

Resource 42: Getting families involved

Everyone participates: Welcome

Why is getting families involved important?

Sport, particularly at the local to state level, depends on the support and involvement of families to provide players/athletes, coaches, administrators, officials, team managers and to assist with fundraising, transporting athletes to training sessions and competitions, travelling with teams, etc. Sport also provides many benefits for families, particularly newly arrived migrants and refugees, including opportunities to meet and socialise with other people in their community.

It can be hard for all families to find time to be involved in sport; however, some groups in the community face additional challenges that limit their ability to get involved. For example, many newly arrived migrants and refugees face the challenges of learning a new language, seeking employment and secure housing and familiarising themselves with their new community. In dealing with this range of competing priorities it may be difficult to prioritise time for leisure and to participate in sport. For sole-parent families there may not be the flexibility or ability to contribute as easily as two-parent families who can share the load.

It is important to remember to cater for *all* families which can include two-parent and single-parent families, carers and guardians, heterosexual and same-sex partners and not to have unrealistic expectations about their involvement in sport, particularly as volunteers.

Getting families interested

- Offer a range of social and competitive activities that meet the needs of members and their families.
- Consider working in partnership with local migrant resource centres, neighbourhood houses, community centres and cultural and linguistically diverse (CALD) organisations to provide the information sessions to families in their community, and involve volunteers of CALD background in this process.
- Have staff and volunteers from your association attend Aboriginal and multicultural community open days, fair days and other events.
- Contact people with a disability, Indigenous and migrant parenting groups to get to know the parents in the local community.
- Gain some basic knowledge of the community you want to involve including dominant family groups, preferred names, original custodians and language groups.
- Become involved in supporting local Indigenous and multicultural events and functions; this is a great informal way of meeting the community and establishing relationships.
- Hold a BBQ or lunches during NAIDOC week, Survival Day, Harmony Day, International Day of People with a Disability or other significant social and cultural events to introduce the programs and activities of your association and affiliated clubs to the community. Wherever possible, be involved in these activities.
- Have a section on registration forms that lists all the areas families can be involved in and ask them to nominate one or more jobs they'd be interested in, if they're available.
- Have job descriptions for key positions so that families know what's involved. For positions such as coaching, emphasise that coach training is available.
- Conduct a series of information sessions throughout the year to explain to families about opportunities within the sport (junior development, master's sport, athlete pathways, coaching and officiating pathways, social events, programs that encourage diversity and integration, etc.).

Keeping families involved

- Encourage families to invite their wider family to social events and to watch games.
- Have separate pricing policies for family attendance at games/matches/competitions or social functions.
- Hold special events during the school holidays, e.g. a junior carnival day.
- Provide support and training to develop and improve skills and knowledge – for example, coach and official accreditation.
- Acknowledge and thank families for their volunteering and seek their feedback about their experiences and ideas for improvement.
- Make sure venues used for social events and competitions are clean and tidy and that the bar is not the central or key focus.
- When catering at events provide culturally appropriate food.

Modified from Sport and Recreation Victoria 2010, *Leading clubs: the rules and tools for a more inclusive club*, Department of Planning and Community Development, information reproduced with permission.

Developed in collaboration

Collaboration leader :



Source:

