

Métis Nation British Columbia

ActNow BC Project

ActNow BC is the health promotion platform that is helping British Columbians live healthier lives by being more physically active, eating better foods, living tobacco free and making healthy choices in pregnancy. The goal of this platform is to make BC the healthiest jurisdiction to ever host an Olympic or Paralympic Winter Games. The Minister of State for ActNow BC is the Honourable Minister Gordon Hogg.

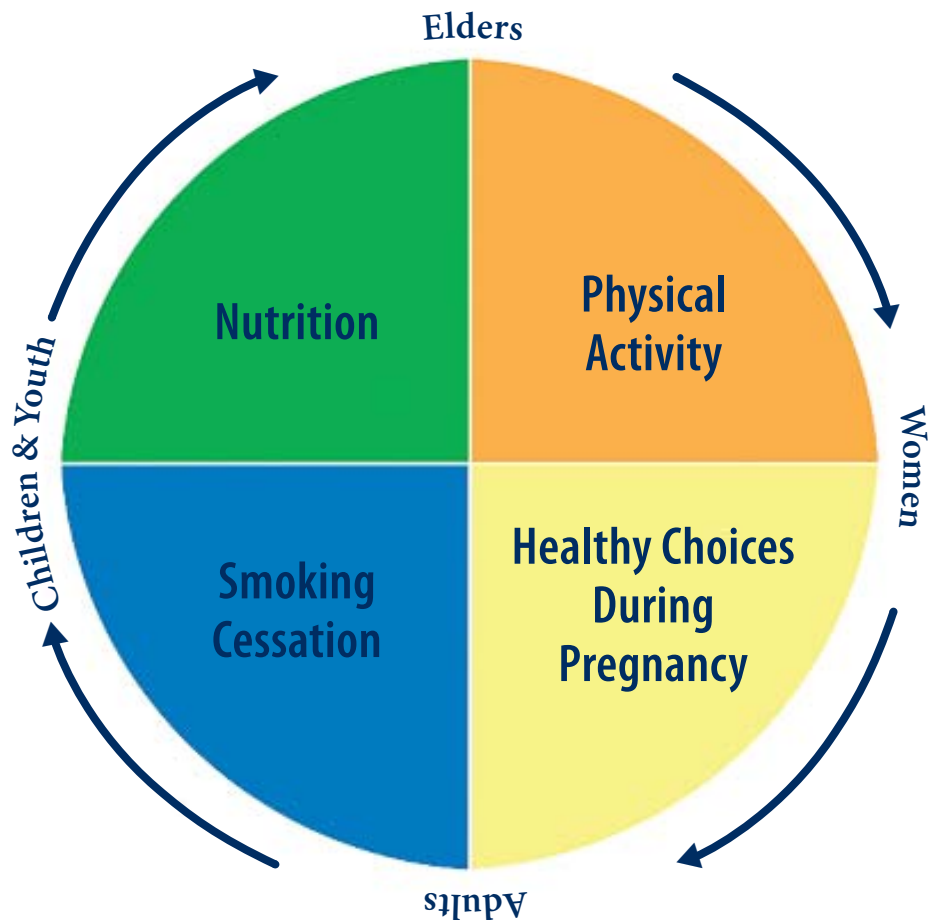
Goals for ActNow BC include:

- To make British Columbia one of the healthiest jurisdictions to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games;
- To build community capacity to create healthier, more sustainable and economically viable communities;
- To improve the health of British Columbians by reducing tobacco use, eating healthy foods, being more active, and making healthy choices during pregnancy;
- To reduce demand on the health care system.

Targets for 2010 include:

- *Tobacco Reduction:* Reduce tobacco use by 10%
- *Healthy Eating:* Increase percentage of people who eat at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables every day by 20%
- *Physical Activity:* Increase percentage of people who are physically active by 20%
- *Healthy Weights:* Reduce percentage of BC adults who are overweight or obese by 20%
- *Healthy Choices in Pregnancy:* Increase number of women counselled about alcohol use during pregnancy by 50%

Success will require broad-based long-term changes in beliefs and behaviours; government can't do it alone and needs the participation of many partners from all sectors. www.actnowbc.gov.bc.ca



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ActNowBC

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The National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health (NCCAHA) has been tasked with implementing the Aboriginal stream of the ActNow BC initiative. To support Métis participation in ActNow BC activities, the NCCAHA has entered into an Agreement with the Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC). The Agreement is comprised of developing seven (7) regional health promotion projects and two age and gender specific projects, one specific to the Métis Women's Secretariat – BC and one specific to the BC United Métis Youth Circle, for a total of nine (9) projects.

