



IMPACT REPORT

**November 2017 -
January 2019**



sportwaikato
out there and active



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INTRODUCTION

This is ME[®] is an initiative led by Sport Waikato that encourages, supports and celebrates women and girls of all ages getting out there and being active.



At a high level the initiative aims to:

1.

UNITE DELIVERY PARTNERS

Growing the quality of delivery and opportunities to participate

2.

CHANGE THE CONVERSATION

Breaking down the barriers to participation through images, stories and women and girls sharing their message

3.

GROW PARTICIPATION AND CHANGE ATTITUDES

Connecting individuals with opportunities to be active and have fun together

Launched as a pilot in 2017, This is ME[®] comprises master content management from Sport Waikato, including creative materials, website, Instagram and Facebook sites, support and education guides, information and workshops for community and sport and recreation delivery partners.

The programme utilises international, national and local insights into women and girl's participation to guide best practice delivery – enhancing the outcomes for participants as well as locally led delivery techniques to engage the community.

The following document outlines the results of the initiative since launching the pilot programmes in 2017, providing proof of concept with high level results and case studies that demonstrate the social and structural impact of This is ME[®].



Join the This is ME[®] movement and be part of the effort to enact relevant and meaningful change for New Zealand women and girls of all ages.

ENGAGING AND ENABLING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

At a local level, This is ME® engages and enables women and girls (and their families) to lead positive change in their lives and communities.

Through co-design and capability building approaches (Locally-led delivery), This is ME® not only connects community members, and particularly females, with sport, physical activity and recreation opportunities but also works alongside them to develop strategies and the leadership capability to address fundamental barriers to participation in their own communities.

Across 14 months of This is ME® in the Waitomo and Hauraki districts, impact has been both structural and social with a deliberate focus on growing physical activity participation through connectivity and a focus on working collectively to enact positive, and longterm change.

Major partners in community outcomes have included stakeholders in local government, community and health organisations, education, and those in the sport and providers of sport, recreation and physical activity opportunities.



25

Local
champions

350+

Local
volunteers

900+

Women
and girls
engaged

6

Clubs/
programmes
revitalised or
seeded

5

Major
activations
designed by
community
members



OUR WORK WITH YOUNG WOMEN

Research has consistently shown that young women are a unique group with diverse and often complex needs when it comes to getting moving. They experience a range of barriers that pose significant threat to their likelihood of participation. They exist in a social world that puts a number of pressures on them that often prevents them from taking part.

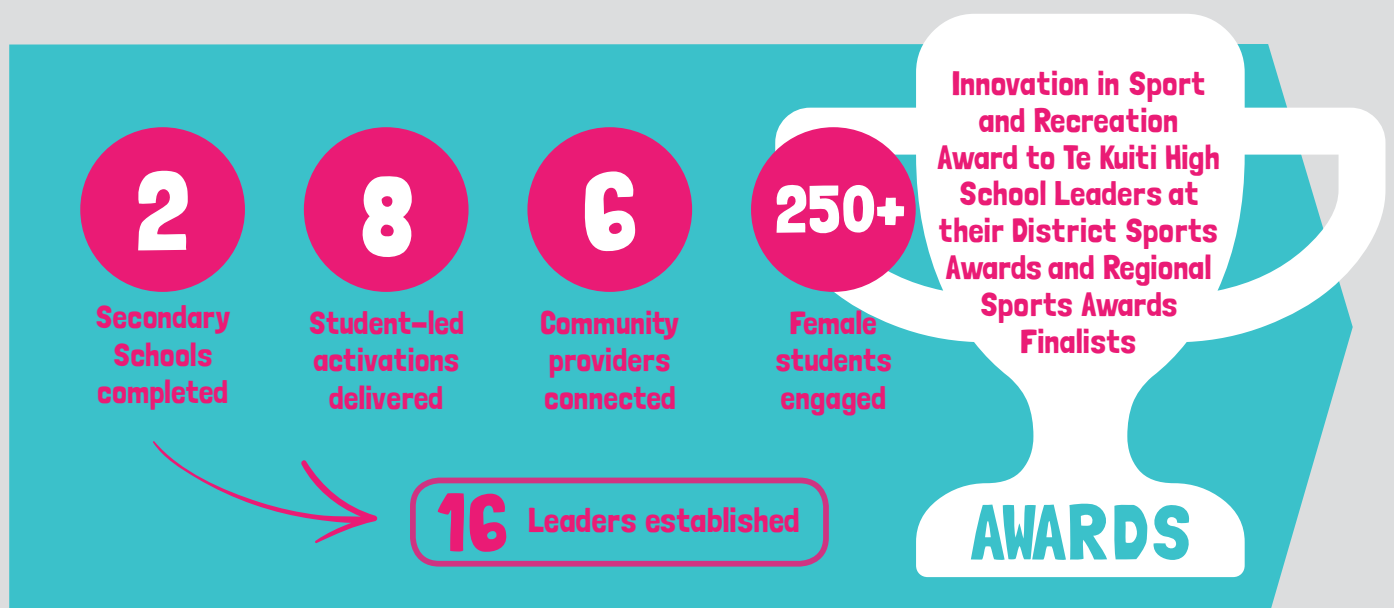
(For more information read: A Case for Change Infographic - Sport New Zealand, 2018; Dwyer, Allison, Goldenberg, Fein, Yoshida and Boutilier, 2006; Enright & O'Sullivan, 2010; Sport Waikato Young People's Profile, 2018)

