



THIS GIRL CAN



THIS GIRL CAN – VICTORIA

YEAR 3 CAMPAIGN
REPORT (2020)

INTRODUCTION

In 2020, This Girl Can – Victoria continued to inspire women to get active, despite the challenges facing the Victorian, and global community during the coronavirus pandemic. The campaign celebrates real women giving it a go and getting active no matter what their skill level, what they look like, or how sweaty they get.

This award-winning and renowned campaign from VicHealth has encouraged and motivated women right across the state to become more active in the 3 years since it began.

Whilst the coronavirus impacted our daily lives, This Girl Can – Victoria provided Victorian women with the inspiration they needed to stay active during this challenging time.

In 2020, almost 320,000 women were inspired to get active at home or in their neighbourhoods as a result of the This Girl Can – Victoria campaign¹.

This year, more than ever, the campaign's influence has been significant as our lives changed, and the importance of getting active increased to support physical and mental health and wellbeing.

This report outlines what we set out to achieve at the beginning of the year, how plans changed due to coronavirus and how women responded to the 'new normal'. We share lessons we learnt along the way – and talk through our hopes and plans for future years of the campaign.

¹ La Trobe University, 2020, Campaign Evaluation report July 2020 (Unpublished Report).



WHAT WE SET OUT TO ACHIEVE

Background

We know that Victorian women aren't sufficiently active, with only half getting enough physical activity per week. We know the other half participate in less than 30 minutes of physical activity 5 times per week, and 1 in 10 do no physical activity at all in a typical week.² We also know that women continue to participate less than men in sport.³

VicHealth research shows that while women know the health benefits of physical activity, it isn't motivating enough to get them out and getting active. VicHealth research found that it was a fear of being judged that stopped women from being physically active⁴.

A staggering 52% of Victorian women worried about being judged while exercising,⁵ and 41% of Victorian women are too embarrassed or intimidated to exercise in public.⁶



52% OF VICTORIAN WOMEN WORRY ABOUT BEING JUDGED WHILE EXERCISING⁸

The research also showed:



National physical activity levels – only half of Victorian women are sufficiently active.⁹



Almost 80% of women want to see more women with a range of body shapes included in physical activity advertising.¹⁰



41% of Victorian women feel too embarrassed to exercise in public compared with 26% of men.¹¹



Two-thirds of women aren't motivated to get active by fitspiration videos featuring toned and taut influencers and fitness instructors.¹²

² Australian Bureau of Statistics 2019, 4364.0.55.001 *National Health Survey: First Results, 2017-18: Physical Activity Victoria*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

³ Victoria University and Federation University 2019, Sport Participation Rates – Aggregation of 12 sports, Victoria 2017. A report prepared for Sport and Recreation Victoria and VicHealth through the Sport Participation Research Program, VicHealth, Melbourne.

⁴⁻⁶ TNS 2016, Physical Activity Behavioural Change Formative Research – A Marketing Research Report, VicHealth, Melbourne (unpublished).

⁷ Victoria University and Federation University 2019, Sport Participation Rates – Aggregation of 12 sports, Victoria 2017. A report prepared for Sport and Recreation Victoria and VicHealth through the Sport Participation Research Program, VicHealth, Melbourne.

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⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics 2019, 4364.0.55.001 *National Health Survey: First Results, 2017-18: Physical Activity Victoria*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

¹⁰ Intuitive Solutions 2020, How women feel about activity and exercise marketing, a report prepared for VicHealth, Melbourne (unpublished).

¹¹ TNS 2016, Physical Activity Behavioural Change Formative Research – A Marketing Research Report, VicHealth, Melbourne (unpublished).

¹² Intuitive Solutions 2020, How women feel about activity and exercise marketing, a report prepared for VicHealth, Melbourne (unpublished).



Objectives

This Girl Can – Victoria launched in 2018 with the aim of motivating and empowering women to be active. But the campaign has grown to become much more than a simple physical activity campaign. The campaign inspires women to get active in whatever way they choose. It empowers women to feel comfortable in their bodies and in public spaces. This is about women getting active without worrying about being judged for their ability, what they look like, or where they come from.

This Girl Can – Victoria smashes outdated stereotypes about what women can and can't do in sport, in the gym, and in their neighbourhoods. It not only motivates and inspires women to get out there and be active, but it also creates opportunities for women to get active, in whichever way they choose.

