

GETTING GIRLS & YOUNG WOMEN ACTIVE! CAAWS' On the Move INITIATIVE

On the Move is a national initiative designed to increase opportunities for non-active girls and young women (ages 9-18) to participate in fun-filled, supportive, female-only, recreational sport and physical activity.

1. **On the Move** is an innovative programming concept to help service providers increase girls' and young women's participation in sport and physical activity. Based on the experiences of **On the Move** programs across Canada, the user-friendly **On the Move Handbook** discusses the issues and barriers that girls and young women face in their participation, and provides information about program design and implementation, leadership, promotion, and building community support. Workshops and presentations across the country educate and increase awareness amongst policy makers and practitioners in the sport, physical activity, education and health sectors about increasing opportunities for girls and young women to participate.
2. **On the Move** is also a national network of service providers involved in female-only programming, and individuals and organizations concerned with the health and well being of girls and young women. The network is a resource for information about the importance of increasing girls' and young women's participation, and shares program successes and challenges.

CAAWS, the Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity, is a national non-profit organization working to encourage girls and women to *participate and lead* in physical activity and sport. Since the organization was founded in 1981, CAAWS has positioned itself as an agent of change, using cooperation, collaboration and consultation to achieve gender equity. CAAWS provides expert advice, positive solutions, and support to the sport and active living community through leadership, research and communication with several sectors of Canadian society.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- ✓ Learn for Oneself
- ✓ Each One Teach One
- ✓ Share the Resources
- ✓ Create Partnerships/Networks
- ✓ Involve Girls and Women
- ✓ Program for Those Not There
- ✓ New Models and Methods
- ✓ Integrate Gender Equity Plans & Policies
- ✓ Ask for What is Equitable
- ✓ Make a Personal Commitment
- ✓ Join the CAAWS Network

WHAT CAN SCHOOLS DO?

- ✓ Build school spirit with physical activity and sport programs that include everyone.
- ✓ Support female students' involvement.
- ✓ Provide a wide range of physical activity choices.
- ✓ Offer female-only gym time and programs.
- ✓ Ensure equity in sport posters, photographs, award systems, assemblies.
- ✓ Encourage females to take leadership roles.

Wondering what you can do to increase the participation of female students in your classroom? Here's 10 easy suggestions:

- 1. Emphasize fun and social aspects**

Physical education needs to be a fun experience, building a foundation for active living. Emphasize participation over skill; celebrate personal bests and accomplishments.
- 2. Provide female-only opportunities**

Many females feel uncomfortable participating in front of males. Add a female-only gym class to the timetable and provide girls and young women with access to the school's facilities.
- 3. Create a positive environment**

Creating a positive environment means making sure that students feel safe and supported. Think about your own and others' actions, and listen to students' concerns and needs.
- 4. Choice of clothing**

Allowing students to wear their choice of safe clothing will increase their comfort and participation. Many girls and young women experience low self-esteem and negative body image.
- 5. Teach the basics**

Helping girls and young women to develop their skills will increase their confidence and interest in pursuing life-long physical activity.
- 6. Value student input**

Value the interests and ideas of girls and young women. Create opportunities for them to plan and make decisions. Taking the time to incorporate some of their ideas will increase their interest and contribute to their overall experiences of sport and physical activity.
- 7. Program to a variety of physical and academic interests**

Respect the different skill levels and interests of your students. Peak their interests and participation by working with other teachers and/or examining the social and physiological aspects of sport and physical activity.
- 8. Encourage leadership opportunities**

Encourage female participation at all levels of sport and physical activity, as coaches, tournament organizers and officials; promote certification and training opportunities.
- 9. Partner with community facilities and explore local parks**

Promote the diversity of opportunities within your community and add some excitement to your program by visiting pools, arenas, courts, climbing gyms and parks.
- 10. Be a positive role model**

For students, colleagues and parents.