By engaging and working in partnership with schools, local sport, recreation and physical activity providers and young women themselves, we engage female students to participate in a way that is exciting, relevant and practical for them in order to reverse the downward trend in participation among this group.

By establishing female leaders in the school setting, we work with and for teenage girls to co-design and co-deliver inclusive and supportive opportunities for activity while at the same time growing young women's confidence and leadership skills.

Through a partnership with the Waikato Institute of Leisure and Sport Studies, we offer student leaders not only a voice in their school system about what is offered for females, but also the opportunity to gain NCEA accreditation and a leadership qualification.

Simultaneously, we use the programme as a springboard for discussions with Principals, PE Teachers and Sports Coordinators about the need for structural change in sport and physical activity provision and delivery in the education setting.





PARTNERS ON THE JOURNEY

A fundamental component of This is ME® is the uniting of delivery partners to grow the number and quality of opportunities for women and girls to participate in sport, recreation and physical activities that are inclusive, relevant and fun.

Community consultation has also emphasised the importance of the link between physical activity and health – including physical, social/emotional and mental wellbeing.

The journey, so far, has seen a number of key This is ME® partners at local, regional and national levels and from a range of sectors including sport and physical activity, education, health, local government and community organisations, all working together to deliver positive outcomes for women and girls.

56

Local sport and physical activity partners

2

Regional sport and physical activity partners

7

National sport and physical activity partners

20

Health partners

4

Education partners

3

Council partners

5

Community partners

Hammertron Women's Ultimate Frisbee Hat Tournament

\$15 ENTRY FEE
LUNCH, SNACKS AND WATER WILL BE PROVIDED

10am - 3pm
SUNDAY 24TH FEBRUARY '19
AT HARIST PARK, HAMILTON EAST

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER PLEASE EMAIL HAMHTRONDISC@GMAIL.COM

LEARN TO DIVE!

FREE Intro Session for Girls (6-16YEARS)

10AM - 11AM
SATURDAY 16TH FEBRUARY 2019
WATERWORLD, GARNETT AVE TE RAPA

Come along and learn water safety and confidence tips from our female coaches in a fun and friendly environment

*Boys are welcome to attend the regular Learn to Dive session times, please contact Danvy for more information

To confirm your spot, please contact Danvy on 027 600 2201 or email waikato.diving.wiw@gmail.com

CHANGING THE CONVERSATION

Using an array of digital mediums, This is ME® provides space for women and girls to be included in a discussion that has largely excluded and marginalised them in the past. This is ME® also helps females to (re)position and (re)define themselves in ways that challenge dominant understandings and historical representations by celebrating their physical capabilities.

