



# FEMALE FOOTBALL CLUB GUIDE





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To assist clubs to provide an inclusive environment

To be used in conjunction with the Australian Football Match Policy



**AUSTRALIA'S GAME**

In partnership with AFL State and Territory affiliates:



Australian Government  
Australian Sports Commission

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# FEMALE FRIENDLY CLUBS GUIDE

- » What having females at our Club means to us...
- » Female Friendly clubs checklist: Actively supporting the inclusion of females

## QUICKVIEW CHECKLIST

Following is a quick checklist for your Club to work through.

1. First impressions of your Club:
  - ✓ List of strategies to welcome new members
2. Recruiting new players:
  - ✓ Strategies to recruit new female players in particular
  - ✓ Promotion ideas
  - ✓ Making membership affordable
  - ✓ How to apply for a Seeding Grant to take the financial pressure off your Club
3. Facilities:
  - ✓ What are appropriate facilities for female footballers?
  - ✓ State AFL affiliates who can help you acquire these
4. Coaching female footballers:
  - ✓ Resources to help coaches
  - ✓ Female Footballers – getting the best out of all your footballers including the competitive and social players.
  - ✓ Addressing areas such as providing empathy for developing positive body image and the emotional needs of youth girls players
5. Showcasing the social aspects of your Club:
  - ✓ Providing social events and
  - ✓ Catering for less competitive players
6. Encouraging a stronger connection to your Club:
  - ✓ Tips to include all comers
  - ✓ Nurturing volunteers and
  - ✓ Developing a diverse Board / Committee

Tips to settings up a new female football team

## FURTHER INFORMATION

- » Resources and Websites
- » Research Bibliography



# WHAT HAVING FEMALES AT OUR CLUB MEANS TO US...

For a number of years the AFL has surveyed numerous community football stakeholders to better understand the benefits associated with having women & girls involved at the community club level.

Here's a selection of some recent testimonials:

"Our Club loved having the girls. They brought in new volunteers and lots of fun."

[Victoria, Club President, Youth Girls](#)

"Go for it, women improve the social fabric of the club, financially they offer value, they are diligent and good contributors of the club and they support social functions."

[Deer Park JFC, Victoria, Club Secretary](#)

"Having the team has added a new dynamic to our club and improved our club culture."

[Eastlake, ACT, Football Administrator](#)

"The junior girls have added lots of excitement and the parents of the girls really get involved."

[Hammond Park JFC, Western Australia, Parent volunteer](#)

"For us it means the whole family can be at the one Club- we start at Auskick and can go through to Youth Girls."

[Queensland, Coach / parent](#)

These surveys, case studies and testimonials have helped shape this Female Football Club Guide as a way to support community clubs to become female friendly clubs.



# A GUIDE TO SETTING UP FEMALE FRIENDLY CLUBS

In 2015, more than 280,000 females participated in Australian Football through introductory programs and competitions - this represents a growth of 162% in the last 6 years.

With so many girls being introduced to the game each year, it is important to understand the benefits of becoming a Female Friendly Football Club and some of the strategies you can use to attract more female members to your Club.

The benefits of being a Female-Friendly Football Club include the ability to attract:

- » More members, supporters & volunteers
- » More players
- » Diversification, leading to better decision making
- » Wider sponsorship and fundraising appeal
- » More appealing social atmosphere

Setting up a new female football team for the first time can seem daunting to clubs that have traditionally catered for male members only. Clubs who have instigated a female team are full of praise for what the girls and women have positively added to their club. These clubs also report that recruiting female players was easier than they first expected; particularly those that followed a few simple steps.

This guide provides the following:

- » a series of checklists for your Club to work through to ensure you provide a safe and inclusive environment.
- » A summary of the opportunities to get girls involved with suggestions as to who within your Club can take responsibility for implementing various strategies. a number of web links and organisations that can assist your Club to successfully recruit and engage females..
- » A series of Club Case Studies providing real examples where Clubs have instigated a new female team and provided a more inclusive environment for their female supporters

Clubs who have already successfully recruited females will find the checklists useful for appraising their current strategies and providing fresh ideas for them to address to make the experience even better.

