

MEDIA RELEASE

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



Active Launceston project successful says report

Launceston residents have enthusiastically taken up the opportunity to be physically active through the *Active Launceston* project, a report has found.

Active Launceston was an 18-month pilot project focused on providing physical activity opportunities for people throughout Launceston.

The pilot period ended in November last year but has funding till the end of 2012.

The project's manager, Lucy Marshall said the results of the recently-released independent evaluation report proved it had been the right decision to support the ongoing development of this community engagement initiative.

"*Active Launceston* addressed an identified lack of coordination of physical activity programs within Launceston and was designed to add value to existing successful local programs and events and to develop capacity within the community," she said.

In the report Janine Combes of Hobart-based consultancy, Community Focus, said the *Active Launceston* pilot had created a model of how to engage a community in physical activity and well-being activities.

"It has demonstrated how effective it is when local government, business, universities, the media and the community sector work together to coordinate and promote physical activity programs within a locality base," she said.

"Active Launceston adopts the integrated approach to sites and levels of intervention cited as best-practice in documents such as *Getting Australia Active* produced by the National Public Health Partnership in 2002."

She noted that the project had gained several awards including the 2009 Active Tasmania Award by the Premier's Physical Activity Council.

The report details statistics taken from several surveys done over the life of the project, indicating that it has lifted the level of physical activity in the Launceston community.

These include:

- 89.9 per cent of respondents to an online survey indicated that *Active Launceston* had taught them more about the opportunities to be physically active;
- 46.6 per cent of those interviewed at a 2009 City Park exercise expo and 50% of those completing an online survey said that the program had assisted them to increase their level of physical activity;
- 83.2 per cent of online survey respondents indicated that they intended to continue to participate in physical activity to this increased level in the future.

Ms Marshall said the *Active Launceston* partnership would examine the report's recommendations closely and work towards improving key areas.

“These include continuing to build the level of public awareness of the project, developing the variety of programs and sites through continuing to be a provider as well as a promoter of activities and ensuring we continue to research and evaluate our initiatives,” she said.

The complete report from Community Focus is available on www.activelaunceston.com.au

Information Released by:

**UTAS Communications and Media, University of Tasmania
Phone: 6324 3218 Mobile: 0438 510616
Email: Media.Office@utas.edu.au**