This is ME® uses digital media to empower and inspire women and girls to showcase the REAL ways they get moving and to be proud of these, while also connecting and supporting one another.

LOVE

"Physical activity takes many forms – it's not just about sport, but about getting moving, and having fun together!"

FUN

"Being active can be done anywhere at anytime"

MOVE

FRIENDS



"That anyone of any age and body type can exercise while feeling good about themselves."

MOVING

HEALTH

ACTIVE

"Women empowering themselves and each other through movement."

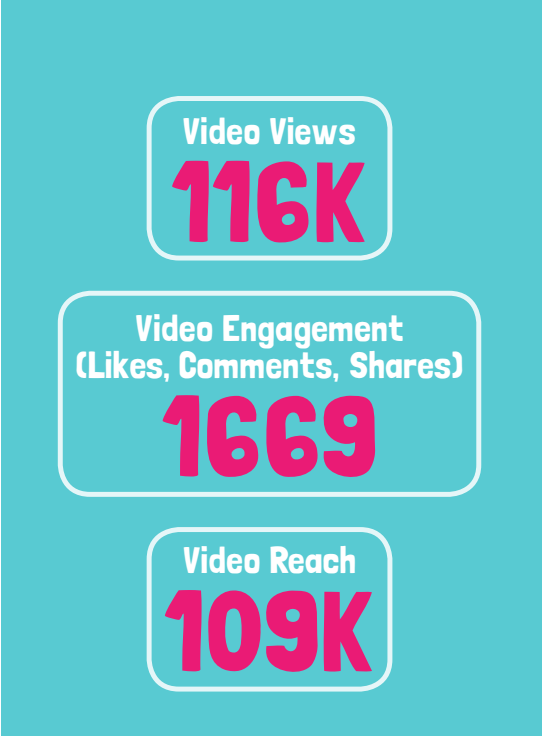
"That any kind of physical activity counts and you don't have to do hardcore to be active"

EXERCISE

*The above quotes are taken from survey respondents who were asked what message they took from the This is ME® video



Video



In October 2018, the This is ME® Video was launched. The video proudly showcases women and girls of a range of ages, ethnicities, abilities and backgrounds getting moving THEIR way. While highlighting a range of sporting opportunities that New Zealanders are familiar with and can relate to, including Waka Ama, Netball and Cycling, the video imagery also deliberately switches the focus from the view of 'sport as the only option' to depict physical activities and recreational opportunities such as Zumba, Aquacise, walking and importantly, home-based workouts and backyard games (play).

The video is far removed from the imagery of females participating in sport or getting active that we usually see in the media. There are no elite athletes, no women or girls with what might be considered visibly peak or high performance athletic physiques, and certainly no abs of steel. Instead, the video celebrates REAL women and girls doing REAL physical activity, and the varied and unique ways they choose to engage.

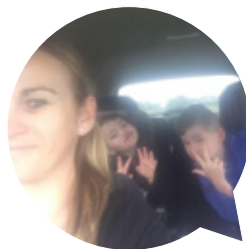
The very first video of its kind in New Zealand has generated National support and importantly, a conversation about the need for more imagery of this kind that celebrates the sweat, pride, reality and togetherness of human movement at a community and grassroots level.



"Yes .. Absolutely, inspirational for all women and tamariki, keeping fit healthy and strong, at all levels and all ages, re: Zumba with big Miss Leigh, classes everyday, day and night, A moko from Huntly, playing League for Taniwharau and is into all other things, Re: Kapa haka, Koru Dance Fitness with her Nanny Kenia Thomas Irvine and our crew, it's just brilliant, these are just 2 I've named in the vid, well done to the filming Crew capturing everyone



- Di Adams



"👏 Awesome 😂 this is what we need strong, fit and independent women and girls – love This is ME NZ"

- Fiona MacLeod Webster



"Great vid, great initiative. So love seeing so many smiling, sweaty faces! Awesome work!"

