



Doing sport differently

State Sport Program (2015–18) Evaluation Summary

About this document

This document provides a high-level overview of the State Sport Program's objectives, results and learnings for sport organisations, governments, researchers and other interested stakeholders. It is part of a series designed to help the sporting sector 'do sport differently' to attract, engage and retain Victorians who are less active in sport.

www.doingsportdifferently.com.au

Related resources include:

- Designing and delivering sport to engage people who are less active
- A guide for sports clubs
- VicHealth program summaries

Introduction

Sporting activities are a great way for people to improve their physical health and mental wellbeing.

While many Victorians play traditional club sport to keep active, it's not the answer for everybody. People who are less active need access to other options, such as social sport.

Trends in physical activity and sport participation are shifting. Recent research has shown there is increased participation in social sporting activities and a decline in traditional, club-based sport.

Sport organisations are facing the challenge of how best to grow participation in a changing world. People are increasingly time-poor, have varied access to sport facilities, and have limited money to spend on participation. Not everyone wants to join a competitive sport team or is able to meet regular training commitments.

The terms 'less active' and 'social sport' are defined on pages 8 and 9.



The State Sport Program

A current focus for VicHealth is to help sport organisations get ahead of sports participation trends by creating and offering more welcoming and flexible approaches to sport.

Between 2015 and 2018, VicHealth provided funding through the State Sport Program to state sporting associations (SSAs) to develop and deliver activities that would set their sport up for the future and ultimately result in more Victorians who are less active being physically active through sport.



Harmony in Cricket Association was developed with the aim of creating safe, accessible, inclusive and equitable sport environments for all in the community. It provides social cricket leagues with specific benefits such as insurance, ground allocation, MyCricket access, staff support and high-performance/junior pathways while allowing the leagues to continue to play their existing competitions.

Hussain Hanif
Multicultural Officer, Cricket Victoria



What did VicHealth do?

Through the State Sport Program, VicHealth funded 21 SSAs across three years to implement 51 individual projects.

These projects tailored the way sporting activities were delivered to attract and retain participants who are less active and those not currently engaged in a sport. Case studies about these projects can be found at www.doingsportdifferently.com.au

Initiatives included:

- simple variations to a traditional sport model (e.g. a low-cost, social format that allows people to play in a short amount of time)
- projects that engaged under-represented community members (e.g. culturally and linguistically diverse groups)
- innovative ways of introducing new people to a sport.

Many of the projects that implemented a new social sport participation product were supported through the four phases of product development:

1. Design the concept
2. Develop strategy and resources
3. Test the concept and full program
4. Deliver at scale

4 PHASES OF PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

1. Design the concept

2. Develop strategy and resources

3. Test, refine and roll out the program

4. Deliver at scale

SSAs were supported throughout the State Sport Program to engage participants, deliver quality activities and build a sustainable approach for the sport and community. This support included networking opportunities to share learnings and build the sector's capacity in new ways of providing sport.

La Trobe University's Centre for Sport and Social Impact evaluated the program using pre- and post-participation surveys, and interviews with participants and key people involved in the delivery of the program. This information was given to funded organisations to help them refine their projects.



The dashboards (which were part of the program evaluation) were a fantastic way to get almost real-time participant feedback. It helped us influence and motivate the clubs to utilise the strategies found in the Get Active program, which in turn has helped our clubs increase participation and club membership.

Sue Phillips
Club Services Officer
Australian Sailing

What was achieved?

THOUSANDS OF VICTORIANS ENGAGED

Nearly 70,000 Victorians were engaged and participated in activities funded by the State Sport Program at least once.

More than a third of these (37.6%) were regular participants, attending at least 50% of the sessions offered for their chosen activity.

Most participants (83%) were satisfied with their experience.

Projects	51
Participants	69,580
Regular participants	26,155 (38%)
'Less-active' participants	62%
Participation opportunities	8,732
Locations	829
Deliverers	3,882

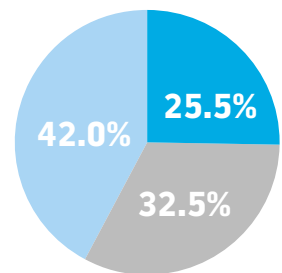
Approximately 62% of participants in the State Sport Program were defined as 'less active' at registration, compared to 72% of the Victorian population.

- **Participants:** People who participated in at least one session
- **Regular participants:** People who attended 50% or more of the sessions offered
- **'Less-active' participants:** People who met the 'less active' definition before attending a participation opportunity
- **Participation opportunities:** Individual activity sessions held
- **Locations:** Sites offering a program
- **Deliverers:** People who delivered the program to participants

IMPACT ACROSS VICTORIA

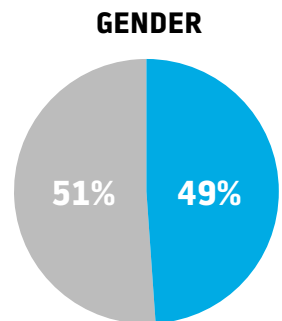
More than one-quarter of participants lived in the most socioeconomically disadvantaged areas of Victoria, and the activities successfully engaged regional communities and overseas-born Victorians.

