



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Record number of women get active & stay active in COVID-19 with This Girl Can

Despite the challenges of 2021, more than 340,000 women across Victoria have been inspired to get active and stay active as a result of VicHealth's *This Girl Can – Victoria* campaign, making it the campaign's most successful year yet<sup>1</sup>.

Now in its 4<sup>th</sup> year, a post-campaign survey by La Trobe University shows the campaign supported around 1 in 6 women aged 18 to 65 in Victoria to move their bodies through inspirational videos and free and inclusive online workouts.

What's even more impressive, 8 in 10 (81%) of the women who got active after seeing the campaign, were still keeping active 4 months later<sup>2</sup>.

Victorian Minister for Women Gabrielle Williams said: "The *This Girl Can* campaign is empowering women to be active and breaking down outdated stereotypes of what they can or can't achieve in the gym, on the sporting fields, in our neighbourhoods and in the great outdoors.

"This is about leveling the playing field and enabling more women to prioritise their own health and well-being, embracing physical activity that suits them in supportive and welcoming environments."

The La Trobe University survey found that the women who did something active as a result of *This Girl Can – Victoria* in 2021 enjoyed a range of health benefits, including:

- 2 in 5 (40%) reported improved general wellbeing
- 1 in 4 (26%) experienced better physical wellbeing, and
- 1 in 5 (22%) felt a better sense of mental wellbeing.

VicHealth's Head of *This Girl Can – Victoria*, Melanie Fineberg, said we must support women to be active in ways that feel good and suit them.

"It's so great to see that so many women across Victoria are making their physical and mental wellbeing a priority this year, despite the ongoing challenges of the coronavirus pandemic. And we're excited that the *This Girl Can – Victoria* campaign could support them on their journey," Ms Fineberg said.

"Women have had to juggle so much yet again, from home schooling and parenting to work, study and other commitments. Physical activity and movement have positive impacts on mental wellbeing, so it's more important than ever for all of us to support women to keep active in any way they can."

#### **CASE STUDY:**

Justine Streager, 32 from Keysborough in Melbourne, says *This Girl Can – Victoria* inspired her to get active and connect with other active women, while juggling motherhood, working from home and the many other challenges of life in 2021.

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<sup>1</sup> In 2018 (the campaign's first year) more than 285,000 women were inspired to get active as a result of the campaign – this year's results show a 19% increase since, with more than 340,000 women moving their bodies in 2021.

<sup>2</sup> These findings are from a survey of 726 Victorian women who responded to the post-campaign survey in July 2021 and a follow-up survey in September 2021.



"I really resonate with the messaging of *This Girl Can*, because it's all about just getting out and giving it a go without fear of judgement," Justine says.

"Worrying about what others think is something that has plagued my mind. Surrounding myself with the messaging of *This Girl Can*, and getting involved with activities that align with this messaging, made me feel safe to try lots of different activities."

In 2020-21, Justine tried online group training with a diverse personal trainer and coach to 5km using the NHS CHOICES UK podcast. When restrictions allowed, she also tried hiking with [Escaping Your Comfort Zone](#), which she's now a leader for, and [GO Soccer Mums](#).

"I've documented my experiences on Instagram and I love being encouraged by *This Girl Can*, and also seeing others doing the same as me, just giving it their best. I love making social connections and supporting and uplifting others in their fitness goals too," Justine said.

"I'm no longer sitting on the sidelines and am no longer isolated. I have community and that feels big."

Women of all ages and abilities can get involved in *This Girl Can – Victoria* by checking out the beginner-friendly workouts at [This Girl Can Get Active @ Home](#), joining the community on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#), or following the #ThisGirlCanVIC.

For more tips and inspo, visit [thisgirlcan.com.au](https://thisgirlcan.com.au)

#### **NOTE TO EDITORS:**

- *Local interviews, images and videos available on request.*

#### **About *This Girl Can – Victoria*:**

*This Girl Can – Victoria* is a 6-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.

*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. VicHealth is the first organisation in the world to license the campaign from Sport England.

In 2021, *This Girl Can – Victoria* advertisements featured on TV, digital, social media, print and out of home between February and June. Watch the 2021 [This Girl Can – Victoria](#) campaign.

#### **Campaign research: Key findings:**

- In 2021, over 340,000 women were inspired to get active as a result of seeing the This Girl Can Victoria campaign. That's approximately 1 in 6 Victorian women aged 18 – 65.
- When surveyed again in September 2021, 8 in 10 (81%) continued doing the active actions they reported in the May/June 2021 survey over the last 4 weeks<sup>3</sup>.
- 3 in 5 (58%) of those who were inspired to get active as a result of the campaign were committed to continuing this change throughout the rest of the year, and an additional 1 in 3 (34%) said they were somewhat committed to maintaining their activity levels.

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<sup>3</sup> These findings are from a survey of 726 Victorian women who responded to the post-campaign survey in July 2021 and a follow-up survey in September 2021.



- *This Girl Can – Victoria* has inspired an average of 309,000 women to get active each year since the campaign began in 2018. Since 2019, the annual figure has increased by an average of 7% year on year. Breakdown of women aged 18-65 inspired to get active each year of the campaign:
  - 2021 - 340,364
  - 2020 - 319,641
  - 2019 - 291,893
  - 2018 - 285,751.
- In 2018 (the campaign's first year) the campaign inspired more than 285,000 women to get active – this year's results show a 19% increase on that figure, with more than 340,000 women moving their bodies in 2021.