

Annual Report 2017-2018

**FITSPIRIT**

**Ready,  
Set, Go!**

ACTIVE FITSPIRIT





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## A word from Claudine Labelle, President and Founder, and Isabelle Viger, Chair of the Board



**Claudine Labelle**  
President and Founder



**Isabelle Viger**  
Chair of the Board

FitSpirit has just completed another banner year in which we secured important partnerships and introduced many innovations for the FitSpirit community. We continued projects that had begun last year and took them to the next level. Tens of thousands of Canadian girls benefited from our efforts.

The year began with the official launch of our major fundraising campaign, in which a number of well-known personalities reaffirmed their support and spoke of the importance of joining forces behind FitSpirit's mission. The day also saw a big premiere: in the presence of Sophie Grégoire Trudeau, who remains as engaged as ever as FitSpirit's official spokesperson, we announced that Isabelle Charest had agreed to be our annual mentor. Finally, at the campaign launch, we unveiled our brand-new website, specially redesigned for the occasion and to support our future projects.

The fundraising launch provided an excellent showcase for FitSpirit and its impact was almost immediate. We received contributions from nearly 50 donors, including \$1 million from Scotiabank, which became the official presenter of the FitSpirit Celebrations for the next five years. Scotiabank's donation will help increase the size and number of FitSpirit Celebrations across Canada and enable more girls to celebrate achievement in sports and physical activity. One of our founding partners, Saputo, also renewed its support and provided a donation of \$1 million over four years to help drive FitSpirit's growth across Canada.

The highly successful second annual edition of FitSpirit's Father-Daughter Ball was held in Spring 2018. The event has become a highlight of the season for the business community in addition to helping FitSpirit raise the funds it needs to carry on its mission.

In 2017-2018, FitSpirit introduced a number of innovations to support and facilitate the work of the program leaders in the schools, including a new FitSpirit approach, training sessions, a support service for partner schools, online tools, a database and portals for schools and for FitSpirit ambassadors. FitSpirit also signed major agreements with partners in Quebec and Ontario that will assist in promoting FitSpirit programs to their respective regions.

At the same time, FitSpirit is looking to the future. We conducted a strategic planning exercise this year to guide our continued growth over the next three years. The process will target our future actions effectively so as to maximize our impact and encourage more teenage girls to become physically active and stay active for the rest of their lives.

But the most important thing is our work with the girls. In 2017-2018, FitSpirit helped educate over 25,000 girls about the importance of being physically active and slightly more than 12,000 girls participated in FitSpirit activities at their schools. We thank all our school program leaders, donors, volunteers, ambassadors, partners and employees for their important contributions to FitSpirit's success, as they are making a real difference in the lives of teenage girls.

We're ready and set to continue working together to reverse the current trend, which sees 9 out of 10 girls failing to meet Canadian exercise guidelines by the time they graduate from high school.



## A word from Sophie Grégoire Trudeau, official FitSpirit spokesperson



**Sophie Grégoire Trudeau**  
Official FitSpirit spokesperson

In recent years, girls' and women's issues have come to the forefront of our conversations as a society. More and more people are uniting their voices to change things for good.

We want greater equality. We want more respect. And we want to empower girls who will one day be the women, mothers, leaders, and friends of tomorrow to live their lives with confidence. Physical activity is a powerful tool to help get us there. Being part of the FitSpirit community over the past three years has allowed me to share an important message about girls and women in Canada: the girls are not alone. We are there for them. We're all in this together. When girls take part in a FitSpirit activity, they're immediately

**When girls take part in a FitSpirit activity, they're immediately surrounded by a community of inspirational people they can trust.**

surrounded by a community of inspirational people they can trust. I've had the chance to meet many of the people who are part of this incredible community, and I can tell you that this is one of the key things that makes the FitSpirit approach so special. Our partner schools surround our girls with extraordinary mentors who encourage them to get

active and to cultivate a love of sports that will last a lifetime.

FitSpirit is growing – and thanks to the wonderful people I've been lucky enough to meet, and the message of hope that we all share, it's helping me to grow, too. After all, when girls are happy and healthy, we all win as a society.



# Programs and operations

## A year of firsts...

If 2016-2017 was a transformative year in which FitSpirit laid the groundwork for future growth, 2017-2018 was the year in which the FitSpirit community took ownership of the new methods and strategies, and translated them into reality. It was a year of many firsts, with a new approach and new partnerships that will help FitSpirit grow and expand its offerings so as to reach more girls.