SOCIOECONOMIC AREAS*

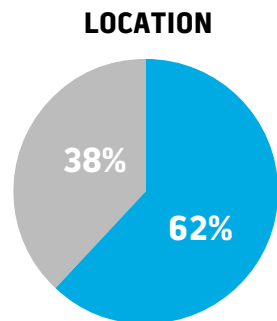


- Deciles 1-4 (Most disadvantaged)
- Deciles 5-7
- Deciles 8-10 (Least disadvantaged)

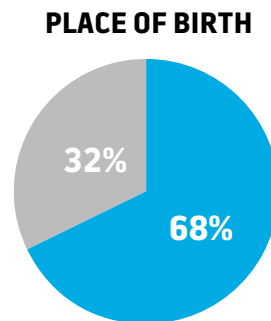
* People from lower socioeconomic circumstances generally have a greater risk of poor health. The Australian Bureau of Statistics ranks geographic areas from the most socioeconomically disadvantaged (deciles 1-4) to the least socioeconomically disadvantaged (deciles 8-10).



- Female
- Male



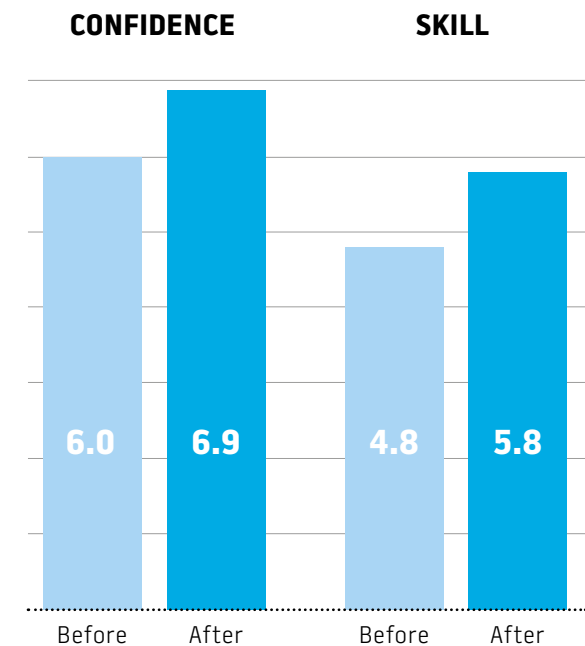
- Metro
- Regional



- Australia
- Overseas

CONFIDENCE AND SKILLS BOOSTED

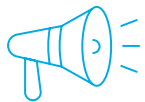
A person's skill and confidence in their ability to do an activity are strong drivers of future participation and maintaining physical activity levels. Overall, participants reported an increase in skill and confidence after participating in program activities.



What did we learn?

Through the State Sport Program and other initiatives aimed at involving people who are less active in sports, VicHealth has gained valuable insight into 'doing sport differently'. Six key principles have been developed to guide the sporting sector and others in future initiatives.

The six key principles are discussed in more details in **Doing sport differently: Designing and delivering sport to engage people who are less active**



Principle 1

Engage with the target market throughout the design process to reduce barriers and fulfil motivations



Principle 2

Think about participants as customers and consider their total experience



Principle 3

Participation should cater to different levels of skill, ability and fitness



Principle 4

The deliverer is the most vital person to participants' experience and retention



Principle 5

Participants need a clear pathway for retention or transition as their skill, fitness or interest changes



Principle 6

Best-practice project management and delivery will enable scale and sustainability

Definitions

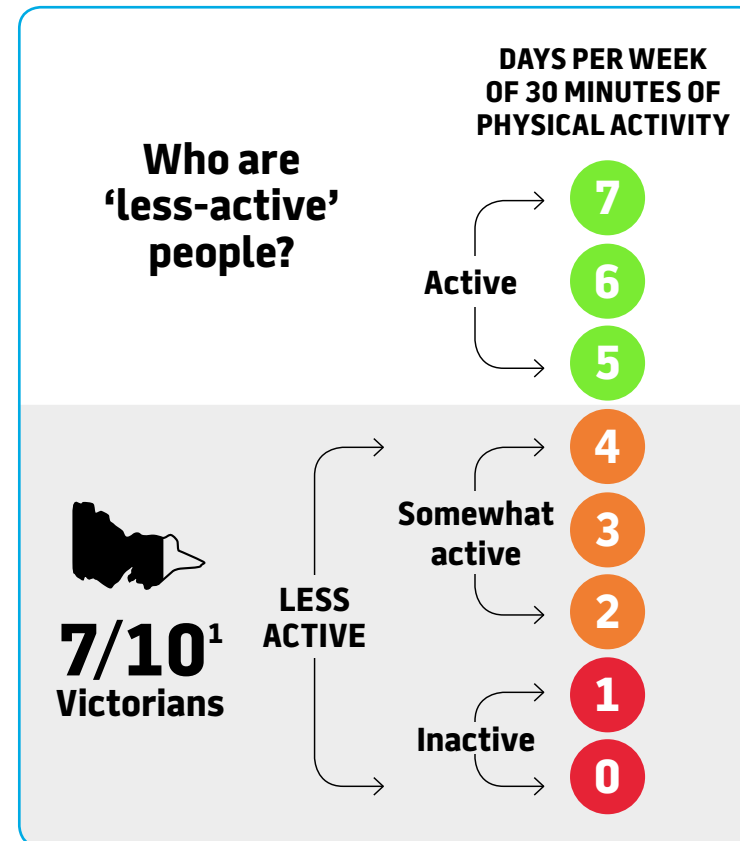
WHO ARE 'LESS-ACTIVE' PEOPLE?

