



**SPORT
ENGLAND**

**THIS
GIRL
CAN**

**CAMPAIGN
SUMMARY**

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Our vision is to transform people's lives through sport and physical activity. To achieve this we need everyone in England regardless of their age, background or level of ability to feel able to take part, and a sector delivering experiences built from an understanding of what is both preventing and motivating different audiences to be active.

This Girl Can was born from a desire to tackle the fact that despite increases in the overall number of people being active in England, women persistently remained less active than men.

We knew that we had to address the gender gap and the reasons behind it; and we knew we had to do something different.

This publication seeks to tell the story of This Girl Can, and the insights which sit at its heart. Its success is down to the fact that it has been truly insight-driven, and that in following the insight we were prepared to create a campaign which was (at times) challenging to us and challenged the status quo.

I hope you find this both interesting and thought provoking.



Lisa O'Keefe
Director of Insight, Sport England

PHASE ONE

JAN - JUL 2015

PHASE TWO

FEB - JUL 2017

PHASE THREE

2018 - 2021

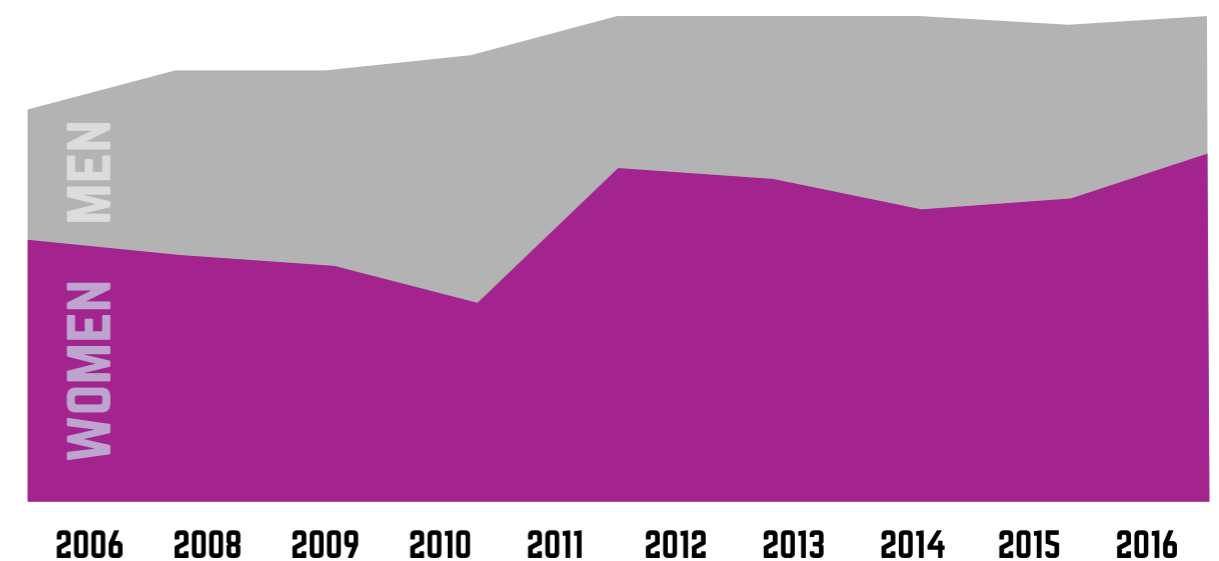
INTRODUCTION

AT SPORT ENGLAND WE ARE WORKING TOWARDS AN ACTIVE NATION, TRANSFORMING PEOPLE'S LIVES THROUGH SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.

We invest National Lottery and Exchequer funding in a wide range of projects so that everyone can experience the benefits of sport and physical activity. The impact of this investment has helped increase the overall numbers of people being active in England, however our research revealed that despite this, women were

persistently less active than men.

We knew that we had to address the gender gap and the reasons behind it, so we created This Girl Can, to celebrate active women who are doing their thing no matter how they do it, how they look or even how sweaty they get.



Once a week sport participation by gender



**1.75 MILLION
FEWER WOMEN WERE
EXERCISING REGULARLY
THAN MEN IN 2014**

SPORT ENGLAND'S ACTIVE PEOPLE SURVEY, OCTOBER 2013/14

INSIGHT

WE NEEDED TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF WOMEN PARTICIPATING IN EXERCISE AND SPORT, TO REDUCE THIS GENDER GAP AND KEEP THEM ENGAGED.