- Rikki Swannell



"This is soo awesome 👏 YTGs 💪 "

- Honey Hireme



Facebook

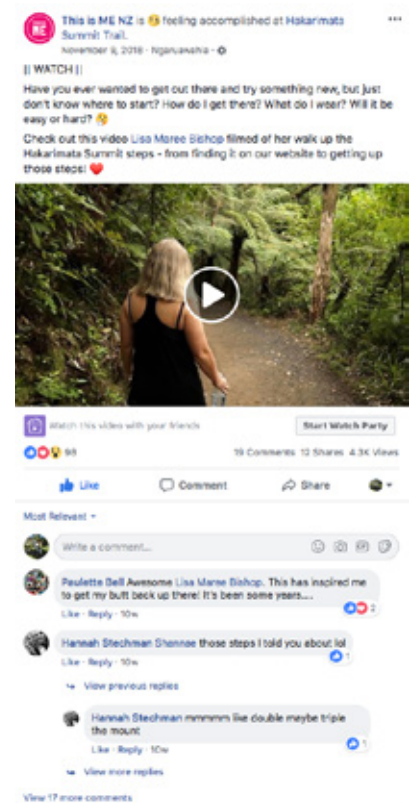
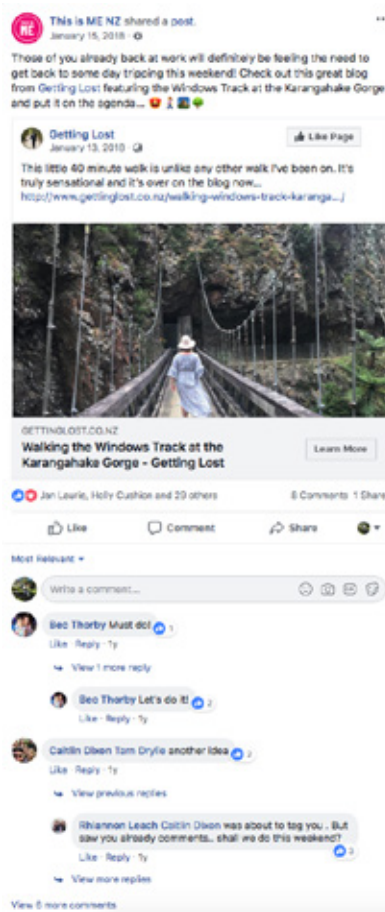
Followers
2.9K

Page Engagement
(Reactions, Comments, Shares)
13K

Page & Post Reach
432K

The This is ME® Facebook page aims to grow the number of positive conversations women and girls are having about physical activity and to connect them with opportunities to get moving, as well as with one another.

It is a space where women and girls are inspired to try new things and get moving in new places, to celebrate female physicality, as well as to share in one another's physical activity journeys and accomplishments.



"Absolutely. This is a fantastic initiative to get women and girls of all ages active, everyday and everywhere! Support 100% Let's do this!!"
- Erica Hinckson



Instagram

Instagram Followers

1058

Instagram Engagement
(Likes and Comments)

18K

#ThisisMEnz

865

The This is ME® Instagram page is a space dedicated to celebrating the various ways that women and girls get out there and moving. Using #ThisisMEnz, users share their physical activity journey with one another, and in the process have created a community that supports females to get moving, try new things and feel confident.

The page is a space that is 'owned' by women and girls – content is centred on showcasing the multiple and diverse ways New Zealand females get active, which are sometimes unconventional and creative, but always framed within a specifically 'Kiwi' way of doing things.

As a form of media, the This is ME® Instagram page is significant for a number of reasons including that it showcases women and girls *actually* out there and moving. It also highlights that women and girls are engaged in the This is ME® message whilst also providing them the opportunity to be visible in it.

Women and girls from around New Zealand, and beyond (e.g. the UK, Denmark, India, Australia), are helping to challenge the (in)visibility of women and girls in sport and active recreation by posting snapshots of themselves getting moving to fill Instagram with images of real females doing real physical activity.





Website

Registrations
1445

Champions
for Change
13

Get Moving database
1051

The This is ME® website connects women and girls with key messaging, with opportunities to get moving, as well as to stories about REAL women and girls and their physical activity experiences.