## COMPREHENSIVE CHECKLIST

The following is the a Checklist including web addresses and organisations that can help your Club.





## 1) FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF YOUR CLUB

Research tells us that some young people perceive Football Clubs are not for them. Providing an enjoyable and welcoming environment during the first visit is paramount to helping the girl feel connected – this is vital to ensuring new players return.

Description of task to be completed	Coach	Administrator/Committee	Team Manager
» Strategies to welcome new female members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Select a Peer Buddy from player group to partner new players</li> <li>» Provide female role models</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Select a Welcome Officer to host new members</li> <li>» Provide the female teams the same rights as the male teams – facilities, fixturing time on the oval and place in the club</li> <li>» Club facilities are clean and hygienically presented</li> <li>» All members of the Club are featured in club memorabilia such as trophies, photos and banners</li> <li>» Offer discounts to current players who introduce new members</li> <li>» Volunteers and staff are qualified, friendly and approachable</li> <li>» Ensure your social media and web platforms are up to date and reflect the culture of your club- Potential players will generally do research before contacting your club</li> <li>» Male members of the Club display appropriate behaviours towards female members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Implement a 'try before you buy' series of sessions before requesting membership payment / registration fee from new members</li> </ul>



## 2) RECRUITING NEW FEMALE PLAYERS

Clubs have told us the strongest recruiter of female players is through personal, face to face or word of mouth promotion. Women and girls are more likely to try a new experience if they know someone. Invest in the people that shape the experience and can ensure female participants are welcomed, feel cared for and are regularly communicated with.

If you believe it would be beneficial, the AFL and it's State Bodies can assist with the provision of female role models, provide promotional materials and advice on how to connect your Club to local schools.

Description of task to be completed	Coach	Administrator/Committee	Team Manager
» Strategies to recruit new female players	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Emphasise the social and health benefits in training sessions</li> <li>» Females need more reassurance to participate</li> <li>» Conduct clinics at local schools for girls</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Identify a 'passionate driver' who can facilitate development of a new female team</li> <li>» Make it easy for females to act: right time, right place, right welcome, right company, right gear</li> <li>» Enlist the help of a female role model</li> <li>» Use digital platforms to communicate.</li> <li>» Set up a Club Facebook page and Twitter account</li> <li>» Run a school based Come 'N Try Day for girls</li> <li>» Answer any correspondence from potential players promptly to ensure you capture them when they are most interested in joining</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Where numbers are small in a Club consider combining with another Club</li> </ul>
» Strategies to make club membership affordable		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Seek a Seeding Grant from your League or State organisation</li> <li>» Provide payment plans for families</li> <li>» Offer family discounts</li> <li>» Get a mouthguard provider connected to the club to offer discounts.</li> <li>» Seek sponsorship and implement fundraising activities</li> <li>» Encourage players to umpire junior grades for pocket money and fitness</li> </ul>	



### 3) FEMALE FRIENDLY FACILITIES

Club rooms are important as they are the place where training sessions start, meetings and social events are conducted and where the club's achievements are displayed and celebrated. They say a lot about the culture and values of a club and are an important first impression to members.

Improving access for girls and women involves taking a closer look at the physical environment of the club facilities, equipment and rules. Whilst there are ideal facilities for clubs to aspire to it's important to realize that girls and women will still come to the club if they are clean and hygienic and not necessarily 'ideal'. Local government, Leagues and the State football body can all assist clubs to achieve the best possible facilities.

Many State Sport and Recreation Departments conduct a funding scheme to advise and support clubs who would like to improve their facilities. Any approaches should be done in partnership with your

State football organization who will assist clubs.