## FitSpirit's new approach well received

The new approach introduced at the start of the 2017-2018 school year redefined FitSpirit's offerings. The addition of flexible, individualized support services now lets schools not only implement the FitSpirit program but also engage girls throughout the year through physical activities tailored to their personal challenges and circumstances.

Working with the FitSpirit program, our partner schools now enjoy a more flexible range of options for encouraging girls to participate. In all, 77 of our partner schools (nearly **one-third** of the total) took advantage of this new flexibility and of FitSpirit's tools and supports to start the program in the fall, instead of February/March as in years past.

FitSpirit has improved the training provided to the program leaders at its partner schools so as to better equip them to address the realities of girls who want to adopt a healthy and active lifestyle. We have also introduced training for student leaders to promote their social engagement, develop their sense of leadership and support the efforts of the hard-working program leaders. Under the new system, FitSpirit provided training to **109 school program leaders and 57 student leaders**, as well as to **24 partners** who wanted to learn more about FitSpirit and about encouraging teenage girls to be physically active.

We produced video versions of this training to reach our clients at more distant locations and provide our people with additional tools. Lastly, FitSpirit made a major effort throughout the year to create networks and encourage everyone involved to share winning ideas and potential solutions.

The new flexibility, supports and knowledge-sharing complement the existing FitSpirit program, which has achieved great success and reached over 150,000 teenage girls since its inception in 2007.



## A better-equipped FitSpirit community

Two new web platforms that are vital to FitSpirit's future growth went live in 2017-2018. The first is a portal where FitSpirit partner schools can register for the program, track their registrations and activities, and access FitSpirit tools and resources. The second is a portal designed to recruit FitSpirit ambassadors and give them access to various online training modules and reference documents that will help them plan their visits to partner schools. Of course, FitSpirit ambassadors continue to receive guidance from FitSpirit coordinators in the field, but the new portal helped FitSpirit communicate with its 160 ambassadors in 2017-2018 and created a space designed especially for them. In coming years, we will continue to enhance this portal in order to encourage and facilitate our ambassadors' efforts and show how much we value their commitment to FitSpirit's mission.

Schools can now use these two new platforms to submit requests for a visit from a FitSpirit ambassador (for a talk or physical activity session) and be matched with an ambassador.

These technological advances have enhanced and streamlined the schools' interactions with FitSpirit and relieved FitSpirit coordinators of administrative tasks, allowing them to concentrate on supporting our partner schools and meeting the challenge of getting girls involved in physical activity. The new sites also enable FitSpirit to build a database that will provide more detailed knowledge of what our partner schools are doing and let us track trends in girls' participation over the years, supporting the development of tools, training and programs tailored to our partners' realities.



More reasons to celebrate

FitSpirit Celebrations, a memorable day of physical activity for the girls and the community, remain a key part of FitSpirit’s activities. In 2017-2018, with the goal of offering the same experience to participants in big cities and smaller centres alike, the number of FitSpirit Celebrations was increased from 3 to 7, with the help of our new 5-year partnership with Scotiabank. We added new events in Gatineau (for the Ottawa/Gatineau region) and Rimouski, while enhancing the experience at existing events in Rouyn-Noranda and Sudbury.

As in years past, the 12-17 year-old participants in the Celebrations were invited to tackle a personal challenge, a 5K or 10K run, in order to push their limits and continue their discovery of physical activity and its pleasures. But this year FitSpirit also invited numerous partners from the worlds of sports, physical activity and the great outdoors to attend the Celebrations and give the girls the chance to try other activities that might interest them, all in a festive and colourful atmosphere where the experience centred on the simple pleasure of being active together. In all, nearly 20 sports federations and clubs partnered with FitSpirit in 2017-2018 to provide a total of more than 40 activity areas at the 7 FitSpirit Celebrations.



 Scotiabank® presents

FITSPIRIT Celebrations

Toronto Celebration  
**2,547**  
participants

Gatineau Celebration  
**863**  
participants

Montreal Celebration  
**3,807**  
participants

Quebec City Celebration  
**3,662**  
participants

Rimouski Celebration  
**364**  
participants

Rouyn-Noranda Celebration  
**135**  
participants

Sudbury Celebration  
**521**  
participants



Push their limits and continue their discovery of physical activity and its pleasures.



Key partnerships

To support the deployment and promotion of FitSpirit activities and provide frontline support for its partner schools, FitSpirit develops partnerships with local organizations that are sensitized to the issue and want to support delivery of the FitSpirit program in their region, such as regional sports and recreation associations, the regional divisions of Quebec’s student sports network (RSEQ), school boards and regional coordinating bodies.