Research conducted by Sport Waikato, in partnership with Sport New Zealand, tells us that a barrier for women and girls when it comes to getting moving is a lack of knowledge or information about how to connect with opportunities to get moving. Focus groups with females about their use of technology and how this could support them to get moving also revealed that women and girls want a “one stop shop of opportunities to get active”. With this in mind, the website includes a database of regular physical activity opportunities (e.g. classes and programmes) as well as listing for events.

In addition to connecting women and girls with movement, the website also acts to increase the visibility of women and girls in physical activity through the sharing of stories, and as a research tool by enabling us to measure the physical activity participation and attitudes of women and girls through its registration form.



SUCCESSSES, ACHIEVEMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS TO DATE

"I've doubled my bootcamp sessions and got out riding and walking with my kids more."

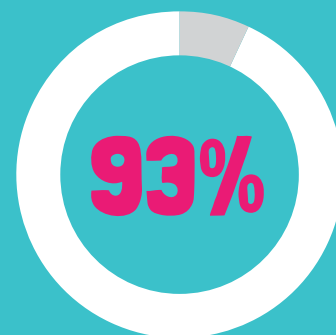
This is ME[®] video inspires and encourages getting active

After as little as 14 months working in our pilot districts (Hauraki and Waitomo) and 2 and a half months post-video release, This is ME[®] is having a significant impact on individuals and groups.

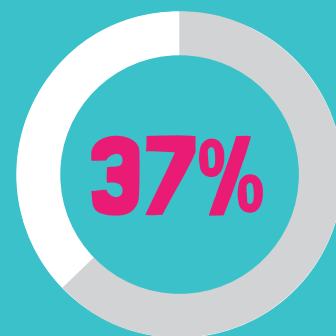
Since the release of the This is ME[®] video in November, over 90% of women and girls who have watched it have felt inspired to get active, with a further 37% converting those feelings of inspiration into movement.

Similarly, website users participating in physical activity 1-4 times per week has increased from 48% to 56% over a 12 month period of engagement, with attitudes about activity shifting to reflect increases in feelings of excitement, happiness, having fun and doing things with friends.

"My sister-in-law and I have started walking in the mornings. We go out for about an hour and are slowly extending the time."



of respondents who viewed the video were inspired to get moving and feel more confident



have done more physical activity or tried something new after seeing the video, and 54% are inspired to be more active

Connecting women, girls and their families with life changing activity

"Don't think about it just do it. Stop coming up with excuses, Don't be shy we've all got to start somewhere"

MEET LEIGH!



I went along to the This is ME® community festival in Waihi to see what it was all about (mainly because my youngest daughter was involved with her school). While I was there I saw the Hauraki Waka Ama (HWA) ladies repping their club and I got excited. I had done a bit of waka when I was at high school with my mum and really enjoyed it. I'd been wanting to get back into it for a few years now, but didn't think I was fit enough or could fit my butt in the seat! I had a chat to my 2 daughters who found out that HWA were having an open day and they trained close by, so we all went along together and I have been hooked on waka ever since! Being part of This is ME® not only offered me the opportunity to re-engage with an activity that brings me so much enjoyment, but importantly, the day I met the HWA crew really has changed my life...

At the time I connected with This is ME® and the HWA I had recently found out I have Type 2 Diabetes. I was depressed and angry that I had let this happen and thought 'I don't want to end up having to inject myself daily'. I knew I had to make some big changes not only in my diet but in my lifestyle. I had always thought I was pretty active as I do a lot of walking and lifting at work, as well as looking after my 4 kids at home, but I knew within myself, that I had to do more, and my waka ama participation is a key part of this.

When I first started paddling, I was quiet and shy and just let my girls take the reins, but now I am right up in there and the voice you hear out on the water is usually mine. HWA have actually bought me out of my shell – the whaanau are encouraging and supportive and we all just love being out on the water, so much so, that I have told work that I am unable to work Mondays and Wednesday nights now so that I can train.

