Introduction to the AFL SOCIAL INCLUSION AND EQUALITY RESOURCE

The AFL social inclusion and equality resource has been developed by the Cultural Strategy & Education unit within the AFL to assist community football clubs around Australia in providing education to their players on the issues of social inclusion and equality in sport. The resource consists of 4 clips and an accompanying resource. Each clip features a football related personality discussing issues that have impacted them personally.

Jason Ball, an openly gay community footballer, Joel Wilkinson, a former Gold Coast Suns player, Simon Hogan, a former Geelong Cats player, and Peta Searle, St Kilda Assistant Coach, each share their experiences relating to issues such as homophobia, racism, mental illness and gender equality.

The clips and accompanying resource can be found on the AFL Respect and Responsibility webpage. The clip on homophobia and the clip on racism can be found under Vilification and Discrimination, the clip on Gender Equality can be found under Respectful Relationships and the clip on Mental Health can be found under Mental Health. Alongside each clip, you will find a resource that provides information on how to present the education in your club, key questions to discuss, the key messages to get across and a fact sheet on the selected topic.

The clips featured in this resource are being used to educate and raise awareness across the AFL industry on equality and social inclusion.

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE IN YOUR FOOTBALL CLUB

OPTION 1: YOUR OWN EDUCATION

PURPOSE: To develop your own understanding and knowledge on these topics

PREPARATION: Download clips and AFL social inclusion and equality resource which can be found on the AFL Respect and Responsibility website.

MATERIALS: Laptop/PC

TIMING: 10-15 minutes per topic

FORMAT: Watch the clip yourself. Think about the questions and read over the fact sheets to develop your own understanding of the issue

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OPTION 2: PLAYER EDUCATION (RECOMMENDED)

PURPOSE: To educate players within your own club

PREPARATION: Download the clip/s and Equality Resource (topic of your choice)

MATERIALS: TV and/or projector, laptop, screen/blank wall, speakers, butchers paper and markers

TIMING: 15-20 minutes per topic including clip and discussion

FORMAT: Show clip to the group and run activity/discussion as per the accompanying resource

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PLAYER EDUCATION: HOW TO RUN A SESSION IN YOUR CLUB

- Decide which clips you want to show.

- Read over the fact sheet, discussion points and key messages of the clips you have chosen and familiarise yourself with the content. Think about the questions you may get asked.

- Prepare any materials you need in advance – e.g. paper, pens, butcher's paper and markers.

- Organise a space for the session. Make sure it is private and without distractions, such as the club rooms.

- If you think you need some support, request assistance from a local community worker/social worker/school teacher etc. to assist.

- Allow enough time to work through each session. At least 20 minutes is recommended per clip. 5 minutes to show the clip and 15-20 minute discussion time. Also allow enough time for questions from participants.

RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES/SUPPORT SERVICES

It is very important to ensure that you have relevant support services referral information and phone numbers to pass onto your participants. National support services are listed under each topic in this resource but you may want to identify local support services in your area.

When facilitating the sessions:

Begin the session with a group agreement around respect.   Four or five group rules are usually enough and may include;

o   Confidentiality – nothing leaves the room

o   Listening and not interrupting

o   Showing respect for other people's comments and opinions

o   Using third person - not telling personal stories

o   Choose how much to participate - it's ok to pass on questions or opt out

Facilitator tips:

o   Continually throw questions to the group. If, as a facilitator, you are asked a question, don't always answer it yourself. Throw the question to the group, and allow that to spark or continue to drive discussion

o   Occasionally somebody might say something that stops you in your tracks. It is important to stay calm and address the comment with respect. If possible, try to suggest an alternate viewpoint or throw it to the rest of the group. It is important not to enter into a public argument.

o   If you get a question that you don't know the answer to, don't panic. Admit that you don't know the answer. You do not want to lie or invent information that isn't true, as you lose all credibility. Reassure the person that you will follow up with them regarding the question after the session and that an answer will be provided in due time.

o   At the end of the session provide an opportunity for participants to follow up with yourself to provide information regarding support services, referrals and websites.

AFL SOCIAL INCLUSION AND EQUALITY RESOURCE

MENTAL HEALTH

DISCUSSION POINTS

- o What stopped Simon from talking about his issues in the first place?

- o Why is there a stigma attached to mental illness?

- o How do you look after yourself in relation to mental illness?

- o How do you think you could look after others who had a mental illness?

KEY MESSAGES

- o Mental illness is a serious health issue and should not be considered as a sign of weakness.

- o People with mental health issues are often reluctant to tell others of their situation, for fear of being judged or discriminated against.

- o Mental illness is treatable and people can make full recoveries.

FACT SHEET

WHAT IS MENTAL ILLNESS?

A mental illness is a health problem that significantly affects how a person thinks, behaves and interacts with other people. It is diagnosed according to standardised criteria.

One in 5 Australians will suffer from a mental illness in any given year.

Mental illnesses are of different types and degrees of severity. Some of the major types are:

- o Anxiety
- o Depression
- o Schizophrenia
- o Bipolar mood disorder
- o Personality disorders
- o Eating disorders
- o These illnesses may also be referred to as a mental disorder, mental impairment or psychiatric disability

HOW DO INDIVDUALS DEVELOP MENTAL ILLNESS?

Mental illness results from complex interactions between the mind, body and environment. Factors which can contribute, but are not limited to, mental illness are:

- o Long-term and acute stress
- o Biological factors such as genetics, chemistry and hormones
- o Use of alcohol, drugs and other substances
- o Cognitive patterns such as constant negative thoughts and low self esteem
- o Social factors such as isolation, financial problems, family breakdown or violence

STATISTICS

- o The most common mental health disorders are depression and anxiety.
- o Most people with a mental illness recover well and can continue to live fulfilling lives within their communities when receiving ongoing treatment and support.

o Women are more likely than men to use services for mental health problems, and about two-thirds of people with a mental illness do not receive treatment in a 12 month period after onset of symptoms.

o 24% of Australian young people suffer from anxiety, affective or substance use disorders or other mental illness

o 45% of Australian adults will experience a mental illness at some stage in their lives

o In the past 12 months 20% of the population aged between 16 and 85 had a mental disorder.

o At least a third of young people have had an episode of mental illness by the time they are 25 years old (SANE 2014).

MENTAL HEALTH REFERRAL SERVICES

Kids Helpline 1800 551 800: Australia's only free, private and confidential, telephone and online counselling service specifically for young people aged between 5 and 25. *'We care and we listen any time and for any reason'*
http://www.kidshelp.com.au/

Lifeline 13 11 14: *Provides crisis support and resources on their 24 hour crisis line*
http://www.lifeline.org.au/

Beyond Blue 1300 22 4636: Can call anytime for confidential telephone and online counselling services
http://www.beyondblue.org.au/

Orygen Youth Health: Not a crisis line, but provides information and referrals for mental health illness
http://oyh.org.au

Headspace 1800 650 890: Provides both telephone and online counselling services
http://www.headspace.org.au/