

CANADA'S OLYMPIC DAY 2012 FAIR GIVES KIDS A SPORTING CHANCE

[Canadian Olympic Committee](#)

June 23, 2012

Olympians descend on Rideau Hall to encourage excellence, health and friendship on anniversary of modern Olympic Games.

OTTAWA— The grounds of historic Rideau Hall rang with the excitement and laughter of good-natured competition as thousands of Ottawa youngsters met Olympians, tried their hand at different sports, and sent best wishes to the London 2012 Canadian Olympic Team as part of the 2012 Olympic Day Fair. The event, hosted in conjunction with the CHEO Teddy Bears' Picnic, was organized by the Canadian Olympic Committee, together with KidSport Canada and the Sport Information Resource Centre.

"You never know what's going to inspire the next Canadian gold medallist and it all starts when kids get to see how awesome it feels to be involved and active," said freestyle skier Alexandre Bilodeau, 2010 Olympian and winner of the first-ever Olympic gold medal won on Canadian soil. "The more kids are exposed the fun and friendships developed through sport, the more healthy, happy and whole we're going to be as a country."

"My parents introduced me to skiing when I was just three years old and being involved in sport as a child certainly helped make me who I am today," said Senator Nancy Greene Raine, the 1968 Olympic gold and silver medallist in Alpine Skiing. "This Olympic Day Fair is a wonderful opportunity for children to experience the joys of sport and hopefully, to develop a life-long passion that will enrich their lives and broaden their horizons."

"Olympic Day is a time where Canadians can gather under the banner of the Rings and celebrate the code of excellence — the Olympic Values — by which we all have the capacity to live," said Marcel Aubut, President of the Canadian Olympic Committee "On the heels of the Governor General agreeing to be the Canadian Olympic Committee's new patron, and with London 2012 so close at hand, celebrating Olympic Day at Rideau Hall has never been more timely or appropriate."

In addition to Bilodeau, and Senator Greene Raine, Canadian Olympians from numerous Games came out to the Olympic Day celebrations, including: Mike Brown (2008, Swimming); Katie Brambley, (2008, Swimming); Alexandra Orlando (2008, Rhythmic Gymnastics); Kristina Kiss (2008, Soccer); Marie-Ève Marleau (2000, Diving), Chris LeBihan, (2010, Bobsled) Ken Pereira (2000, 2008, Field Hockey), Anna van der Kamp (1996, Rowing), Sharon Donnelly (2000, Triathlon), Alex Bruce (2012 Nominee, Badminton), Hugh Fraser (1976, Athletics), Lijuan Geng (1996 and 2000, Table Tennis) and Dana Rice (1984, Bobsleigh). National Swim Team Coach and CEO of Swimming Canada, Pierre Lafontaine also paid the Olympic Day Fair a visit, as did 2012 Winter Youth Olympic Games Young Ambassador Élise Desjardins.

Ten sport demonstration stations were set up on the green meadows of the Governor General's residence, giving the visiting children from all across Ottawa a variety of opportunities to try out different sports under the watchful eye of experts. Coordinated by KidSport Canada and the

Sport Information Resource Centre, the Fair provided both excitement for local kids and exposure for the different sport clubs, including: Ottawa Lions Club (Athletics); Nepean Night Hawks (Hockey) Table Tennis Canada (Table Tennis); City of Ottawa Tennis Program (Tennis); Pheonix Taekwondo (Taekwondo); West Ottawa Soccer (Soccer); and Bytown Storm Triathlon Club (Triathlon). KidSport Canada also ran a basketball station, a karate demonstration and a sitting volleyball station.

“The positive lessons kids learn from sport carry over into all areas of their lives,” said Dawn MacDonald, Executive Director of KidSport Ontario. “All kids have the opportunity to enrich themselves and improve their future through sport and activity and we are so proud to be part of helping them on that journey.”

“Part of educating Canadian families about the values and opportunities that arise through sport is helping facilitate their participation in as many new sports as possible,” said Debra Gassewitz, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Sport Information Resource Centre. “We’re delighted to be part of making today happen.”

ABOUT THE CANADIAN OLYMPIC COMMITTEE

The Canadian Olympic Committee leads the achievement of the Canadian Olympic Team's podium success and advances Olympic values in Canada.

Independent and predominantly privately funded, the Canadian Olympic Committee delivers resources that Canada's elite athletes need to perform at their best and give their everything every day.

The backbone of Canada's Olympic movement, the Canadian Olympic Committee works with National Sport Federations to prepare the Team for the Olympic, Youth Olympic and Pan American Games.

By sharing our athletes' stories, we inspire all Canadians through the power of sport: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.