





In partnership with







Acknowledgement of Country

The western regions of Melbourne are home to Indigenous peoples from all over Australia. We would especially like to acknowledge all language groups of the Kulin Nation as the traditional owners of these (municipal) lands and offer our respect to their elders past and present. Their cultures, knowledge and languages continue to enrich the Hobsons Bay and Wyndham communities and we wish to recognise their relevance and importance throughout the wider Australian community and the world.

Acknowledgements to Community

This guide has been developed by the Hobsons Bay Community Fund Inclusion Project with the University of Melbourne, together with Hobsons Bay and Wyndham City Council partners, for the purpose of empowering sporting clubs and communities to build strong, active, and inclusive environments.

The resource has been created from interviews with young people, families, sporting club members and local organisations, and existing publications. In particular, the Darebin "Access for All, Promoting Disability Inclusion in Sport" guide provided an invaluable starting point for us to consider the full spectrum of inclusion.

We want to especially thank all of the coaches, clubs, families and young people who let us into their lives and shared their stories. Your input has been invaluable, without you, this guide would not exist.

We hope the following information will be helpful to you and your communities.

"Sport creates inclusiveness and peace by its remarkable ability to break down barriers between different nations and cultures"

Shannon Parry Australian Rugby Sevens star.

We encourage this material to be reproduced and updated.

An Invitation to Work With Us

Dear parent, coach, young person, government officer or other interested party,

This guide has been built from the real life experiences of young people who find it more difficult to be included in sporting organisations. Mental and physical disability can be a barrier, cultural differences and language can be a barrier and so too can lack of co-ordination, difficulty following instructions or struggling with social interaction.

Young people may also face difficulties related to their family circumstances, perhaps resulting in there being little time or money to support their participation in sport and recreation. Parents are often key supporters and advocates, but sometimes parents need support to enable their children to access opportunities.

The aim of this Guide is to help all of us make sporting clubs inclusive. This is not to suggest that there is not a great deal already being done. There are inspiring examples as you will see in the case studies in the Guide. But, we can learn from each other and always strive to be more inclusive.

This Guide has been developed by Social Work postgraduate students from Melbourne University working in partnership with the Hobsons Bay Community Fund, Hobsons Bay City Council, Wyndham City Council and Compton Green Real Estate. It is a wonderful example of collaboration.

For those who have produced the Guide the one true measure of its success will be the extent to which it is read, discussed and owned by everyone. It is not meant to be etched in stone but a living document that can be added to, built upon and changed as more knowledge and examples come to light. We see it simply as a means to work together, to share knowledge, support each other and recognise good practice when we see it.

Please take it, use it and help us keep making it better.

Hayden Raysmith AM

Chair - Hobsons Bay Community Fund

Open letter

"Three months ago, we were feeling daunted by the task of creating an inclusion guide and eliciting community investment in a project that we ourselves had not yet fully understood. As we began meeting with the community, our investment grew, not only academically but also emotionally, knowing that the stories we were hearing were important.

People were sharing part of their lives with us, and it was their experiences and ways of knowing that allowed us to turn this project into something meaningful and powerful.

Our investment continued to grow, not only through community interactions but also through getting to know one another, our working styles, strengths, weaknesses, and perhaps most importantly, our own individual stories.

Through knowing and learning about one another we discovered that in different ways, we all shared some common values: accountability, respect, curiosity and perhaps most importantly, social justice. These values allowed us to create a document that reflected not only the community but us too.

Its shape reflects our learning; each paragraph, sentence and word indicates debates, reflections, more debates, and then a decision. Decisions that we ultimately made together and that are laden with these united core values.

In reflecting upon some of the things we've learnt from this project a few key themes emerged. Perhaps most noticeably were the ways in which we all deepened our own ability for self-reflection; that by knowing ourselves we can continue to develop both personally and professionally. Patience recognising that we all have different ways of processing information, and that no one way is better than the other.

We learnt about the power of the community, the importance of your voices - united and as individuals. And even a small number of people, with devotion and commitment, can bring about positive change.

Lastly, we recognised the power of listening, not only to the people we interviewed but to one another. We listened to value the opinions and perspectives that each individual brings; not just to frame our own response. As two wise women put it, "people don't say things for no reason." It's lessons like these that have been at the core of the success of this project, and we will all do well to remember this in years to come."

Bliss, Brendan, Daniel, Isabella, Kelly, Travis. Master of Social Work students 2017



What is the purpose of this guide?

"Fitting into a group takes a little bit of extra work if there's lots of other things going on for that child. As a family, we kind of just want to blend in with everyone else. We just want to be part of it."

Lisa (Altona)

The aim of this resource is to share local knowledge about how to include more young people in sporting clubs. It speaks broadly to people of diverse experiences and all walks of life, including young people with disabilities, who – like anyone else – need to be understood as having a range of skills, preferences and limitations.

We hope that this guide will give you ideas, resources, contacts, and practical ways to help young people of all abilities participate in local sporting and recreation clubs.

Many young people stop participating in sporting clubs after finishing primary school, but participation drops more for some than others. Australian Sports Commission research shows that only 44% of 14-17 year-olds are involved in a sports club, and only **22%** of 18-29 year-olds. The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates that people with a disability are 15% less likely to engage in sport and recreation activities.

Inclusive clubs and communities can help maintain young people's participation in sport and recreation, as well as removing barriers for those who can participate provided there are a few adaptations or modifications.

All young people have individual needs. A good relationship between parents and club personnel can make a big difference to the opportunities for participation in sport and recreation. It can be challenging to understand and accommodate needs that are unfamiliar, but with greater knowledge and familiarity comes greater confidence in working and playing together.

Everyone benefits when everyone is included.



What are some key inclusion concepts?

This document highlights concepts such as 360° inclusion, individual needs, mental health, and disability. Below, you will find a brief summary of how we use these terms throughout this guide. We acknowledge that these terms mean different things to different people.

360° Inclusion

The term 360° Inclusion means valuing people's participation in the community, with all the different abilities and backgrounds they bring. Inclusion efforts that focus on accommodating one specific characteristic may not acknowledge and accommodate the combination of characteristics that makes us who we are.

When it comes to inclusion, personal abilities and preferences are often more important than a person's health conditions, nationality, age, gender, sexual orientation, education, economic means, culture, religion, or ethnicity.