My involvement has also led to a number of other life changes for me and my whaanau. I have not only lost a bit of weight (which was instrumental for my health) but I am also much fitter and feel way more healthy and my blood sugars have returned to a stable, healthy level. My girls and I have always been close but now we are healthier and fitter together!

My boys have also jumped on the waka, so to speak and as a whaanau we are paddling with and against each other. I cannot wait till we start a midget's crew as my youngest son and mokos are all very keen to get out on the water too. A few of us not only paddle together but also do Muay Thai and boxing to get stronger and fitter for races and my oldest son also comes to those trainings.

I chose waka ama for something to do with my kids as I knew from my past little dabble in it that we could all do it together no matter our ages and I wanted to spend more quality time with my kids, especially my older 3 at home as I work most evenings and weekends, so my time with them is short. I never thought I would be paddling in regional and national competitions or doing Muay Thai but now I do, and it all started by making that one step in the right direction at the This is ME® festival.



Providing support and a sense of community while challenging the status quo



"@thisisme_nz thank you so much!! This page and all the women on it are so motivating and inspirational!! 💕💕"
 - chejana.maree

"Hi. I love your page. Im not in NZ but love the idea of real women and real workouts. I have 2 girls and only hope they see pages like this. So thank you for starting it"
 - nbrine.ic

Research tells us that women and girls are more likely to participate in physical activity when they feel supported and connected (Women and Girls Profile, 2016). It also tells us that the dominant imagery of females and physical activity is not always conducive to these types of feelings (For more information read: Duncan, 1994).

Over the past 14 months, the This is ME Instagram has acted as a deliberate intervention into current media representations of females getting active, with the aim of reframing the relevance of social media platforms as tools to encourage females to feel included in and empowered by messaging around body image and physical activity.

Over this time, the page has repeatedly been recognised by users in New Zealand and beyond as an important source of inspiration and a fundamental network of support that enables a sense of community to develop and healthy and realistic imagery to be celebrated.

The page has been credited for providing the type of support that encouraged an Otago woman to conquer her goal of running 10kms non-stop.

It has been celebrated by a Mum of two girls from Australia as promoting positive messages about the body.

And it has been celebrated by numerous users as offering opportunities for women and girls to be inspired, celebrated and valued for engaging in physical activity of all kinds.

"Thank you @thisisme_nz and thanks for this page to show so many inspirational women doing epic stuff minus the heels, photoshop and g strings 😂😂😂"
 - eat.sweat.grownz

"Inspirational! I love following the thisisme # so many awesome real women 🙌🙌"
 - mckay_charmaine

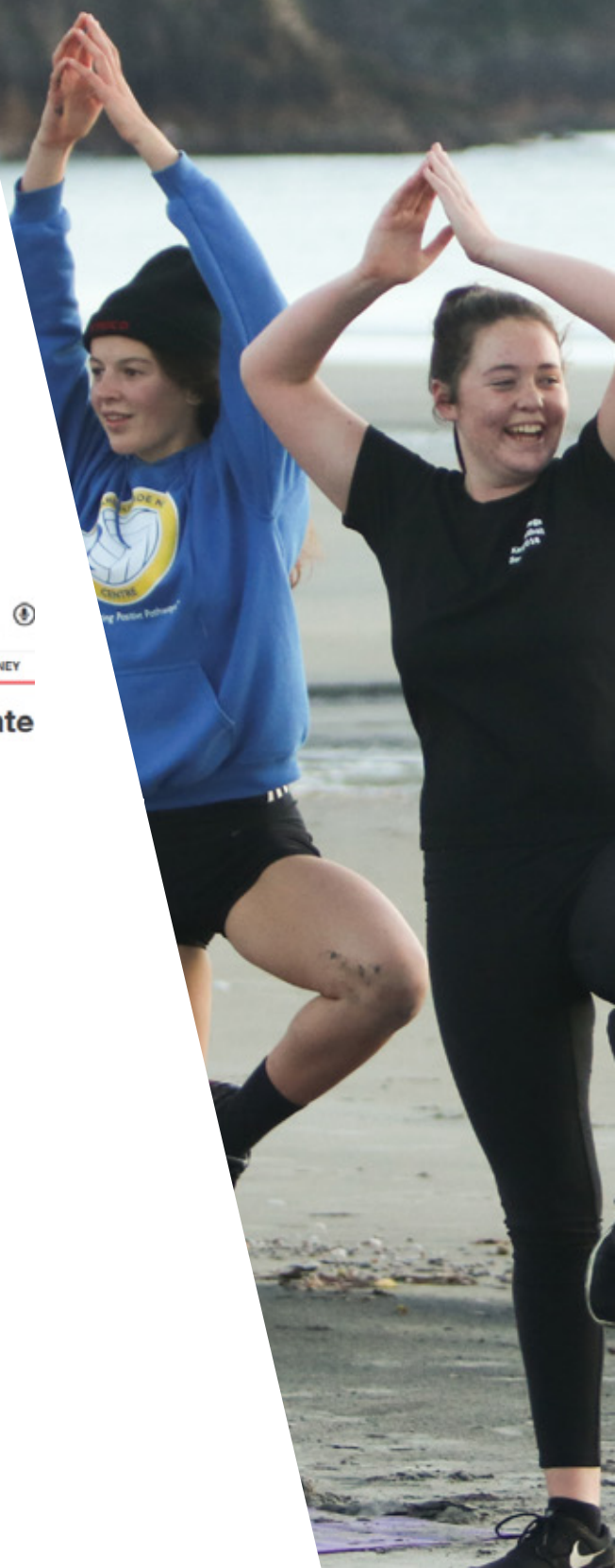
We made the national news.... Twice!