OBJECTIVES

1. Increase the number of girls and women taking part in sport and exercise
2. Change how they feel and think about exercising and playing sport
3. Change the opportunities available to women to become active

We knew that women recognised the benefits of exercise, with 75% saying that they wanted to do more. But something was stopping them.

At any point, a woman might have one barrier or multiple, all constantly shifting with the world around her.

By removing practical barriers, a pattern started to emerge.

KEY INSIGHT

Every remaining barrier could be traced back to something truly universal, fresh and emotionally powerful: The fear of judgement.

Fear was stopping women from exercising.

Women were worried about being judged on their appearance during and after exercise; on their ability, whether they were a beginner or 'too good'; or for spending time exercising instead of prioritising their children, family or work.



FEAR WAS STOPPING WOMEN FROM EXERCISING

APPEARANCE

- Being sweaty
- Having a red face
- Not looking like I usually do (made up)
- Changing in front of others
- Wearing tight clothing
- Wearing sports clothing
- Wearing the wrong clothing/kit
- Showing my body
- How my body looks during exercise (jiggling)
- Not appearing feminine
- Developing too many muscles

ABILITY

- Not being fit enough
- Not being good enough
- Not being competitive/serious enough
- Not knowing the rules
- Not knowing what equipment to bring
- Bringing the wrong equipment
- Holding back the group
- Being too good
- Being seen as too competitive

PRIORITIES

- Family should be more important
- Time with friends should be more important
- Studying/working should be more important
- Other things I should be doing are more important

JAN - JUL
2015

PHASE ONE

OUR INSIGHT TOLD US THAT WOMEN FELT DISTANCED FROM EXERCISE DUE TO THE USUAL PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN AND EXERCISE IN SOCIETY.

By celebrating a realistic vision of women and exercise in England, we created a campaign to provide women with inspiration and support to liberate them from the judgements that hold them back. We developed a manifesto based on a real understanding of our audience and designed a 3-phase behaviour change approach.

OUR MANIFESTO

'Women come in all shapes and sizes and all levels of ability. It doesn't matter if you're rubbish or an expert. The brilliant thing is you're a woman and you're doing something'

**LIBERATING WOMEN
FROM THE JUDGEMENTS
THAT HOLD THEM BACK**



HELPING WOMEN REALISE THEY WERE NOT ALONE

1. REALISATION

The first step was to talk about the fear of judgement and help women realise they were not alone in feeling this way.

We soft-launched the campaign in October 2014. The PR agency worked with select media titles to create a series of articles discussing the fear of judgement. We created a series of online films that we shared through chosen publications, each telling the story of one woman (Kelly, Julie, Victoria or Grace) overcoming their individual barrier to exercise.

We identified women tweeting their exercise anxieties and we started conversations to support and encourage them.

2. INSPIRATION

To encourage as many women as possible and create a new societal norm, we needed to ensure our campaign had a very broad and public reach. To achieve this, we launched with broadcast creative on primetime TV. The TV campaign was supported by a cinema ad, YouTube takeover, digital and social ads and a national poster campaign.

3. SELF-IDENTIFICATION

Behavioural economics suggests that making a public statement improves the likelihood of cementing new attitudes and habits. The third stage focused on encouraging women to 'self-identify' with exercise publicly. If we had managed to empower women with the confidence to exercise, we wanted them to shout about it; whether that be talking about their activity, sharing their exercise photos or simply by using #ThisGirlCan.



WE DELIVERED OUR MESSAGE IN NEW PLACES

OUR INSIGHT TOLD US TO GO WHERE WOMEN ARE. SO WE GOT CREATIVE, AND DELIVERED OUR MESSAGE IN NEW PLACES:

- Premiering our This Girl Can advert during a Monday night Coronation Street advert break (January 2015)
- Using a full-time social media presence on Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram to curate conversation and engage with women online
- Targeting consumer media like Mail Online, Grazia and Stylist
- Utilising billboard, cinema and further TV advertising to reach women during the course of their everyday lives (January – March 2015, and May – June 2015)

Recognising the role that self-identification plays in affecting behaviour change and our growing This Girl Can community, who felt part of a movement, we also created a This Girl Can app. The app allows women to create their own This Girl Can poster, using the campaign's mantras, such as 'I kick balls. Deal with it' and 'Hot and not bothered'.

In addition, the This Girl Can website provides helpful advice and signposting to women who want to become more active.



Girl. Power.



