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Just Two in Ten (22%) Canadians Have Managed to Keep All
Their Resolutions in the Past*

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Toronto, ON - With the New Year nearly here, many Canadians (77%) are resolving to change something about themselves, but according to a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of Sun Life Financial, only two in ten (22%) Canadians who have made at least one resolution going into 2011 report that they've managed to keep all the resolutions that they've made in the past. Roughly the same proportion (20%) of Canadians admits that they never keep their resolutions, while the vast majority (58%) says that their success or failure depends on what exactly the resolution is. In total, eight in ten (78%) have failed to keep past resolutions.

By far the most common New Year's Resolution relates to health and wellness, as Canadians use the passing of the old year as a symbolic shedding of past bad behaviour. Four in ten (42%) say that their number-one resolution relates to health and wellness, including exercising more (15%), losing some weight (14%), eating better/healthier (7%), or quitting smoking - either their first attempt (1%) or trying again (4%).

Other commonly-made resolutions heading into 2011 include paying down debt (10%), saving money (7%), travelling to someplace special (4%), getting something they've been longing for (2%), drinking less alcohol (1%) or other miscellaneous resolutions (2%).



All in all, when considering their top-three resolutions for 2011, the most common-made resolutions in Canada are: exercising more (37%), losing weight (37%), eating better/healthier (31%), saving money (30%) and paying down debt (28%).

When it comes to keeping their resolutions, while 22% of Canadians, overall, have managed to keep their previous resolutions, men (26%) are more likely than women (19%) to say they've kept them, and those aged 45 to 54 are the most likely (32%) to say they've kept their past resolutions. Interestingly, those who claim to have no unhealthy behaviours (such as eating poorly, smoking, and not exercising regularly) report having the best success rate at keeping their resolutions (41%), while those who report having 1 (37%), 2 (27%), 3 (18%), 4 (20%), or 5 (10%) unhealthy behaviours admittedly have had much less success in the past.

According to the poll, those who have resolved to travel to someplace special (31%), save money (26%) or spend more time with family and loved ones (25%) report having the highest success rates in the past. Conversely, those who are resolving to drink less (6%) and quit smoking (10%) in 2011 reportedly have the lowest past success rate.

Among the eight in ten (78%) Canadians who report that they haven't managed to keep all of their past resolutions; the most common obstacle that has hindered Canadians' ability to keep their resolutions is a lack of willpower, motivation or drive (76%). Others report that past obstacles include a lack of money (38%), lack of time (35%), a physical ailment (18%), lack of comfort with trying something new (13%), lack of access to exercise equipment or facilities (11%), lack of support from family or friends (10%), lack of knowledge (7%), lack of access to healthy food (7%), or lack of support from their employer (2%). Just 4% of Canadians say that none of these have been obstacles for them in the past.



These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted between December 1 and 3, 2010, on behalf of Sun Life Financial. For this survey, a sample of 1586 adults from Ipsos' online panel was interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size and a 100% response rate would have an estimated margin of error of +/-3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what the results would have been had the entire population of adults in Canada been polled. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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