Exclusion is often unintentional. We all belong to our own set of social groups and have our own range of strengths and limitations: any of these may be misunderstood or seem unfamiliar to members of our sporting club. With greater understanding of common ground and differences, it is easier to include everyone.

Hobsons Bay and Wyndham represent communities composed of people from all walks of life. Inclusion for all people has a positive impact on their personal health and wellbeing and that of the broader community.

All people, regardless of their abilities, can and should be integrated in community life. It means making aspects of everyday life available to everyone, regardless of ability and background.

Providing specialist support can be a necessary aspect of inclusion when it helps people develop their individual capabilities and potential in ways that other services could not. It can be a pathway towards full participation in the activities of the broader community. Over time, an individual may or may not continue to need specialist support.

"I think when you have a disability people are always putting limitations on you, telling you, even in a nice way, what you can't do. My attitude to that has always been: You can't tell me that. I'll show you. You never know what you can achieve until you try."

Louise Sauvage, Gold medal winner in Paralympics and Olympics

"If I compare the Thai refugee camp and here, it's a big difference. My son was born here and going to school and learning how to talk and learning things. But the children who live in the camp, they never learn and they've never been taught, so they don't know how to speak."

Happy Mother (Wyndham)

Individual Needs

The term 'individual needs' is used to mean a person requires flexibility or tailored approaches so that they can participate fully in everyday activities. Often it means doing something differently rather than doing something extra.

Reasons for taking a flexible approach or making adaptations to enable participation could include mental health conditions, social circumstances, marginalised identities, physical conditions or chronic pain, learning difficulties, mobility issues, or cognitive disabilities.

These conditions could be the result of a temporary change in circumstance or an ongoing issue. Some conditions are visible, and some cannot be perceived without a deeper understanding of the person.

Mental Health

Mental health conditions affect nearly half of the population at some stage of their life. Mental health diagnoses vary wildly, and everyone experiences mental health differently. There is no "one size fits all" model, so we need to approach each individual as a unique person.

It is important to check whether the person has individual needs—due to mental health conditions, treatment side effects, or both—which can be supported to enable full participation.

Disability

The rate of disability in Australia has remained relatively stable over time, with one in five (18.3 per cent) reporting disability in 2015. Disability may impact a person's mobility, communication or learning, but it affects everyone differently.

Disabilities may be a result of accidents, illness or genetic conditions. Some disabilities are visible and some are invisible.

Many of the barriers that prevent people with disabilities from fully participating in work, study, sport, and other everyday activities are avoidable. Modifying attitudes and expectations, and perhaps some elements of the physical environment, can create many more opportunities for participation.

By bringing realistic optimism to our expectations, providing relevant assistance, or making adaptations to activities, many people who may otherwise be excluded are able to take part in sport, recreation and other day to day activities.

It is important to remember that we are all more than our abilities or limitations. Not everyone defines themselves as having a 'disability' even if they live with a condition that impacts on their mobility, communication or learning. The best thing you can do is ask what works for someone to help them participate.

A Parent's Perspective

Often young people have keen insights and useful strategies for inclusion. Adrian, a parent of a child with Asperger's Syndrome, lit-up as he recalled a basketball teammate's support of his son scoring a goal. "One of the most amazing moments was when a young kid on the team said to my son, 'You are going to get a goal this game.' My son had never gotten a goal."

The entire team got on board with everyone passing to Adrian's son. Adrian tapped on the table as he explained, "He would have a shot, and miss. In the second half, he had a shot and he got it. The crowd erupted because at that point everybody had realised what was going on. No one cared about the score, they were all just out there to help him get a goal."

Young people can be highly attuned to the needs of their peers. By asking about players' ideas, insights, and opinions, clubs may have a deeper understanding of how best to include everyone.



What are the benefits of including everyone?

Sports clubs are fantastic community hubs where local people can come together for a common passion. Clubs offer so much more to community members than just the sports experience on the field.

Why Sports Clubs?

Initiatives to overcome barriers to participation can build the number of club members and volunteers, increase access to funding opportunities for clubs, and encourage better physical and mental health for the whole community. Clubs also gain opportunities to better represent their community profile, on and off the field, through their supporting the teams.

By aiming to increase confidence and knowledge about how to include people of all abilities in sport and recreation, clubs and their members can have more fun, more success, and attract strong community support. Players, parents, and volunteers are the essence of clubs, so removing barriers to participation and inclusion is a win-win.

Benefits Include:

Young People

- Improved mental health
- Increased opportunities to develop sporting and social skills
- Increased confidence and empowerment

Families

- Strengthened relationships between clubs and families
- Increased ability to advocate for their children
- Increased awareness and understanding of individual needs

Sporting Clubs

- Increased membership and volunteers
- Positive representation within the community
- Opportunities to access funding

The Community

- Increased confidence meeting diverse needs
- Greater awareness of diverse individual needs and inclusive practices
- Better social cohesion, reduced stigma and discrimination
- Everyone benefits when everyone is included.

Stepping Stones to Inclusion

Glen Orden Sports Club has a football and cricket team, where everyone is welcome to participate. Young people with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder play in the team, needing no modifications to play the game.

Lesley, the Junior Administrator of the club, knows the benefits of inclusion. She says young people, "love getting out there – they're all treated equally, the kids treat each other equally, they all get that sense of team-mateship, you know, working together as a team". Inclusion in a club can be "a self-confidence build-up... to that child, and to a parent, knowing that they've got support".

They create a fun and welcoming atmosphere through their "code of conduct, which every child signs along with their parent...no swearing, no bullying - that type of thing". The club strives to promote an environment of understanding and respect through policies and practices.

How can everyone be included?

People with individual needs and needs related to disabilities are often underrepresented in sports clubs, unless the club offers a specialised program, or an "all abilities" team. However, there are many ways to include people with individual needs without running a specialised program.

There can be a range of physical access barriers in a sport club environment, given ageing infrastructure, variable surfaces, and competing needs for available funding. But physical barriers are only part of the story; many barriers can be overcome with little or no money. The greatest barriers to people with disabilities becoming more involved in the community are usually attitudinal.

The club culture must be welcoming and inclusive in order to allow young people with individual needs to participate. By asking individuals what their needs are, and being open to making adaptations, many of the greatest barriers can be eliminated.