JAN - JUL
2015

PHASE ONE - RESULTS



OVER 95M ONLINE VIEWS OF
THE CAMPAIGN



733,000 MENTIONS ON SOCIAL MEDIA



581,000 FANS/FOLLOWERS ACROSS
ALL PLATFORMS



OVER 1.2M VISITS TO THE WEBSITE



TALKED ABOUT OVER A THOUSAND TIMES
EVERY DAY ON SOCIAL MEDIA



IN OVER 110 COUNTRIES

**70% OF WOMEN AGED
14-40 REPORTED BEING
MOTIVATED BY THE
CAMPAIGN**

KANTAR'S STANDARD ADEVAL METRIC -
KANTAR PUBLIC, MARCH 2015

**2.8 MILLION WOMEN
WERE MORE ACTIVE
AS A RESULT OF SEEING
THE CAMPAIGN**

**SPORT ENGLAND'S THIS GIRL CAN SURVEY -
KANTAR PUBLIC, NOVEMBER 2015**

IMPACT

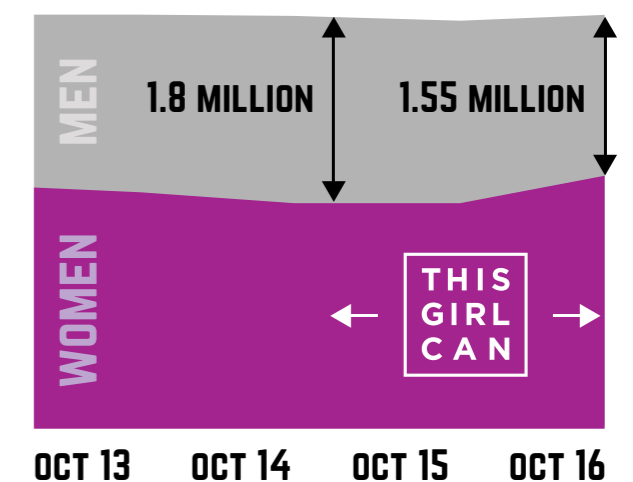
OUR TRACKING STUDY ASKED WOMEN WHAT INFLUENCE THE CAMPAIGN HAD ON THEIR ACTIVITY LEVELS.

The following figures have been adjusted up to national population levels, telling us:

- 2.8 million women aged 14-40 were more active (e.g. tried a new type of exercise, or increased the amount of time spent exercising) as a result of seeing the campaign.
- Of those, 1.6 million started or re-started exercise (e.g. got back into exercise after a break) as a result of seeing the campaign. (Sport England's This Girl Can Survey – Kantar Public, November 2015)

Looking at overall physical activity levels in England:

- The number of women playing sport and getting active **once a week, every week** increased by 250,000. (Sport England Active People survey results, October 2016)
- The increase in women's participation occurred while men's activity levels remained the same.





**TOTAL GROSS VALUE TO
THE ECONOMY = £66M**

**SPORT ENGLAND'S ECONOMIC VALUE OF SPORT MODEL,
NOVEMBER 2016**

RETURN

WE CALCULATED THAT THE INCREASE IN WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION HAS A DIRECT ECONOMIC VALUE TO SOCIETY, THROUGH A COMBINATION OF THE MONEY GENERATED BY PARTICIPATION ITSELF, COMBINED WITH THE VALUE OF THE HEALTH BENEFITS.

TOTAL GROSS VALUE TO THE ECONOMY = £66M

This includes economic activity associated with the provision of and participation in sports facilities requiring subscription fees and activity associated with the manufacture and retail of sports clothing and equipment.

TOTAL ESTIMATED VALUE = £387M.

These figures have been estimated using Sport England's 'Economic Value of Sport Model'. The model was developed and verified independently and reviewed by a number of government departments before being put into use.

TOTAL ECONOMIC VALUE OF HEALTH BENEFITS = £320M


The reduction in treatment costs that can be attributed to participation in sport, and the value of increased health-related quality of life.

Health cost savings = £49m

Other health benefits = £271m
(quality-adjusted life years, etc)

SPORT AND THE ECONOMY

Click here to discover how sport benefits the economy using our Economic Value of Sport Model.



**IT'S NORMAL TO
HAVE 'WOBBLES'**

LEARNING

THE FIRST PHASE OF THE CAMPAIGN TAUGHT US A LOT ABOUT HOW WOMEN NAVIGATE IN AND OUT OF ACTIVITY.