NSW/ACT: [www.sportandrecreation.nsw.gov.au/](http://www.sportandrecreation.nsw.gov.au/)

Northern Territory: [www.sportandrecreation.nt.gov.au/grants-vouchers/other-grants](http://www.sportandrecreation.nt.gov.au/grants-vouchers/other-grants)

Queensland: [www.qld.gov.au/recreation/sports/funding/](http://www.qld.gov.au/recreation/sports/funding/)

South Australia: [www.ors.sa.gov.au/funding/?a=144813](http://www.ors.sa.gov.au/funding/?a=144813)

Tasmania: [www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/csr/sportrec/funding\\_opportunities](http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/csr/sportrec/funding_opportunities)

Victoria: [www.sport.vic.gov.au/community-sports-infrastructure-fund](http://www.sport.vic.gov.au/community-sports-infrastructure-fund)

Western Australia: [www.dsr.wa.gov.au/funding/facilities-\(csrff\)](http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au/funding/facilities-(csrff))

For a comprehensive checklist of the 'ideal' female friendly facilities go to: [www.aflcommunityclub.com.au/index.php?id=1823](http://www.aflcommunityclub.com.au/index.php?id=1823)

Description of task to be completed	Coach	Administrator/Committee	Team Manager
» Female-friendly facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Female players have equal access to the facilities and equipment and are not allocated late evening time slots for training</li> <li>» Gym equipment is suitable for use by females such as availability of light weights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Changerooms have lockable doors on cubicles (or shower curtains)</li> <li>» Club facilities are clean and hygienically presented</li> <li>» Sanitary disposal bin placed in every toilet</li> <li>» Adequate lighting in the car park</li> <li>» Invite women and girls to provide input into how to improve facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Operate Buddy system to ensure all female participants get to their cars at night after training and social functions</li> </ul>

For more information on where to seek assistance to improve your Club facilities contact your State Australian Football organization directly. State contacts can be found at: [www.aflcommunityclub.com.au](http://www.aflcommunityclub.com.au) and on the final page of the Female Club Guide.



## 4) COACHING FEMALE FOOTBALLERS

Up until the onset of male puberty, there are very few physiological differences as to how girls and boys participate in AFL. Once boys move through puberty their larger bodies mean they will have enhanced physical abilities over females, for example: kicking the ball further or jumping higher at a ruck contest. Further to this, within a mixed gender team, the skill acquisition of a non athletic boy is greater than for a non athletic girl. (Source: Dr Fleur McIntyre, University of Notre Dame)

Another key gender difference across any age group lies in the motivations for why girls want to play the game. Boys are more likely to participate for the competitive nature and the outcome of the contest. Girls tend to be more motivated by improving their skills and place greater value on how they fit into the team. Promoting the health benefits of sport is also more likely to appeal to girls than boys.

Unlike boys, girls are less likely to have progressed from NAB AFL Auskick and Junior football through to Youth Girls. At Women's League level, clubs are still attracting new players who have never played AFL before. Many girls will not have had the opportunity to participate in Youth Girls competitions so their senior aged Club may be their first exposure to playing Australian Football. This brings with it the need to introduce the physical skills such as giving and receiving a tackle safely, whilst introducing the basic skills of the game.

It is important that clubs understand the factors that impact young females leaving sport which can be due to three main factors.

1. Environmental
2. Individual; and
3. Societal

These factors do not work in isolation and could mean that there are multiple influences on a young female's physical activity behavior. When designing programs or strategies to promote participation in AFL by girls and young women it is important to consider all of these influences.

Coaches who understand these key considerations and work to support their footballers through them, will be highly successful in retaining players and providing a fun learning environment.

### ADDRESSING THE KEY FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE WOMEN AND GIRLS' PARTICIPATION IN SPORT

It is important that clubs address the factors that are most relevant to young females leaving sport at this age.

#### Environmental factors

- » Too competitive where players prefer the social aspects over the competition
- » Poor coaching

- » A big jump in skills required from U12 to the next level which makes the sport less fun to play.
- » Club setting is too unwelcoming
- » Facilities are not female friendly

#### Individual factors

- » Lack of or perceived lack of skill
- » The sport is no longer enjoyable
- » Lack of time – numerous competing activities impact on an adolescent's available time such as study, part time work, relationships and other sports
- » Body image issues – concerns about their body shape, weight management and dislike of sweating
- » Cost of participation
- » Injuries
- » Friends no longer participate

#### Societal factors

- » Pressure to conform to popular ideals of beauty and what represents femininity
- » Being teased for being involved in a predominantly male pursuit
- » Lack of support in transition from primary school age to young adult

The following provides ideas Clubs can adopt to maximise their girls' participation. The strategies suggested are only a starting point so it is expected that clubs will explore others depending on what their female players see as relevant to their needs.