If the physical environment needs an upgrade to allow better access for people with a physical disability, there are funding opportunities that can help. As a first step, visit the Hobsons Bay Community Fund website at www.hbcommunityfund.org. au. City Councils and the State Government offer grants from time to time as well.

Everyone is different

It is not necessary to have an in-depth knowledge of every different health condition, ethnicity and culture because how they affect individuals varies greatly. Focus on understanding the club member's experience and needs, and what they can do for the club.

The best way to understand a person's needs is to ask them. In cases where this is not possible, conversations with family and friends can help overcome challenges. Page 13 of this Guide ('How can we talk about individual needs?') highlights ways caregivers, young people, and coaches can have meaningful conversations about the way to best include young people with individual needs in sporting clubs.

"It's getting kids out in the fresh air. It's getting them participating in the game. That's reasonably easy depending on whatever learning difficulty, physical disability you've got."

Mark

Barnstoneworth United Junior Football Club (Williamstown)

Small yet mighty

What the Altona Lacrosse club lacks in size, they make up for in ideas. Under the leadership of Bernard, this small yet mighty club is doing great things for the Hobsons Bay community. Bernard is a softly spoken man, with a firm but gentle approach to running the club. When he speaks, people stop and listen.

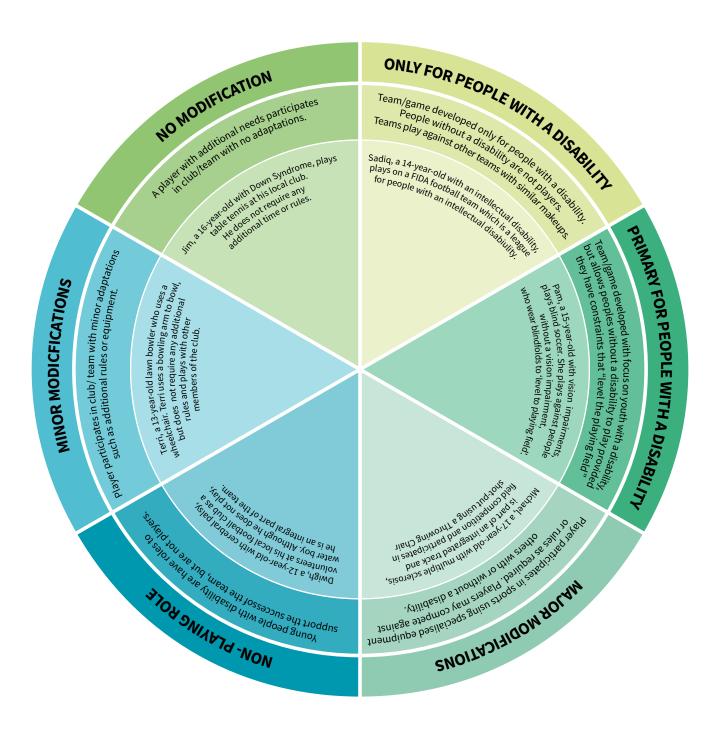
Bernard shared a story about a lacrosse seminar the club held at a local school. During the session, he noticed a child who seemed to have difficulties with mobility sitting on the sidelines.

Without fanfare, he recalled how they simply invited him up, put a kit on him and put him in the goals: "He just used his stick to stop the balls, and that seemed to work for him. He enjoyed it, and the teacher loved it, she said, "That's the best thing he's ever done! Normally he just sits out because he can't run."

Bernard went on to describe how the school session served as a catalyst for the idea of starting a wheelchair lacrosse competition. The Altona Lacrosse Club plans to build an enclosed arena, which would be adaptable to many different activities. It just goes to show, you don't need to be the biggest club to have big ideas. There is always something, no matter how small, that we can all do to include one another.

Inclusion Wheel

The Australian Sports Commission promotes a holistic view of how clubs can engage people with individual needs in sports¹. The inclusion Wheel explains approaches to inclusion and gives examples of adaptation and modification in action.



¹ Australian Sports Commission, Inclusion Spectrum [website], (accessed 2 July 2017) https://www.playbytherules.net.au/got-an-issue/inclusion-and-diversity/inclusion-and-diversity-what-can-you-do/people-with-disability

Accommodating individual needs in clubs

Making changes to club environments may be easier than you think. Below are some tips about overcoming barriers and making adjustments in order to make clubs more inclusive.



GerryBowls (Altona)

General Tips for Inclusion

Everyone can	Clubs can
 Do your best to establish open communication about individual needs Use plain language that is easy to understand Use a person's identified pronouns – not everyone is 'he' or 'she'; some people may go by 'they/them/their' or another pronoun Offer to contribute your skills to the club, e.g. translating languages, operating a BBQ, organising car pools or social functions, scoring etc. Ask before interacting with any support animals, e.g. guide dog 	 Ensure an equitable and inclusive environment from policies to practices Ask young people and their caregivers about their needs when they sign up for the club Encourage coaches, parents and players to use this Inclusion Guide Accept the 'Companion Card' Offer information about club activities in an accessible format e.g. online, large print, visual options Establish a 'buddy system' to welcome new members Encourage people with disabilities to volunteer at the club Have accessible toilets ('accessible' and 'all-gender')

Mental Health

Everyone can	Clubs can
 Talk about mental health openly and non-judgementally Seek training in mental health first aid Ask if people are OK, but refrain from making assumptions about people Refrain from "counselling" a team member, and instead connect them to a qualified mental health practitioner 	 Seek the help of a professional in supporting club members' mental health Encourage social connections between all team members Explore what team members can and cannot control and foster focus only on what they have the power to change Do team building exercises outside of sporting activities to develop good club culture

Limited Mobility and Wheelchair Users

Everyone can	Clubs can
 Ask if the person needs assistance moving around the club Clear obstacles from pathways Let the club know if you see someone in need Communicate in an age appropriate manner Ask if someone would like a seat 	 Have one entrance that is accessible for all rather than a special entry for people with mobility aids Have portable ramp available for access to buildings/playing surface Have an open environment so people in wheelchairs can move around Have seats available throughout club

Hearing Impairments

Everyone can	Clubs can	
 Speak clearly and adjust the rate and volume of speech appropriately - ask them what they prefer Look directly at person while speaking Do not cover mouth or turn away as they may be using lip reading techniques Allow alternative methods of communication Talk to the individual, not their interpreter 	 Ensure that signage is clear and concise. Minimise background noise Ensure there is a quiet zone where communication can take place Ensure club members are aware of the National Relay Service (NRS) for communicating over the phone with people with hearing or speech problems 	

"I explained to them we need a little bit longer... we could maybe need up to 12 weeks for my son to settle in. And I know that sounds like a long time, especially when he's disrupting everyone, but I really wanted him to stay. It was changing his listening ability, he was listening better, not just there, but at home too."

