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## Risk management strategy

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### Administrators

An important role for club administrators is to reduce the potential for things to go wrong, including preventing and managing risks concerned with inappropriate and unsafe behaviour and unfair decisions. There are a number of resources available to assist clubs to help identify risks and develop an action plan to ensure child safe and harassment free environments.

Key strategies to consider when developing your action plan include:

#### **Provide leadership to develop inclusive clubs**

Having an inclusive club culture, where differences are not only tolerated but valued, is important for developing a positive environment for participation.

Steps to achieve an inclusive clubs include:

- welcoming all members of the community;
- offering both competitive and social opportunities for participation;
- having flexible practices (e.g. modifying games or uniform requirements);
- making participation affordable (e.g. pooling transport, second hand uniforms, minimising fees);
- acting promptly to address any inappropriate behaviour (e.g. racist, sexist jokes, making fun of religious practices).

#### **Develop a Member Protection Policy**

A commitment to harassment free and child safe sport needs to be underpinned by a Member Protection Policy or other welfare policy.

This policy should outline:

- your sports position on harassment and child safe sport;
- roles and responsibilities;
- complaint processes and procedures;

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- the type of disciplinary action that can be taken to deal with breaches.

This policy should be developed by your national sporting organisation and adopted by your state sporting organisation for clubs to follow. Depending on the size of your club or other factors you may decide to develop Member Protection policy for your club.

## Have a non-discriminatory constitution and membership rules

Club constitutions or rules that are unfair and give rise to unequal treatment (e.g. as a committee member, club personnel or player) could result in a discrimination complaint. Some rules appear fair but have a disproportionate negative impact on people with particular characteristics. This is called indirect discrimination.

To address this issue consider:

- reviewing the constitution and membership rules to remove any discriminatory clauses;
- encouraging participation on the club committee from all demographics (e.g. juniors, women, gays and lesbians);
- encouraging members to undertake non traditional roles (e.g. women as coaches).

## Make fair and consistent decisions

Making consistent and fair decisions is important, particularly when engaging paid staff or volunteers, in setting policies and rules and in team selection.

- When hiring staff appoint people on their merits, don't consider irrelevant stereotypes like sexuality or race. Make sure personnel are appropriate for working with children.
- Develop or adopt team selection processes and procedures, for both junior and senior competition.
- Seek information on issues that are relevant to your sport (e.g. girls playing in boys teams for football and pregnancy and participation for netball).

## Choose the right people

Clubs have a duty of care to ensure safe environments for their members and personnel. A key responsibility is to keep children and young people safe from abuse and protect them from people who are unsuitable to work with children.

Strategies to ensure you are choosing the right people include:

- developing a job description to be clear about duties and the skills, experience and personal qualities required for the position
- developing interview questions to determine a persons suitability to work with children (e.g. what techniques do you use to motivate children)
- requiring all paid staff and volunteers undergo police checks and other screening processes (requirements vary between states and territories)
- conducting referee checks

## Provide guidelines for coaches and other personnel

Providing guidelines for coaches and other personnel is important in developing safe environments, particularly for children and in protecting personnel from being at risk.

Depending on your sport and the issues they face guidelines could be developed on:

- Maintaining appropriate boundaries
- Minors seeking inappropriate relationships
- Supervision of children while on away or overnight trips
- Images of children
- Heat guidelines
- Blood rules
- Bullying

Check the Resources section of *Play by the Rules* for these and other guidelines and information sheets.

## Communicate policies and procedures

Developing a Member Protection Policy is not enough. All members and personnel must be made aware of policies and procedures.

Ways to communicate policies and codes of behaviour include:

- developing codes of behaviour for members and personnel;
- holding meetings with coaches and other groups (e.g. parents) to go through policies and expectations;
- giving members fair and safe brochures on registration day;
- putting up posters in club rooms, change rooms and the canteen;
- putting messages and articles in newsletters and on the club website.

## Provide training and education to develop skills and knowledge

It is important that administrators, coaches and other personnel are supported to meet their roles and responsibilities.

Strategies include:

- requiring administrators, coaches and other personnel complete online courses or short problem based scenarios on inclusive sport and discrimination, harassment and abuse;
- encouraging coaches and officials undertake training and education to further develop their skills and knowledge in coaching and officiating.

## Take complaints seriously

Any behaviour that results in the unfair treatment of club personnel or members or results in them feeling threatened, intimidated or offended could result in a discrimination, harassment, assault or child abuse complaint.

Steps to assist your club to deal with complaints include:

- understanding your constitution, sports rules and powers to act;
- following your sports Member Protection Policy;
- knowing who is your sports Member Protection Information Officer (MPIO);
- communicating complaint procedures, including the contact name and details of your sports MPIO, to all personnel and members;
- knowing your responsibilities to report complaints, particularly a suspicion of harm against a child;
- responding to issues and complaints promptly and being fair in how you deal with the complaint;
- seeking advice at any time that you are unsure about what to do; and
- protecting people from victimisation.