

Keeping sport fun and safe

Codes of behaviour for user-friendly junior sports clubs



The Australian Sports Commission and the Victorian Government have generously permitted the reproduction of this resource.



Government
of South Australia

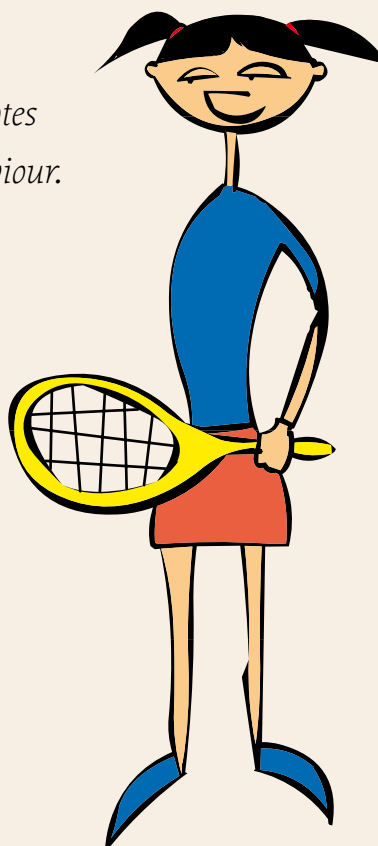
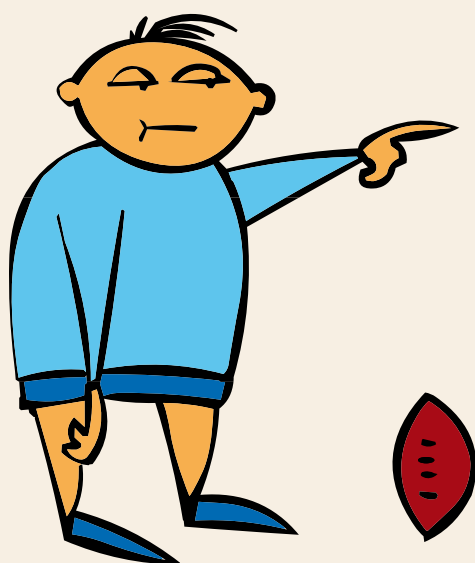
be active.

Keeping sport fun and safe

What is a fun and safe junior sports club?

- ▶ **a community** — where juniors can feel connected to friends and family
- ▶ **a fun place** — where the emphasis is on enjoyment, involvement and being physically active (rather than winning);
- ▶ **a safe physical environment** — the right equipment, first aid and safe buildings and playing areas
- ▶ **a safe social environment** — where a club has policies and practices in relation to alcohol use, drugs, child protection and harassment;
- ▶ **a safe cultural environment** — where a club has policies and practices that are inclusive and welcoming for all juniors (including young people with disabilities, who are indigenous and/or who are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds).

A fun and safe junior sports club promotes and enforces appropriate codes of behaviour.



Codes of behaviour are for:

- ▶ Players
- ▶ Parents and Spectators
- ▶ Coaches and Teachers
- ▶ Administrators
- ▶ Officials
- ▶ The Media

The core principles of codes of behaviour are:

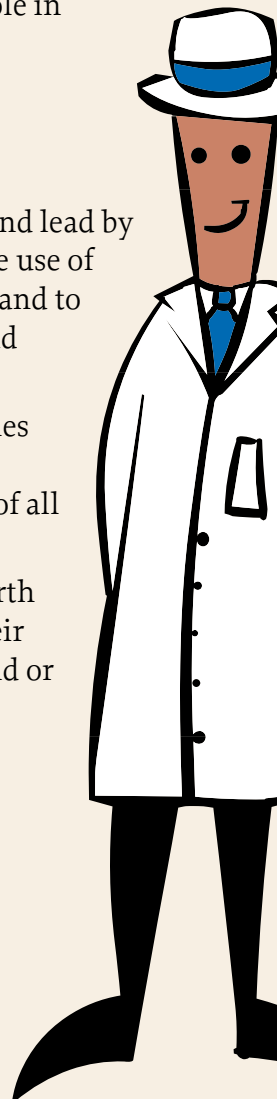
- ▶ Junior sport should be fun.
- ▶ Junior sport should be safe.
- ▶ Junior sport should be fair.
- ▶ Junior sport should 'belong' to juniors.

Coaches

- ▶ Remember that young people participate for pleasure and winning is only part of the fun.*
- ▶ Give young people the chance to try out different playing positions and different sports.*
- ▶ Create opportunities for participants to learn appropriate sports behaviour as well as basic skills.*
- ▶ Give priority to free play activities, skill learning and modified sports over highly structured competition.*
- ▶ Keep up to date with coaching practices and qualifications and the principles of physical growth and development.
- ▶ Promote a culturally tolerant environment.*
- ▶ Help young people understand that playing by the rules is their responsibility.*
- ▶ Encourage young people to participate in administration, coaching and refereeing as well as playing.*
- ▶ Operate within the rules and spirit of your sport and teach your players to do the same.*
- ▶ Relate to officials in a courteous and polite way.*
- ▶ Ensure that any physical contact with a young person is appropriate to the situation and necessary for the player's skill development.
- ▶ Implement relevant sport safety policies and practices.*
- ▶ Implement policy and practices (and lead by example) in relation to responsible use of alcohol and in relation to recreational and performance enhancing drugs.*
- ▶ Listen to your players and ensure that the time they spend with you is a positive experience.
- ▶ Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

