



2026 Black Leaders in Sports Day

The Inclusion in Canadian Sports Network (ICSN) exists to advance access, visibility, mentorship, and inclusion for Black and racialized individuals within Canada's amateur sport system. While diversity is often spoken about, evidence continues to show that meaningful, systemic action remains limited.

The reality is clear.

A **2025 Statistics Canada report: Unfair treatment, racism, and discrimination in community sports in Canada** found that:

- **18% of participants experienced or witnessed racism or discrimination**, with higher rates among **racialized participants (26%)**.

These experiences have direct consequences; **more than 1 in 10 participants stopped participating in sport altogether due to negative treatment**.

Other key findings from the report include:

- **12% of racialized participants** experienced racism or discrimination in community sport
- **Roughly 1 in 5 (22%) of victims** experienced threats or harassment, and 14% faced physical attacks (Statistics Canada, 2025)

Further research reinforces these findings. **The MLSE Foundation's 2026 Change the Game Report** revealed that the proportion of Black youth in Ontario who reported experiencing racism in sport has **more than doubled since 2021**. The report also found that:

- Black youth are **twice as likely** to experience unsafe hazing practices or bullying in sport
- **54% of Black youth** participate in sport less than once per week

Similarly, the **2025 Black Girls & Sport Report** found that:

- **1 in 2 Black girls** feel they must downplay or limit aspects of their cultural identity in sport and physical activity settings
- **48% of Black girls** have seen or experienced racism in school

Despite years of research, surveys, and dialogue, there remains a clear absence of systemic programming and policy action to address these realities within Canadian amateur sport. These challenges affect not only athletes and coaches, but also board members, senior leaders, and sport organizations.

If we are serious about the belief that "Sport is for All," then addressing racism and discrimination must move beyond conversation and into sustained, collective action.



Our Call to Action

The history of Black people in Canada spans more than four centuries, shaped by slavery, pioneering contributions, segregation, civic participation, and the ongoing fight for civil rights. Black communities represent a vital and active part of Canadian society as athletes, coaches, leaders, volunteers, and contributors to the broader economy.

Addressing anti-Black racism and discrimination is not only a legal and ethical necessity, but also fundamental to cultivating a healthy and prosperous society.

During the visit to Ottawa, the participants of Black Leaders in Sports Day respectfully urge the federal government to:

#1. Embed Measurable Anti-Racism and Inclusion Policies - Incorporate clear and enforceable anti-racism, discrimination, and inclusion requirements into existing sport funding and oversight structures. This should include mandatory education, reporting mechanisms, and transparent accountability processes.

#2. Develop a National Framework to Address Anti-Racism/Discrimination, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion strategy in sport. There are currently no accountability or reporting structures to keep National Sport Organizations (NSOs), Multisport Sport Organizations (MSOs) or Provincial and Territorial Sport Organizations (PTSOs) accountable or to report any racism/discrimination incidents.

#3. Foster a culture of meaningful collaboration - one that connects Black and racialized sport organizations to NSOs, MSOs and PTSOs to community clubs, and recreational programs; and across sectors like health, education, immigration and justice. One concrete step would be to strongly encourage sport leaders to participate in forums like the Diversity in Sport Conference.

#4. The Government of Canada **continues to support and expand initiatives** to advance anti-racism/discrimination, equity, diversity, and inclusion in sport and physical activity, including initiatives that seek to remove barriers and increase Black and racialized participation in sport and physical activity.