The results of FitSpirit’s partnerships in 4 regions of Quebec and Ontario in 2017-2018 were so positive that in the course of the year we signed agreements with 7 new regional partners to take effect at the start of the 2018-2019 school year, bringing the total number of similar partner agreements to 12. The new partnerships significantly increase FitSpirit’s ability to grow in these regions and to reach more girls, while providing the schools with effective support from local partners and the community at large.

Our new partners are: Loisir et Sport Montérégie, Sports Laval, RSEQ-QCA, Sport et Loisir de l’île de Montréal, Unité régionale loisir et sport Côte-Nord, Loisir et Sport Abitibi-Témiscamingue and Leadership Advancement for Women and Sport (LAWS) Windsor. They join our list of existing partners: Conseil des écoles publiques de l’Est de l’Ontario (CEPEO), Unité régionale de loisir et de sport de la Mauricie (URLSM), Loisir Sport Centre-du-Québec, COSMOSS Bas-Saint-Laurent and RSEQ Outaouais.



## Strength in unity

Emma Savard is the executive director of COSMOSS, an organization in Quebec's Lower St. Lawrence region whose members work together to promote equal opportunity by developing the potential of children and youth.

In view of COSMOSS's excellent results with young children, the regional roundtable for healthy lifestyles decided in Fall 2016 to explore ways of providing more support for teenagers as well. The members of the roundtable were already familiar with FitSpirit, which then had programs in 7 of the region's secondary schools. As Emma explains, "We believed in their mission and saw the benefits of their program for the girls. Not only is the program designed especially for teenage girls but it is also accessible to the schools thanks to the support and guidance that FitSpirit provides."

Emma therefore contacted FitSpirit and proposed that COSMOSS and FitSpirit join forces and work together to raise awareness of the issue of physical activity for teenage girls. FitSpirit agreed enthusiastically, as the proposal was entirely consistent with its regional deployment plan. FitSpirit and COSMOSS began working jointly on targeted, positive initiatives in January 2017.

Cathy Potvin, FitSpirit's coordinator for the Lower St. Lawrence, also works as a regional development officer for COSMOSS. This unique vantage point enables her to identify needs, develop action plans and forge alliances in the field. Thus, alongside her work supporting the FitSpirit teams in the schools, she also develops partnerships with players and stakeholders in the region.

Says Cathy, "To support the deployment of the FitSpirit approach in our region, and to support the participating schools, FitSpirit signed a partnership agreement with the regional sports and recreation association. We also formed partnerships with several other organizations, such as the local COSMOSS teams, the Integrated Health and Social Services Centre, the eastern Quebec section of the RSEQ, and 100 degrés magazine for purposes such as recruiting FitSpirit ambassadors, raising awareness of the issue and of FitSpirit's approach, and building ties with local sports clubs and associations."

The results of the FitSpirit-COSMOSS partnership speak for themselves: in 2017-2018, the number of schools participating in the FitSpirit program in the Lower St. Lawrence increased from 7 to 13, the number of ambassadors from 1 to 6, and for the first time a FitSpirit Celebration was held east of Quebec City, in Rimouski, to the delight of girls in the region.

These glowing results show how an alliance between FitSpirit and existing local organizations lets them pool their resources and work together to broaden FitSpirit's reach and maintain its presence in the long term.

## Assessing our impact

The new technologies, new partnerships, enhancements to the Celebrations and changes to the FitSpirit approach are all part of our drive to grow FitSpirit and bring our program to more communities. Reaching more girls remains our central goal, but we want to do it in a way that effects real change by working closely with our partners to create environments that encourage teenage girls to adopt healthy, active lifestyles. FitSpirit has therefore undertaken a multi-year project with academic partners to assess its programs' outcomes in terms of the impacts on girls' behaviour. The strategic planning exercise conducted over a good portion of 2017-2018 also pursued similar objectives. The FitSpirit community can expect to see results from these initiatives in the very near future.



# FitSpirit aims higher!

## Project to assess the FitSpirit approach

FitSpirit is constantly seeking concrete solutions to transform environments, improve the capabilities of its program leaders and ambassadors, and encourage girls to engage in healthy physical activity on a regular basis. With this goal in mind, FitSpirit began a rigorous assessment of its approach in 2017 with the support of a scientific team of distinguished researchers from several Canadian universities, led by Marie-Ève Mathieu, professor in the School of Kinesiology and Physical Activity Science at Université de Montréal.

various parameters, including their overall health, physical activity, self-efficacy, eating and sleeping patterns and body image, as well as their own evaluation of FitSpirit's activities.