It is well documented that good coaching is the key reason young people continue to participate in a sport. Clubs should support their coaches to attend courses that will improve their skills and hence heighten the enjoyment and skills of their players.

When coaches are teaching female athletes for the first time there are some specific areas they should be mindful of to get the best out of their footballers and ensure their players return.

There are few differences between coaching male and female footballers. Coaches who stick to good coaching principles such as striving to achieve individual goals, putting development ahead of winning and allowing time for the girls to socialize, will get the best out of their footballers.

There are a number of resources and courses that can assist coaches to optimize their performance. An online module Understanding Female Footballers can be found at [www.aflcommunityclub.com.au/index.php?id=801](http://www.aflcommunityclub.com.au/index.php?id=801) and is especially useful for those coaching females for the first time whether you are a female or male coach!

## BODY IMAGE ISSUES

Adolescent girls concerns about their body shape, weight management and the dislike of sweating are valid reasons they leave sport as an adolescent. They want to feel and look good so getting fit is a good selling point. Ill fitting apparel and a lack of confidence as their body matures cause major difficulties for many young girls.

Coaches should be mindful of players who may not be hydrating sufficiently or eating the right foods and at the right time prior to training and games.

State Bodies conduct regular coach education sessions and specific modules on coaching female footballers. We encourage all coaches to attend courses to increase their understanding and provide the best quality experience for themselves and their players.

Description of task to be completed	Coach	Administrator /Committee	Team Manager
» Strategies to provide positive body image support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Encourage all women and girls no matter their size or body shape</li> <li>» Invite a local dietician or nutritionist to discuss links between food, activity and health</li> <li>» Education on correct hydration will also be helpful</li> <li>» Be flexible with clothing requirements accommodating the needs of various cultural groups</li> <li>» Coach and staff comments to women or girls should focus on performance and/or output, and never be about what they look like, even if intended to be positive. I.e: 'You're looking really fit' can be reworded to 'You're running really well'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Provide healthy food choices at the canteen / kiosk</li> <li>» Provide mirrors in the changerooms</li> <li>» Provide female produced apparel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Source an apparel provider who makes female shaped garments</li> <li>» Ask the women and girls for their ideas on apparel design and sizing</li> </ul>

### To better understand the implications of body image issues go to:

The Clearing House is a compilation of easy to read academic articles from researchers around the world who provide background about body image and recommendations to coaches:

[www.whv.org.au/publications-resources/clearinghouse-connectors/chc-physical-activity-and-body-image](http://www.whv.org.au/publications-resources/clearinghouse-connectors/chc-physical-activity-and-body-image)

One hundred and ten of the United Kingdom's best female athletes describe some of the pressures they feel and the sources of these pressures to conform to a particular body "norm":

[www.sport.bt.com/womeninsport/bt-sport-survey-body-image-insecurities-rife-in-womens-sport-511363867248465](http://www.sport.bt.com/womeninsport/bt-sport-survey-body-image-insecurities-rife-in-womens-sport-511363867248465)



## DISPLAYING EMPATHY WHEN DEALING WITH YOUNG PLAYERS

Adolescence can be a difficult period in the lives of youth girls. Their body makes adjustments, they deal with changes to their maturity socially and emotionally, begin to understand their sexuality, and deal with issues such as academic achievement, relationships, taking on part time work and family tension. As they strive to make their own decisions and consolidate their sense of connection in their world these challenges leave them vulnerable to emotional states and behaviours. (Luciana, 2014)

Girls in the 14 – 17 year age groups are more likely than boys to suffer from the perception of not being good enough, perfectionism, sexual confusion, fear of failure, body image hatred and lack of self esteem. (Berger, 2014) This makes it difficult for many of them to overcome adversity whilst falling into a heightened state of self consciousness and self centredness.

