



Press Release

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***This Girl Can* goes international: Sport England campaign adopted by VicHealth to help Australian women manage the fear of judgment**

- Sport England has announced a partnership with Australia's VicHealth, to share award-winning *This Girl Can* campaign, which aims to reduce the gender gap in exercise by helping women manage the fear of judgment
- The partnership will see VicHealth use the formula behind *This Girl Can* to create their own localised campaign – beginning this month by sourcing the stories of real women from the state of Victoria, before launching nationally in February 2018
- In Victoria, more than 41 per cent of women over 25 are too embarrassed to exercise in public, with one in five doing no physical activity in a typical week
- Since 2015, *This Girl Can* from Sport England, funded by The National Lottery, has helped reduce the gender gap in England by inspiring 2.8m women in to get active

Sport England is taking its successful *This Girl Can* campaign to the world's first health promotion foundation, VicHealth, to promote getting active among women of all shapes and sizes and all levels of ability in Victoria and Australia.

The initial three-year partnership, announced today at an event in Melbourne, Victoria, will see VicHealth adopt *This Girl Can's* ground-breaking formula of showing real women and girls playing sport and getting active, to help others in the state manage the fear of judgement that holds many back – hoping to achieve similar success to the original, that has inspired 2.8million more women to get active to date.

The announcement comes as research from VicHealth finds that physical activity in Victoria sees consistently higher participation rates amongst men.

Three in five Australian women (60 per cent) are not sufficiently active – participating in less than 30 minutes of physical activity on four or more days a week – with one in five women doing no physical activity in a typical week.

The research found that the fear of judgment however is widespread in Victoria, with 41 per cent of Victorian women aged over 25 and over being too embarrassed to exercise in public and almost half finding sporting clubs intimidating.

VicHealth is hoping to use the *This Girl Can* formula to help women manage this fear of judgment and get active in any way that suits them by showing the experiences and stories of women ‘like me’.

The campaign will look to create an active and engaged network of women across Victoria, supporting each other and encouraging getting active. VicHealth will use social and mass media to reach and inspire women across the state and the rest of Australia.

There will be two stages to the initial partnership with VicHealth:

- **Community Engagement (July 2017 – early 2018):** VicHealth will source the stories of Victorian women via social media and a dedicated website (thisgirlcan.com.au) to inspire others to get active. A mobile Story Pod will visit sites around metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria to gather stories from women across the state.
- **Mass Media Campaign (2018):** In early 2018, VicHealth will launch the full This Girl Can campaign. The campaign will include an all-new TV ad featuring real Victorian women from the Community Engagement phase, as well as online advertising, posters, radio and social media. VicHealth will work with a range of sports and organisations to amplify the campaign and reach as many Victorian women as possible.

The ground-breaking *This Girl Can* campaign from Sport England funded by The National Lottery was the first to feature real women exercising in mass advertising, through telling the unedited story of women of all shapes, sizes, ages, and a range of diversities being active and playing sport.

Since 2015, the campaign has featured women who are typically not represented in media. The women shown being active in the adverts reflect teenagers to over 60s, pre and post-natal women, women with disabilities, women with different ethnicities and women of all shapes and sizes. Research has shown that if women can identify themselves in advertising they are more likely to manage the fear of judgment associated with being physically active.

Sport England CEO, Jennie Price, said: *“The fear of judgment is a universal issue facing women the world over, and while This Girl Can has made a real difference since it launched by helping 2.8million women get active, we want to take our campaign further.*

“Australian women face the same barriers to being active as English women – whether that’s worrying about how they look when they exercise, that they aren’t skilled enough to exercise or that they should be prioritising their family or work over activities.

“Using the insight we have gained over the last two years from women across England, we want to take This Girl Can international, with the ultimate goal being that girls will grow up in a world where there is no fear of being active. This partnership is an important step forward.”

VicHealth CEO, Jerril Rechter said she hoped the Victorian version of the campaign would encourage local women to smash outdated stereotypes and take advantage of the increasing opportunities for women in sport and physical activity.

“Over the last few years there has been a shift in momentum, with more and more opportunities opening up for women and girls to take part in sport and physical activity,” she said.

“We want to see this campaign inspire women to smash old-fashioned stereotypes about what women can and can’t do in sport, in the gym and in their neighborhoods.

“We’ll be celebrating active Victorian women who are doing their thing no matter how they look, how well they do it, or how sweaty they get.”

ENDS

Notes to editors:

For more information about *This Girl Can*, including campaign imagery, video footage, and interview requests with the girls that feature in the campaign, please contact the team at Mischief on behalf of Sport England on 020 3128 6600 or email TGC@mischiefpr.com

ABOUT VICHEALTH

The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) is a pioneer in health promotion – the process of enabling people to increase control over and improve their health. VicHealth's primary focus is promoting good health and preventing chronic disease. More information:

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au

VicHealth creates and fund world-class interventions, conducts vital research to advance Victoria's population health, produces and supports public campaigns to promote a healthier Victoria, and provides transformational expertise and insights to government.

Above all, VicHealth seeks to make health gains among Victorians by pre-empting and targeting improvements in health across our population, fostered within the day-to-day spaces where people spend their time, and with benefits to be enjoyed by all.

About Sport England & The National Lottery

Sport England is a public body and invests more than £300 million National Lottery and government money each year in projects and programmes that help people get active and play sport.

It wants everyone in England, regardless of age, background, or level of ability, to feel able to engage in sport and physical activity. That's why a lot of its work is specifically focused on helping people who do no, or very little, physical activity and groups who are typically less active - like women, disabled people and people on lower incomes.

Sport England used National Lottery funding to create the This Girl Can campaign in 2015. So far it has inspired 2.8 million women in England to do some or more activity, won over 50 awards including at the International Cannes advertising festival for the Best Health Related Campaign in the world in 2015, and has created a social media sensation around the world. The second phase of the campaign launched in 2017.