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MEDIA RELEASE

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MADDEN TOO BUSY TO SUPPORT WOMEN'S SPORT

Labor's so called Sports and Recreation Minister Justin Madden failed to attend the launch of a critical strategy for women's sport and physical recreation in Victoria today.

Apparently the Minister had other priorities. This is not the first time that Justin Madden has failed to show a genuine interest in women's sport and recreation.

Justin Madden failed to turn up despite his own department providing funding for the strategy work which was undertaken by Womensport and Recreation Victoria (WSRV), a non-government, not for profit advocacy body.

The strategy follows extensive consultation with sporting organisations over more than six months and is regarded as a starting block and springboard for more opportunities and choices for the future generation of women in sport and physical recreation.

More than 200 representatives of sports organisations, including former Olympians and leading Victorian sportswomen certainly demonstrated a greater interest in the future of women's sport than Justin Madden.

The WSRV strategy embraces five key planks of building partnerships, engaging people, designing and delivering programs, influencing policy and profiling women who have made a substantial contribution in sport.

I attended this morning's launch and believe the strategy is an important document that can increase participation rates in sport and physical recreation by women.

Kirstie Marshall, Labor's celebrity MP, did attend the breakfast launch and told sports administrators and sportswomen that they should be more active in lobbying government to improve support for women's sport. This is a bit hard when the Minister responsible was not even there.

It is hard to bend the ear of Justin Madden if he consistently fails to turn up at women's sporting events and forums. It was also disappointing that Kirstie Marshall, herself a former elite sportswoman, gave no commitment to advocate a better deal for women's sport from the Bracks Government.

The Liberal Party is committed to developing more opportunities and choices for women in sport and physical recreation.

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