WE LEARNT

That the fear of judgement doesn't just go away. It's about managing fears and gathering the confidence to get active in spite of them.

Other strategies women told us they used to build confidence included looking the part (e.g. getting new gear), giving themselves pep talks and re-framing exercise (e.g. so it was about raising money for charity rather than competing against other people).

We also learnt that small changes by providers can make big differences to how women feel, for example: changing a session leader, or the location of an activity can affect women's confidence. Providers should consider this when making changes to staffing or timetables. Women told us they managed their fears by carefully selecting activities. The things they considered included:

- The atmosphere around the activity e.g. will the other people taking part be friendly?
- Who to take part with e.g. can you take along a friend or family member for moral support?
- The specific sport or activity e.g. swimming makes some women feel more self-conscious than running.

We learnt that developing confidence leads to action and this helps build resilience but it's a constant battle. It's normal to have breaks or 'wobbles'. As much as most women have a fear of judgement in common, they're also not alone in having setbacks and having to pluck up the confidence to go back.

FEB - JUL
2017

PHASE TWO

PHASE TWO OF THE CAMPAIGN BUILT DIRECTLY ON THE LEARNING FROM THE FIRST PHASE.

This phase prioritised long term, sustainable growth – creating regular habits and increasing the resilience of women who drop in and out of activity. We also extended the campaign to include women aged 40-60 for the first time, as our insight into this age group showed that the fear of judgement resonated just as strongly with them as it did with younger women.

However, there were slight differences in some of the barriers for this audience e.g. women told us they worried about not being as good as they used to be, about hurting themselves, feeling compelled/pressured to exercise because of poor health, or being too old to start something new.

We adapted the campaign to respond to some of these concerns. For example, the Phase Two creative featured some older women and slower-paced activities, responding to the concern that the activities shown in the first phase were all very fast-paced and intense and so might feel unachievable for some women.

A woman wearing a blue swimsuit with white polka dots, a white swim cap, and yellow goggles is standing on a paved pool deck. She is looking towards the left. In the background, there is a swimming pool and some trees with autumn foliage.

**INCREASING THE
RESILIENCE OF
WOMEN WHO DROP
IN AND OUT**



FEB - JUL
2017

PHASE TWO - RESULTS



29M ONLINE VIEWS OF THE CAMPAIGN



272 PIECES OF EDITORIAL COVERAGE



BRAND AWARENESS GREW TO 46%
FROM 35% AT THE END OF PHASE ONE



SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNITY GREW
TO OVER 700K



45K POSTERS CREATED BY WOMEN
USING OUR TGC MANTRA APP

**RECOGNITION PEAKED
AT 61% IN JULY 2017,
WITH THE BIGGEST
INCREASE IN WOMEN
AGED 41-60**

SPORT ENGLAND'S THIS GIRL CAN SURVEY -
KANTAR PUBLIC, NOVEMBER 2017



**OVER A THIRD OF
WOMEN WERE AWARE
OF THE THIS GIRL
CAN BRAND**

**SPORT ENGLAND'S THIS GIRL CAN SURVEY -
KANTAR PUBLIC, NOVEMBER 2017**

ENGAGEMENT

**BY THE END OF PHASE TWO, JUST OVER
HALF OF WOMEN AGED 14-60 RECOGNISED
ONE OR MORE OF THE ADS.**

Our tracking study also showed us that over a third were aware of the This Girl Can brand. Brand resonance increased as a result of the campaign, and has maintained post-campaign.

Phase Two was just as motivating as Phase One, with 57% of women aged 14-60 saying that the new This Girl Can advert motivated them. This was calculated using Kantar's standard AdEval metric and puts the campaign in the top performing group of ads for motivation.

While the younger age groups were still more likely to agree the campaign is for them 41-60 year olds were more positive about the campaign than they were following Phase One, reflecting the broader target for Phase Two. (Sport England's This Girl Can Survey – Kantar Public, November 2017)

“I’ve overheard a conversation on the train this month about This Girl Can! I was itching to join in but managed to restrain myself! There was a mum and daughter chatting about an older lady on a bike in a This Girl Can advert and the mum was saying that it had inspired her to go for a swim during the week. She said she’d been discouraged because she hadn’t been for some time, but the ad had inspired her to go back. She’d managed 6 lengths and was thrilled with herself!”