Lisa (Altona)

Vision Impairments

Everyone can	Clubs can	
 Ask if any assistance is needed Identify who is present out loud Tell someone with vision loss when you are leaving the group or conversation Be open to physically guiding them through the space 	Make sure space is well lit and use colour contrast to locate aspects of the environment Ensure that signage is clear, and concise Ensure signs use large print and symbols Use hand rails and colour contrasting edges on steps and ramps	
 Ask if they want you to describe the layout of the area – especially any obstacles like stairs or furniture Ask before interacting with any support animals, e.g. guide dog 	Ensure information is available in large print on request	

Intellectual Impairments/Disorders

Everyone can	Clubs can	
 Speak in simple, short sentences Refrain from overwhelming with information Give feedback and encouragement 'in the moment' Demonstrate and model behaviour and instructions Check for understanding by asking for a demonstration or description Phrase instructions as 'what to do' instead of 'what not to do' 	 Break instructions down into simple and direct steps Provide visual cues for instructions e.g. pictures, photos, symbols Alert coaches to give physical demonstrations of instructions or walk through the activity together, and provide opportunities to practice skill/task before moving onto a new one 	

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)

Everyone can	Clubs can
 Be considerate of other peoples' cultures and differences Promote shared cultural and linguistic activities Have difficult conversations about instances of exclusion, discrimination, and racism Be mindful of dietary requirements and cultural practices 	 Start culturally specific programs addressing specific needs Be flexible around cultural requirements for uniforms Create clear boundaries against discriminatory behavior Display welcome signs in different languages Establish club inclusion policies and have them on display Consider allocating a space for cultural practices e.g. praying

Financially Disadvantaged

Everyone can	Clubs can	
 Be aware that not everyone can afford new equipment or clothing Pass on sporting uniforms or equipment you don't need Start of swap-shop to help others afford the cost of sports Ask if anyone needs help getting to or from the game or coaching sessions 	 Allow payment to be made in instalments Offer a program where volunteering can reduce club fees Allow members to trade in uniforms for reduced fees Start fundraising initiatives to help cover costs Don't charge players and supporters extra to go to games 	

What can we do to help people participate?

Sports clubs are fantastic community hubs where people can come together. There are many things clubs can do to help promote participation of people with individual needs.

Club Culture

Promote an inclusive and welcoming club culture.

Arrange training or information sessions for members to raise awareness about individual needs and how to communicate with them about it. This can be arranged through Council or some of the organisations listed at the end of this document.

All club members and volunteers can be actively involved in including people with individual needs in the club. For example, they could:

- Provide a welcoming environment for new club members through assigning a club 'greeter'
- Offer to be a 'buddy' or establish a 'buddy system'
- Offer to pick up and drop off participants by establishing a carpool
- Assist a volunteer with individual needs until they can independently complete their volunteer job roles
- Volunteer to manage, coach, or umpire a team of people needing adaptations or modifications

Social members

Enable social members to participate in training sessions.

People can get the physical health benefits of the sport even if they do not want to participate at a competitive level. A great way to increase membership at your club is to cater to people who don't want to play competitively but would like the health benefits of training.

Non-players can be incorporated into all aspects of training – not just the fitness or sports skills aspects. They could also participate in an adapted training session run alongside club training.

Participants would need to sign up as social members to be covered by the club's insurance for the training sessions, which could offer an additional revenue stream for the club.

"We don't tolerate any bullying whatsoever... we try and encourage a safe environment for them, so they know if they've got a problem they can come and talk to me – parents and children."

Lesley Glen Orden Club (Werribee)

Did you know?

The Williamstown Seagulls Football Integration Development Association

(FIDA) club have greatly benefited from Come and Try Days. They now run a mixed-gender team for people with intellectual disabilities aged over fourteen. The FIDA league started in 1990 with a Come and Try Day, where only half a dozen people were expected to attend. However, more than ninety people showed up, and now the FIDA league has over six hundred players, and several Victorian branches.

Inclusion in Teams

Many people with individual needs such as disabilities can be included in sporting teams with minor adjustments to equipment, technique and coaching – particularly at a junior and social level. Talent and skill can be found in everyone given the right opportunities and considerations.

In competitive teams, where performance is the focus—more than participation or fun—it is understandable that the highest performing team members are chosen to compete. Others can still be involved in the team in a supporting role and given the opportunity to compete in 'friendlies' and social matches.

Most training drills can be made suitable for all participants or can be modified to suit an individual. Coaches may be able to access training to help enable them to coach young people with disabilities, see Section 8 ('How can we link with community support?') for more details.

Come and Try days

Organise 'Come and Try' days to get community members into your club

'Come and Try' days are a great way to introduce new people to your club and sport. They give community members the chance to come down and see what your club has to offer. Come and Try days are aimed at individuals with little or no experience playing the sport and they can cater to a wide range of abilities and ages.

They allow community members the opportunity to explore the sport without making a specific commitment. Clubs run the sport with these community members – going over basics, safety, rules, and providing a non-judgemental space to test out skills with other players.

BB's Pool Team - Just Do Your Best

Located in Yarraville, Annecto David's House gives advice and support for independent living. Kim, Glen, and Matthew are long term service users of David's House, where they first started playing pool. They are now members of the BB's pool team based at the Altona Sports Club.

The BB's pool team has been playing competitively for over 10 years. A team of eight players attend a weekly pool tournament in the local area. Other teams have been flexible about game times to enable the BB's to compete.

Having won many trophies, the BBs are an integral part of the pool competition. For members of the team, the social aspects of the competition are the best part. They all love meeting and spending time with other people, having the opportunity to play together, and grabbing some dinner and drinks before and after games.

The enthusiasm of the players is infectious. The social benefits of participating in sport can sometimes be overlooked, but this story illustrates the positive difference it can make to people's lives.

