

## Sport

Increasing physical activity levels is an inherent process of sports organizations and clubs across the state of West Virginia, further serving as a platform for citizens of all ages and abilities to engage in enjoyable physical activity. Thus, sports professionals can play a vital role in fostering a culture of physical activity. This can be accomplished by leveraging expertise and community connections to strengthen and showcase existing programs that demonstrate best practices. Sports professionals, including coaches, trainers, and organizations, can extend their reach by designing and implementing programs throughout the state. Through multi-sector collaborative efforts, sports organizations and professionals can partner on efforts to inspire, engage, and drive meaningful change in West Virginia's physical activity landscape.

### Strategies and Tactics

#### Priority Area 1: Structural Capacity

##### Priority Area 1 Strategy

Create safe and supportive sport opportunities for youth, adults, and older adults, with a focus on eliminating disparities based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, geography, age, or compromised health.

##### Priority Area 1 Tactics

- 1 Introduce sports opportunities in schools and educate teachers on how to maintain them.
- 2 Facilitate the adoption of supportive practices within community sports programs and educate coaches on how to effectively implement them.
- 3 Identify and disseminate evidence-based practices that prioritize moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity for all participants during sport and play participation practices and games (Physical Activity Guidelines).
- 4 Offer affordable community-level sports for youth, adults, and older adults, including non-competitive or low-level competitive recreational sports (i.e., swimming, golf, biking, dancing, hiking, walking).

<b>5</b>	Develop and circulate educational materials and training about lifetime physical activity and its impact on preventing injuries and reducing chronic disease risk for sports organizations (e.g., Remain in the Game app).
<b>6</b>	Provide incentives and support existing mandates to increase the number of coaches trained in key competencies, including basic safety and immediate care, and sport-specific rules and protocols.
<b>7</b>	Create opportunities for free and organized play for people of all ages and abilities.
<b>8</b>	Champion sport organizations that already work to create supportive opportunities with evidence-based practices (e.g., West Virginia's National Interscholastic Cycling Association).

## ***Priority Area 2: Public Awareness and Social Marketing***

<b><i>Priority Area 2 Strategy</i></b>	
	Identify sport resources, programs, and events and circulate the information to the public.

<b><i>Priority Area 2 Tactics</i></b>	
<b>1</b>	Use sporting event venues to deliver messages and create opportunities for increased physical activity using various forms of media.
<b>2</b>	Embed health messages into materials that target reducing barriers and addressing health disparities in formal and recreational sports opportunities.
<b>3</b>	Utilize social media platforms and other technologies to connect people of all ages and abilities with sport and recreation options in their communities.
<b>4</b>	Develop and disseminate resources that encourage family friendly recreational sports (e.g., Pickleball).
<b>5</b>	Identify and promote sports organizations that actively work to facilitate mass physical activity participation across all ages, abilities, and races.

## ***Priority Area 3: Community Engagement and Environment***

<b><i>Priority Area 3 Strategy</i></b>	
	Create communities of practice that engage various stakeholders to promote safety and encourage participation within community sport programs.

### ***Priority Area 3 Tactics***

- 1 Facilitate increased communications between parents, athletes, coaches, teachers, medical professionals, and policy makers to establish safety precautions during sport.
- 2 Offer sport and play opportunities for all ages and abilities within community sport facilities, schools, and recreation areas via shared-use agreements.
- 3 Encourage community sport programs to engage with evidence-based initiatives (i.e., Aspen Institute's Project Play) to address any potential gaps in their practices.
- 4 Develop local asset maps of sport and play opportunities to connect the communities they serve with the full array of sports and recreation options available.

### ***Priority Area 4: Policy***

#### ***Priority Area 4 Strategy***

Adopt policies and practices that promote physical activity, health, participant growth, and development of physical literacy.

### ***Priority Area 4 Tactics***

- 1 Engage key stakeholders outside of the sport organization in collaborative meetings to develop sport policies that meet the contextual needs of all participants.
- 2 Encourage sports organizations and programs to become National Sport Strategy Champions to unify and strengthen stakeholders in the sports sector.
- 3 Develop evidence-based policies and practices that ensure sports programs put the highest priority on the health and safety of participants to minimize the risk of sports-related injuries and illnesses.
- 4 Establish collaboration between sport-specific entities to organize pricing models and sport season timelines and encourage multi-sport participation.

### ***Priority Area 5: Multi-Sector Collaboration***

#### ***Priority Area 5 Strategy***

Develop collaborative efforts across sectors to promote best practices and opportunities for greater participation within competitive and recreational sport.

## Priority Area 5 Tactics

1

Partner with education and business administrators to recruit and train community sport associations, organizers, and volunteer coaches to advocate and deliver developmentally appropriate, safe, and supportive physical activity programming.

2

Collaborate with the public health and/or higher education researchers to identify and write grant applications for the funding of sport-related programs with an emphasis on those that are supportive of individuals facing barriers to participation (ex. Special Olympics and Para Sports).

3

Partner with community leaders to promote an increase of access to facilities and sites, such as recreation centers, colleges with open-access facilities, the YMCA, an armory, etc., to offer a wide range of sport opportunities.

4

Partner with schools to incorporate sports activities into before- and after-school programming.

5

Collaborate with public health agencies to develop a comprehensive surveillance system for monitoring sports participation in all segments of the population.

6

Collaborate with medical professionals to ensure safety procedures are in place at practices and games.

7

Partner with the education and public health sectors to develop and promote educational resources focused on the impact of parental and caregiver behaviors on the development of youth athletes and the overall sport environment.

8

Collaborate with all sectors to link people with disabilities and/or chronic conditions of all ages with the programs, providers, and resources (e.g., equipment, parks) needed to be physically active (e.g., National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability).