

ELECTION 2003: COMMIT TO A HEALTHIER NOVA SCOTIA THROUGH RECREATION



What is your Party's position on these important issues?

The thousands of Nova Scotians who use and depend on recreation services want to know your answers to the following questions:

FACT: Nova Scotians benefit from a comprehensive and coordinated provincial government role regarding recreation.

QUESTION: What is your Party's vision for ensuring the provincial government continues to provide this leadership role? Will you continue to appoint a Senior Minister who will have responsibility for making this happen? How will you involve those who directly support the delivery of recreation services?

FACT: The current funding allocated to the Provincial Active Kids – Healthy Kids Strategy is inadequate. Studies consistently show that investing in healthy lifestyle choices and increasing Nova Scotians' physical activity levels would actually save taxpayers money over the long term.

QUESTION: What will be you and your Party's level of commitment to increasing physical activity across Nova Scotian and ensuring adequate funds are provided to the Active Kids – Healthy Kids Strategy, i.e.: how much funding over what period of time?

FACT: Research continues to show that access to recreational opportunities reduces self destructive and antisocial behaviors in kids and provides meaningful and positive lifestyle alternatives for our young people. Today, 72% of children and youth in families with a family income of under \$20,000 do not participate in recreation programs (compared to 25% of those with higher family incomes).

QUESTION: How will you and your Party commit to support recreation opportunities – helping ensure our young people stay out of trouble?

FACT: Nova Scotia's recreation and sport facilities, built in the late 60's and early 70's, are reaching the end of their life cycle and there is a pressing need to replace, repair and renovate these important regional facilities. There is an existing minor facility development program that assists communities in the development of "medium" size facilities, but is much too small to address these larger scale facility issues.

QUESTION: How is your Party going to ensure that appropriate and equitable levels of funding is provided to recreation and sport facility development?

FACT: In 2003, there were over \$5,000,000 worth of requests to the provincial sport and recreation facility development fund. There was less than \$1,000,000 in provincial government funding available to respond to these requests.

QUESTION: How is your Party going to ensure that funding for minor facility development (ball fields, playgrounds, etc.) is available to meet the need and demand?

FACT: According to the Canadian Medical Association, 95% of schools do not meet the minimum requirements of 2.5 hours per week of physical activity.

QUESTION: What is your position on introducing quality daily physical activity in Nova Scotia's schools?

FACT: Canada's sick, elderly, disabled, children and other vulnerable groups are receiving 4.7 % less service from volunteer groups than they did in 1997. In Nova Scotia the decline has been 7.2%, costing the province \$60 million a year in lost service.

QUESTION: We want to know what your plan is for supporting volunteerism and the voluntary sector, and what investment is your Party prepared to make to this sector?

FACT: Volunteer groups have been greatly impacted by the inability to access insurance for community special events, trails, and children's programs and camps.

QUESTION: What is your Party prepared to do to ensure these volunteer community groups are able to continue to offer recreational opportunities?

Please forward your responses to Dawn Stegen, Executive Director, Recreation Nova Scotia, or any one of the RNS Board Members listed in the attachment. We thank you for responding to us on these important issues, and look forward to working with you to continue to make Nova Scotia an active healthy province.