This major data-collection effort will continue over the next three years and will let FitSpirit monitor the participants' journey through its various activities. In the near future, other components of the project will survey the program leaders, ambassadors and members of the community to explore the impact of



It took several months to write the research protocol and have it approved by the Université de Montréal health-research ethics committee. In Spring 2018, FitSpirit launched the first phase of data collection. With the support of the school program leaders and FitSpirit coordinators in all the regions where the FitSpirit approach has been deployed, hundreds of participants from Quebec and Ontario were recruited to answer an online questionnaire. Their responses make it possible to assess

the FitSpirit approach in the community. Ultimately, the entire FitSpirit community will benefit from the results of this large-scale study.

FitSpirit thanks all the FitSpirit participants, school program leaders and coordinators who are contributing to this assessment project, and the research team that guarantees the study's scientific rigour.



### Lead researcher

**Marie-Ève Mathieu**  
Associate Professor, Department of Kinesiology  
Université de Montréal

### Research coordinator

**Jo-Anne Gilbert**  
School of Kinesiology and Physical Activity Science, Faculty of Medicine  
Université de Montréal

### Co-researchers

**Vicky Drapeau**  
Full Professor, Department of Physical Education  
Université Laval

**Dr Martin Juneau, Cardiologist**  
Director of Prevention  
Montreal Heart Institute

**Jean Lemoyne**  
Professor, Department of Physical Activity Sciences  
Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières

**Johana Monthuy-Blanc**  
Professor, Director of Loricorps, cross-disciplinary research group on eating disorders  
Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières

**Nicolas Moreau**  
Associate Professor, Social Work, Faculty of Social Sciences  
University of Ottawa

**Jonathan Tremblay**  
Associate Professor,  
Department of Kinesiology  
Université de Montréal



# FitSpirit key stats for 2017-2018

## SECTION 1 – PARTICIPATION

25,000

Girls whose awareness of the importance of physical activity was raised by FitSpirit ambassadors' motivational talks

12,310

Participants in FitSpirit activities at partner schools

11,899

Participants in FitSpirit Celebrations

## SECTION 2 – PARTICIPANTS IN FITSPIRIT CELEBRATIONS

Toronto	2,547
Gatineau	863
Montreal	3,807
Quebec City	3,662
Rimouski	364
Rouyn-Noranda	135
Sudbury	521

## SECTION 3 – FITSPIRIT PARTNER SCHOOLS

<b>Ontario</b>	
Southwest Ontario	3
Toronto West	11
Toronto East	15
Peel-Halton-Guelph	16
York	15
Sudbury	22
Ottawa	7

<b>Quebec</b>	
Chaudière-Appalaches	18
Quebec City	22
Lower St. Lawrence	10
Mauricie	15
Outaouais	12
Centre-du-Québec	15
Montreal	21
Montréal	8
Eastern Townships	3
Laval	3
Lanaudière	4
Laurentians	20
Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean	3
Gaspé-Magdalen Islands	1
Abitibi-Témiscamingue	6

FITSPIRIT PARTNER SCHOOLS

250

30%  
OF PARTNER SCHOOLS  
START ACTIVITIES IN  
THE FALL

PARTNER SCHOOL  
RETENTION RATE:

94%  
IN QUEBEC  
72%  
IN ONTARIO

## SECTION 4 – STAKEHOLDERS

Paid stakeholders supporting FitSpirit's mission

160

Ambassadors

Volunteer stakeholders supporting FitSpirit's mission

700

Program leaders

Other volunteers supporting FitSpirit's mission

250

ACTIVITIES BY  
FITSPIRIT  
AMBASSADORS:

170

MOTIVATIONAL TALKS

155

TRAINING PROGRAM  
LAUNCHES

235

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY  
SESSIONS

## SECTION 5 – ATTENDEES AT TRAINING DAYS

109

Program leaders

57

Student leaders

9

Ambassadors

9

Coordinators

24

Partners

## SECTION 6 – VIRTUAL COMMUNITY

19,236

Facebook likes

3,588

Instagram followers

1,825

Twitter followers

208

TOTAL ATTENDEES AT  
TRAINING DAYS IN  
6 REGIONS OF QUEBEC  
AND ONTARIO





# Philanthropic development

## Major fundraising campaign continues

On November 23, 2017, FitSpirit publicly launched its first major fundraising campaign, “Let’s ramp up the movement”, which had begun in 2016. A large contingent of Montreal personalities were on hand to lend their support to FitSpirit’s mission and become agents of change for girl’s health.