The campaign speaks to women aged 18 and over who are less active, through the voices and stories of our ambassadors. Our ambassadors are real, everyday women from all walks of life, from right across the state. They include:

- younger and older women
- mums and non-mums
- women from our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community

- women from culturally diverse backgrounds; women with disabilities; women from across the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer, non-binary and gender diverse (LGBTIQ) community
- women from a range of socio-economic backgrounds
- women living in both metro and regional Victoria.

CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVE 1

Increase physical activity

among Victorian women,
with a focus on less active women.

CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVE 2

Support gender equality

by challenging traditional gender
roles and stereotypes in sport and
celebrating women in this space.

WHAT WE DID

This Girl Can – Victoria campaign is focused around our fabulous ambassadors. Over the 3 years of the campaign we have found 46 incredibly inspiring women to be a part of the campaign and to talk about how they manage their fear of judgement in getting active.

The ambassadors are everyday women who've found the confidence to get active. They are the backbone of the campaign.

Our third year of the campaign evolved to focus on the importance of how activity makes women feel. Our research showed that when women shift from thinking about how they look when they exercise to how they feel when they move, it helps to moderate the fear of judgement and foster more enjoyable and sustained activity patterns.

This year was all about celebrating the myriad of feelings that come when women are active – from happy to strong or calm. In 2020, the campaign was off to a promising start, with the best laid plans anticipating an incredible response from Victorian women, building on the success of the first 2 years.






Each year, the campaign has been improved, tweaked and adjusted in response to both the audience and stakeholder feedback.


However, the coronavirus pandemic had other plans for 2020.





Campaign elements


In year 3, the campaign was expected to include the below elements:


-  **Advertising** – on TV, cinema, outdoor (bus backs and retail shopping centres), online (video and search), radio and social media (Facebook and Instagram).
-  **Ambassadors** – a focus on ambassador stories that highlighted the ‘felt benefits’ of physical activity. There were 21 new ambassadors featured, along with new activities to represent the diversity of Victorian women’s experiences.
-  **Media engagement** – sharing our ambassadors’ stories with national, regional, suburban, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and other targeted media outlets.
-  **Social media** – continuing to build and engage a community of women on Facebook and Instagram using #ThisGirlCanVIC.
-  **Campaign supporter program** – enabling stakeholders to use the campaign to promote their own activities, along with helping them to create welcoming and inclusive environments for women and girls.
-  **Digital** – showcasing the campaign ambassadors, information about a range of physical activities and sports, and links to physical activity opportunities through the website www.thisgirlcan.com.au.

 **Sport partnerships** – extending the campaign reach through high profile sporting organisations and funding new, social and flexible activities for Victorian women and girls to get active.

 **Council partnerships** – funding to local councils across Victoria to promote the campaign to their local community of women and to run physical activity opportunities in their area.

 **Communication to women** – an email program to reach and inspire women to be active.

 **Podcast** – launch a This Girl Can – Victoria podcast, sharing the voices of our ambassadors helping to inspire women to get active.

 **This Girl Can Week** – building on the success of the first year, This Girl Can Week was planned to increase women’s participation extensively, with many stakeholders offering free or low-cost beginner and women’s only sessions across Victoria.

The coronavirus 'pivot'

Due to coronavirus, and the resulting lockdowns in Melbourne and regional Victoria, the original planned activities were altered as outlined below.



Advertising – due to the government priority of coronavirus messaging, the campaign budget was significantly reduced from March 2020. Ads which featured activities no longer permitted under coronavirus restrictions were removed and the advertising shifted to a digital focus to reach women at home.



Ambassadors – to help inspire women, we asked our ambassadors to share their tips and tricks of staying active at home.



Media engagement – opportunities and outcomes decreased as the pandemic was the sole focus of all media's attention from March onward.



Social media – due to restrictions, our messaging shifted to become more about staying active while at home and promoting only those activities allowed during restrictions.



Campaign supporter program – many Campaign Supporters were shut down and could not offer any activities during lockdown periods.



Digital – the campaign focus shifted to digital, launching online workout videos to support women to get active at home with the release of the new Get Active @ Home page. The workout videos featured a mix of campaign ambassadors and fitness professionals with different body shapes, abilities and cultural backgrounds. Search engine marketing also helped women find at home exercise content on our website.