(Research participant, London, 40-49)

IMPACT

OUR TRACKING STUDY ASKED WOMEN WHAT INFLUENCE THE CAMPAIGN HAD ON THEIR ACTIVITY LEVELS, IT TOLD US THAT:

- 2.9 million women aged 14-60 have been more active (e.g. tried a new type of exercise, or increased the amount of time spent exercising) as a result of seeing the campaign.
- Of those, 1.5 million have started or re-started exercise (e.g. got back into exercise after a break) as a result of seeing the campaign. (Sport England's This Girl Can Survey – Kantar Public, November 2017)

Active Lives, Sport England's national population survey, showed that the overall number of women who were active for at least 150 minutes per week was maintained, consolidating the gains we saw following the first phase of the campaign. (Sport England Active Lives survey results, May 17/18)

2.9 MILLION WOMEN AGED 14-60 WERE MORE ACTIVE AS A RESULT OF SEEING THE CAMPAIGN

**SPORT ENGLAND'S THIS GIRL CAN SURVEY -
KANTAR PUBLIC, NOVEMBER 2017**

We have seen some evidence of changing attitudes and norms among women. The proportion of women aged 14-60 agreeing that 'people like me are doing sport and exercise' grew from 43% before we launched the campaign (Nov 2014) to 49% after Phase One (Nov 2015) and 48% after Phase Two (Nov 2017). (Sport England's This Girl Can Survey – Kantar Public)



WOMEN WITH LOWER INCOMES AND FROM SOME ETHNIC GROUPS WERE LESS ENGAGED WITH THE CAMPAIGN

LEARNING

PHASE TWO BUILT ON PHASE ONE, CONTINUING TO ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT MILLIONS OF WOMEN TO BE MORE ACTIVE.

The campaign didn't feel as new and noisy to women as it did in Phase One however, when it was very striking and fresh. Some women told us that without constant reminders the message begins to recede, so they need to keep coming across the campaign for it to make a powerful impact on their journey into activity.

We successfully increased engagement with the campaign by women aged 41-60 and we saw a positive shift in attitudes and activity levels among these women.

However, we also saw the continuation of some existing inequalities. Although overall engagement had increased, women with lower incomes and from some specific ethnic groups remained less engaged with the campaign. These same groups are also less likely to be active. We were keen to understand why and make appropriate changes to the campaign message.



OCT - DEC
2018

PHASE THREE

WE LAUNCHED PHASE THREE TO TACKLE INEQUALITIES IN ACTIVITY LEVELS.

We wanted to help more women meet the Chief Medical Officer's guidance to do at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week for good health.

To close the physical activity gender gap, Phase Three addressed the stark inequalities in exercise levels between different groups of women.

In order to help address these inequalities, Phase Three of the campaign acknowledged and encouraged women to overcome the social, cultural and economic barriers preventing them from having the confidence and motivation to exercise regularly.

OVERCOMING THE
SOCIAL, CULTURAL
AND ECONOMIC
BARRIERS

Almost half of lower income women (for example, those working in 'routine' and 'semi-routine' jobs, like shop assistants, hairdressers and cleaners) are not meeting the recommended physical activity guidelines, compared to a third of higher income women. Significantly more black and South Asian women are not meeting weekly guidelines compared to white women.

(Sport England Active Lives survey, November 16/17)



REAL WOMEN OF DIFFERENT AGES AND ETHNICITIES DOING EXERCISE THEIR OWN WAY

OUR LATEST RESEARCH FOUND THAT MANY WOMEN DID NOT EXERCISE AS MUCH AS THEY WOULD LIKE, DUE TO THE PRACTICAL CHALLENGES THEY FACED, IN ADDITION TO FEAR AND JUDGEMENT.

Many of the women we were trying to reach faced additional practical challenges – such as not having enough time, feeling too tired, being too busy or the high costs of sports and gym memberships.

Women were motivated by the first two phases of the campaign, and admired the women that were featured, but thought those women didn't face the same challenges as them. There was a perception that 'real women' like them are rarely shown exercising in marketing, the media or on TV, and if they are, the women are often shown in a negative light or even ridiculed.

Phase Three of the campaign tackles this perception with a new Fit Got Real message showing real women of different ages and ethnicities doing exercise their own way, no matter how unconventional, including; running around a park pushing their child in a pram, hula hooping at home, jumping into the sea, trampolining with friends and teaching themselves how to swim using YouTube.

The This Girl Can website also showcases women talking about how they fit exercise into their lives, why they like it and the negative perceptions and barriers they overcome to be more active.

