

PARTICIPATION VERSUS PERFORMANCE

Managing (dis)ability,
gender and cultural
diversity in junior sport

TIP SHEET #1 ATTRACTING AND RETAINING DIVERSE JUNIOR MEMBERS

When looking to attract diverse participants to your club there are number of small things volunteers can proactively do to support diverse communities to become involved. Below are a few tips and strategies that you could use to help with attracting diverse members to your club.



1. To attract diverse junior members, local schools provide a key connection point. Consider whether someone from your club could be a main contact point for schools. Send promotional material to local schools to place adverts/information in their newsletters. If feasible, running 'come and try' sessions at local schools can be a great way to engage young people in your club.



2. Provide a dedicated contact person for new members and ensure the contact person is present during their first visit to the club. This goes a long way in helping new members to feel secure and welcome. Make sure new members are clear on who to contact if they have any questions or queries and make time to connect with new members to check in with how they are getting on.



3. For young people, providing a 'buddy' who is an existing junior player to welcome and work with new members can help new members feel secure and welcome. The buddy system can be extended to families to help parents and carers of new members feel welcome and provide them with another contact point to ask questions and gain a better understanding of the club.



4. Attract culturally and linguistically diverse members. Provide information and promotional material in a range of languages applicable to your local area. This can help to break down barriers for members and their families whose first language is not English.



5. Consider whether it is possible to offer subsidised registration fees for members from low income families. Ideally offer a number of free taster sessions for new members, so families do not have to worry about paying registration fees before they know whether their child will enjoy participating.



6. Where possible, offer to loan equipment and uniforms to new members to reduce initial outlay costs.



7. Try to offer a diverse range of social activities for members and their families. These might include celebrating different cultural traditions that reflect the diversity of members, for example.

This tip sheet has been developed from the findings of the 3-year Australian Research Council project '*Managing Diversity in Junior Sport: Participation versus Performance*' led by Victoria University in partnership with VicHealth, the Australian Football League and the Centre for Multicultural Youth. The guidance has been authored by Dr Ruth Jeanes, Monash University and Professor Ramón Spaaij, Victoria University. For more details on the research project please see our summary and full report at <http://www.cmy.net.au/publications/participation-versus-performance>