The BBs have been able to come together and make a positive change in each other's lives, as well as enhancing the culture of their sporting association. Their philosophy is simple: "Try. Just do your best".



Specialised programs

Run a specialised program or team for people with individual needs.

In a number of sports there are specialised leagues for people needing significant adaptations and modifications in order to participate in sport. Once the number of participants is sufficient and the required skill level achieved, the team can be entered into a league. This could be a great way of attracting new members and identifying potential players for other teams at your club.

Not all people necessarily want to compete so it could be a training only program with occasional 'friendlies' with other teams in the area. Contact other clubs to set up a game.

Space and Grounds

If you can, consider offering your clubrooms and other spaces for use by other community groups or teams, where appropriate.

Many club pavilions are not used during business hours when community groups require spaces. Enabling community groups to utilise your space during the day is a great way for community members to familiarise themselves with the space and increase the likelihood of them supporting the club on game day or becoming a social member.

Contact support services (listed on pages A to B to offer your space and make sure it is as accessible as possible.

Uniquely Australian

The Starfish Nippers is a branch of the larger Nippers program within the Williamstown Surf Life Saving Club. It aims to teach kids with individual needs about water safety - skills they would not have been able to learn without this kind of specialised program.

The Starfish Nippers program has social benefits for parents, but perhaps most importantly, it brings joy to the kids and gives them the opportunity to have fun in the water. The Coach, Josh, says "if it increased their confidence around the water, and increased their ability to participate in something they might not normally participate in, then I think we succeeded."

This program creates a safe and welcoming space for kids whose needs may otherwise be overlooked. The Starfish Nippers allows everyone to experience the therapeutic potential the sea offers, and affords everyone a uniquely Australian experience. As Josh explains, it gives "everyone the opportunity who wants the opportunity."

The Starfish Nippers program provides a welcoming environment for all newcomers, and the club is truly a leader throughout the Hobsons Bay community when it comes to inclusion.

Volunteer roles

Engage people with disabilities as club volunteers to fulfil required roles on training and match days.

As with many community members, people with disabilities like to be able to give back to their community and contribute meaningfully. Clubs are run by volunteers and there are many tasks that must be done each week for the teams to be able to take to the field or court.

Engaging a community member with physical, cognitive or behavioural impairment to fulfil these roles helps the club while empowering the individual.

Raising Funds

Run fundraising activities around days of awareness in partnership with local organisations.

Hosting awareness or fundraising events for charitable organisations or campaigns is a great way to support our diverse community, raise money for those in need and improve your club's profile. These funds can also be used for club activities and members.

Please consider applying for the Hobsons Bay Community Grants or the Hobsons Bay Community Fund Grants for funding to increase participation in your club by people with individual needs.

Legal awareness

Ensure members are aware of human rights legislation.

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992 is legislation that protects people with a disability from being treated unfairly or unfavourably as a result of their disability. It is important that the club is aware of their obligations in relation to this legislation and take actions to ensure they do not treat people with a disability less fairly than other community members. For more information and advice contact the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission enquiry line on 1300 292 153.

"Funding helps a lot so that we can send people off to courses. I know our council has put together a few things to get our volunteers to do classes on things like chasing funds and grants and programs like that, which will help."

Bernard (Altona)



Simple Yet Powerful

The Barnstoneworth United Junior Football Club runs the Football-4-Fun program. This team is free and open to all children ages 6 to 15, with no experience required.

"You want to help the community, and it's an easy way to do it. Our purpose is straightforward—get them out into the fresh air, get them playing a bit of a game and try to test their physical ability a little bit, to help with coordination, and a bit of the team element," Mark, the coordinator, explained.

The Football-4-Fun program helps provide kids with a fun and safe space for exercise, building motor-skills, and fostering friendships. "You see the joy on the kids' faces when they're running around and having a kick, and the parents."

It is easy to get bogged down with limited resources and finances, but Football 4 Fun highlights the fact that with a positive attitude, inclusive programs can run successfully with little or no additional costs.

When asked what advice Mark could give to other clubs considering starting a program like this, he said, "Give it a go! It's very rewarding to put on a program like that. It is a rewarding way to give back to the community...Even if you just had a ball and a field, you could do something. It's not complicated. A field and a ball, you can make it work".

How can we talk about individual needs?

It is important to consider language when talking with or about people with individual needs – as it often reflects unconscious attitudes and beliefs that can further isolate people.

Sometimes, the fear of offending a person means people choose to say nothing at all. This prevents us from learning and communicating openly with people who require modifications or adaptations to participate. Use the following tips as a basis for establishing open lines of communication between clubs and the community.

Communicating with community members

Communication Tips

- Watch a person's body language and try to respond to any nonverbal cues
- Use all your communication skills visual and verbal and back these up with positive body language and facial expressions
- Speak directly to the individual not to their interpreter or assistant
- Remember, some people may not always communicate using speech. Some write messages and/or use computerised systems, symbols, sign language, gestures, and/or eye movements
- Be polite and introduce yourself to everyone, including people with individual needs
- Keep in mind a person's age and speak to them in an age appropriate manner
- Be considerate of the extra time it may take some people to process information they've been given

Things to avoid

- Shouting, using big hand gestures, or speaking with exaggerated slowness - just speak clearly
- Pushing a person's wheelchair if they haven't asked you to, or hanging things from a person's wheelchair (unless you have permission)
- Distracting a support or assistance animal
- Pretending you have understood something if you have not
- Assuming someone needs help always ask first

The Power of Connection

Before moving to Werribee, the TwayJay's lived in a Thai-Burmese refugee camp. They have five children in total and two still living at home. Their son is 24 and has Down syndrome, and their daughter is 28 and has learning difficulties. Both attend a Wyndham City Council program every Thursday where they are picked up from home, and taken on field trips. These weekly trips include going out for meals, and playing sports such as soccer and AFL.

One of the organisations that was linked with the TwayJay family invited them along with other participants with individual needs for a bowling session, as they had mentioned having a love of bowling – in addition to soccer and AFL. They appreciated this program because they did not know the rules, but instead of just watching, they were taught how to play the game and the entire family was able to participate.