Officials

- ▶ Apply rules and regulations to match the skill levels and needs of young people and to make participation more fun.
- ▶ Compliment and encourage all participants — you are a role model and a source of a young persons confidence building.
- ▶ Be consistent, objective and courteous when making decisions.
- ▶ Condemn unsporting behaviour and promote respect for all opponents.
- ▶ Keep up to date with the latest trends in officiating and the principles of growth and development of young people.
- ▶ Place the safety and welfare of the participants above all else.
- ▶ Be familiar with and know your role in relevant sport safety policies and practices.*
- ▶ Promote a culturally appropriate environment.*
- ▶ Implement policy and practices (and lead by example) in relation to responsible use of alcohol, to child protection issues and to issues involving to recreational and performance enhancing drugs.*
- ▶ Ensure that equipment and facilities meet safety standards and are appropriate to the age and ability of all players.*
- ▶ Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.*



Administrators

- ▶ Make your club environment more user friendly by providing accessible opportunities for all to participate.*
- ▶ Create pathways for young people to participate in sport not just as a player, e.g. as umpire, administrator, etc.
- ▶ Ensure that the types of programs, rules, equipment, length of games and training schedules are modified to suit the age, ability and maturity level of young players.
- ▶ Provide quality supervision and instruction for junior players and ensure volunteers are adequately trained.
- ▶ Direct coaches and officials to highlight appropriate behaviour and skill development.*
- ▶ Ensure that everyone emphasises fair play, not winning at all costs.
- ▶ Give a code of behaviour sheet to spectators, officials, parents, coaches, players and the media and encourage them to follow it.
- ▶ Develop where appropriate and distribute codes of behaviour for other volunteers including team managers and sport trainers and first-aid staff.*
- ▶ Remember, you set an example. Your behaviour and comments should be positive and supportive.
- ▶ Maximise child safety by conducting volunteer screening and implementing child protection strategies.*
- ▶ Implement policy and practices (and lead by example) in relation to responsible use of alcohol and in relation to recreational and performance enhancing drugs.*
- ▶ Adopt and implement relevant sport safety policies and practices.*
- ▶ Promote a culturally tolerant environment.*
- ▶ Listen to your players and involve them in decisions, leadership and planning and evaluation related to the club.*
- ▶ Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

Media

- ▶ Provide coverage of young people's competitive and non-competitive sport as well as reporting adult sport.
- ▶ Be aware of the differences between adult sport, professional sport and modified sports programs for young people.
- ▶ Don't overly focus on isolated incidents of inappropriate sporting behaviour.
- ▶ Focus upon a young player's fair play and honest effort.
- ▶ Do not place unfair expectations on young people. They are not miniature professionals.
- ▶ Describe and report on barriers to young people participating in organised sport.
- ▶ Focus on the abilities and not the disabilities of young people.
- ▶ Avoid reinforcing stereotypical views on the involvement of boys and girls in particular sports.
- ▶ Give equal time and space to reporting boys' and girls' sports.
- ▶ Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every young person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.

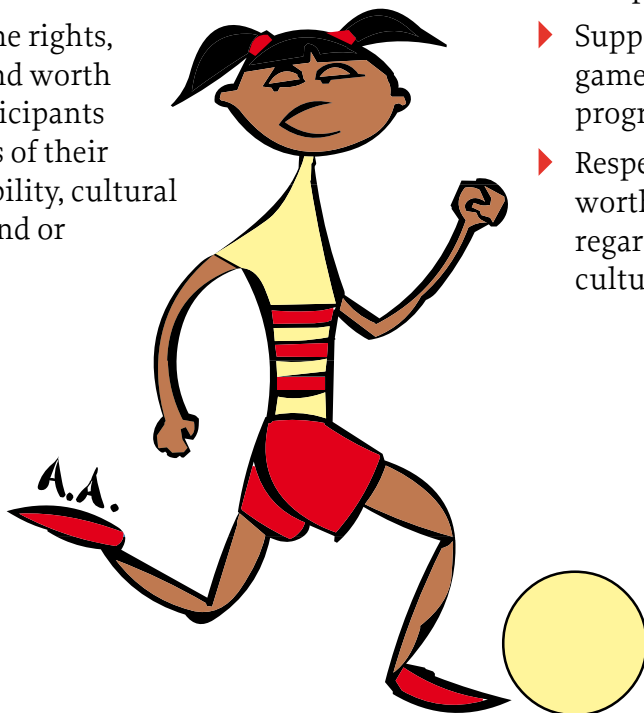
Note: Codes developed by the Australian Sports Commission unless marked with an asterisk.



