

TIPSHEET

CREATING AN INCLUSIVE SPORTING ENVIRONMENT

The culture of a club or sporting group can have a positive or negative influence on member's mental health and wellbeing.

Your club or sporting group has the opportunity to foster a culture that promotes positive mental health and wellbeing, and drive inclusivity for all members. An inclusive culture will be created by demonstrating through actions and policy that mental health and wellbeing issues are important and deserve time and attention.

The purpose of this **Creating an Inclusive Sporting Environment Tipsheet** is to provide you with information and actions that your club or sporting group can take to create an inclusive culture.



10 TIPS TO CREATING AN INCLUSIVE SPORTING ENVIRONMENT

1

Implement and share a **Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy** and **Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy** in your club or sporting group. Templates are available in the **Club and Community eToolkit for Mental Health and Wellbeing** to help you create these.

2

Consider providing training for key club or sporting group members to develop knowledge and skills to assist with mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as upskilling members to respond as per their capacity. Visit the **True Sport – Community Links** webpage for examples of organisations that provide training.

3

Raise awareness by sharing mental health and wellbeing policies, processes and resources (such as those found in the **True Sport eToolkits**) that support members to address mental health and wellbeing issues in their club or sporting group.

4

Ensure club leaders, members, and administrators know how to access any support they need and who key points of contact are at your club or sporting group. Check out the **Mental Health Champion** resources to find out how to appoint a Mental Health Champion in your club or sporting group.

5

Provide networking opportunities for your members to openly discuss mental health and wellbeing, and share ideas and experiences.

6

Using positive and judgement free language. For example:

“I understand. That sounds really challenging for you. I can assist with providing you with the steps you can take to get the support that you need.”

7

Making statements and using imagery on websites that appropriately acknowledges mental health and wellbeing issues, and promotes positive mental health and wellbeing strategies, including always sharing links to support services such as the **Where to Seek Help** document.

8

Celebrating and supporting diversity within your sport can significantly contribute to mental health and wellbeing. This is due to minority and at-risk groups being more likely to feel excluded or stigmatised, and experience a mental health or wellbeing issue. Some practical examples of how a club or sporting group might do this includes:

- **Inclusive policies:** Review and update your club or sporting group’s policies and code of conduct to explicitly prohibit discrimination and promote inclusivity based on cultural background, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, and ability.
- **Diversity awareness events:** Organise events or workshops that showcase and celebrate the diverse backgrounds of your members. This could include cultural presentations, food festivals, or storytelling sessions.
- **Collaboration:** Partner with local community organisations that serve diverse populations to host joint events, clinics, or tournaments.
- **Diverse programming:** Offer programs, classes, or sessions that cater to specific populations, such as beginner options, women-only classes, senior sessions, or adaptive sports for those with disabilities.
- **Tailored mental health and wellbeing support:** Recognise the unique mental health and wellbeing challenges that diverse populations might face by offering resources, workshops, or mental health and wellbeing support tailored to address these specific needs.
- **Safe people:** Create a safe environment within your club or sporting group where members can discuss their experiences and challenges related to their diverse backgrounds without fear of judgement and with achieving a practical outcome.

9

Promote events or awareness campaigns throughout the sporting calendar to encourage inclusivity and promote help seeking behaviour. Campaigns can link with external organisations and agencies or be specific to your sporting code. Common examples of this already happening in many sports includes:

- Mental Health rounds
- Indigenous rounds
- Mental Health Awareness Week
- Are you OK? day, or
- Harmony Week

10

Partner or link in with charities, organisations, local governments, and businesses to help promote positive mental health and wellbeing outcomes. This can be a great way to also gain sponsorship, new members and support for your club or sporting group while raising your profile in the community.



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In an Emergency Dial 000
For support call Lifeline 13 11 14
or visit **True Sport – Community Links** for more services.