Some issues that may arise where the player can appear to react in an 'out of character' manner include but are not restricted to:

- » Their reaction to sustaining an injury. When girls are 'winded' for the first time or roll an ankle they may get quite distressed and take some calming down. Or when they receive a tackle or solid bump they may be quite agitated.
- » Seeing their daughter react in this manner may initiate distress in some parents who have not seen their daughters react this way before
- » Girls are more likely to discuss their relationships more openly than males, which may include experiencing same sex attraction. A players' emerging same sex attraction, and the beginning and ending of any subsequent relationships will require acceptance, support and compassion.
- » Feeling the player has not eaten before a game and is vomiting or feeling lethargic and nauseous.
- » Players don't feel connected to the team for example perceiving they are not being kicked the ball or feeling socially isolated.

Description of task to be completed	Coach	Sports Trainer/First Aid Officer	Team Manager
» Displaying empathy to your Youth Girls / female footballers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Display compassion and steadfast support especially if the girl is clearly distressed</li> <li>» Collaboratively create goals then hold the player accountable for achieving them</li> <li>» An authoritarian coach will not be successful particularly if a girl is in an emotional state. Authoritarian-style coaches are unlikely to be successful with any young player!</li> <li>» Concentrate on the player's strengths</li> <li>» Cultivate trust and be open minded</li> <li>» Ask players what they need to help them achieve their potential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Ensure you stay calm and encourage the player to do so</li> <li>» If player is injured, clearly explain what you are going to do to help alleviate the pain and what the repair process is eg a cut on the eyebrow area always results in copious blood but is actually easy to repair</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» If a player is injured assist by keeping the parents calm</li> <li>» Provide avenues for players to show their strengths</li> </ul>



## 5) OPPORTUNITIES TO HIGHLIGHT SOCIAL ASPECTS OF YOUR CLUB

Females are drawn to a sport and stay involved because of the people. If their friends leave they are less likely to stay involved even if they love the sport. Social opportunities therefore rank higher than skill development or the competition for females. The role of the family changes between junior girls and youth girls age groups.

Where parents were supportive by providing transport and watching games, by youth girls it is peers who provide the most support. This is a major reason why young females do not make the transition from primary school age to secondary school age sport.

Description of task to be completed	Coach	Administrator /Committee	Team Manager
» Strategies to help promote the social aspects for females	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Focus on fun and participation rather than winning</li> <li>» Ask the girls what they want from their club experience</li> <li>» Incorporate music into training sessions</li> <li>» Link youth girls up with junior girls</li> <li>» Mentor Youth Girls who can help coach a junior girls team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Provide a range of activities to cater for the girls' desire for socializing</li> <li>» Develop the female pathway so girls can play from 5 years through to the top age group</li> <li>» Conduct some female only social events such as a movie night, ten pin bowling, fashion parade etc</li> <li>» Social events do not always revolve around alcohol</li> <li>» Encourage parents to take on roles in female teams through car pooling, coaching, umpiring, watching games and other roles around the club</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Conduct an exit survey to ascertain why the girls leave the club / AFL</li> </ul>

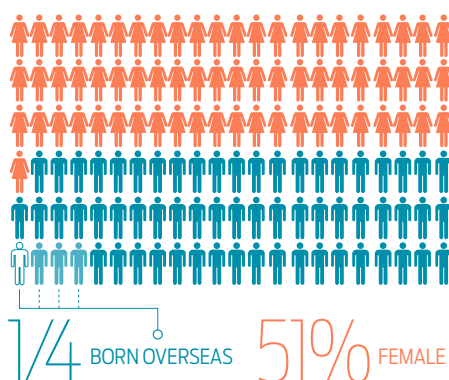
## CATERING FOR PLAYER'S OTHER INTERESTS AND COMMITMENTS

Girls have so many competing activities in their lifestyle that as they get older sport tends to play a smaller role. Numerous competing activities impact on an adolescent's available time such as study, part time work, relationships, religious commitments and other sports. For many girls, football is not their first sporting priority, and so some flexibility is required by coaches to ensure that girls can include football in their sporting pursuits.

