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Is February the new January? Resolutions set later in the year believed to have better results, ParticipACTION survey finds

Increasing physical activity ranks as a top resolution; ParticipACTION launches new app to help keep you on track

Toronto, February 7, 2019 – Have you given up on your New Year’s resolutions yet? If so, you’re not alone. According to a recent ParticipACTION survey, 57 per cent of Canadians said they had given up their resolutions by March – and 41 per cent said January resolutions are overrated.

“This leads us to believe that people should be making resolutions a bit later in the year instead of January,” said Elio Antunes, President and CEO of ParticipACTION. “The hastiness of goal-setting in January isn’t setting Canadians up for success. Waiting until February, for example, gives you time to choose a realistic and measurable goal, create a personalized action plan, figure out how you’ll track your goal and determine what supports you’ll need to stay on course.”

To help with this, ParticipACTION has launched a free app designed to help Canadians stay on track and meet their physical activity goals– recognizing that physical activity remains one of the top resolutions with just under half of Canadians (47 per cent) setting a resolution to be more active throughout the year. ParticipACTION encourages Canadians to get 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity aerobic physical activity per week; only 18 per cent of Canadians are currently meeting these guidelines.

“The Government of Canada is committed to supporting and encouraging initiatives that get Canadians moving more and sitting less in their everyday lives,” said the Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, Minister of Health. “We are excited to support the development of the ParticipACTION app, which will help promote and encourage increased physical activity among all Canadians.”

The survey also found that setting resolutions in January has a negative impact on Canadians staying on track for the rest of the year, and even making one altogether, with two-thirds (66 per cent) deciding to forgo setting a resolution.

How do Canadians think they would be more successful? Just under two-thirds (62 per cent) of Canadians surveyed believe that if they took more time to think through their resolutions, they would stay on track throughout the year.

For Canadians unsure of what their physical activity goal should be, the ParticipACTION app, designed by business agency GALE and Mobile App Design and Development Firm Clearbridge Mobile, can help determine a realistic and measurable goal that is personalized to each user’s physical activity level. From there, features like the activity dashboard monitor progress, which 30 per cent of Canadians reported as being a factor that would increase the chances of them sticking to and reaching their goals. As users continue to engage with the ParticipACTION app, the data science begins to kick-in eventually serving customized content based on each user’s physical activity levels and activity suggestions to motivate and keep users on track towards their goals as well as to create behaviours that will result in a long-term change.

Another factor that would motivate Canadians to reach their physical activity resolution? Incentives and rewards, according to 42 per cent of Canadians, that celebrate both small and big milestones. The ParticipACTION app offers incentives for users that are tracking towards their physical activity goals and consuming in-app content. The more activity that users track, and the closer they get to meeting their goals, the more opportunity there is to collect badges and accumulate entries towards the weekly, monthly and quarterly prizes.

The multi-functionality of the ParticipACTION app allows Canadians to not only track toward their physical activity specific goals, but their overall health to encourage better habits and show how *Everything gets better when you get active*. With easy how-to videos, at-home workouts, customized content, suggestions for new activities and sports to try, the ParticipACTION app is the active app for everyone.

You don't need to make a resolution in January to make a life change for the better. The ParticipACTION app is available now for free from the App Store and Google Play. Be one of the first to download and win from over \$20,000 in prizes like an all-inclusive vacation, gift cards and more.

The development of this app was made possible through a financial contribution from the Public Health Agency of Canada.

About the ParticipACTION Survey

Deployed by Maru/Matchbox, a total of 1,370 Canadians over the age of 18 completed an online poll via the Maru Voice Canada Panel from January 11th to January 18th, 2019. The respondents were interviewed through the Maru Voice Canada Panel. Quota sampling and weighting were employed to balance demographics to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the population according to recent Census data. The margin of error for this poll is +/- 2.65 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

About ParticipACTION

ParticipACTION is a national non-profit organization that helps Canadians sit less and move more. Originally established in 1971, ParticipACTION works with its partners, which include sport, physical activity, recreation organizations, government and corporate sponsors, to make physical activity a vital part of everyday life. ParticipACTION is generously supported by the Government of Canada. For more information, please visit participACTION.com.

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