The term 'less active' includes people defined by the Australian physical activity and sedentary behaviour guidelines as 'inactive' and 'somewhat active'.

People who are less active are those who do not undertake at least 30 minutes of physical activity on at least 5 days of the week. Children who are less active are people under 18 who haven't participated in organised sport (outside school) in the past 3 months.

People might be less active because they have dropped out of sport or decreased their activity levels as their life circumstances changed, or they may never have been active enough. Some people may not like sport, or might have had bad experiences in the past.

Some people may face particular barriers that prevent them from being active (e.g. a lack of confidence, financial difficulty, limited time).

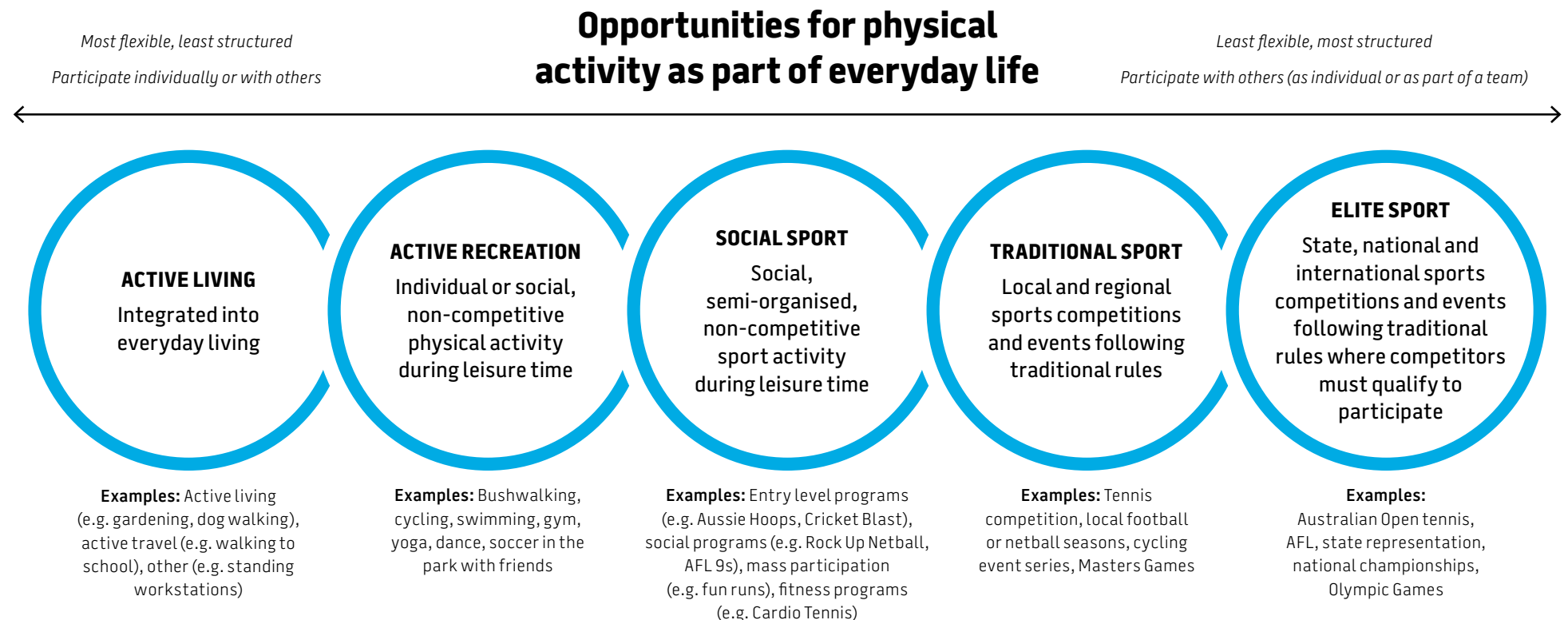


¹ ABS 4364055001D0021_20172018 National Health Survey: First Results, 2017-18 — Victoria.

WHAT IS 'SOCIAL SPORT'?

Social sport is less structured than traditional sport. It has fewer rules and more flexibility, but is more structured than active recreation activities. Social sport can be designed and delivered by an organisation (e.g. State Sporting Association), sport club, local council or other individuals and groups. Social sport places a greater emphasis on fun, social interaction and enjoyment than on performance, results and competition.

A current focus for VicHealth is to help sporting organisations get ahead of sports participation trends by creating and offering more welcoming and flexible approaches to sport.



More information

You can find more information at www.doingsportdifferently.com.au

Participating state sporting associations



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