Strength in Numbers

What is it?

The Strength in Numbers Tool contains a step-by-step guide to forming a partnership, a Partnership Profile Chart, a List of Potential Partners, and an explanation of the different types of partnership structures.

How will it help me get people active?

There is strength in numbers. Pooling your resources and forming partnerships can:

• focus sports resources and eliminate duplication;
• broaden community support and increase enthusiasm for a sports initiative;
• share the benefits of participation by community leaders, celebrities and influential people;
• fill in any gaps in the knowledge, skills, and expertise needed to effect a change;
• increased media interest and coverage, which will raise public awareness of physical activity and fitness issues; and
• reach more people within your target population more effectively.

By forming the right partnerships you increase your ability to get more people active for life.

When could I use it?

Use this Tool when:

• a group approach is the best way to accomplish your goals;
• no existing group is available in the community to address physical activity;
• an existing group needs rejuvenating;
• an existing group plans to tackle a new sport and requires additional expertise; or when
• previous efforts have not been successful.

For example...

When developing Canada’s Physical Activity Guide to Healthy, Active Living, Health Canada officials knew that they would need participation from many partner organizations to successfully promote and distribute the Guide.

The Guide Development Team approached a variety of organizations that also want Canadians to be more active. They secured the participation of over 30 key partners such as the Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology, the College of Family Physicians of Canada, the YM/YWCA of Canada, and the Canadian Public Health Association.
By working collaboratively, Health Canada was able to leverage the resources and talents of their partners, who were all working towards a common goal. This group effort increased the Guide’s credibility and helped spread the message that every bit of physical activity helps, but more is even better!

**Other useful ToolKit Tools**

Use the *Strength in Numbers* Tool with:
- *Forming Partnerships* and
- *“Make a Change” Action Plan*.

**Suggested format**

Photocopy all or part of this Tool for as many people as will take place in the process.

**Source**

Active Living acknowledges the “Athletes Helping Athletes Outreach Program” (formerly run by MacMaster University) as a resource on Group Profiles.
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The Partnership Process

Background information

Step 1: Identifying the skills, expertise and experience needed
Across the top of the Partnership Profile Chart, list the skills, expertise and experience that are needed to complete the task at hand.

Step 2: List the people who are already available
In the far left column, list the names of people who are already available. For each person, check off which of the required skills, expertise or experience they contribute. Identify each person by job title, facility or organization.

Step 3: Analyze skill, expertise and experience gaps
Examine the chart and note any areas where there is a lack of skills, expertise or experience.

Step 4: Look for potential partners
Consult the S-E06 “List of Potential Partners in Your Community” for suggestions on where to find partners. Keep in mind when recruiting partners that they should bring additional strengths to the group.

Step 5: Recruit partners
Contact potential members. Make sure that you highlight “what’s in it for them” if they participate. This may be different for each partner.

Step 6: Complete the Partnership Profile Chart
Add the names of new group members, indicating their skills, expertise or experience in the appropriate columns to maintain an accurate profile of your group.

Step 7: Decide what type of structure your partnership will have
Included in this Tool is an explanation of the various types of structures a partnership can have. Once you have recruited members, the group should examine the possibilities and decide which structure would be most suitable.
**Strength in Numbers**

**Group Profile Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills/Expertise/Experience Required</th>
<th>Position/Organization</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>Current Members</strong></td>
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| **New Members**                     |                       |
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List of Potential Partners

You may have other resources in your community so be sure to review this list with colleagues to identify as many possibilities as you can. Also check out the Active Ontario website <http://www.activeontario.org> for other potential partners.

Health and Physical Activity (Fitness, Recreation & Sport) Organizations

- Boys and Girls Clubs
- Local heart health coalition
- Local health unit
- Hospitals, health maintenance organizations, or clinics
- Private practicing physicians
- Physical and occupational therapists
- Cardiovascular rehabilitation centres
- Professional medical associations and auxiliaries
- Emergency medical teams
- Mental health centres or crisis intervention centres
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters
- National, provincial, or municipal parks
- Local parks and recreation department
- YMCA/YWCA
- YMHA/YWHA
- Community centres
- Older adult centres
- Walking, hiking, trails or running clubs
- Aboriginal sport circle
- Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a Disability
- Canada’s Coalition for Active Living
- Canadian Health Network Active Living Affiliate (Alberta Centre for Well-Being and Leisure Information Network)
- Active Living Community Action Project (ALCAP) Facilitators
- Breakfast for Learning — Canadian Living Foundation
- Canadian Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance
- Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women in Sport
- Canadian / Ontario College of Family Physicians
- Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute
- Canadian Intramural Recreation Association
- Canadian Parks and Recreation Association
• Canadian Society for Exercise Sciences
• Health Canada
• Ontario Association for Sport and Exercise Sciences
• Ontario Fitness Council
• Ontario Physical and Health Education Association
• Ontario Special Olympics
• Parks and Recreation Ontario
• ParticipACTION
• Provincial Sport Organizations
• sportalliance
• Sport for Disabled Ontario

