

## No. 2



VicHealth

HEALTH THROUGH PARTICIPATION

# Tips Sheet for Clubs

## Becoming Inclusive of People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds

### Overview

Victoria is one of Australia's most multicultural states. 45% of Victorians were born overseas or have at least one parent born overseas, and nearly 20% come from countries where English is not the main language spoken. Given this large ethnic population, it is surprising that statistics reveal a dramatic under-representation of ethnic people in structured sport. This presents a great opportunity for sports clubs to expand their membership base by being more inclusive of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) groups.

This tip sheet outlines the benefits of becoming a more culturally inclusive club, as well as outlining practical strategies to assist you in your approach.

### Definitions

Before we begin to look at strategies, it is important to look at some definitions.

A *migrant* is someone who chooses to leave their country of origin for a range of personal or economic reasons.

A *refugee* is someone who has suffered persecution or has a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, or membership of a particular social or political group, and as a result of this has fled their country.

An *asylum seeker* is someone who is seeking asylum or protection in a country that is not his or her country of origin or nationality. Asylum seekers may be refugees, but until their application is approved by the government they will not be recognised as refugees.

### Do migrants and refugees want to play sport?

YES! Young people from CLD backgrounds are just as passionate about their sports as other young people. Many have played sport in their own countries prior to arriving in Australia.

### Common barriers faced by newly arrived communities

While some young people may want to play sport there can be many factors that can stop a young person from participating:

- Some may have come from countries without structured community based sport and are unfamiliar with the concept
- Lack of familiarity with sporting clubs and environments
- Lack of effective public transport

# Sport – access for all cultures.

# Tip Sheet from CMYI

- Potential threat or experience of racism
- Alcohol being perceived as a main activity of sports clubs
- Cost of activities
- Family and cultural commitments may take priority over sport

## **Benefits to becoming more inclusive**

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The process of becoming inclusive is not a difficult one, but it does require a commitment from club administrators and members. However the benefits your club can gain will make it worthwhile.

- More members means more income for the club
- Opportunity to increase the number of skilled players in your club
- Social benefits associated with new members and their family and friends participating
- Potential to recruit volunteers and administrators
- The opportunity to learn more about other cultures

## **Making your club accessible**

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The sporting club environment can look intimidating to someone who is unfamiliar with the sports structure in Australia.

*How accessible is your club?*

- Is your signage clear and welcoming?
- Is it in languages other than English?
- Is your promotion material easy to read and understand, or is it available in other languages?
- Ask yourself – How easy is it to join our club?
- Do you have an induction for new members?
- Do you have a buddy system for new members?

## **Letting people know about your club**

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- Talk to and provide information to ethnic community groups and community leaders
- Talk to and provide information to services who work with migrants and refugees such as Migrant Resource Centres (go to [http://www.immi.gov.au/grants/mrc\\_msa\\_b.htm#vic](http://www.immi.gov.au/grants/mrc_msa_b.htm#vic) for a full listing of MRCs in Victoria)
- Talk to and provide information to youth specific agencies such as the Western Young People's Independent Network (WYPIN)
- You can contact your local council and find out what other ethno specific agencies are in your area

## **Public transport**

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- Where possible try and schedule your training sessions with transport time tables
- If possible, set up a car pooling roster

**Setting the agenda on multicultural youth issues**

## How economical is it to join your club?

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- Have you considered an instalment system for paying your fees?
- Are there concession prices?
- Is equipment provided?
- Are second hand uniforms or equipment available?
- Can you offer a discount for families who have more than one child participating?

## Catering for diversity

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- There are many ways of communicating, so even if someone has limited English they can still join in.
- How flexible is your uniform policy and does it allow for different cultural and religious beliefs?
- Can you cater to suit different cultures?
- Have you considered incorporating other cultural and religious events into your calendar?
- Are you aware of religious celebrations which may impact on some of your players?
- Does alcohol consumption play a large role in your club culture?

