

## KEY ACTION AREA 4.1:

The SSA, including staff and volunteers, understands the diverse circumstances of children and young people, and provides support and responds to those who are vulnerable.

## OVERVIEW

It is important for your SSA to firstly acknowledge that children and young people have diverse circumstances and acknowledge the benefits of a diverse membership to your SSA, as well as to the broader community.

Next, it is important for your SSA to understand the diverse circumstances of the children and young people who are involved in it. This information can be gained through a range of means, including your SSA's registration process and open and regular communication with families, carers, and children and young people (see [National Principle 2](#) and [National Principle 3](#) resources). Once the diverse circumstances of the children and young people are understood, your SSA will be able to identify what support is required in the sports context, as well as respond to those who are more vulnerable. In other words, your SSA needs to understand the circumstances of its children and young people in relation to how these might influence their involvement and participation. Remember, your SSA staff and volunteers **do not need to be experts**, but they need to seek guidance, to enable involvement and participation by all children and young people. This can be achieved through a range of approaches as outlined below.

It is valuable and beneficial to have a diverse volunteer and staff workforce and for this diversity to reflect the lives and identities of the children and young people involved in your SSA. This enables children and young people to have role models within your SSA to aspire to. Therefore, you can consider whether your recruitment processes could be enhanced to encourage recruitment and retention of staff and volunteers from diverse backgrounds. It is recommended that your SSA's environment reflects the lives and identities of the children and young people involved within it, through images and role models. Diverse images and photos can be shared on your website, social media platforms, on posters and on pull-up banners (with the appropriate permissions to use the photographs of course!).

It is important for your SSA to embed respect for, and celebration of, diversity and cultural differences in all of its policies and practices, as well as your SSA staff and volunteers understanding that the cultural identity or religious beliefs of children and young people are fundamental to their wellbeing.

It is important for your SSA staff and volunteers to implement practices that promote the inclusion and safety of children and young people with diverse needs. This includes promoting your SSA as an inclusive organisation where all children and young people are welcomed, as well as your SSA creating the conditions and environment that makes it accessible for all children and young people – both physically accessible as well as accessible in terms of provision of information.

In order to achieve the above it is essential for your SSA to provide opportunity and active encouragement for regular feedback and input from children, young people and their families (see [National Principle 2](#) and [National Principle 3](#) resources).



<b>EXAMPLE SSA ACTIONS TO WORK TOWARDS IMPLEMENTING KEY ACTION AREA 4.1</b>	<p>The SSA’s environment reflects the lives and identities of the children and young people within it, through positive images and role models.</p>
	<p>Respect for, and celebration of, diversity and cultural differences is embedded in all SSA policies and practices, and affirms that the cultural identity or religious beliefs of children and young people are fundamental to their wellbeing.</p>
	<p>The SSA ensures that practices are in place to promote the inclusion and safety of children and young people with diverse needs.</p>
	<p>All children, young people and families, including those from diverse backgrounds, are supported to give feedback.</p>

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If you need support:

- > [Mental health community links](#)
- > [Reporting flowchart](#)