Their involvement with Wyndham Council programs highlight the value of low-cost, and accessible services, and the key roles bi-lingual service workers play in linking people with available programs. Though the TwayJay's do not speak English, and their son and daughter are non-verbal, they can still be involved in community life with a bit of support from community members. Their story illuminates the diverse stories of the Wyndham community and the power inclusion has in allowing people to feel a sense of belonging.

Communicating about community members

The best use of language when referring to people with individual needs is person-first and needs second (when relevant). Some labels can be seen as discriminatory, demeaning, and/or patronising. It is also important to avoid racist, queer phobic, sexist, and stigmatising language.

Terms to use	Terms to avoid	
People with a disability	Disabled; Physically/mentally/ vertically challenged; Differently abled; Special	
Person who is deaf or hard of hearing	Deaf (the)	
Person with visual impairment (maybe not using the word blind at all)	Blind (the), visually impaired (the)	
Wheelchair user	Wheelchair bound	
Person has/with a 'condition'	Suffer from, afflicted with 'condition'	
Person with an intellectual disability	Mentally retarded	
Disability accessible parking/toilet	Disabled parking/toilet	
Person with a mental illness or person with (specify the condition)	Insane, lunatic, maniac, mental patient, neurotic, psycho.	

Remember that people with individual needs deserve the same respect and treatment as any other member of the club. A person with individual needs should also be made aware of any club rules and be expected to abide them. You may need to make the code of conduct or club rules available in an alternative format.

Communication tips for families and coaches

Communication between parents or caregivers and club members is vital. Often, a parent's willingness to discuss their child's needs is based on how comfortable they feel. Some caregivers and siblings may want to disclose a family-member's individual needs when starting at a new club; however, others may not feel comfortable talking about it, out of fear for their child (or themselves) being excluded, labelled, or misunderstood.

It is important to ensure that the club and all those involved with the club provide a positive environment which is welcoming and non-judgemental. Once this has been achieved, caregivers may feel more comfortable in talking about their child's needs with the relevant members of the club (e.g., club administrators, coaches, and staff).

For Coaches

Pre-season: Focus on building a positive relationship with parents or caregivers early. Aim to start this process during the pre-season, by promoting open discussion and a willingness to listen.

This can help to create strategies which allow young people to develop necessary skills to participate in sport and the club environment.

Include a section on enrolment forms that asks about individual needs (e.g., "does your child require adaptations or modifications to coaching or other activities").

Ask caregivers about the needs, abilities, and the potential limitations of the young person.

Discuss level of personal awareness of/experience working with disabilities.

Explain relevant policies, codes of conduct, and other important aspects of the club to caregivers.

Mid-season: In the middle of the season, talk about the young person's progress with caregivers and the young person themselves.

- Focus on positives and achievable aims for building on skills or behaviour, as caregivers and players respond better strength-based feedback.
- Highlight the ways the player is a valued member of the team and/or club environment
- Use positive exceptions to encourage consistency or improvement, based on an ability they have demonstrated (even if only once)
- Focus on the benefit to the young person themselves of addressing any problem behaviour, e.g. I think you want to get along with people and enjoy the game, so follow the code of conduct.
- Honestly discuss any issues that have arisen with parents and young people, in order to try and find mutually acceptable solutions as soon as possible.

Post-season: After the season, review the season with parents and the young person themselves.

- Highlight what the young person has done well in the
- Raise any areas which can be improved before the next
- Explore potential barriers/issues that may impact on the young person's ability to participate in the next season.

For Parents and Caregivers

Pre-season: Prior to joining, look into how inclusive the club environment is and whether it suits your child's needs and interests.

- If the club seems right for your child, explain any individual needs the child might have.
- Foster good relationships and open communication with the coach and club members.
- Discuss what may help to ensure a safe, inclusive, and fun experience for the young person and their team.
- If the club is not suitable, ask if they know any other local clubs that may be more suitable.

Mid-season: During the middle of the season, review the young person's current progress with both them and the coach.

- Provide feedback about how well the club is accommodating the child's needs – positive and negative.
- Listen to any feedback provided by the coach and work together to help the young person develop their personal and social skills.
- Advise the coach of any potential issues or concerns, in order for them to be addressed as soon as possible.

Post-season: After the season has ended, it is important to discuss the young person's experience with everyone.

- Provide feedback about the overall experience as a caregiver.
- Get the young person to provide feedback on their experience.
- Ask if/how more involvement next season would be helpful.
- Inform coaches of any potential barriers which may impact the young person's ability to continue next season.

"We want our son to be included and accepted as he is. But we also expect him to pull his weight. We want the organizers to have that expectation of him as well."

Lisa (Altona)

The Importance of Communication

Kim is as a parent of a child with autism, and plays an important role at the Williamstown Cannons Basketball Club. Kim, with the support of the Williamstown Cannons, developed a basketballtraining program for kids with individual needs. This has expanded opportunities for young people in the area, but also started changing club culture, creating more room for those who have often been left out.

Kim has often sought feedback from other parents about her son's participation in school and sporting programs. Kim has found parents and other young people to be warm and supportive. Parents have told her, "we are really thankful that our kids get to have an opportunity to learn that there are different people in life and you just have to find a way to communicate with them...."

We are all different, we all have different needs and it is important to acknowledge just how powerful it is to be able to learn from one another.

How can we value diversity and increase awareness?

Hobsons Bay and Wyndham are home to many different people from all walks of life.

It is important that diverse voices are heard and community members are represented. Here are some ways in which to strengthen diversity to increase awareness of diversity and use the full range of strengths and experiences within a diverse community

- Arrange fundraising for a group or organisation on days of recognition – volunteer club members can host a raffle and/ or sell awareness merchandise
- Organise a one-off event/match/training marathon to raise funds for a local charity
- Partner with a local disability support organisation to deliver a fitness or skills-based program to their members
- Have club members participate in a modified form of their sport e.g. blind soccer, wheelchair rugby, seated volleyball invite athletes from that sport to coach you
- Promote your club's activities and inclusion champions to local media
- Include diverse club members and identities in promotional
- Display symbols of support and acceptance throughout club grounds
- Make this Inclusion Guide available and arrange discussions with other clubs about what they are doing.

Heart of Gold

The Rainbow Club of Point Cook is a parent- and carer-led 'not for profit' swim service, which provides a private 20-minute swim session each week for young people who need adaptations and modifications to water activities in order to participate. It was created by Stephen, the father of a young person with autism.