Thanks to the generosity of many donors<sup>1</sup>, the campaign raised a total of \$7,071,462 by the end of fiscal 2017-2018, well on the way to its target of \$10 million by 2021. The funds will be used for three main purposes: (1) to develop new technologies to support FitSpirit’s growth by providing an optimal experience and decreasing per-participant operating costs; (2) to support FitSpirit’s programs and operations by creating materials for existing communities and organizations and expanding the offering of activities; and (3) to support assessment of FitSpirit’s activities by working with world renowned academic researchers to gauge the impact on girls and the community.

Also in 2017-2018, the Montreal fundraising campaign cabinet officially passed the torch to the Toronto campaign cabinet, which will continue the fundraising drive and carry it across the finish line. Like their predecessors, the members of this new campaign cabinet are tasked with representing FitSpirit within their business networks.

## Founding partner Saputo continues its invaluable support



**Sandy Vassiadis**  
Vice President, Communications and Corporate Responsibility, Saputo Inc.

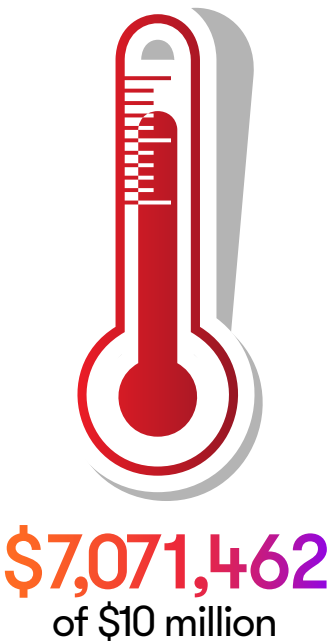
In connection with its major fundraising campaign, FitSpirit announced in Spring 2018 the renewal of its partnership with one of its founding partners, Saputo Inc. Saputo pledged \$1 million over 4 years to support FitSpirit’s cross-Canada expansion so that we can reach more girls from coast to coast and encourage them to adopt a physically active lifestyle.

Saputo says it feels special attachment to FitSpirit because of the entire team’s exceptional work and the sustainable, long-term impact on girls and their communities. As Sandy Vassiadis, Saputo’s Vice President, Communications and Corporate Responsibility, puts it, “FitSpirit is out to promote girls’

wellness, and every one of its activities helps to strengthen girls’ self-esteem. FitSpirit perfectly embodies Saputo’s social mission, which is to promote healthy lifestyles. Our partnership with FitSpirit is thus an authentic way to act on our mission.”

Saputo’s support goes well beyond its financial contribution. The company’s involvement also includes encouraging its employees to participate in FitSpirit’s mission personally. Some have used volunteering for FitSpirit as an opportunity to develop professional skills while sharing their expertise. Others have seized opportunities for citizen engagement by working directly with girls at organized sports activities. As a result of

## Campaign progress



these experiences, Saputo employees have adopted healthy lifestyles themselves and now act as ambassadors for FitSpirit in their personal and professional lives.

“FitSpirit’s success is very impressive, and we are convinced that its impact is relevant, sustainable, and growing constantly,” says Sandy Vassiadis. “We have taken an important step to help FitSpirit achieve an even more meaningful impact.”

Saputo is proud to renew its support for FitSpirit and to partner in its plans for growth. This unflagging support from a company that has been a donor since day one demonstrates the bond of trust between FitSpirit and Saputo and the solidity of our partnership.

“Let’s ramp up the movement”

To view the FitSpirit video thanking Saputo, go to [www.fitspirit.ca/give/support/major-fundraising-campaign](http://www.fitspirit.ca/give/support/major-fundraising-campaign).

FitSpirit extends its heartfelt thanks to its donors and the members of the Montreal campaign cabinet for their generous support:

### Co-chairs

Geneviève Fortier, SSQ Insurance  
Diane Giard, National Bank of Canada

### Leaders

Lise-Anne Amyot, National Bank of Canada  
Louis-Philippe Carrière, Saputo Inc.  
Nicolas Chevalier, Pembroke Management Ltd.  
Diane Lafontaine, Sun Life Financial  
Stéphane Lespérance, Aon Canada  
Steeve Robitaille, WSP Global  
David Savard, National Bank Financial

<sup>1</sup> For a complete list of FitSpirit’s donors, see page 21.



