



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Give us a smile**



The broader you smile and the deeper your creases around your eyes when you grin, the longer you are likely to live, according to a study recently published in Psychological Science.

Researchers studied 230 photographs of US major league baseball players and grouped them according to their smiles. Those in the no-smile category lived for an average 72.9 years, those with partial smiles – just the mouth involved – died at age 75, and the full-smile players lived to the ripe old age of 79.9.

Our emotions have a positive relationship on health and longevity and that special flair for feeling good, could lengthen our life.

Local Act-Belong-Commit project officer Hayley Wesson, from Women's Health in the South East in Dandenong explains "We have all seen how our emotions can influence another's; laughter can trigger chuckles in others; seeing someone smile can momentarily lift one's spirits. If we are happy or become happy it boosts the chances that someone we know will be happy".

The power of happiness, moreover, can span another degree of separation, elevating the mood of our husband, wife, brother, sister, friend or next-door neighbour.

In a study in the Journal of Happiness Studies by Veenhoven, it was found that the strongest effect on longevity was reflected by the feel-good factor from belonging to a close-knit stress-free community with a sense of purpose.

Act-Belong-Commit Campaign Manager Amberlee Laws agrees saying "For all those who are looking for a little or a lot extra out of life, remember that being active, having a sense of belonging and a sense of purpose in life all contribute to happiness, good mental health, help people cope better with problems and stress and lift your mood".

"Happiness is contagious, it spreads among friends, neighbours, and family. Now we know that our emotions can spread through groups of people who may not even know each other" Hayley says.

So make a difference in your life and those around you and share your biggest, happiest smile – you might just live longer for it!

For more information contact Hayley Wesson on 9794 8677 or visit [www.actbelongcommit.org.au](http://www.actbelongcommit.org.au) or [www.whise.org.au](http://www.whise.org.au)