The MNBC will serve as the mechanism through to which to guide the development of projects that contribute to the achievement of the ActNow BC goals within Métis communities. Activities undertaken may be up to two years in length and are intended to contribute to the following key objectives:

- Promote wellness and support chronic disease prevention;
- Promote physical activity in communities;
- Promote wellness and healthy lifestyles in British Columbia;
- Increase the capacity of the Métis communities to create and sustain health promoting policies, environments, programs and services; and
- Enhance collaboration between Métis communities, government, non-government and private sector organizations.

Partnerships

Through its membership within the BC Healthy Living Alliance the MNBC has secured partnerships with national and provincial organizations with expertise in the areas of nutrition, physical activity, smoking cessation and prenatal health to support the development of the MNBC ActNow BC project(s). The partners to date include: the Heart and Stroke Foundation, the Canadian Diabetes Association, the Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Health Aboriginal Tobacco Strategy and the Métis Centre of the National Aboriginal Health Organization.

Regional Information Sessions

Throughout the fall of 2007, the MNBC will provide regional information sessions about the program and provide a menu of options for pilot projects. These options are for the consideration of the regions who may want to utilize all or part of the programming presented for their project. These sessions will then be followed by planning meetings with each region, the MWS-BC and BCUMYC to support the development of projects.

MNBC Minister of Health
Lorne LaFleur

MNBC ActNow Coordinator
Marie van Humbeck

Métis Health

The 2006 MNBC Provincial Survey confirmed the 2001 Census data that chronic conditions constitute major health issues for the Métis population with rates of arthritis, heart disease and diabetes at two to three times the rate of mainstream Canadians. While genetic predisposition is a contributing factor, the likelihood of contracting heart disease, diabetes, and other health issues is directly impacted by the choices we make every day. Sedentary lifestyles, poor nutrition and smoking put many people at unnecessary risk of developing diabetes and other chronic conditions.

Lifestyle changes supported by health-enhancing environments can decrease risk factors, and reverse the affects of some chronic conditions such as arthritis. Everyone with arthritis can benefit from eating well. There's no special diet or miracle food that cures arthritis, but some foods may complement drug therapies for some conditions. There's also growing evidence that some components of foods can have an anti-inflammatory effect. Studies have consistently shown that regular exercise, such as brisk walking or resistance exercises such as lifting weights, are safe and effective ways of reducing pain and disability, and enhancing physical fitness in arthritic patients.

MNBC ActNow BC projects will provide communities with the strategic direction and collaborative environments to develop their own healthy living programs. The goal of the MNBC ActNow BC project is to build on community strengths and knowledge to provide opportunities to develop individual, family and community health promoting environments, programs and services.

Physical Activity

The Métis Elders Networking Dynamic is a ten-week program running one afternoon per week for three hours. The project is called the Métis Elders Networking Dynamic, or MEND project, because it aims to create an awareness and understanding of the existing network of supports for Métis Elders. Through partnerships with federal, provincial and municipal partners the MEND program aims to increase the access of Métis Elders to existing programs and services in a culturally sensitive framework.

The one hour fitness component of the program stresses the need for Elders to stay active in order to maintain and improve their health and to stay engaged in life. The program demonstrates how exercise and nutrition build confidence and self-esteem – and can ward off problems like depression and dementia by keeping our brains in good condition. Weekly topics include Pensions, Housing, Abuse, Legal Aid and Legal Issues, Safety and Security, Falls Prevention and Aging Well.

The MNBC is currently developing a facilitation guidebook for communities wishing to make the MEND Program all, or part, of their ActNow BC project.

1:00pm - 2:00pm	Fitness Class	60 minutes
2:00pm - 2:30pm	Meal Break	30 minutes
2:30pm - 3:30pm	Weekly Topic / Presentation	60 minutes
3:30pm - 4:00pm	Talking Circle	30 minutes

Nutrition

Whether you're a gourmet chef, an admitted amateur or somewhere in between, the Canadian Diabetes Association's "Cooking for Your Life!" program might be your ticket to healthier eating. Cooking for Your Life is a 4-week, hands-on, cooking and nutrition class taught by a registered dietician and a cooking instructor.