Sport partnerships – with planned activity delayed until post-lockdown, many sports partners moved to producing online videos and webinars.



Council partnerships – some councils were able to offer online activities, while many partnerships were put on hold during the lockdown, delaying activities until October and November 2020.



Communication to women – the email program shifted to support women with at home video workouts and ways to stay active at home.



Podcast – recordings moved to online or over the phone. Launching our first 8-part series, each episode featured an inspiring ambassador story of how they get active their way.



This Girl Can Week – this event was cancelled to prioritise community safety.

THE RESULTS

Campaign impact in 2020

Despite the limitations put on the campaign in year 3, it has been a great success, inspiring more women than ever before to get active.

In 2020, there were almost **320,000** women who were inspired to get active as a result of seeing the campaign¹³.

We helped women find a 'new normal'

With the new focus shifting to online workout video content, we developed the [Get Active @ Home](#) page which enabled women to stay active during lockdown in their homes.

The 3 This Girl Can – Victoria ambassador workouts were watched over a total of 12,600 times on Facebook (completed 30 min video views) during April to June.

The campaign is still very well recognised

The campaign momentum over time has ensured that campaign awareness remained relatively steady despite the significant

reduction in activities and advertising. 46% of Victorian women recognised the campaign. This decreased from 54% in 2019, but is an increase from the first year of the campaign at 43%.¹⁴

Inspiring women to get active

After watching This Girl Can – Victoria, many women were inspired to start a sport or physical activity for the very first time. Others were motivated to get back into exercise after taking a break.¹⁵

The campaign, featuring real Victorian women with diverse backgrounds, abilities and body shapes, has led to an incredible 33% of Victorian women who saw the campaign being inspired to get active¹⁶.

The message is clear

After viewing the campaign 82% of women believed it encouraged women to keep being active.¹⁷



In 2020, This Girl Can – Victoria inspired almost **320,000 women to get active** as a result of seeing the campaign



In 2020, This Girl Can – Victoria **inspired 1 in 7 women** aged between 18-65 across the state to get active



33% of women who recognised the campaign, did something active¹⁸

¹³⁻¹⁸ La Trobe University, 2020, Campaign Evaluation report July 2020 (Unpublished Report).

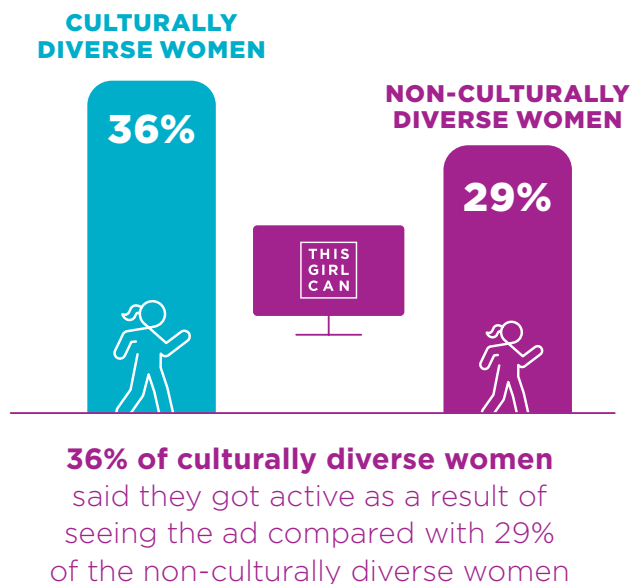
With the cumulative impact of the campaign over 3 years, we have also seen continued positive shifts in most 'fear of judgement' related attitudes, with women who have seen the campaign (compared with those who have not) worrying less about:

- not being good enough
- being judged by other women
- developing too many muscles
- not knowing any people to go with
- being sweaty
- not being fit enough
- not being feminine
- not knowing the rules
- beginning again after some time off
- wearing tight clothing¹⁹.

Right across Victoria, women are participating in more social, fun, supportive and welcoming activities, that is what the This Girl Can – Victoria campaign is all about.

Impact with diverse audiences

This Girl Can – Victoria represents cultural diversity in Victoria by featuring women from a range of cultural backgrounds, including: Filipino, Indian, Sri Lankan, Vietnamese, Turkish, Polynesian, Greek, Spanish, French, Pakistani, Chinese, Taiwanese, African and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.



