



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ParticipACTION launches national movement to move Canadians need to move more

Toronto (ONTARIO) October 15, 2007 – Today, ParticipACTION, the national voice for physical activity and sport participation in Canada, along with its partners including the Government of Canada, celebrated its return with the launch of a public awareness campaign aimed at inspiring Canadians to move more. Originally established in 1971, ParticipACTION was reinvigorated to help deal with the inactivity and obesity crisis that is facing Canada.

The launch of the awareness campaign was kicked off by a symbolic walk with the Honourable Tony Clement, Minister of Health, and the Honourable Helena Guergis, Secretary of State, Foreign Affairs and International Trade and Sport, who joined ParticipACTION staff and board members in a stroll from Centre Block to Confederation Building in Ottawa.

“There has never been a more critical time for Canadians to get off their couches and get in motion. If we don’t deal with this inactivity crisis, we could soon see a generation of children who have shorter life expectancies than ours. This would be an unprecedented and historical shift,” says Kelly Murumets, President and CEO of ParticipACTION. “Today marks the start of a new movement in Canada – a movement to move. We urge Canadians to join.”

ParticipACTION’s public awareness campaign is targeted to all Canadians with an emphasis on parents and Canadian youth. With only nine per cent of Canadian children and youth (aged 5 to 19) meeting the recommended guidelines in Canada’s Physical Activity Guides for Children and Youth¹, ParticipACTION’s new ads seek to show the implications of youth inactivity and motivate parents to make physical activity a priority at home. The campaign will include TV and radio advertisements that will run nationally from October 2007 to March 2008, and a content rich website (www.participACTION.com) complete with tips, resources and information for Canadians.

“The inactivity and obesity crisis we are facing will have a major impact on our health, our society and our economy if Canadians don’t get more active in the very near future,” says Minister Tony Clement. “Canada’s New Government strongly supports ParticipACTION as an organization that promotes physical activity because there is an undeniable need for change.”

Physical inactivity can lead to a host of chronic degenerative conditions and premature death². With more than half of Canadians considered inactive,³ Canada is facing an inactivity and

¹ Source: *Canadian Physical Activity Levels Among Youth (CANPLAY) Study 2005-2006*

² Katzmarzyk PT, Janssen I. *The economic costs associated with physical inactivity and obesity in Canada: an update. Can J Appl Physiol. 2004 Feb 29(1):90-115*

³ *Physical Activity Monitor. Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute. 2004*

obesity crisis that will not only impact individuals' health, but also society and the economy. The economic burden of physical inactivity in Canada is estimated at \$5.3 billion.⁴

“We are not asking Canadians to make dramatic changes to their lifestyle or to suddenly join the gym but rather to integrate movement into their daily routines,” says Helena Guergis, Secretary of State (Foreign Affairs and International Trade) (Sport). “Whether it’s taking the stairs instead of the elevator, walking your kids to school or even raking leaves, there are many simple things we can do in our daily routines to get us moving more.”

To inspire Canadians to move more, ParticipACTION will run public awareness campaigns, provide leadership and support to the physical activity, recreation and sport sectors so that all organizations and initiatives are united and coordinated, and it will work with its partners to advocate for policy change and action that supports physical activity in Canada. ParticipACTION will also be a resource for Canadians and provide information about the inactivity issue and tips for how to integrate movement into daily life.

About ParticipACTION

ParticipACTION is the national voice for physical activity and sport participation in Canada. Originally established in 1971, ParticipACTION was relaunched in 2007 to help address the looming inactivity and obesity crisis that faces Canada. As a national not-for-profit organization solely dedicated to inspiring and supporting active and healthy living for Canadians, it will work with its partners, which include sport, physical activity, recreation organizations, government and corporate sponsors, to inspire and support Canadians to move more. ParticipACTION is generously supported by Sport Canada and the Public Health Agency of Canada. For more information, visit www.participACTION.com

-30-

A photo is available on the newswire. For more information or to arrange an interview please contact:

Andrea Wooland
Hill & Knowlton Canada
(416) 413-4698
andrea.wooland@hillandknowlton.ca

Amy Diniz
Hill & Knowlton Canada
(416) 413-4696
amy.diniz@hillandknowlton.ca

⁴Katzmarzyk P, Gledhill N, and Shepard R: The economic burden of physical inactivity in Canada. CMAJ 2000; 163(11):1435-40