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| In Conversation – Change Our Game ChampionsJamie Parsons, CEO Gymnastics Victoria  |
| Video transcript |

**[Change Our Game Logo]**

**[In Conversation – Change Our Game Champion. Jamie Parsons, CEO Gymnastics Victoria**

**Jamie Parsons:**

I'm Jamie Parsons, I'm the CEO at Gymnastics Victoria and I'm a Change Our Game Champion.

**Interviewer:**

Jamie, tell us about your role as a Change Our Game Champion?

**Jamie Parsons:**
Well, I could be more thrilled for being the role that I have been. To be able to learn so much about women in sport and how we can support women in sport and be successful, whether they be an administrator or a coach, a judge, a volunteer. It's just been wonderful to learn so much and then be able to share that in our organisation.

**Interviewer:**

Every sports different. One of the things about gymnastics is it’s already dominated by women, girls at all levels. Participants, administrators, coaches, runners of clubs, et cetera, et cetera. So you must be able to provide the other members of the Change Our Game Champion Program with a lot of insights from your perspective?

**Jamie Parsons:**
Well, I think with the team that we have at Gymnastics Victoria being able to share our experiences and our knowledge with other sports has been great. But it's also what we've been able to learn to enhance women's role in our sports, whether that be as a leader or whether it be as an emerging leader and being able to take the knowledge from others and use it in our organization or sharing it with others has just been fantastic with our knowledge share and we can really combine that information and use it to the best of our ability for gymnastics. It's just been a great thing to be a part of.

**Interviewer:**
What are some of the challenges that you're finding still in terms of increasing participation of women and girls across all ranges of what you're doing in gymnastics?

**Jamie Parsons:**
Because of the nature of our sport, we have a lot of private businesses that run gymnastics clubs. About half of our membership base operate out of a privately owned club so being able to build women's leadership, build women's entrepreneurship to start their own business, to be successful in their own business, to give them the confidence to share knowledge, to collaborate has been a great opportunity for us in our sport. So whilst we are predominately women, about 80% of our participation base is women, being able to get women more into areas where they can be successful and build a career out of gymnastics has been really important.

**Interviewer:**
And are you finding that, you talked about that 80% of your membership are women, do they feel empowered to become involved in leadership positions at whatever level they're at?

**Jamie Parsons:**
I think one of the things that I've learnt through being on the Change Our Game Champion Program is that women are a little bit less likely to put their names forward for things. A man will if they know 20% of the job pretend that they know how to do it but a women may not feel that confident. So being able to give people the confidence, the knowledge, the skills and the tools and having great women leaders such as our own Deputy CEO Allison Lyons to really be role models has been a great way to get more women's leadership more prominent in our sport as well.

**Interviewer:**
One of the significant improvements in the opportunity for women in sport recently has been in government investment into facilities and infrastructure and those sorts of things, how has gymnastics able to benefit from that program?

**Jamie Parsons:**
We'd like to benefit from it more but it's working collaboratively. It's a lining out of aims and objectives and our mission with what some of the key things that government wants to achieve around inclusion, disability, women and being able to increase participation, increase the number of jobs. Many of our coaches, 95% of our coaches, are paid so really having a career in gymnastics and so that alignment has really provided opportunities for us to grow our sport significantly over the last few years. We've doubled our numbers in participants over the last five years.

**Interviewer:**
We just recently had the Australia Gymnastics Championships and you see the young girls become the international competitors become the coaches, is that pathway something that's really transparent for everyone involved in gymnastics?

**Jamie Parsons:**
It's definitely something that we can strengthen and get better at. People have often seen gymnastics as maybe something extra that they do, something they do in their spare time but it's a real career. It's a career from when you start really young through the pathways as you've explained it, through as an athlete into a coach and a business owner to bring people through so they really see the opportunities and can build a livelihood out of gymnastics.
**Interviewer:**
If we come back to you in six months time or twelve months time and say, "How much progress has there been in gymnastics in Victoria and what you're trying to achieve?" What do you hope to say that the top two or three things might be?

**Jamie Parsons:**
Well, I really hope a female CEO takes over from me so I think that, that would be a fantastic thing if I'm not here in twelve months time. I think having more clubs open, more women's leadership through clubs, being able to increase the participation base of our sport and create successful careers for women would be a fantastic outcome for us. There's never been a better time to change our game.

**[Change our Game logo]**

**[State Government of Victoria logo]**

[Authorised by the Department of Health and Human Services, 50 Lonsdale St Melbourne. Spoken by D. Culbert and J. Parsons]

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