



Violence against women is a serious public health issue in Australia and across the globe, with an estimated **35%** of women worldwide having experienced either physical and/or sexual partner violence at some point in their lives. Violence against women is **prevalent**, but also **preventable**.

Sporting clubs have often been described as the 'heart and soul' of rural and regional communities, and can play a key role in shaping positive community attitudes and behaviour. By promoting equality and removing gendered practices, clubs can address the underlying drivers of violence against women, and challenge the attitudes and cultures that support violence against women.

Creating an inclusive and respectful culture on and off the playing field will help increase the participation and satisfaction of club members, as well as;

- Ensure both men and women can fully participate in all aspects of the club
- Increase retention of club members
- Promote a family friendly environment which will attract new members
- Improve the morale and club culture
- Ensure all members feel respected and valued
- Promote the safety of club members

Possible Actions

Club Facilities

- Review club facilities to ensure there is a parent's room, available to both male and female carers. If there is no parents room, review possible options of making one available to carers.
- Provide toys in the clubrooms for children
- Ensure all playgrounds are fenced off and protected from oncoming traffic
- Ensure the clubrooms are pram and wheelchair friendly
- Ensure club change rooms meet the needs of both male and female members e.g. are private, have hot showers – if currently not available, investigate the possibility of grant funding to support the implementation of such facilities

Promoting your club

- Review club promotional material (e.g. Facebook page, club website, club promotional images), and ensure both men and women, and a diverse membership of the club are represented
- Review clubrooms and ensure the awards and achievements of both male and female members are equally displayed e.g. club life members, players that have reached milestone games, premierships winning teams
- Advocate to local media to enhance their coverage of women's sport
- Promote yourself as a family friendly club, and the positive aspects available to both men and women

Training

- Hold a training session/information night for your club on violence against women
- Provide training session for key leaders/leadership team of your club to build their capacity to act as role models in the club and build their knowledge
- Encourage and support key club members to attend forums and training sessions relating to; increasing women's participation and leadership in sport, family and female friendly facilities and the prevention of violence against women

Women in Leadership

- Strive for equal representation of men and women on club boards, committees and/or leadership teams
- Develop and implement active recruitment, retention or re-engagement strategies for females within your club
- Actively promote and encourage females into leadership positions
- Support and encourage female members to attend forums and coaching courses to assist in developing their leadership skills
- Provide mentoring opportunities for female members, allowing them to transition from playing at junior to senior level, as well as mentoring them into leadership positions e.g. co-coaching with a more experienced coach

Club Culture

- Ensure both men and women participate equally in all aspects of the club e.g. canteen, cleaning club rooms, maintenance of facilities etc
- Promote a culture that has a zero tolerance to sexism, sexist comments and jokes – take appropriate action should these behaviours arise
- Ensure all teams have an agreed way of addressing sexism and disrespectful behaviour should it arise
- All club leaders to model respectful behaviour
- Ensure contact information of local state support services for those experiencing violence, are displayed in your club, and someone in your club has knowledge of appropriate referral services
- Hold club functions that are family friendly; allowing children, youth and parents to participate e.g. held at an appropriate time and venue, minimise heavy drinking culture
- Ensure all fundraising activities are respectful and inclusive of both men and women, and do not reinforce negative or harmful stereotypes
- Ensure there are club leaders/club contacts members can go to if they have an issue, and all members are aware of the club contacts

Club Policies

- Ensure the club code of conduct is understood, upheld and signed by all members
- Display club code of conduct in clubrooms
- Utilise the Courageous Conversations Sporting Clubs Handbook, to assist in encouraging positive bystander action by all club members if disrespectful behaviour occurs
- Establish agreed courses of action/protocols for addressing inappropriate and disrespectful behaviour in teams and in the club



Useful Resources

[Courageous Conversations Sporting Club Handbook](#)

[Sport and Recreation Victoria Female Friendly Sport Infrastructure Guidelines](#)

[AFL Preferred Facility Guidelines](#)

[Vic Health - Female participation in sport & physical activity: a snapshot of the evidence](#)

[Female friendly Change room guide](#)

[Active Moreland – A female friendly facility Guide](#)

Implementation Process

Discuss the Respect and Equity policy with the club committee, ensuring to consult with club members where necessary, to decide on actions your club will commit to during the season

Identify key contacts/champions to lead the process

Scan the policy, completed with your clubs agreed actions, and send to the Projects & Recreation Officer at council@wangeratta.vic.gov.au

For any support or further information regarding the implementation of actions and the Respect and Equity policy please contact the following organisations below;

Contact and Support

Women's Health Goulburn North East

Phone: 5722 3009

Email: whealth@whealth.com.au

Rural City Council of Wangaratta

Phone: 5722 0888

Email: council@wangeratta.vic.gov.au

Sports North East

Phone: 5721 0200

Email: sportnortheast@thecentre.vic.gov.au

AFL NE Border

Phone: 5722 1993

Email: media@aflneb.com



We _____ commit to creating a safe, welcoming, respectful and inclusive environment, for all women and girls, at our club.
[INSERT CLUB NAME]

By committing to this, we understand and acknowledge that;

- Violence against women is one of the most pervasive violations of human rights across the globe, and includes, any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm to women.¹
- On average, at least one woman a week is killed by a current or former partner in Australia.²
- One in three Australian women has experienced physical violence, since the age of 15.³
- One in five Australian women has experienced sexual violence, since the age of 15.⁴

We understand that violence against women is a major public issue in Australia, and given the number of women that participate at, and come into contact with _____, we affirm our role in supporting the prevention of violence against women in our community.

We further recognise to prevent violence against women, we must commit to the following behaviours;

- Challenge condoning of violence against women
- Promote women’s independence and decision making
- Challenge gender stereotypes and roles
- Strengthen positive, equal and respectful relationships ⁴

We _____ commit to promoting these behaviours and to creating a club environment where women, and all club members, feel safe, welcome, respected and included. This applies when playing, training and taking part in club activities.

_____ recognise this is both an individual and collective responsibility.

In order to achieve this _____ commits to the following actions; [INSERT 2-4 actions your club will commit to]

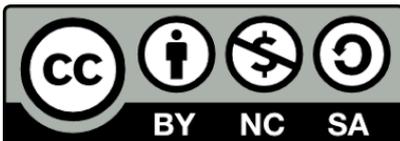
Action	Timeframe	Responsibility

Club President _____ Club Contact _____



Reference List

- 1 United Nations, 1993, Declaration of the Elimination of Violence against Women, Article 1
- 2 [Australian Institute of Criminology](#) (AIC), 2015.
- 3 Cox, P. (2015) [Violence against women: Additional analysis of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Personal Safety Survey 2012](#), Horizons Research Report, Issue 1, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS)
- 4 Our Watch, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS and VicHealth, 2015, *Change the Story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of Violence against women and their children in Australia*, Our Watch, Melbourne, Australia



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