



Media Release

“HAVE YOU GOT WHAT IT TAKES?” ASKS NICOLE LIVINGSTONE

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Victoria has a new walking organisation aimed to inspire and assist Victorians to be active by getting back on their feet, everyday.

Victoria Walks is leading the move to create walking-friendly neighbourhoods by working with communities, government, councils and local organisations to encourage walking as part of our everyday lives – be it to work, the park, to school or around the neighbourhood.

“We are less physically active and are walking less than ever before. This lack of physical activity is taking a heavy toll on the health of our whole community. The beauty about walking is that it’s something most of us can do easily,” explained Victoria Walks Executive Officer, Dr Ben Rossiter.

Latest figures indicate that in Victoria, only 64.2 percent of adult men and 61.2 percent of adult women are sufficiently active to enjoy the health benefits of physical activity.

“We want people to get active and commit to walking wherever possible for local trips” said Dr Rossiter. “People who walk feel better and are more likely to know their neighbours and feel a part of their community.”

Victoria Walks offers support and practical online tools to help communities turn their neighbourhoods into walking-friendly places. Launched today, it’s first campaign “*Have you got what it takes?*” www.gotwhatittakes.org.au uses a series of online videos to inspire us to make our communities better for walking. The first of the five videos is released today.

Olympian and campaigner for positive body image, Nicole Livingstone (OAM) is getting behind the campaign.

“As a mother of three young children I believe it’s essential to make our streets safer for walking and get children more active” said Nicole. “The videos are great. They’re funny but also very helpful for anyone who wants to see more people out and about.”

“Many people would like to walk more, but there are often barriers such as a lack of footpaths, street crossings and lighting. It’s up to us all to advocate for positive change,” Nicole added.

Research shows that physical inactivity is responsible for over 13,000 deaths each year in Australia and costs the health system \$400 million in direct health care costs.

“Regular physical activity not only protects against many illnesses, it also makes us mentally healthy, alert and resilient against the stresses of modern life,” explained VicHealth Chief Executive Officer Todd Harper.

Mr Harper said Victoria Walks, which is funded and supported by VicHealth, has great potential to get many more Victorians walking-for-transport, and their health.

Further Information:

Dr Ben Rossiter, Executive Officer, 0425 805 578 or 9667 1339

www.gotwhatittakes.org.au

www.victoriawalks.org.au

Resources:

A range of still images from the viral campaign videos and a variety of different size “*Have you got what it takes?*” online banners, are available by logging onto:

www.victoriawalks.org.au/gotwhatittakes