at all levels of sport in proportions at least equal to those of men. This is not yet the case. (*Appendix Three*)

Sport organizations can play a significant leadership role in two areas:

- Ensuring the right of girls and women to equitable participation in sport;
- Validating the importance of a lifelong experience of sport and physical activity for all members of society.

Achieving gender equity in sport is not simply a goal for the present. It represents a commitment to create a different way of life for our daughters and our daughters' daughters.

Recognizing the social responsibility of sport organizations is an acknowledgment that actions and practices are seldom neutral. Sport organizations have two choices: they can accept and reinforce what exists, or they can work for change. On the whole, sport organizations are making the choice in favour of equity.

Sport must accommodate the changing needs of all participants, not just open the doors to welcome new participants.

— Sandi Kirby

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The Federal Government invests in the sport system to ensure that certain social benefits and objectives are obtained by the sport community. These include bilingualism, gender equity, more favourable regional access, and the ethical conduct of sport.

In *Employment Equity: A Guide for Employers*, (Government of Canada, 1991) the federal government has also enacted policies and/or guidelines in areas such as employment equity that require sport organizations, under their funding umbrella, to address the under-representation of girls and women at all levels of sport participation.

The *Sport Canada policy on women in sport* (Sport Canada, 1986) underlines the importance of equal opportunity in competition, coaching, officiating and administering sport. The goal of the policy is "to attain equality for girls and women in sport."

THE LAW AND GENDER EQUITY

According to Section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, every individual is equal under the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit without

discrimination. The Charter applies to actions by Parliament, the provincial legislatures and government agencies. Equality rights are also protected by human rights (Appendix Four)

THE DUBIN INQUIRY RECOMMENDATIONS (1990)

In its comprehensive investigation of the Canadian sport system, the Dubin Inquiry recommended that those responsible for administering government funds to sport should take into consideration the sport organization's record in encouraging participation by women, minorities, disadvantaged groups, and the disabled. - Recommendations 1 and 4. (Appendix Seven)

MINISTER'S TASK FORCE ON FEDERAL SPORT POLICY (1992)

Sport: The Way Ahead, (Fitness and Amateur Sport Canada, 1992) the report of the Minister's Task Force, contained important recommendations that could genuinely improve access to opportunities at all levels of the sport system. The report noted that "the concept of inclusiveness is the principle behind sport for all," and said that women are not represented equally at any level of the sport system. Two recommendations are designed to accelerate the pace of change for girls and women while concern for equity and access is expressed throughout the report. (Appendix Eight)

FEDERAL DIRECTIONS IN SPORT. RESPONSE TO THE MINISTER'S TASK FORCE ON FEDERAL SPORT POLICY (1993)

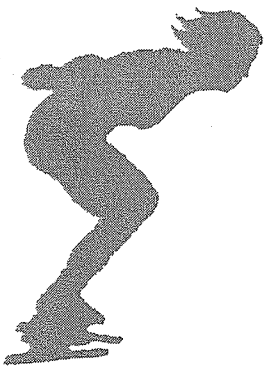
In keeping with the recommendations of the Minister's Task Force on Federal Sport Policy, the Government of Canada stated that equitable and accessible sport was one of its major themes. Many Canadians have opportunities to participate in sport but for others, significant barriers remain. Girls, women and such marginalized groups as Aboriginal people, persons with disabilities, ethnic and visible minorities and the economically disadvantaged have low participation rates and are under-represented in sport governance and promotion. This situation is not acceptable to the government, which believes that sport in Canada should provide equitable participation opportunities, without gender or linguistic bias, within a reasonable range of participation options. (Appendix Nine)

CANADIAN SPORT COUNCIL (1993)

Meeting in June 1993, delegates to Sport Forum IV recommended the establishment of a new governance structure. In setting up the Council, the delegates broke with tradition to build gender equity into every level of its structure. For example, each of the Councils' governing and working committees must have a gender composition of not less than 40 percent of one gender. When the Councils' general assembly meets each delegation of two or more must include one person from each gender with the overall goal of 50/50 gender representation. (Appendix Ten)

PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS

A growing public expectation insists that sport organizations govern themselves in a manner consistent with values Canadians deem important — equity, fairness and justice. To continue to receive government, public, and corporate support, sport organizations need to meet these expectations. With the introduction of equity policies and programs at all levels of government over the past 10 years, clearly sport organizations will increasingly be expected to create opportunities for girls and women in the areas of participation, leadership development and promotion.



THE BENEFITS OF GENDER EQUITY TO SPORT ORGANIZATIONS

Sport organizations have much to gain by committing themselves to gender equity programs and opportunities because:

- Attracting more girls and women to sport enhances the revenue base and increases the market segment to which the sport appeals.
- Fully representing the population base and tapping the resources of every member results in a larger, stronger and more effective organization.
- Skilled women provide the sport organization with an important talent pool of administrators, coaches and officials.
- Changing the image of women in sport attracts public interest - - and private investment. In turn, more members are attracted to the organization.
- Taking the lead in promoting girls and women brings prestige and support to the organization.
- Working together, women and men can learn to build equal partnerships.
- Providing opportunities for mothers and daughters to get involved can enhance both the chosen sport and family relationships.
- Sport can provide opportunities for girls to understand and respect their bodies which in turn helps them to deal with health issues such as eating disorders and smoking.
- By fulfilling their legal responsibility to treat fairly everyone involved in the organization and making a commitment to gender equity, sport organizations avoid a negative public image as well as the time and expense of dealing with unnecessary lawsuits.
- Government funds will be increasingly tied to equity issues and the realization of gender equity objectives.

In *Towards Equity for Women in Sport*, (draft 1991), the Australian Sports Commission states:

"The fact that an organization is seen to be committed to principles of equal opportunity in itself can encourage women to associate with the organization which they will recognize as progressive and responsive to social change. This may also improve the image of the organization in the eyes of the spectators, the media, potential sponsors, and associates."

**The new market —
52 per cent of the population! A commitment to equity isn't
altruism, it makes good business sense.
— Marg McGregor**

A GENDER EQUITY SPORT ORGANIZATION: AN ASSESSMENT TOOL

WHAT DOES GENDER EQUITY LOOK LIKE?

Many sport organizations believe that if both women and men are allowed to participate in their sport, that makes them a gender equitable organization. However, to be gender equitable means more than merely allowing girls and women to play.

Bringing about gender equity involves structural changes, a new set of values, norms and policies, new management practices, and changes in the attitudes of individuals towards inequity.

Bringing about gender equity means ensuring that there are goals and plans in the areas of:

- Systems and structures
- Leadership
- Resource allocation
- Programming
- Education, awareness and promotion

To help you to respond confidently and effectively to the challenge of ensuring a full range of opportunities and assuring equitable participation and competitive opportunities for girls and women with your organizations, the Handbook now leads you through an assessment of your organization from the standpoint of gender equity.

In using the assessment tool, assign a priority to each suggestion. Check the appropriate right-hand columns as follows: If the suggestion has been implemented, check Done (D); for priority ranking, indicate high (H), medium (M), or low (L). For determining timelines, indicate short-term (ST) or Other (O).

Under the general headings of Systems and Structures, Leadership, Resource Allocation, Programming, and Education, Awareness and Promotion, goals for each area are identified, accompanied by suggestions for realizing the goals. (Refer to **Part Two — Steps to Achieving Gender Equity for Women in Your Sport Organization** — for samples and tools to assist in implementing the appropriate suggestions.)

