



## YWCA Victoria commends State Government's action on combating damaging body image

**MEDIA RELEASE**

YWCA Victoria today commended the State Government's announcement to establish a new Media Code of Conduct on Body Image.

Shannon Rees, President of YWCA Victoria, said today that, "Too many women and teenage girls are damaging their health, and ironically their bodies, in an effort to replicate images of beauty often distorted by airbrushing and digital enhancement."

"In bringing together stakeholders from both the public and private sectors, and importantly young people themselves, the State Government has taken an important step in combating eating disorders in our community" Ms Rees said today.

The Media Code, part of the Victorian Government's '*Go for your life - Positive Body Image Strategy*', will bring together experts to formulate a guide for the media on this important issue.

The new strategy will also include a Community Advisory Committee to assist the Government in tackling the growing problem of negative body image in our community, especially amongst young women.

Ms Rees, who joins the Community Advisory Committee today, encouraged young Victorian women to celebrate positive body image, and congratulated the Victorian Government on these new initiatives.

"The high incidence of eating disorders amongst the Australian community, especially amongst young women, is devastating," Ms Rees said today.

"Negative body image can seriously impact on the emotional, psychological and physical health of young women in Victoria, and is an issue that needs to be addressed, for the health of both young women and the wider community"

"Images of women promoted by the media do not reflect the true diversity of women's bodies in Victoria, and often place unnecessary pressure on young women, leading to negative body image and serious eating disorders"

"Negative body image is a serious issue for young women" Ms Rees said, "Anorexia is the third most common disease in Australian females aged 15-24 and it is estimated that only one in ten cases of bulimia nervosa are detected in Australia"

"Today marks a day when we, as a community, not only acknowledge the seriousness of poor body image, but start working towards real solutions."

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