It's a celebration of the women who have defied convention and found ways to exercise that fit with their lives.

**THIS
GIRL
CAN**

OCT - DEC
2018

PHASE THREE - RESULTS

LAUNCHED IN OCTOBER 2018 PHASE THREE IS PLANNED TO RUN IN BURSTS OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS.

We will be tracking the results in the same way we have for phases one and two:

- Monitoring digital and social media reach and engagement
- Tracking the number of supporters signing up to use the campaign toolkit and resources
- Working with partners to monitor women's engagement with specific TGC activations e.g. TGC Swim etc
- Using our TGC Tracker Survey to monitor women's attitudes to sport and exercise, as well as awareness, recognition, motivation and action in response to the campaign
- Using our national population survey, Active Lives, to monitor women's levels of participation in sport and physical activity

**TO RUN IN BURSTS
OVER THE NEXT
THREE YEARS**



SUSTAINED CHANGE IN WOMEN'S ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS

ENGAGEMENT

THE CAMPAIGN HAS EMOTIONALLY ENGAGED WITH THE TARGET AUDIENCE, CHANGING BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS PHYSICAL ACTIVITY. IT HAS CAPTURED ATTENTION AND WON AWARDS IN ENGLAND AND INTERNATIONALLY.

It is not just discussed in sport and exercise circles, it regularly features in national media and has influenced how women are talked about and represented in advertising and the media.

- We have built a vibrant online community of over 700,000 women who follow TGC on social media and encourage and support each other to be more active
- The campaign has captured the attention of partners interested in providing more appealing opportunities for women to be active – over 13,000 partners have signed up to use our toolkit

There is strong evidence that this has led to a sustained change in women's attitudes and behaviours:

- The proportion of women aged 14-60 agreeing that exercise is for them is higher in November 2017 than it was in November 2014 (Sport England's This Girl Can Survey – Kantar Public)

Large numbers of women report taking action as a result of the campaign (Sport England's This Girl Can Survey – Kantar Public, November 2017). If we extrapolate the survey results to the national population level it suggests that:

- 2.9 million women aged 14-60 have been more active as a result of seeing the campaign
- Of those, 1.5 million women started or re-started exercise as result of seeing the campaign.

The number of women playing sport and getting active once a week, every week, increased by 250,000 after we launched the first phase of the campaign. The gender gap reduced from 1.79m to 1.55m (Sport England's Active People Survey, Nov 15/16).

Two key factors help explain why the campaign was so well-received by women:

1. THE INSIGHT-DRIVEN CREATIVE:

Research and insight heavily informed every stage of the creative work. This enabled the campaign to strike a chord with our target audience and become close to their hearts.

2. THE UNCONVENTIONAL APPROACH:

Allowing the creative to challenge advertising conventions meant that the campaign was standout, fresh and newsworthy. Increasing the diversity of women and barriers featured in the campaign intensified its relevance and likeability.

We ran an online panel study, alongside our quantitative tracking, to understand in depth the impact of the campaign, and any related change in behaviour and activity. The respondents were not aware that the panel was being run by This Girl Can so we were able to see the campaign's natural effect on them: 'Almost all who have viewed the campaign talk of a shift in feeling – an increase in motivation to participate in sport and exercise'. (Future Thinking Cohort Study, 2016).

Our insight suggests that the communication worked by increasing the percentage of women who felt confident enough to get active. Barriers don't just go away. It's about managing them and about gathering the confidence to get active in spite of them.

The impact of barriers on behaviour is reduced with activity, but it is an ongoing battle. Life stage changes nudge women in and out of activity. Even when a routine is established, small things (as well as big events) can derail progress and create a setback. Anything from a change in schedule or 'falling off the diet wagon', to family issues or illness can impact motivation to exercise, and judgement barriers start to take over. But they can also be moments of positive change.

Crucially, we understand that developing confidence leads to action and then helps build resilience – but it's a constant battle. Recognising this cycle as something everyone goes through leads to a sense of belonging. It's ok to have breaks or 'wobbles'.

We know changing how sport is presented to women isn't the whole story. The provision of sport and exercise needs to be right too. That's why we have published a practical guide for deliverers of sport that are keen to engage more women and offer them more appealing ways of becoming active.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please visit: thisgirlcan.co.uk
or email: thisgirlcan@sportengland.org



**SPORT
ENGLAND**

LOTTERY FUNDED