The club currently provides private swim sessions to 150 children. Sessions in the Rainbow Club are fluid and flexible; young people and their parents have the power to make decisions about what happens in each session.

Stephen and other parents talk highly of the club's swim instructors, saying they "are patient, have hearts of gold, and get great satisfaction out of working with the kids". To help instructors better understand the needs of swimmers and connect with them, the Rainbow Club enrolment form asks parents about their child's individual needs.



How can we link with community support?

There are many local, State and national organisations that can be accessed to link sporting clubs with the community.

There are many local, State and national organisations that can be accessed to link sporting clubs with the community.

Speak with your local council, or some of the resources listed below about your ideas for making your club more inclusive. They can provide guidance, help with promotional material, and link you to the disability community. For further assistance and resources for including people with a disability in your club contact your State Sporting Association or look through the organizations below. All sporting associations now have inclusion policies as a requirement of receiving government funding. Most will welcome ideas and help in putting those policies into practice.

Below are some organisations that sporting clubs can connect or partner with to increase the membership of people with individual needs. Please note this is by no means an exhaustive list but it is an indication of services and courses that may be useful when reaching out for help.

Not all services will have the information or advice that you seek, but it is important to acknowledge that often services have a great awareness of other services and resources within the same area. Even though one person may not directly be able to help you, it is likely they are able to refer you to someone more relevant – all you have to do is ask.

Services	Details & Contact Information
Support Programs	
Annecto - David's House	The annecto David House Hub offers government- funded activities and courses, to assist people with disability (18+) connect with their community and increase learning and independence. Together, we'll develop a plan that identifies your interests and establishes goals that will increase your skills- leading to employment, volunteering or hobbies.
	Annecto is all about making this possible. Phone: (03) 9314 0988
	Email: enquires@annecto.org.au
Extended Families	A program that links children with a disability to volunteers who assist the child to engage in sport and recreation activities. Phone: 9355 8848 Email: northwest@extendedfamilies.org.au
Yooralla	Yooralla provides a wide range of tailored, flexible and quality services for people with disability of all ages and needs. Phone: 9666 4500 Website: https://www.yooralla.com.au
Courses and Training	
Mental Health First Aid	MHFA courses teach mental health first aid strategies to members of the public. Mental health first aid is the help provided to a person who is developing a mental health problem, experiencing a worsening of a mental health problem, or in a mental health crisis. First aid is given until appropriate professional health is received or the crisis resolves.
	Phone: 9079 0200 Website: https://mhfa.com.au
YouMeUs – Achieving Inclusion	An inclusive online training course aimed at leisure center staff to build skills and confidence to engage and include people with a disability. The training course may not be suitable for all sporting clubs however there are resources available on the website that could be helpful.
	Website: www.youmeus.org.au

Services	Details & Contact Information	
Cultural Awareness Training		
VASCAL (Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Ltd.)	The Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Limited is the state wide peak body providing advice to Government on a range of issues. It is a community based, community controlled organisation comprising representatives from Koorie organisations across the state. Established in 1984, communities to develop local and state sporting initiatives, the the VACSAL has been instrumental in assisting the Victorian Aboriginal community strengthening kinship and community connectedness through sports participation. Our strategic priority areas are; Aboriginal youth sport and recreation participation, assisting Aboriginal promotion and improve Aboriginal health, social and emotional wellbeing by increasing participation in sport and recreation activities and strengthening Aboriginal culture and identity by providing opportunities for the community to come together. Phone: 9416 4266 Email: reception@vascal.org.au	
Centre for Multicultural Youth	Provide support for young people of migrant and refugee backgrounds as they make Australia their home. An online resource, Game Plan, is readily available to the community and specifically looks at cultural inclusion of young people in sporting clubs. Phone: 9340 3700 Website: http://www.cmy.net.au	
AFL Sports Ready Education and Employment	Building your social awareness and challenging your beliefs will help you to become leaders of positive change. Our program is aimed at people who wish to obtain a greater understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and culture and are seeking practical assistance to build culturally inclusion workplaces. Phone: 1300 133 222 Website: https://www.aflsportsready.com.au/indigenous/cultural-awareness-training	
SALT – Sport and Life Training	Education, culture and leadership sessions for sporting clubs, schools and businesses. Phone: 0414 409 175 Website: www.sportandlifetraining.com.au Email: info@sportandlifetraining.com.au	
Mental Health		
Beyond Blue	Information about depression, anxiety and suicide. Phone: 1300 22 4636 Website: www.beyondblue.org.au/	
Headspace	Headspace provides mental health information and care for young people aged 12-25. Phone: 8001 2366 Location: Werribee Email: https://headspace.org.au/	
Mind Australia Limited	A community-managed specialist mental health service provider. They have numerous locations across the country, including one in Hobsons Bay. Phone: 1300 286 463 Website: https://www.mindaustralia.org.au	
Inclusion Resources		
Access for all Abilities (AAA) PLAY	Operated by Reclink Australia, Access for All Abilities (AAA play) provides Australia's only first-point-of call service connecting people with a disability to sports and recreational opportunities in Melbourne, Victoria. Phone: 1800 222 842 Website: www.aaavic.org.au Email: request@aaavic.org.au	
Deaf Sports Australia	Aim to facilitate and support the participation of deaf Australians in all levels of sport, their website includes tips for communication, modifications and coaching. Phone: 9473 1191 Website: www.deafsports.org.au	
Volunteer Development		
Sports Community	Sports Community seeks to assist 'grass roots' sports clubs to be successful by providing free access to information and resources required by clubs and their volunteers including tips on increasing participation which includes a section on disability inclusion: Phone: Website: https://sportscommunity.com.au/	