Father-Daughter Ball was a hit

On April 28, 2018, more than 250 father-daughter duos were transported to the sunny, festive streets of Rio de Janeiro for the second Father-Daughter Ball at Montreal’s Windsor Station. For most of the attendees, it was the philanthropic highlight of the year.

Mélanie Aubut, Senior Advisor – Strategy and Creation at Oxygène, was in charge of logistics for the ball. She attests to the enthusiasm of the

fathers and daughters who took part in the big event: “The dads we spoke to told us that, of all the balls they attend every year, this was their favourite. It makes you realize how special this evening with their daughters is to them.”

This second edition of the Father-Daughter Ball sold out three months in advance. The event raised \$600,000 that FitSpirit will use

to support its growth and involve more girls in regular physical activity. The first Father-Daughter Ball in Spring 2017 raised \$460,000.

In view of the success of the first two editions of the Father-Daughter Ball, FitSpirit is happy to announce that a third edition will be held in Montreal in Spring 2019 and the first FitSpirit Father-Daughter Ball in Quebec City will be held in Fall 2019!



FitSpirit is grateful to the organizations and individuals who contributed to the success of its second Father-Daughter Ball:

Honorary Co-chairs

Robert Dumas and daughter Camille  
Sun Life Financial Quebec

Stéphane Lemay and daughters  
Rosalie and Sara-Jeanne  
Power Corporation of Canada

Honorary Patrons

Albert Anelli and daughters  
Carina and Sara  
Ernst & Young

Ronald Dahms and daughter Vivian  
Optimum Talent

Benoît Dubé and daughter Léa  
CGI

Claudine Labelle and godfather Daniel  
FitSpirit

Martin Leroux and daughters  
Maya and Gabriella  
PayFacto

Frederic Martel and daughter Emy  
Claridge

Mylène Savoie and father Paul  
McCann

Danny Serraglio and daughter Clara  
TELUS

Masters of ceremony

Iohann Martin and daughters Kaya,  
Stella-Rose and Mila

Oxygène

Mélanie Aubut and her team

To watch the video and experience some magical moments from the second Father-Daughter Ball, visit the event microsite at

**balfillactive.com.**



### Peer-to-peer benefits

In June 2018, FitSpirit launched its new peer-to-peer online platform, Activities That Make You Move. Visitors to the site can read about, donate to and register for all the FitSpirit benefit events organized by individuals, groups and businesses that support its mission.

The [activites.fillactive.ca/en](https://activites.fillactive.ca/en) site is now the ideal place to register for an activity or to support a participant by making a donation on their activity page or personal fundraising page. The new platform makes it easier to take action and hence optimizes FitSpirit's fundraising efforts.

FitSpirit thanks the following businesses whose initiatives in 2017-2018 raised funds that made a real difference for FitSpirit's philanthropic development:

- ▶ **Lolë** donated 10% of sales made on last year's International Women's Day (March 8, 2018) to FitSpirit.
- ▶ **Omnium Bossy/Creamer** held its 25<sup>th</sup> Bowl-a-thon from March 10 to 18, 2018, with proceeds going to 5 organizations including FitSpirit.
- ▶ **Stikeman Elliott** turned over all the funds raised on its Jeans Day on March 23, 2018, to FitSpirit.
- ▶ **The North Face** organized the *Réaliser des rêves* activity at the second Father-Daughter Ball on April 28, 2018, to raise money for FitSpirit.
- ▶ The **MégaRelais Madame Labriski**, held on September 16 and 17, 2017, supported the FitSpirit cause by turning over a portion of the proceeds to the organization.
- ▶ **McKesson Canada** raised funds for FitSpirit through a relay race held in conjunction with their national leadership conference on May 24, 2018.

### The importance of donations in kind

Every year, in addition to cash gifts, FitSpirit receives valuable donations of goods and services from its generous partners. FitSpirit would like to spotlight a few examples of the donations in kind<sup>1</sup> that have enabled us to enhance our activities.

Thanks to the generosity of **Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities**, FitSpirit was able to provide athletic shoes and sports bras to 3,264 participants who attend schools in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In the spring, **The North Face** donated 200 pairs of athletic shoes for participants in FitSpirit activities. One-quarter of these shoes were distributed to recognize the efforts of girls who were physically active throughout the year, another quarter went to recognize the work of FitSpirit student leaders, and the remainder to girls in disadvantaged neighbourhoods who may not have the financial means to buy appropriate shoes for sports activities. We also

want to acknowledge **Garage**, which donated 17,640 T-shirts for all FitSpirit participants, program leaders and ambassadors, and **Lolë**, which gave bags and tuques to the girls who attended the FitSpirit Father-Daughter Ball in April 2018.

