

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

## **For Immediate Release**



## **THOUSANDS ACROSS BC GET ACTIVE ON 2009 MOVE FOR HEALTH DAY**

**Burnaby, BC (Friday, May 8, 2009)** – Thousands of people across British Columbia will be participating in community events designed to get them active as part of 2009 Move for Health Day. Move for Health Day is held annually on May 10<sup>th</sup> (although some communities have scheduled events on other days) and is intended to encourage people to adopt physically active, healthy lifestyles. Last year, 68,000 British Columbians took part in Move for Health Day events. This year, the BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA), which leads Move for Health Day with its partners in this province, is hoping for a turnout of 70,000.

BCRPA will officially launch the 2009 Move for Health Day festivities today (Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup>) at the Community School Inukshuk Relay in Surrey. Hundreds of children from two elementary schools will participate in activities such as obstacle courses, dance, martial arts, soccer and a tug-of-war. Some of the relay stations will also teach students about eating the right foods and other important healthy lifestyle information. The event takes place at Unwin Park at 9:30am.

BCRPA Chief Executive Officer Suzanne Allard Strutt says it's important to learn the value of physical activity at an early age. "We've known for a long time that physical activity helps develop a healthy body and mind and social skills. It also plays a role in building a sense of community belonging and teaches the value of participating." She adds that physical activity is something people of all ages should get more involved with. "For adults, regular physical activity helps prevent a range of health problems like heart disease, diabetes and some forms of cancer. In older adults, it can help slow the aging process and prolong quality of life."

Communities around BC are hosting a wide range of events. In Vancouver, there are a number of activities planned, including a free fitness class in Coal Harbour combining cardio-kickboxing, Pilates, Yoga, Tai-Chi and Qi-gong. Williams Lake and Quesnel will face off in their traditional challenge to see which city can get the most people active. And in the Victoria area, opportunities include free admission to all drop-in activities at the Juan de Fuca Recreation Centre.

Because Move for Health Day falls on Mother's Day this year, some communities, like Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge, will be encouraging people to "Move with Your Mother" at local rec centres. Others, like the New Aiyansh Community Wellness organization in the Nisga'a Valley, will be hosting a Walk with the Chief and Matriarchs.

To find out about events in your area, visit the BCRPA website's Move for Health Day page: [www.bcrpa.bc.ca/mfhd](http://www.bcrpa.bc.ca/mfhd)

Photos of Move for Health Day events are available to the media upon request.

Move for Health Day was designated by the World Health Organization in 2002 as an international day of physical activity. The BCRPA, in collaboration with various partner groups, has spearheaded the organization of Move for Health Day activities since the inception of the event. CTV British Columbia is the proud media sponsor of 2009 Move for Health Day.

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## **BACKGROUND:**

The British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association is a not for profit organization dedicated to building and sustaining active healthy lifestyles and communities in BC. Established in 1958, the Association is a central resource agency for members and stakeholders of the parks, recreation, physical activity and culture industry, providing leadership, training and support to help meet national, provincial and local priorities. Through a diverse network of partners and extensive programs and services, BCRPA actively advocates accessibility and inclusiveness to recreation and physical activity and strives to bridge the gap between the recreation and sport system to increase participation from “playground to podium.”

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### **MOVE FOR HEALTH DAY PARTNERS:**

2010 Legacies Now / The Aboriginal Sport and Recreation Association of BC / Action Schools! BC / BC Healthy Living Alliance / BC Lung Association / BC Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport / BC Pediatric Society / BC Recreation and Parks Association / BC Therapeutic Recreation Association / Canadian Cancer Society of BC & Yukon / Canadian Diabetes Association – Pacific Division / Dietitians of Canada / Heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon / Physical Education Teachers of BC / Premier’s Sport Awards Program / Sport BC / SportMed BC / The Arthritis Society / Union of BC Municipalities

