

13th World Sport for All Congress, Jyväskylä, Finland

Promoting Sport for All: Benefits and Strategies for the 21st Century

DECLARATION

Hosted by the Finnish Olympic Committee, the 13th World Sport for All Congress was organised by the LIKES Research Centre for Health and Sports Sciences and the Neuromuscular Research Centre of the University of Jyväskylä under the patronage of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and its Sport for All Commission, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and SportAccord/GAISF. It was attended by 586 delegates from 92 countries.

As Sport for All is a human right, the Congress recognises

- The need for optimal and equal opportunity for physical activity, through availability and accessibility of facilities (including open space), equipment, and other resources appropriate to the needs of communities; and for encouraging participation through the provision of innovative enjoyable grassroots programmes and traditional games and sports
- The threat and costs to society of decreased physical activity levels, particularly among young adults, and the global incidence of lower levels of physical activity in the workplace
- The need for nutritious diet and healthy food habits to help reduce the incidence of obesity and chronic disease
- The social and health benefits of significantly reducing time spent engaging in sedentary behaviour, especially “screen-based” activities, including computer games, social networking internet sites, and television
- The value and increasing popularity of unstructured, moderate-intensity physical activity (such as non-competitive recreation, including jogging, walking and cycling) and modified-rules games being integrated into daily lives
- The need to encourage and recruit new participants into physical activity and to take a lifetime and client driven approach which addresses the particular needs of all age groups
- The importance of targeting and influencing young people, as early integration of physical activity – including unstructured sport and recreation activities and physical education at school – into daily lives facilitates its establishment as a lifetime habit.

Congress urges the sports movement to take a leadership role in implementing direct action to address declining and inadequate levels of physical activity in communities, particularly through:

- Sports federations promoting Sport for All at all ages and among the entire community, particularly by implementing physical activity programmes emphasising health benefits; forming Sport for All Commissions; and including Sport for All in their mission statements
- National Olympic Committees encouraging, promoting and organising Sport for All projects for all age groups in collaboration with other sports institutions and organisations, and also forming Sport for All Commissions
- Sports Clubs and NGOs providing after-school and out-of-school physical activity programmes for children and young people
- The involvement of sports stars as influencers and role models in promoting social and behavioural change in regard to physical activity and health
- The International Olympic Committee developing a set of guidelines for Sport for All activities, including specific programmes, for all sections of the Olympic Movement.

Congress also recognises the responsibilities of all stakeholders in the Sport for All sector - individuals, families, schools, workplaces, the health sector, non-government organisations, and government at all levels – to take action, and the need for the sports movement to join forces with these stakeholders, working in collaboration, coordinating actions and forming alliances for strong multi-level, multi-agency action.

Accordingly, Congress urges

- People of all ages to engage in a variety of physical activities and sports, as different activities provide different health benefits
- Individuals to integrate moderate-intensity physical activity such as walking and cycling (including as transport where possible), and unstructured recreation into their daily lives
- Families to be role models and provide positive influence by being physically active, taking an active interest in school and community physical education and recreation activities
- Families to provide appropriate opportunities for children to participate in structured and unstructured physical activity, including facilitating involvement in programmes and respecting children's abilities and preferences
- The health sector to form stronger collaborations with the sports movement at all levels to promote and implement effective actions to counter the global problems of decreasing physical activity and the connected incidence of obesity and chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease
- Schools to work with the private sector, government and community groups to ensure access to facilities and necessary resources including appropriate equipment to participate in physical activity programmes
- The establishment and expansion of physical education and extracurricular programmes to provide daily recreational activities, including fitness programmes and competitive and non-competitive sports
- Particularly, government authorities at the relevant level to develop educational curriculum frameworks which include compulsory physical education classes, increasing the quality and hours of physical education, and information on the benefits of a healthy diet and physical activity
- Governments and government agencies to work with schools to establish agreements allowing fields, playgrounds and recreation centres to be used by community residents, sports clubs and NGOs for structured and informal physical activity when schools are closed, adopting policies to address any liability issues
- Government, particularly regional and national governments and public health authorities and armed forces, to take fully into account the significant social, health and economic benefits of increased physical activity, and costs of inactivity when formulating sport, health, and building design and urban development policies, including the provision of public space for sport and recreation.

Jyväskylä, 17 June 2010