



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WinSport, Brock University, Calgary Catholic Immigration Society partner to examine impact of physical literacy on young Afghan refugees

CALGARY, Alta. – Sunday is the final session of WinSport’s eight-week IPlay program, which is a partnership with Brock University and the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS) that examines the impact of physical literacy on newcomers to Canada.

This is the second eight-week session, where WinSport is delivering multisport programming with a group of 25-30 Afghan refugees aged 12-16 from the Calgary Catholic Immigration Society. The research team is investigating the impact of program on physical literacy development and mental health outcomes. Preliminary findings from this program will be presented at the International Physical Literacy Conference (IPLC) 2023 on May 2-5 in New York City by members of the research team. The presentation is entitled: “The IPLAY Project: Description and Findings from a Pilot Physical Literacy-based Intervention Targeting New Immigrants and Refugee Youth”.

This partnership helps WinSport create evidence-based programming that will have a meaningful impact on new immigrant or refugee youths that have recently settled into Canada.

“Physical literacy is so important for the physical and mental health of our children,” says Jennifer Konopaki, WinSport’s Vice President, Sport. “It is especially important for new Canadians who often don’t have the resources or the opportunity to learn fundamental movement and sport skills. There is such value in this program by bringing together a strong academic group with expertise in physical literacy with a nationally recognized organization seeking to develop evidence-informed programming targeting new immigrants and refugees.”

The program is specifically designed to intentionally target each domain of physical literacy, including competency in new movement skills, motivation, confidence, and knowledge and understanding of physical activity.

“This is such important work that we are doing with newcomers to Canada,” says Dr. Matthew Kwan, a Tier 2 Canada Research Chair at Brock University and co-Director of the Infant, Child, and youth Health (INCH) Lab. “Particularly with new immigration policies that will see approximately 1.5 million newcomers to Canada over the next several years, it is vital that we find ways to help these youths develop a pathway to lead healthy active lifestyles. The partnerships with WinSport and CCIS for this program has been incredible.”

Media are invited to Sunday’s final session, which runs from 3 p.m. and 5 p.m. at the Performance Training Centre in the Markin MacPhail Centre. Representatives from WinSport, Brock University, and participants will be available for interviews.

Please proceed to the check-in desk at the Performance Training Centre or contact Dale Oviatt at 403-461-9074 upon arrival.

About WinSport

WinSport inspires human potential through the spirit of sport. The Calgary Olympic Development Association, operating as WinSport, is a community-based, not-for-profit organization that owns and operates Canada Olympic Park and the Bill Warren Training Centre in Canmore. WinSport also administers legacy funds that support the Olympic Oval. WinSport's mission has three pillars: to help people discover the joy and health benefits of sport; to encourage talented athletes to develop their skills; and to enable Canada's high-performance athletes to excel on the world stage. Financial commitments from Canadian governments and business have allowed WinSport to expand its sport and community offering over time; significant investment will be required in the coming years to renew the legacy facilities that have welcomed the world to the Calgary region for more than a generation.

About Calgary Catholic Immigration Society

Calgary Catholic Immigration Society (CCIS) is a nonprofit organization that offers settlement and integration support and services to all immigrant and refugees in Calgary and Southern Alberta. For over 40 years, CCIS has worked towards developing and delivering, innovative programs and services that are enriched by the engagement of our funders, partners, and local communities. CCIS sees over 12,000 clients pass through our doors each year. From airport reception to a first job interview, CCIS ensures that our services respond to the needs of ethnically diverse communities within Calgary and Southern Alberta. With a stable and diverse staff complement who speak over 70 languages collectively, our deeply rooted involvement with ethno-cultural communities is mirrored in the diversity of our staff, our leadership, and our Board of Directors. Combined with our volunteer collective, CCIS is represented in every cultural, faith base, and linguistic background observed in the changing makeup of Calgary. Today we deliver our programs and services out of 13 locations and 25 outreach locations in Calgary and Southern Alberta.

For more information, please contact:

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