Other donations in kind from the **Touché!** media agency and media outlets **Bell Media** and **CBC/Radio-Canada** enabled FitSpirit to extend the life of the advertising campaign *The Break-Up*, launched in Spring 2017. These partnerships also enabled us to add a short video in which actor **Valérie Chevalier**, a female role model girls admire, reinforces our message.

To watch the video featuring Valérie Chevalier, visit [www.youtube.com/user/Fillactive/videos](https://www.youtube.com/user/Fillactive/videos).

<sup>1</sup> For a complete list of FitSpirit's donors, see page 21.



# Communication

### Impressive communication achievements

FitSpirit's communication efforts got off to a strong start in 2017-2018 with the introduction of our new brand image, developed in Spring 2017 by Sid Lee in conjunction with FitSpirit's advertising campaign *The Break-Up*. This rebranding project comprises several phases. Upon completion, all of FitSpirit's communication vehicles will sport the new image, which is cleaner and more modern but just as vibrant and colourful as before. In the course of the year, we completed the first round of initiatives to implement this change, which included updating our document templates and online platforms and purchasing new materials to brighten our events.

In this same spirit of renewal, FitSpirit's communications department decided to become better organized so it can better serve the organization's various segments and handle its own major projects more effectively. The FitSpirit team therefore established a working committee<sup>1</sup> with outside experts to help it develop its first communication plan, which will guide FitSpirit's communication activities through Fall 2019.

One of the recommendations that emerged from this process was to proceed with the revamp of FitSpirit's website. This first major move would then provide an anchor for many other actions included in the plan. With the help of our partner Camden, the website was redesigned to improve the user experience by letting visitors perform actions such as making online donations, making the site responsive and making navigation more fluid. The navigation menu was built around the three calls to action that are central to FitSpirit's activities: Participate (calling on schools to register for the FitSpirit program), Get Involved (encouraging people to become ambassadors or volunteers) and Give (calling on everyone to make donations of various kinds).



Isabelle Charest, FitSpirit's first annual mentor

These three calls to action were also used to define the messages of the three women who joined their voices in 2017-2018 to help publicize FitSpirit: President and Founder Claudine Labelle, official spokesperson Sophie Grégoire Trudeau, and annual mentor Isabelle Charest. This new way of positioning their messages also became the basis for a set of three videos produced courtesy of our partner Luminance Studio. The heartfelt testimonials have now been posted on FitSpirit's various platforms to raise the organization's visibility and offer people concrete ways of contributing to its mission.

To complete the first round of actions in the communication plan, the FitSpirit communication team worked with CBC/Radio-Canada in Spring 2018 to produce the first documentary about FitSpirit: a short film called *Sans chrono, sans classement, juste pour ELLES* [no stopwatch, no rankings, just for themselves]. This documentary

shows the benefits FitSpirit delivers by following the story of two girls who participated in our activities and kindly agreed to take part in this project for the benefit of all.

From the bottom of our hearts, we thank all the people who were involved in one way or another in realizing these communication projects.

<sup>1</sup> Members of the working committee:

Karine Desmarais,  
teacher and FitSpirit program leader  
École secondaire Jean-Jacques-Rousseau

Sabrina Duguay,  
Director of Corporate Communications  
National Public Relations

Kim Fuller, Founder and Creative Director  
Phil Communications

Marie-Michèle Jacques,  
Vice President and Senior Partner  
Camden





Alexandra Duron is a big fan of sports and physical activities of all kinds, especially those practiced outdoors. She learned about FitSpirit through her job as a project manager with management consulting firm McKinsey & Company, and was instantly drawn to its mission and vision: “The role FitSpirit plays in girls’ lives is something that spoke to me. I wished there had been an organization like that when I was a teenager!”

While Alexandra was having ice cream with FitSpirit’s President and Founder Claudine Labelle on a summer day in 2017, they came up with the idea of forming a charitable committee of young women professionals. They named it the *FitSpirit Circle of Influence*, and Alexandra became its first chairperson. A dozen young female professionals joined the committee to support FitSpirit’s mission, focusing on three main activities: raising funds, being involved in the field, and developing strategic partnerships. The mission of the *FitSpirit Circle of Influence* is to spur businesses to take action to encourage teenage girls to discover the pleasures and benefits of physical activity. Its vision is to raise the profile of the cause in order to attract investments of time and resources from the business community.