Description of task to be completed	Coach	Administrator /Committee
» Strategies to help participants manage being time poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Ask the women and girls what suits their overall timetable and conduct training on those days / times</li> <li>» Be flexible with your approach to your footballer's commitment encouraging them to attend at least one training session a week or play them every two weeks</li> <li>» Provide the opportunity for them to get fit and stay involved</li> </ul>	
» Strategies to meet the girls desire for less competition		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Provide more social physical activities that cater for different skill levels and broad range of health interests such as: AFL Active, AFL 9s, A 'pay as you play' version of AFL that requires less commitment than full sided games; Get in Zumba or yoga instructors to conduct a session at the Club during the home and away season</li> </ul>

## INCLUDING EVERYONE

Of Australia's 23 million people our communities currently look like:



**2.2m** INDIGENOUS POPULATION  
SPEAKING 60 LANGUAGES

**3.5m** ARE HEARING IMPAIRED

**4.2m** ARE DISABLED

With this diversity in mind coaches and administrators should consider how to include everyone successfully into their club. For females, barriers to participation can take on numerous forms and prevent them joining a club. It is worthwhile for club committee members and coaches to view the AFL's Vilification Policy found at: <http://s.afl.com.au/staticfile/AFL%20Tenant/AFL/Files/Respect%20and%20Responsibility/National-Vilification-Discrimination-Policy.pdf>

This clearly outlines areas of discrimination and support clubs can seek to help alleviate such behaviours and barriers for all members.

Barriers can take many forms Here are a few areas to consider:

1. **Gender:** such as females getting trophies of lesser value than are given to males or the club's website conveying images of male teams but not female ones.
2. **Stereotyping athletic females:** Some girls relate incidences of teasing, bullying and feelings of non acceptance when they go to a club. This can be a strong deterrent to them getting involved in a male dominated sport in particular where members may be influenced heavily by stereotypes of what a female should be like. Often being a strong, athletic female is not part of that stereotype.
3. **Religious:** wearing a hijab (full head scarf) should not exclude a player. League bylaws support the wearing of hijabs, long sleeve jumpers, and full skins to encourage active involvement of players under religious or cultural constraints.
4. **Pregnancy:** Familiarise yourself with the League's pregnancy policy and guidelines to assist any players who present as pregnant during the season. It is advisable for clubs to have a very clear policy that deals with participation by pregnant women, because it is not helpful to anyone if the issue is first raised when a very evidently pregnant woman arrives to play. The requirement to sign an indemnity may also lead to discrimination, depending on its wording, and an indemnity may not be successful if there was failure to take reasonable care. It is also strongly advised that clubs ensure that they hold current, valid, up-to-date insurance that does not contain exclusions for pregnant participants.

### 5. Sexuality: following are examples based on;

- » a coach who hugs players as they come to the interchange bench. Whilst this may be a perfect display of this coach's warmth it is not an appropriate gesture and can make players and/or their parents feel uncomfortable.
- » Vilifying a person on the grounds of their sexual orientation. It is not uncommon for youth girls and women's league players to be same sex attracted. Clubs should keep an open mind and be understanding of the tensions and pressures this attraction may result in at times.
- » Transphobia – vilifying someone on the basis of gender identity. Proactive sports administrators and coaches, particularly at women's league level, should educate themselves on transgender issues. 'Transgender' is an umbrella term that refers to a person whose gender identity is different to their physical sex as recorded at birth, for example, a player born a female who has male gender identification and now presents and lives as a man or a boy. When transitioning to being a boy or man and still using the female changerooms or wishing to continue to play in a girls or women's league team, may be difficult. Clubs should seek an understanding of the legal responsibilities they have around inclusion and be mindful to model respectful ways of engaging and supporting a transgendered player.

For further information and guidance go to:

Australian Sports Commission:

Play by the Rules [www.playbytherules.com.au](http://www.playbytherules.com.au)

[www.equality-network.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Out-for-Sport-Report.pdf](http://www.equality-network.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Out-for-Sport-Report.pdf)

Guideline: Transgender people and sport > Complying with the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (PDF)

<http://www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/index.php/our-resources-and-publications/ea-practice-guidelines/item/1125-guideline-transgender-people-and-sport-complying-with-the-equal-opportunity-act-2010>