Participants walk away with a new set of cooking skills and practical advice on how to find out what's in the products they buy. Discover healthy food choices, add more variety to what you eat, and increase your sense of well-being!

Cooking for Your Life! participants learn to:

- prepare and cook delicious, nutritious meals
- read food labels, modify recipes, and plan menus
- include the right amount of fat and fibre in meals without sacrificing flavor
- manage or decrease the risk of diabetes or heart disease
- enjoy a healthier lifestyle



Classes are held in a fun, informative atmosphere where individuals receive as much instruction as they need.

Smoking Cessation

The Honour Your Health Challenge (HYHC) is funded by the B.C. Ministry of Health – Aboriginal Health Branch. The HYHC is a province wide, community based health initiative which mobilizes individuals and communities to live active, healthy & strong lifestyles, free from tobacco misuse. Incentives and provincial grand prize draws make the Honour Health Challenge a fun way to keep moving toward better health and wellness!

The HYHC is comprised of training individuals from Aboriginal communities to become HYHC coordinators. Coordinators support individuals and groups to reduce or quit tobacco misuse, increase their daily physical exercise, and or focus on healthy eating. HYHC Community Coordinators are eligible to receive:

- training and grant opportunities (deadlines apply)
- planning and resource kits, including pledge forms and timelines; and
- water bottles and other items to reward, encourage and gift your participants.

Healthy Choices During Pregnancy

The Healthy Choices in Pregnancy component of the ActNow BC platform is designed to promote healthy lifestyles and prevent illness among British Columbians. The best way to have a healthy pregnancy is to: eat a balanced diet, stay physically active, get lots of rest, avoid smoking, alcohol and drug use and reduce stress. A target of a 50% increase in women counseled on alcohol use during pregnancy has been set for the Healthy Choices in Pregnancy initiative.

BC Women's Hospital & Health Centre, the BC Centre of Excellence for Women's Health and the British Columbia Reproductive Care Program are working in collaboration to support the achievement of this provincial initiative.

Hearts in motion™ WALKING CLUB *A step in the right direction – Hearts in Motion™ Walking Clubs*

The Hearts in Motion™ Walking Club is a Heart and Stroke Foundation program designed to encourage people to participate in regular physical activity by walking. The program encourages participants to walk at their own pace in a safe and social environment.

Lack of physical activity is recognized as a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke, which is Canada's leading cause of death. Walking is an easy and sociable activity that can be enjoyed by people of all ages.

The Hearts in Motion™ Walking Club recognizes that each community is distinct and has access to different resources. As a result, the design of the program allows a community to adapt it to their own particular needs. This gives the Hearts in Motion™ Walking Club the flexibility to work in any community.

Partnering with the Métis Nation British Columbia

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon will provide materials for communities wanting to make the Hearts in Motion™ program part, or all, of their ActNow BC program. The ActNow BC grant funding can be used to pay the \$10 membership fee for participants, purchase pedometers or other items to support the Walking Club, paying someone to be the Walking Leader, facility rental or other items to make your project a success.



HeartSmart Kids™ *Three Programs: Grades K-3; Grades 4-6; Aboriginal Grades 4-6*

The objective of HeartSmart Kids™ is to encourage children to develop heart-healthy values, attitudes and skills. All activities in the program are focused on supporting a heart-healthy lifestyle by providing information that will encourage children to make informed and healthy food choices, be smoke-free and be physically active into their adult life.

The Aboriginal HeartSmart Kids™ Grades 4-6 program is designed differently than the other HeartSmart Kids™ program. It is culturally sensitive and teaches children to be active, eat heart healthy, and live smoke free. The development of the resource was guided by a holistic approach to health, combined with scientific knowledge. The lessons lead students through a series of activities that focus on spiritual, emotional, physical and mental aspects of their health. The activities ask students to explore links between their health and their environment and community. They are not linked to a particular Aboriginal group in B.C., but reflect a general approach to Aboriginal philosophy. There are six units organized around the theme of the drum, a symbol for wholeness and health.

Partnering with the Métis Nation British Columbia

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon will provide the Educators Guide, program materials and the Educator training for communities wanting to make the HeartSmart Kids™ program part, or all, of their ActNow BC program. ActNow BC grant funding can be used to pay the salary of the newly trained ActNow Educators, to rent space to facilitate the program, to purchase food and refreshments, to purchase materials for the program or to incorporate extra activities such as jigging, canoeing or snowshoeing.