We were extremely excited to receive National news coverage, not once, but twice, in January 2019.

Both the NZ Herald and Newshub approached This is ME[®] representatives to run print and televised coverage about the initiative and the launch of the landmark This is ME[®] video.

This is ME[®] was described by the reporters as being on “a mission to change the perception around what exercise is and why we’re doing it” with an emphasis on “real people having fun and getting the blood pumping” (Newshub, January 2019).

Response from the public of New Zealand was overwhelming following the coverage, with increases in social media traffic and engagement from across the country, as well as electronic communication on how to get involved and whether or not This is ME[®] had a presence in regions outside of the Waikato.



Newshub.

21 January 2019

AUCKLAND 24° 48' WIDE WEAVERS



HOME NZ WORLD POLITICS SPORT ENT TRAVEL LIFESTYLE RURAL MONEY

Gin Wigmore's 'Girl Gang' soundtrack to motivate women to get active

06/01/2019 | Sam Farrell

Facebook Share LinkedIn



Credits: Image - Getty/Danne Manson; Video - Newshub

Gin Wigmore's track 'Girl Gang' is the soundtrack to a new initiative trying to get more women and girls active.

'This is ME' started in the Waikato and it's now on a mission to change the perception around what exercise is and why we're doing it.

This is what Sport Waikato wants women and girls to think of when they get active: real people having fun and getting the blood pumping.

"There's an emphasis on the high-profile elite athletes who have the peak athletic physiques and then on the other end of the spectrum you have the fitness models who dominate Instagram and there's often a gap in the middle," says Amy Marfell, head of the Women and Girls Initiative.

A study by Sport NZ last year showed that females participated 12 percent less in physical activity than men. And a lot of the time that's because women feel out of place.

CONNECTING TO SPORT NZ OUTCOMES & APPROACHES

Locally-Led design principles, the Voice of the Participant and a Physical Literacy Approach consistently inform the ways we work with women and girls and their communities in all that we do.

