



## YWCA VICTORIA WANTS GOVERNMENT ACTION TO MAKE MODELS 'MODELS OF GOOD HEALTH'

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> March**

On the eve of Melbourne's fashion week activities, YWCA Victoria is calling on the Federal Government to work with the fashion industry, health professionals and stakeholders to introduce guidelines to control the body image promoted by fashion models.

The calls come after the tragic deaths of three international models due to complications associated with anorexia nervosa.

Shannon Rees President, YWCA Victoria said such guidelines are essential to help prevent low self esteem and poor health among people who are influenced by unrealistic body images portrayed by the fashion industry in the media.

"Too many young women, especially girls, are looking to the catwalks and are being bombarded with unrealistic images of thinness," Ms Rees said today.

"The fashion industry has the responsibility to work with stakeholders to help address this growing problem".

The YWCA Victoria believes the Federal Government has a role in bringing together representatives of the fashion industry, the health professions, teachers and parents' groups to discuss what images are acceptable or unacceptable.

"The pursuit of the perfect look leads to a whole range of health threats such as eating disorders, dangerous dieting habits, purging, smoking and depression," Ms Rees Said.

"Anorexia is the third most common disease in Australian females aged 15 – 24"

Ms Rees said it is vital that the fashion industry, government and the community work together to prevent young people, especially girls, harming themselves in the pursuit of a false ideal.

"Guidelines should cover the appropriate Body Mass Index (BMI) for models and the most appropriate age for models projecting certain images."

"The guidelines would ensure that models are models of good health."

YWCA Victoria's concerns are shared by the AMA and other groups.

**MEDIA RELEASE**