*Illustrations by Andrew Anson
Brouhaha Design*

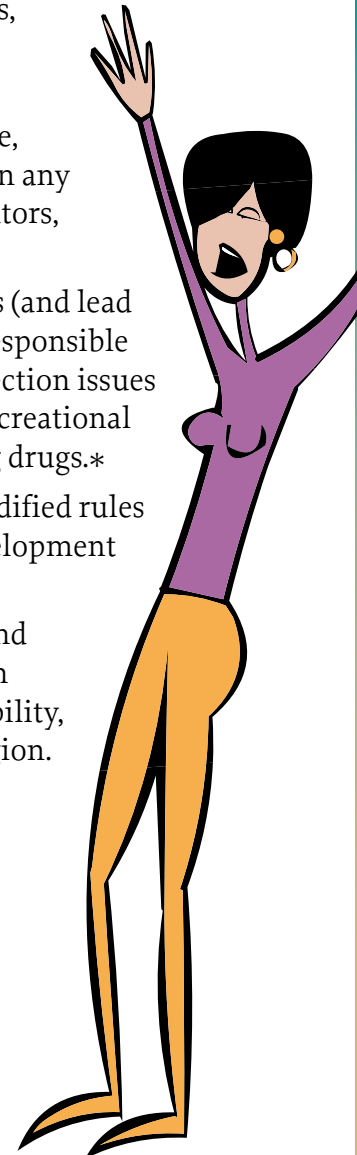
Players

- ▶ Play by the rules.
- ▶ Never argue with an official. If you need clarification, have your captain, coach or manager approach the official during a break or after the competition.
- ▶ Work equally hard for yourself and your team. Your team's performance will benefit — so will you.
- ▶ Be a good sport. Applaud all good plays whether they are made by your team or the opposition.
- ▶ Show respect to and acknowledge opponents and officials (e.g. shake hands before and after the game and say things like 'good luck', 'thanks for the game', 'thanks ref', 'three cheers for ...').*
- ▶ Cooperate with your coach, team mates and opponents. Without them there would be no competition.
- ▶ Participate for your own enjoyment and benefit, not just to please parents and coaches.
- ▶ Play fair — no verbal abuse of officials, sledging other players (including vilification) or deliberately distracting or provoking an opponent.
- ▶ Respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.



Parents & spectators

- ▶ Remember that children participate in sport for their enjoyment, not yours.
- ▶ Encourage children always to play according to the rules and to settle disagreements without resorting to hostility or violence.
- ▶ Never ridicule or yell at a child for making a mistake or not winning.
- ▶ Respect officials' decisions and encourage children to do likewise.
- ▶ Show appreciation for volunteer coaches, officials and administrators.
- ▶ Applaud good performance and efforts from all individuals and teams. Congratulate all participants, regardless of the game's outcome.
- ▶ Condemn the use of violence, verbal abuse or vilification in any form, whether it is by spectators, coaches, officials or players.
- ▶ Support policy and practices (and lead by example) in relation to responsible use of alcohol, to child protection issues and to issues involving recreational and performance enhancing drugs.*
- ▶ Support involvement in modified rules games and other junior development programs.*
- ▶ Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every young person regardless of their gender, ability, cultural background or religion.



Consider this

Will your club:

- ▶ Emphasise the idea of fun ahead of winning?
- ▶ Distribute and promote codes of behaviour to everyone at your club? For extra hard (or downloadable) copies of the code and ideas, contact **Office for Recreation and Sport on (08) 8416 6707 or www.recsport.sa.gov.au**
- ▶ Adopt and implement a 'fair go' policy that makes sure all players get a fair go with quantity and quality of playing time, regardless of ability level?
- ▶ Have an inclusive, and welcoming atmosphere for juniors from different circumstances? For assistance with inclusiveness of:
 - ▶ indigenous people, contact
 - ▶ **The Indigenous Sport Program, General** — (08) 8416 6677;
 - ▶ different racial and religious
 - ▶ (multicultural) backgrounds, contact the **Multicultural Communities Council of SA** — (08) 8410 0300 or at www.multiwebsa.org.au;
 - ▶ **Migrant Resource Centre of SA** — (08) 8223 3604
 - ▶ people with disabilities, contact the
 - ▶ **Disability Education Program** — (08) 8416 6677.
- ▶ Have an environment that protects its members and is free of harassment? For an online member protection training and info resource, go to **www.playbytherules.net.au**.
- ▶ Have responsible alcohol policies and, if relevant, appropriate policies on recreational and performance enhancing drugs information and advice is available from the **Australian Drug Foundation** — (03) 9278 8100 or at www.adf.org.au.
- ▶ Ensure that your coaches, officials and all volunteers are adequately trained and resourced for the roles required of them? Information and advice is available from the **Volunteer and Coach Education Centre** — (08) 8416 6677

Does your club have junior sport safety policies and practices relating to:

- ▶ First aid and injury management?
- ▶ Hydration and sun exposure?
- ▶ Medical history?

Sport safety guidelines, sample policies and other practical information on junior sport safety are available from **Sports Medicine Australia SA Branch** — (08) 8234 6369.

Have you checked with your state association?

Give them a call, they may already have some of these policies ready for your use.