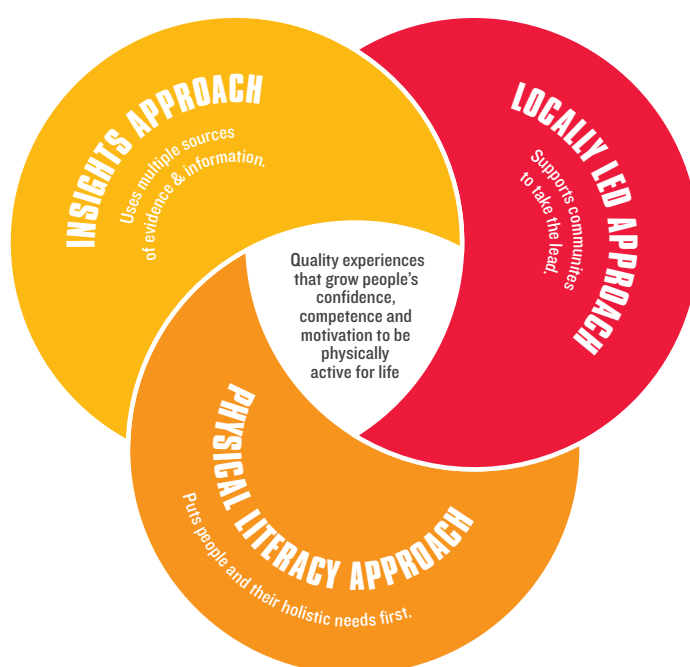
Through consultation, engagement and working together, This is ME[®] focuses on growing “the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding required by participants” to allow “them to value and take responsibility for engaging in physical activity and sport for life” (Sport New Zealand, 2018).

At the individual level, our approach is to understand the people and communities we work with and in, to work in partnership with them to grow physical activity participation among women, girls and their families, and in so doing, to grow their capability and capacity to lead outcomes that work for them. Through co-design and co-delivery, This is ME[®] takes a holistic view of the participant and seeks to understand and value their physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual needs when it comes to getting active.

This is ME[®] simultaneously works to ensure our partners, providers and all who offer and support sport and physical activity opportunities for women and girls understand their role in supporting and facilitating growth. Focus is placed on developing a shared understanding and vested interest in catering for the holistic needs of this target group.

To achieve this, we use an insights approach that blends national and international research with the Voice of the Participant and Sport Development work to empower sport and physical activity providers and partners to respond to the unique needs of women and girls, and drive real and meaningful change for females of all ages.

This is ME[®] is much more than an advertising ‘campaign’. Rather, it is a targeted initiative that works top down and bottom up to challenge structures and institutionalised ways of thinking and delivering to effect outcomes that increase opportunities and feelings of belonging for females in sport, physical activity and recreation.



WHAT'S NEXT?

THIS IS
ME®

2019

Following the success of our This is ME® pilots in Hauraki and Waitomo, in 2019, we will be expanding delivery of the initiative across the Waikato Region into North Waikato, Waikato district, Matamata Piako, Waipa, South Waikato and Taupo districts as well as Hamilton City.

As this report illustrates, This is ME® at both national and local levels has not only proven a success, but it also, importantly, addresses key components highlighted as action points in the newly released Government Strategy for Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation. We would, therefore, invite partners from a range of sectors (including, but not limited to sport, physical activity, recreation, health, education and social/wellbeing services) to consider working with us to deliver This is ME® concepts as an opportunity to address the deficit of female physical activity participation as well as to provide a nationally consistent approach that feeds into the national conversation already created.

Increasing equity for women and girls in sport and physical activity in key areas such as participation, leadership and value and visibility at the community level are important strategic outcomes of This is ME®, and we warmly welcome conversations about partnering with other organisations and agencies to adopt This is ME® principles and practices in your region.

Of course, while there have been many successes for This is ME® over the past 14 months, we are intently aware that our work is by no means done. Women and girls continue to emphasise the significant barriers that hold them back from being as active as they would like, including, caregiving responsibilities, health issues/injury, travel time, equipment needs and the difficulties negotiating time and space to engage. This is ME® will continue to work hard to break down these identified barriers through targeted imagery and messaging, community interventions, partnerships and education.



Amy Marfell

Women and Girls' Initiative Lead

m 021 310 712 **e** amym@sportwaikato.org.nz

Michelle Hollands

General Manager Regional Leadership

m 027 542 1554 **e** michelleh@sportwaikato.org.nz

Matthew Cooper

Chief Executive

m 027 545 0005 **e** matthewc@sportwaikato.org.nz

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