In fact, the campaign has continued to be particularly successful with women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. In year 3, 36% of culturally diverse women said they got active as a result of seeing the ad compared with 29% of other women.²⁰

Importantly, our results show that the campaign's inclusivity of women with a disability has a positive impact with this audience. Women with disabilities responded equally as well to the campaign as women without a disability.

¹⁹ La Trobe University, 2020, Campaign Evaluation Matched Sample Report July 2020 (Unpublished Report).

²⁰ La Trobe University, 2020, Campaign Evaluation report July 2020 (Unpublished Report).

OUR RESEARCH

Campaign development

Our campaign planning and development continue to be built upon:

- use of the FLOWPROOF Model* to inform planning, implementation and evaluation
- utilisation of the Theory of Planned Behaviour* as the underpinning theory to guide the campaign
- pre-formative research (segmentation research and focus group testing)
- formative research (focus group testing and stakeholder consultation)
- use of a Program Logic* to guide campaign development and evaluation.

A systems-based approach

The success of This Girl Can – Victoria campaign over 3 years can be attributed to the systems-based approach we took to creating change. We worked directly with sporting clubs, physical activity providers, local councils, and sporting organisations to make the environment as welcoming to women as possible.

This Girl Can – Victoria is shifting the way women see themselves (and others) being physically active and building a community of supportive and empowered women across Victoria.

While a key objective of the campaign is to motivate and empower women to be active, the campaign also focuses on influencing the places and spaces where women go to get active, to ensure they feel welcome, included and supported to give something a go.

This is why:

- we've worked with sporting organisations to create social, flexible, fun sports programs
- we created the '[Getting more women active](#)' portal to help activity providers improve what they do
- we've created an online community of women supporting women.





Our evaluation process

VicHealth has a strong focus on creating and strengthening the evidence base for health promotion action to improve people's health. This means that rigorous research and evaluation are at the centre of all our work.

For This Girl Can - Victoria, the evaluation encompassed process, impact and outcome evaluation, and included qualitative and quantitative methods. VicHealth appointed the Centre for Sport and Social Impact at La Trobe University to evaluate the campaign.

Key evaluation and research elements to date have included:

- **Quantitative research** – campaign impact and outcomes were assessed via an online survey of the target audience. A total of 7,143 women have now been surveyed to understand the impact of the campaign at different points in time (2 baseline surveys ahead of any campaign activity and post-campaign surveys in 2018, 2019 and 2020).

An additional survey of 2,500 women was conducted in year 2 to further understand women's engagement with physical activity and enablers to getting back into physical activity.

- **Qualitative research** – in-depth phone interviews with 40 women in year 1, to explore emerging themes from the target audience. Interviews (with 24 Victorian women) were conducted in year 2 to develop a greater understanding of women's engagement with and experience of sport, exercise and physical activity.
- **Process evaluation** – reports on each campaign element were collected from the relevant agencies throughout the campaign delivery, to feed into the process evaluation and to inform future campaign activities. VicHealth also surveyed ambassadors, supporters and stakeholders to gather insights. A fortnightly monitoring process during the campaign phase supported real-time insights and gathered both anecdotal and data-driven evidence.

LESSONS LEARNT ALONG THE WAY

The results to date have been incredibly positive and show that the campaign is effective at getting more women active. The lessons learnt during the changes required with the global pandemic are valuable and offer opportunities to improve outcomes in future years.

Below are key lessons that may be useful for others working in this space.

Flexibility

While the campaign planning was strategic and well developed, 2020 taught us to remain open to evolving and adapting as needed. Coronavirus restrictions created a society where social connection moved online. Shifting our focus to align the campaign with this movement ensured we continued to encourage women to stay active – just in a different way.

We worked with our Campaign Supporters to shift their planned activities online, attracting participants over Zoom and Facebook, or to move their face-to-face activities until later in the year. It is essential, particularly in the new ‘COVID normal’ world that physical activity providers are equipped to deal with a potentially shifting delivery model, as restrictions may ebb and flow.

Ambassadors

Using everyday diverse women as our campaign ambassadors (instead of actors, models or athletes) was critical to the campaign’s success. These women’s stories ensured campaign relevance and authenticity, while driving engagement.

In 2020, we introduced 21 new ambassadors and slightly shifted the key message to be about the ‘felt benefits’ of getting active, which ensured the campaign connected with Victorian women at an emotional level. By talking through the ‘felt benefits’ of physical activity, as well as increasing the range of activities represented, a greater proportion of Victorian women could see women like themselves as part of the campaign.