## Asking questions

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Sometimes it's hard to know what questions are safe to ask a person who is newly arrived to Australia. Here are some tips:

- It's OK to ask a person where they have come from.
- It's OK to ask someone about sports that they may have played before.
- It's OK to ask what someone likes to do.
- It's OK to ask what someone does for work or school.
- It's OK to ask if someone likes living in Australia.
- It's OK to ask what a person's country is like (just be sensitive to the fact that a person may have come from a war zone and may have experienced some trauma, and may still have family there).
- It's OK to ask about a person's family (just be sensitive to the fact that family may have died or may be unable to flee the country they came from).

## How can club members make a difference?

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- Befriend new members
- Offer support and advice
- Be sensitive to cultural differences
- Do not tolerate racial harassment
- Offer to help with transport
- Share sports equipment
- Help a new person learn the rules
- Smile and say hello
- Be aware that locals tend to speak very fast which may be difficult for a person learning English. Try to speak clearly and avoid slang, but don't speak in a false accent or shout.

## Training and support

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CMYI can assist your club to become more inclusive of young people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

CMYI can provide cultural awareness training, advice and resources that can put your club on the road to inclusion and potentially a wider membership base.

## 10 benefits of Cultural Awareness Training

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Cross cultural differences can sometimes impede communication and interpersonal relationships. Cross cultural training aims to develop awareness between people where a common cultural framework does not exist and to promote clear lines of communication and better relationships.

Some of the main benefits for participants in cross cultural training are:

*People learn about themselves:* Through cultural training, people are exposed to facts and information about their own cultures, preconceptions, mentalities and worldviews that they may otherwise not been aware of.

*Encourage confidence:* Cross-cultural training promotes self-confidence in individuals and teams through empowering them with a sense of control over previously difficult challenges.



*Break down barriers:* Cross cultural training demystifies other cultures through presenting them in an objective light.

*Build trust:* When people's barriers are lowered, mutual understanding ensues, which results in greater trust, allowing for greater co-operation and a more productive outcome.

*Motivate:* One of the outcomes of cross cultural training is that people begin to see their roles more clearly. Through self-analysis people begin to recognise areas in which they need to improve and become motivated to develop and progress.

*Open horizons:* Cross cultural training addresses issues at a very different angle to traditional methods.

*Develop interpersonal skills:* Through cross cultural training, participants develop great 'people skills' that can be applied in all areas of life.

*Develop listening Skills:* Listening is integral to effective and productive communication. Cross cultural training helps people to understand how to listen, what to listen for and how to interpret what they hear within a much broader framework of understanding.

*People use common ground:* Cross cultural training assists in developing a sense of mutual understanding between people by highlighting common ground.

*Career development:* Cross cultural training enhances people's skills and therefore future employment opportunities.

These are a few of the many ways in which cross cultural training can have a positive impact on your club.

## Footy Club Aims for Diversity

Whitehorse Leader 4.08.04 page 7

*The Blackburn Football Club Under 14's kicked off this season on the boot of cultural diversity.*

*Mullauna Secondary College student Daniel Tajic from Afghanistan joined the team this season after the club sought to include players who reflected the mix of ethnic groups in the community.*

*The 14-year-old who moved to Australia in 2002 said he loved Australian Rules football.*

*"You get to learn something. You get to learn Australian sport and you get to meet different people," Daniel said.*

*Club Vice President Paul Molan said the club received a \$3000 VicHealth grant in 2003 to increase the involvement of families from non-English speaking backgrounds.*

*"The most difficult part has been to win the confidence of the youths and their families, taking into consideration the problems of communication, transport and cultural background," Mr Malon said.*

*The club held a football clinic in June 2003, which sparked Daniel's interest. Another clinic was held in April this year.*

*"He has hardly missed a training night and has played every game this year," Malon said. "If we haven't got a representative example of the kids who actually live in the area then I don't think we are building up the community as we should be."*

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Information for this resource was adapted from a number of sources including *Creating Fairer Playing Fields*, Office of Sport and Recreation, Tasmania. Copies of this resource are available through Launceston City Council. For more information call (03) 6323 3381.

If you would like further assistance or information about conducting CLD programs in your club. Please contact:

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