



## ***IndigenACTION*** ***Community Wellness*** ***Through Sports and Recreation*** ***Updated July 2013***

*IndigenACTION* is an initiative of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) National Youth Council aimed at fostering partnerships that will help ensure Indigenous peoples in Canada have every opportunity to enhance their lives and their communities through community fitness, wellness, sport and recreation. It has helped to grow and enhance partnerships with Tim Hortons, Nike N7, Rick Hansen Foundation and Just Move It USA and Just Move It Canada.

Launched in July 2010, *IndigenACTION* is built on the spirit of the 2010 Olympic Games where First Nations and all Canadians gathered and worked together in mutual respect toward a common goal. This is the relationship *IndigenACTION* is carrying forward – to work together in the spirit of partnership for a better day for Indigenous peoples in this country, just as was agreed to during Treaty making. By gathering voices and facilitating focused discussion aimed at real results, *IndigenACTION* supports and promotes healthy lifestyles, community wellness and a brighter future for Indigenous peoples in Canada.

*IndigenACTION* proudly welcomed Olympian Waneek Horn-Miller as Ambassador to the initiative. In addition to motivating participation by Indigenous youth, athletes and community members, and fostering key partnerships with existing organizations, groups and programs, Waneek and the AFN Youth Council have developed a preliminary plan aimed at gathering input from across Canada on ways to better support Indigenous sport, fitness and wellness.

With the help of lead sponsor Tim Hortons and supporting sponsors, Nike N7 and New Relationship Trust, *IndigenACTION* hosted three roundtable sessions across Canada. The roundtable sessions brought together leaders in Indigenous communities, athletes, sports institutions, organizations, the private and public sectors to gather voices and coordinate efforts to identify opportunities, common goals and objectives. Discussions focused on identifying opportunities to improve and enhance existing resources for Indigenous youth in sport while promoting active and healthy lifestyles at the community level. A report on the outcomes of the roundtables is available at <http://www.afn.ca/uploads/files/indigenaction/indigenactionroundtablereport.pdf>.

*IndigenACTION* hosts annual Friendship Run/Walks which take place usually during AFN Annual General Assemblies. These annual events help promote physical activity, fitness and healthy living among Assembly delegates, and have also helped to build partnerships with local running groups, including the Tom Longboat Running Club in Toronto, ON and Athletics Yukon in Whitehorse, YK.

As the youngest and fastest growing population in Canada, First Nations have an opportunity to spark serious change in this country. Sport, fitness and wellness have great potential to encourage, motivate and create confidence in young people leading to further empowerment and support for youth leadership. Athletics and physical education help combat obesity and are linked to improved academic performance and education outcomes, including concentration and attendance at school. They also help increase self-esteem and sense of identity, further motivating and empowering First Nation young people to strive to achieve their goals and their fullest potential. Whether it's building hockey rinks in the remote northern reaches of Ontario, sending sporting equipment to kids on the prairies, or giving kids on the streets the option of joining a team instead of a gang, benefits include fostering community togetherness, community-based economic spin-off opportunities and greater investment and support for Indigenous athletes.

There are already many caring and amazing individuals, charities and foundations working together with and among First Nations. AFN recognizes and supports these efforts in the hopes to grow them into a national movement.

Please continue to watch for *IndigenACTION* updates and encourage individuals and organizations to join the *IndigenACTION* movement. With a focus on our youth we can improve First Nations health by sparking a movement encouraging activity and healthy living within every individual and every household.

**For more information on *IndigenACTION*, including upcoming events please visit  
[www.afn.ca](http://www.afn.ca). #indigenACTION @AFN\_Updates**