When selecting ambassadors, it was critical they had a genuine connection to the campaign ethos and could speak naturally to how being active made them feel. Prior to the launch of the year 3 campaign, we provided media training and social media tips to all new ambassadors, along with inviting all 46 ambassadors to preview the creative, which they found valuable.

PR

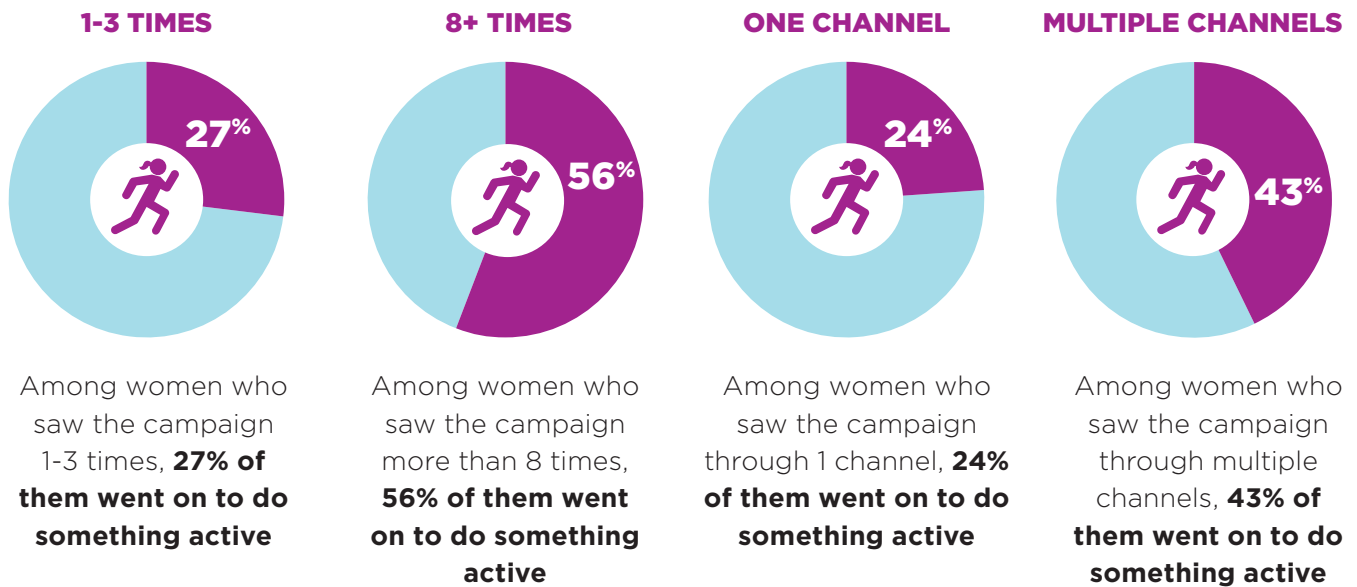
It was essential we had biographies for all ambassadors, as well as additional assets (high quality videos and images) before launch, which helped with media interest. While media opportunities were limited this year, with assets on hand we were ready when opportunities arose, such as the launch of our [Get Active @ Home](#) page.

Creative

The new creative developed in year 3 focused on the ‘felt benefits’ of being active, and showed ambassadors making mistakes, getting sweaty, connecting, being strong and having fun. To help inspire action and provoke emotion, the question “Can you feel it?” was added as the call to action. This was powerful and combined with the ambassadors looking into the camera, helped prompt reflection among viewers.

²¹ La Trobe University, 2020, Campaign Evaluation report July 2020 (Unpublished Report).

This Girl Can – Victoria campaign results by views and channels



Shorter edits of TV and online videos were created, along with multiple formats for relevant media, such as vertical videos for social media stories. The addition of the ambassador home workout videos during lockdown featuring fun beginner friendly exercise women could do in their homes was timely. These improvements led to strong engagement on social media and a high number of completed video views.

Paid media

The planned media spend was significantly reduced due to coronavirus. Interestingly, the reach across channels remained strong, which, together with the continued creative improvements saw an increase in women getting active as a result of seeing the campaign.