Description of task to be completed	Coach	Administrator /Committee	Team Manager
» Strategies to promote inclusion of all members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Implement a Code of Conduct and an education process during the pre-season</li> <li>» Should the Code be breached revisit education of the player/s.</li> <li>» Explain context and football terms especially to multicultural players</li> <li>» Use gender neutral language eg. don't use gender as a put down as in saying to a boy, "that girls kicks better than you!"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Focus on developing the pathway from Auskick onwards</li> <li>» Does the Club's membership reflect the community's diversity?</li> <li>» Implement the AFL's Respect and Responsibility program at the club</li> <li>» Provide opportunities for training all club members in this program</li> <li>» Ensure your coaches, committee and members are aware of the AFL Villification and Discrimination Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Be prepared to learn and educate players about the various cultural backgrounds of players within the team.</li> <li>» Implement a changeroom roster to ensure all players can access showers or toilets without discomfort</li> </ul>
» Strategies to help club personnel and members display empathy and understanding and respectful sexual behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Be aware that upper age youth girls and women may be encountering sexuality issues and related challenges.</li> <li>» Refer to the AFL's Respect and Responsibility Policy to ensure respectful behaviours are practiced</li> </ul>		

## BRINGING DIVERSITY TO YOUR CLUB LEADERSHIP

Women are significantly under represented across coaching, management, media, commercial sporting activities, and in bodies responsible for local, national, regional and international level sporting events. In addition to providing role models, sport can provide girls and women with leadership experience that they can apply in other domains such as employment, civic leadership and advocacy.

The composition and manner in which a board or committee operates fundamentally impacts the operations of the club. Only a board operating under sound principles will be effective and facilitate the success of the club. It is well documented that diversity in decision making has a positive financial impact on organisations. For a sporting club that can be more vibrant membership and social events, greater pool of volunteers and a sustainable and engaged membership.

### What clubs can do

Some members of your club may be very capable of adding value to the committee but may not have the confidence to put their hand up.

- » Club leaders could mentor probable board members
- » Ensure that each meeting contains Inclusion and / or female participation as an agenda item
- » Encourage and support willing members to seek relevant leadership, governance or self development courses to prepare them for voluntary board roles.

For further assistance with governance and board development look to your local Sport and Recreation Department. They often conduct workshops and courses for developing board knowledge. See a list following in Further Resources and Websites page.

# FURTHER RESOURCES AND WEBSITE REFERENCES

## Australian Football League

[www.afl.com.au](http://www.afl.com.au)

## AFL Community Football

[www.aflcommunity.com.au](http://www.aflcommunity.com.au)

## Australian Sports Commission

[www.ausport.com.au](http://www.ausport.com.au)

[www.playbytherules.com.au](http://www.playbytherules.com.au)

## Womens Sport and Fitness Foundation

[www.wsff.org.uk](http://www.wsff.org.uk)

## STATE AND TERRITORY AFFILIATES

### AFL NSW/ACT

[www.aflnswact.com.au](http://www.aflnswact.com.au)

### AFL Northern Territory

[www.aflnt.com.au](http://www.aflnt.com.au)

### AFL Queensland

[www.aflq.com.au](http://www.aflq.com.au)

### AFL Tasmania

[www.footballtas.com.au](http://www.footballtas.com.au)

### AFL Victoria

[www.aflvic.com.au](http://www.aflvic.com.au)

### South Australian National Football League

[www.sanfl.com.au](http://www.sanfl.com.au)

### West Australian Football Commission

[www.wafc.com.au](http://www.wafc.com.au)

## STATE AND TERRITORY DEPARTMENTS OF SPORT AND RECREATION

### NSWACT Office of Sport and Recreation

<https://sportandrecreation.nsw.gov.au/>

### NT Sport and Recreation

<http://www.sportandrecreation.nt.gov.au/>

### Queensland Department of National Parks, Racing, Sport and Recreation

<http://www.nprsr.qld.gov.au/>

### Tasmania Communities, Sport and Recreation

<http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/csr/sportrec>

### South Australia Office for Sport and Recreation

<http://ors.sa.gov.au/>

### Victoria Sport and Recreation

<http://sport.vic.gov.au/>

### Western Australia

<http://www.dsr.wa.gov.au/>

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