



Media Release

For immediate release 26 March, 2018

THIS GIRL DEFINITELY CAN IN VICTORIA!

54 year old Sally throws a netball, Tina's powering on a bike in her lycra, helmeted Miranda pushes through her opposition in roller-derby and Joys punches into a bag.

They're four of the twelve local women starring in the powerful new *This Girl Can - Victoria* campaign launched last night by health promotion foundation VicHealth.

The campaign, which hit screens last night, is a local version of the [world-famous viral campaign](#) by Sport England which inspired an incredible 3.9 million British women to ditch the couch and get active.

This Girl Can – Victoria aims to build upon this success and empower women across the state to get active and overcome feelings of judgment which new VicHealth research shows is stopping them from getting active.

The research reveals over half of Victorian women worry about being judged when exercising. They worry more than men about keeping up, being unfit and find it harder to go back to exercise when they haven't done it for a while.

The ad features everyday Victorian women – no airbrushed Instagram models – overcoming their fears and giving it a go, curves, jiggles, wrinkles and all. The women, from all across the state, get their sweat on in a range of activities from boxing, cycling and roller-derby to netball and Aussie rules. Netballer Sally shoots goals in a game despite being told she's 'too old to play' and Tina's on the bike even after someone's yelled out 'fat chicks shouldn't wear lycra'.

Minister for Health Jill Hennessy said: "This Girl Can – Victoria shows everyday women getting out there and having a go. This campaign is all about getting Victorian women active, feeling proud of themselves and reaching their goals.

"In Victoria, only two in five of us do enough physical activity to be healthy and we know that women in particular are less active than men. We want to inspire as many women as possible to get active and prove that in Victoria, all women and girls most certainly can."

Minister for Women Natalie Hutchins said: "This Girl Can – Victoria is all about empowering women to smash outdated stereotypes about what they can or can't do in the gym, on the sporting field and in our neighbourhoods."

VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter said the fear of judgment – as well as actual experiences of judgement – stop too many women from being physically active.

"Over half of Victorian women worry about being judged while exercising and for over 40 percent this feeling of embarrassment or intimidation is so strong it actually stops them from taking part in sport or exercise," Ms Rechter said.

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“Concerns about how they look, that they aren’t skilled enough or that they should be prioritising their family or work over exercise are genuine obstacles for women. However, we know if women can identify themselves in advertising and in the media, they’re more likely to overcome this fear of judgement.

“This Girl Can features everyday women staring down their critics and getting active regardless of how they look or how sweaty they get.

“This campaign isn’t about making women feel bad about not doing enough exercise. It’s about celebrating what they can do, even if that’s just a walk around the block or a few laps of the pool.”

Sport England CEO Jennie Price said she was proud to partner with VicHealth on bringing This Girl Can to Australia: “We’re really proud of our partnership with VicHealth. This ad is visibly part of the *This Girl Can* family – but it’s your campaign...it’s all about Victorian women. We’ve had enormous success in England and I think it’ll be a fantastic success here in Victoria too!”

Ms Rechter said she had been overwhelmed by the number of Victorian women wanting to share their stories of how sport and exercise have improved their confidence, health and wellbeing.

“We’ve listened to the stories of hundreds of Victorian women who’ve told us about what being active means to them and what they’ve had to overcome to do it,” she said.

“The women featured in This Girl Can – Victoria are everyday women who’ve found the confidence to get out there and get active. They’re doing it for themselves – not for anyone else. They’re doing it because they love it, and because they can.”

Watch [This Girl Can – Victoria](#).

Local statistics, interviews and images available on request.

Victorian women are encouraged to join the This Girl Can movement by heading to thisgirlcan.com.au and join the community on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) and follow the #ThisGirlCanVic.

The website features a range of ways women inspired by the ad can get active including a list of active tips giving practical suggestions from the women featured in *This Girl Can – Victoria* about how they motivate themselves to get active. Be inspired to try a new activity, grab a friend to be active with and check out the different ways to get moving on the website.

This Girl Can – Victoria is the local implementation of the original ‘This Girl Can’ campaign in England, which is owned and operated by the English Sports Council (Sport England). Sport England used National Lottery funding to create the This Girl Can campaign in 2015.

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For editors:

This Girl Can – Victoria is a three-year VicHealth campaign aiming to increase physical activity among Victorian women. It focuses on less active women, and supports gender equality by challenging traditional gender roles and stereotypes in sport and by celebrating women in this space. VicHealth is the first organisation in the world to license the This Girl Can campaign from Sport England. VicHealth is promoting This Girl Can – Victoria in partnership with a range of organisations and community groups across the state including high profile sporting codes, sporting clubs and charities.

This Girl Can –Victoria features the voices and stories of diverse women from right across the state. It features younger and older women; mums and non-mums; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women; women from culturally diverse backgrounds; women with disabilities; women from across the LGBTI community; women with lower incomes or education levels; and women living in metro, regional and disadvantaged areas.

The television ad was created by The Shannon Company and directed by Walkley-Award winning independent film-maker Celeste Geer during three days of filming in ten locations across the state. The television ad will play on metro and regional free to air television networks across Victoria, in cinemas and on digital and social media channels, including Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. The ad's soundtrack features soulful RNB Sydney-based songstress OKENYO's female anthem *Woman's World 2.0* with a crew of fierce Brisbane rappers, Miss Blanks and Jesswar. The campaign will also feature on the back of buses and ads near tram stops.

Stats:

- Three in five (60%) of Australian women are not sufficiently active
- One in five Victorian women don't do any physical activity in a typical week
- A VicHealth survey of 2000 Victorian women and men aged 18 or over found that:
 - When exercising, 52% of women worry about being judged
 - Men are more likely than women to feel comfortable in themselves exercising, and more likely to agree that they don't worry about what other people think about them when exercising
 - Women are more than twice as likely as men to worry about being unfit, not being able to keep up or being a beginner
 - 62% of women find it harder than 52% of men to return to exercise after a break
 - 31% of women felt judged for having to stop or slow down during exercise compared with 26% of men
 - One in four women is worried about changing in front of others when they exercise or play sport
 - 41% of women were too embarrassed to exercise in public, compared with 26% of men
 - 46% of women found gyms and fitness centres intimidating compared with 42% of men
 - 30% of women were uncomfortable in exercise clothing
 - Women are more likely to feel that exercise is a better option for them than sport

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