



Tuesday 4 September 2012

For immediate release

BODY IMAGE AND MELBOURNE SPRING FASHION WEEK

This week, Body Image and Eating Disorders Awareness Week coincides with Melbourne Spring Fashion Week. The fashion and advertising industries put pressure on young people to conform to beauty ideals. Women's Health Victoria calls on the government to make the Voluntary Industry Code of Conduct on Body Image mandatory so that we see a healthier and more diverse portrayal of women.

Executive Director of Women's Health Victoria, Rita Butera, says 'Body image is the top personal concern for young women under 25. At Melbourne Spring Fashion Week this year, Women's Health Victoria will be spreading the message that women can be healthy, empowered, and equal', Ms Butera said.

'Fashion and advertising can distort young people's perception of a healthy body and lead to negative body image', says Ms Butera. 'We encourage fashion and advertising industries to take responsibility for the message they are sending to young women, because it does impact on health.'

Negative body image has been linked to a range of physical and psychological health concerns and risk-taking behaviours, including the development of eating disorders, low self-esteem, depression, self-harm and suicide. Positive body image promotes physical and mental health, strengthens self-esteem and decreases vulnerability.

Regulation against media and advertising that exploits or sexualizes women is an important step towards reducing some of the impacts of poor body image and discriminatory treatment of women.

- Ends -

For further information contact:

Rita Butera
Executive Director
0437 578 182

MEDIA