The members of the FitSpirit *Circle of Influence* soon realized that business partners and major donors today want to do more than just contribute money to the causes they support. They want to be identified with them and mobilize their employees to support them too. In March 2018, with this idea in mind, the FitSpirit *Circle of Influence* made a lunchtime presentation to spread the word about FitSpirit to the employees of a major campaign partner, the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec. Other achievements by the *Circle of Influence* during the year included contributing to the development of the new digital platform for registering FitSpirit ambassadors and helping to organize the auction at the second FitSpirit Father-Daughter Ball in April 2018.

The *Circle of Influence* gives FitSpirit one more vehicle for raising its visibility and promoting public awareness of its mission, especially in the business community. The committee now has the wind in its sails and has a number of exciting projects planned for the coming months.

FitSpirit thanks the 2017-2018 members of the FitSpirit *Circle of Influence* for their involvement and dedication. They are:

Alexandra Duron, Project Manager  
McKinsey & Company

Alexandra Racette, Marketing Group  
Lead, Brands & Innovation  
Pendopharm

Anne Vincent, Senior Manager, Business  
Marketing & Campaigns  
Cogeco Connexion

Anna Goodson, Founder  
Anna Goodson Illustration Agency

Catherine Laroche, Project Manager  
Tétragone

Chantal Ferland, President  
CF Communications

Geneviève Cléroux-Perrault, Group  
Marketing Manager  
L’Oréal Canada

Julie Gosselin, Director, Marketing,  
Individual Insurance and Wealth,  
Quebec  
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Marie-Christine Boucher, Executive  
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Laurent Duvernay-Tardif Foundation

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# Thank you to our donors

FitSpirit could not carry out its mission without the continuing support of its generous donors, sponsors and partners. Thank you for enabling us to encourage more girls to be physically active for the rest of their lives!

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NOTE: This list shows donors who contributed in the last financial year (September 1, 2017, to August 31, 2018). It includes both financial donations and in-kind contributions, as well as 2017–2018 installments on multi-year gifts. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of information on the list. However, if you or your business have been omitted or incorrectly spelled, please accept our sincere apologies and contact us so we can make the necessary corrections to our records.





# Financial Results

FitSpirit recorded strong financial results in 2017-2018. Total revenues rose by more than \$1 million year over year, from \$1.5 million to \$2.5 million, surpassing our budget projections.

It was an exceptional year for new corporate, government and regional partnerships. Beyond any doubt, these new alliances were the result of the work done over the past few years on large-scale projects such as the major fundraising campaign and the public awareness campaign. More specifically, donations and sponsorships were up 100%.

As a result of the success of the Father-Daughter Ball and the addition of other fundraising activities, revenues in this segment were up 24%.

Revenues from registration fees were up 17%. The increase was attributable not so much to the increase in the number of FitSpirit partner schools as to the work we did to better identify registration costs and to restructure this revenue stream.

## BREAKDOWN OF REVENUES:

**62%**

DONATIONS AND SPONSORSHIPS

**7%**

GRANTS

**17%**

REGISTRATION FEES

**12%**

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

FitSpirit continued to spend considerable amounts on programs and events, resulting in a 51% increase in expenses. Part of the increase was due to the organization of FitSpirit Celebrations outside the major urban centres in order to reach more participants.

Even though we added key personnel in our various departments, our overall administrative expenses were down 9%.

Recognition of depreciation of the various information technology tools developed over the past few years began in fiscal year 2017-2018.

## BREAKDOWN OF EXPENSES:

**62%**

PROGRAMS AND EVENTS (UP 15 PERCENTAGE POINTS)

**18%**

ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

**17%**

DEVELOPMENT OF PARTNERSHIPS AND DONATIONS

For the first time in its history, FitSpirit was able to allocate \$400,000 to working capital and future needs.

# Board of Directors

FitSpirit is grateful for the support and expertise of the members of its Board of Directors.



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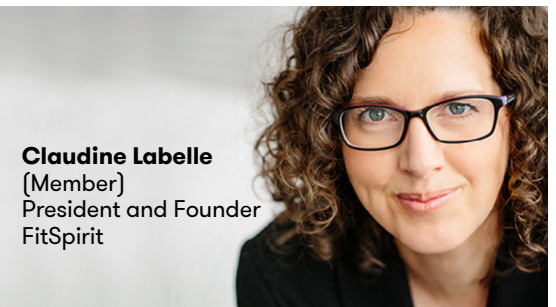
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