Sport and Recreation Clubs whose members have contributed to this resource		
Glen Orden Sports Club - AFL and Cricket:	Website: www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/directory/glen-orden-sports-club Address: 53-57 Kookaburra Avenue Werribee 3030 Postal Address: PO Box 1235 Werribee Plaza 3030 Phone: 0400 394 311 Mobile: 0400 394 311 Email: info@glenordensportsclub.com.au Glen Orden Sports Club is a family orientated club that provides the opportunity to play cricket from a junior through to a	
	senior, and football from junors to seniors including over 47's, an all women's team and an all girls football team in 2017.	
Powerhouse Rugby:	Website: powerhouserugby.com.au Address: Langshaws Reserve, Maddox Rd, Altona North Email: jnr_coordinator@powerhouserugby.com.au	
Rainbow Club of Point Cook Swimming:	Rainbow Club of Point Cook Inc.(RCPC) is a parent/carer led & run 'not for profit' charitable service for kids with special needs	
	Website: www.rainbowclub.org.au Email: steve@rainbowclub.org.au	
Barnstoneworth United Junior Football Club:	Website: www.bujfc.com Phone: 0487 916 590 Email: mark.pilditch@gmail.com Phone: 0421 050 436	
Altona Lacrosse:	Website: www.altonalacrosse.com.au Address: Paisley Park, Mason Street, Altona North, VIC 3025 Phone: (03) 9391 0330 Email (General Information): info@altonalacrosse.com.au Email (Recruitment): recruitment@altonalacrosse.com.au	
Altona North Bowls Club:	Website: www.altonanorth.bowls.com.au/site/index.cfm?fuseaction=display_main&OrgID=18113 Phone: 93913112	
Williamstown Seagulls Football Integration Development Association (FIDA) Football Club:	The Victorian FIDA (Football Integration Development Association) Football League exists to provide girls and boys 14yrs and over with an intellectual disability the opportunity to participate in Australian Rules Football, at a competitive level. Contact Name: Rob Klemm Email: klemm.robert.r@edumail.vic.gov.au Website: http://wsfida.com Phone: 0419 136 992	
Williamstown Seagulls Football Club	Website: www.williamstownfc.com.au/ Address (Admin): Seagulls Nest, Level 1, 1 Mason Street, Newport 3015 Address: Burbank Oval, Morris Street, Williamstown 3016 Email: admin@williamstownfc.com.au Phone: 03 9391 0309	
Williamstown Cannons Basketball Club:	Website: www.williamstowncannons.org.au Email: secretary@williamstowncannons.org.au Phone: 0458 304 202	
Williamstown Swimming and Surf Life Saving Club:	Website: www.williamstownslsc.org.au Phone: 0478 416 004 Email: info@williamstownslsc.org.au	
Hoppers Club Pool Competition	Website: www.hoppersclub.com.au/pool/ Phone: 0417 344 065	
Altona North Community Library Monthly Minecraft	Website: libraries.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au/youth/ Phone: (03) 9932 2303	
Altona Badminton Centre	Website: www.wsbaonline.com/ Phone: 9391 0880 Email: wsbasocciation@bigpond.com	
Altona Magic Soccer Club	Website: www.altonamagic.com.au/ Phone: (03) 9391 4017 Email: altonamagicfc@hotmail.com	
Wynbay Bulldogs	The aim of the Wynbay Football Team is to create an inclusive team where everyone is welcome, and the players and supporters to feel like they belong. Being a member of the team also gives players access to services, support, and every opportunity to succeed in their future. The team is coached by Leading Senior Constable Scott Sutton For more information about the team or if you are interested in playing in the Reclink Football League you can contact Scott Sutton Altona North Police Station on 9392 3272 or Rhonda Collins at Latitude: Directions for young people on 9315 0061.	

Sport and Recreation Clubs whose members have contributed to this resource	
Wyndham Netball Association	Wyndham Netball Association (WNA) cater for netballers from the age of 5 upwards by providing NetSetGo, Junior, Open Age Ladies and Mixed competitions. In 2016 Wyndham Netball Association started an All Boys program. All competitions are conducted from Eagle Stadium. Email: enquiries@wyndhamnetball.com.au Phone: 0405 753 834 (During our office hours only) Website: www.wyndhamnetball.com.au/
Werribee Junior Cricket Club	Email: werribeejuniors@club.cricketvictoria.com.au Website: werribeejuniors.vic.cricket.com.au/ Mobile: 0491 127 816
Resilience Gymnastics College	Address: 3, 13-15 Graham Court, Hoppers Crossing, Melbourne VIC 3029 Phone: 03 9369 3253 Email: info@www.resiliencegymnastics.com.au Website: www.resiliencegymnastics.com.au
Newport Baseball Club	Website: http://www.newportrams.com/ Address: 120 Park Cres, Williamstown North VIC 3016 Phone: (03) 9397 1254
Melbourne Aces Baseball Victoria	Phone: (03) 8360 9371 Address: Melbourne Ballpark, Merton Street, Laverton VIC 3028 Email: info@melbourneaces.com.au Website: melbourneaces.com.au
Footscray City Gymnastics Club	Established as a not for profit gymnastics club in 1981 Phone: (03) 9315 4010 Email: info@fcgc.com.au Address: 10 Mitford Pde, West Footscray, 3012



A Brief History of Community Partnership

In 2014, the Hobsons Bay Community Fund (HBCF) and the University of Melbourne began exploring how they could work together as long-term partners to support community health and wellbeing. Both organisations aim to be guided by our communities about priorities and to support community organisations and volunteer activities.

A partnership project was made possible by HBCF funds received from South West Melbourne Medicare Local (covering Hobsons Bay and Wyndham communities) as part of its wind-up in 2015. HBCF and the University of Melbourne collaborated to enable students living in the area, together with international exchange students, to contribute to the local community while also completing learning towards their degree.

For several months each year, students are hosted by local real estate business Compton Green to find out how young people who face barriers to participation can be included in sport and recreation. They investigate what is already working, and facilitate information-sharing and connections that strengthen and sustain local action.

The Inclusion project was undertaken with both Hobsons Bay and Wyndham Councils, together with the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences at Melbourne University. Both the University and HBCF contribute \$10,000 annually to the project, with all student supervision costs absorbed by the University.

Giving all young people the chance to stay connected to local sport and recreation opportunities has become a project that a wide range of clubs, families, community services, schools and businesses have joined in supporting. We welcome the spirit of cooperation and mutual commitment and look forward to building together on the outcomes of the project.

We would like to give special thanks to the people who made this project possible:

Tom Bevan Janet Bailie Kate Naish Kath Sellick Jan Thomas Adrian Butera **Leah Dimitriadis Brittany White** Ceren Buyukata Sara el Khatib Jyoti Verma Genevieve Dubois **Hobsons Bay Community Fund** University of Melbourne School of Health Sciences Hobsons Bay City Council Wyndham City Council

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