**Government Sector**

- Representatives of Federal, Provincial and Municipal government (e.g., MP, MPP, city councillor, mayor, local elected officials)
- Regional or local planning commissions
- Provincial government ministries
- School board trustees
- Local Councils on Recreation, Sport, Fitness, Community Planning, Crime Prevention, etc.
- Public utility companies
- Law enforcement agencies
- Emergency rescue agencies (e.g. medical and fire)
- Libraries
- Public housing companies
- Municipal zoning board

**Education Sector**

- Universities and colleges
- Public/private elementary and secondary schools
- School boards
- Daycare centres, pre-school programs, and after-school programs
- School councils
- Home and school associations

**Transportation and Environmental Development Sector**

- Ontario Recreation Facilities Association
- Ontario Parks Association
- Provincial/Municipal Department of Transportation officials; bicycle and pedestrian coordinators
- Federal and provincial highway traffic and safety officials
- City and regional planning commissions; urban planners
- Colleges and institutes of city and regional or urban planning and research
- Colleges and schools of architecture, civil engineering, landscape design, and social ecology
- Colleges and schools of law and criminal justice
- Professional associations and environmental advocacy groups (e.g., Go for Green!)
- Private walking, hiking, bicycling and other sport organizations
- Private nature, garden, and other outdoor conservation organizations
- Municipal and provincial officials regulating zoning laws

<.../more>
Business Sector

- Chamber of Commerce
- Business coalitions and labour organizations
- Large businesses and industries
- Small businesses and industries
- Real estate agencies
- Worksite wellness coordinators
- Shopping mall managers
- Fitness clubs and health spas
- Athletics or sporting goods industries
- Professional sports teams

Media and Communications Sector

- Television stations (cable and public) news or health editors
- Radio station managers
- Newspaper editors; especially health and lifestyle section editors
- Electronic mail and Internet consultants
- Professional journal editors
- Health and fitness publication editors
- Public relations and marketing professionals or consultants

Religious Sector

- Clergy and ministerial associations or councils
- Places of worship
- Religious affiliated recreation facilities, camps, etc.
- Women’s groups and men’s groups
- Youth groups

Voluntary or Service Organization Sector

- Heart and Stroke Foundation
- Red Cross
- Lung Association
- Canadian Diabetes Association
- Special or private foundations
- Neighbourhood or homeowner associations
- Girl Guides, Boy Scouts, 4H Clubs
- Older adult associations
- Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, Jaycees and other service organizations
- Graduate students in schools of public health, kinesiology, medical students, physiotherapy and occupational therapy students, pre-service teachers
- Local physicians, sports figures, and celebrities
- Cultural organizations

Be sure to check out the Active Ontario website <http://www.activeontario.org> for other potential partners in your community!
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Types of Partnership Structures

Once you know the purpose of your partnership and have recruited partners, you will need to decide what type of structure will best suit the task at hand. These are some of the possibilities.

**Active Living NETWORK**
A network is a group whose members typically gathering to share information. They may not often work collaboratively on joint projects. While bilateral partnerships may emerge from the group meetings this is not the intent. No public identity or profile is necessary.

*Example:* Two partners in the community who offer fitness programs for children meet a few times a year to hear about what others are doing, share ideas and perhaps get together to undertake joint staff training initiatives.

**Active Living COALITION**
A coalition is a group whose members gather to act collectively, typically at the community-wide level, on an issue such as advocating a policy change. Usually a public identity is associated with the group as a whole.

*Example:* All private, public and voluntary partners who have a mandate to promote fitness, together with interested citizens, lobby to change municipal plans to include bicycle lanes on major roads and sidewalks in new housing developments.

**Active Living COMMITTEE**
A committee is a group that typically reports to another entity like a Board of Directors, and meets on an ongoing basis. The group determines its slate of activities, partly based on the strategic direction of its “parent” body.

*Example:* A community health promotion project, such as a heart health coalition, strikes a specific group to deal with on-going activities related to physical activity—reviewing messages for accuracy, developing new resources, or identifying community priorities.

**Active Living TASK FORCE**
A task force is a group that usually addresses a short-term project with a specific outcome. It is often appointed by someone, to whom they are accountable for the completion of the task. Following the completion of the task, the group may disband. If it continues, it often becomes a Committee or a Coalition to reflect the on-going nature of the function.

*Example:* Each year community partners in active living gather to undertake *SummerActive* activities in their community. Following the activities, they disband until the next year’s project.