The reduced budget required a refocus of advertising towards Search Engine Marketing (SEM) and social media, which was essential to engage women at home. The SEM strategy helped women find the '[Get Active @ Home](#)' content, while social media ensured we reached an audience across Victoria and helped to showcase the 'Get Active@ Home' content.

In line with previous campaign evaluations, this year it was highlighted again that frequency of exposure and the use of multiple media channels is important to drive action because:

- the more often women see the campaign, the more likely they are to report getting active as a result of the campaign
- women who see the campaign across multiple channels are more likely to report getting active.²¹

Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholders continue to respond incredibly positively to the campaign, with grassroots support and momentum building. The [Campaign Supporter online hub](#) continues to be a valuable resource, with additional creative content available for use along with branded templates for personalising promotional material.

FUTURE PLANS

Evolving the campaign with the knowledge gained from the past years, along with the changes and lessons in year 3, will ensure we focus our efforts where they have the greatest impact.

With Victoria coming out of strict restrictions and adjusting to 'COVID normal', supporting women as they get back into team sport and rejuvenate their social connections through physical activity is a priority.

Celebrating how women feel when they get active will remain the focus for year 4, along with reaching women across multiple channels, multiple times, to inspire more Victorian women to get active and feel great.

Based on the success of shifting online in year 3 – with a focus on at home content, SEM and social media activity – these elements will be a feature of our plans for year 4.

Our thorough approach to research and evaluation continues to help us understand what's working and what's not, to help shape future work and to inform the health promotion evidence base more broadly.

To learn how you can help more women become active visit: www.gettingwomenactive.com.au

Year 4 will be all about inspiring more Victorian women to get active and feel great – by focusing our efforts where they have the greatest impact.



GET INVOLVED

Want to get involved and support the campaign? There are only 4 things to do:

1

Share the campaign far and wide

The more often women see the campaign, the more likely they are to get active. Help us reach and inspire every woman across Victoria.

2

Check out social media

Listen to the community of women and join the conversation with the hashtag #ThisGirlCanVIC

3

Use the campaign to promote your own activities to women locally

Register as a Campaign Supporter at thisgirlcan.com.au

4

Make changes where you can

See our step-by-step guide (gettingwomenactive.com.au) to getting more women to sign up for physical activity (includes checklists and suggested scripts for marketing, customer service, the physical environment and programs and activities).

Find out more

THIS GIRL CAN - VICTORIA

Online

thisgirlcan.com.au

Facebook

facebook.com/ThisGirlCanVIC

Twitter

twitter.com/ThisGirlCanVIC

#Hashtag

#ThisGirlCanVIC

TV ads

thisgirlcan.com.au/watch-the-ad

Ambassadors

thisgirlcan.com.au/meet-the-girls

VICHEALTH

Online

vichealth.vic.gov.au

YouTube

youtube.com/user/VicHealthMedia

#Hashtag

#VicHealth

GLOSSARY

- **Less active**

Based on the number of days in the past week that they have completed a total of 30 minutes or more of physical activity (which was enough to raise their breathing rate). Less active means they have completed this level of activity on only 0-4 days.

- **FLOWPROOF Model**

This is a best-practice protocol comprising nine components:

- formative research
- logic model development/use of theory
- development of objectives including KPIs
- well-resourced (considering resource and partnerships)
- conducting a Process evaluation
- running the campaign
- on-the-ground support
- outcomes
- financial and summative (integrated) evaluation, including cost breakdown and returns on investment.

For more information, see [Mass media campaigns addressing physical activity, nutrition and obesity in Australia 1996–2015](#)

- **Theory of Planned Behaviour**

A theory which assists in predicting behaviour and intentions from attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. For more information, see Ajzen, I (2012), 'The theory of Planned Behaviour' In PAM Lange, AW Kruglanski, & ET Higgins (Eds.), Handbook of theories of social psychology (Vol. 1, pp. 438–459). London: Sage

- **Program Logic**

A program logic describes how a program is intended to work. It aims to represent the causal links for a program and to link each component of a program to intended short-intermediate- and long-term outcomes. For more information, see the [Evaluation Guide and associated tools by the Centre for Evaluation and Research in the Department of Health and Human Services, 2018](#)

Research partner



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[#ThisGirlCanVIC](https://twitter.com/ThisGirlCanVIC)



VicHealth is committed to health equity, which means levelling the playing field between people who can easily access good health and people who face barriers, to achieve the highest level of health for *everyone*.

VicHealth acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government.

