

## ***Bridging the research-to-practice gap in Canadian youth sport: The PYD SportNET Project***

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Canada has some of the world's leading researchers in youth sport, and one of the most sophisticated sport systems. Yet, there is a research-to-practice gap when it comes to applying knowledge from youth sport research to the delivery of sport in Canada (Holt, 2016). This SSHRC-funded research project has three phases. In the first phase, we conducted a systematic review of over 1,000 studies of positive youth development (PYD) through sport. A total of 62 articles were ultimately included in our analysis, and we presented a model of how to promote PYD through sport.

In the second phase, which is on-going, we conducted a qualitative study with the following purposes: (1) To examine the barriers and opportunities for provincial, national, and multi sports organizations in the use of research to inform youth sport programs. (2) To identify preferred methods of receiving research information. To date, we have interviewed 46 representatives from Provincial Sport Organizations in five provinces (Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, Québec, and Prince Edward Island) as well as 20 representatives of National or Multi Sport Organizations. Initial results show that barriers to the use of research are lack of time and capacity, not knowing what exists, what is credible, and lack of appropriate communication from researchers (e.g., the knowledge presented is 'too academic'). Organizations see opportunities for using research to make or justify decisions. Key topics are parent education, athlete recruitment and retention. In terms of preferences, organizations want accessible, understandable, and shareable content.

In the third phase, we are in the process of developing a range of shareable content resources that can be used by stakeholders in the sport community. We have created the PYD Sport Network (PYD SportNET) to link researchers with other stakeholders. Through Twitter (@PYD SportNET) we share research information through infographics, retweets, and links. Our Facebook page will include longer (1-2 page) summaries of research written in plain language. We also self-publish an on-line magazine called *The Sport Parent*. The PYD SportNET website will be launched soon, and will be our 'home base.' It will include resources for coaches, parents, athletes, and researchers. Despite the fact that PYD SportNET is in its infancy, we have over 300 followers. Our infographics average 2,800 views and 110 interactions (likes, shares, comments). Infographics targeted to coaches are most highly viewed. One infographic,

promoted as a SIRC knowledge nugget, received over 9,000 views. *The Sport Parent* magazine has received over 3,000 views and 50 shares/link outs.