



# HEALTHY SPORTS CLUBS

A FRAMEWORK FOR SPORTS CLUBS TO CREATE HEALTHY CHANGE

# HEALTHY SPORTS CLUBS ACKNOWLEDGES

***Healthy Sports Clubs* was developed and piloted by Monash Health in partnership with Cardinia Shire Council, City of Casey Council and City of Greater Dandenong Council.**

*Healthy Sports Clubs* evolved from learnings and feedback from sport clubs participating in the Monash Health Healthy Canteens pilot. Thanks to Casey Comets, Endeavour Hills Junior Football Club and Lyndhurst Football and Netball Club.

*Healthy Sports Clubs* is evidence-based, informed by best practices, and guided by established frameworks and programs, including:

- Alcohol and Drug Foundation, Good Sports and Tackling Illegal Drugs
- Cancer Council Victoria, Sun Smart, QUIT and Vic Kids Eat Well
- Peninsula Health, Health Promotion, Creating Smoke Free Environments in Sporting Clubs
- State of Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services, Achievement Program and Healthy Choices Guidelines
- VicHealth, Healthy Sporting Environments

Health areas were developed with the support of Victorian State Sporting Associations, peak bodies and organisations through consultation forums.

Thank you to the following organisations for reviewing and providing expert feedback:

- Healthy Food & Beverages – *Healthy Eating Advisory Service*
- Physical Activity & Active Recreation – *VicHealth*
- Responsible Alcohol Consumption – *Good Sports, Alcohol & Drug Foundation*
- Preventing Drug Harm – *Good Sports, Alcohol & Drug Foundation*
- Mental Wellness – *Headspace*
- Smoke and Vape Free Clubs – *QUIT, Cancer Council Victoria*
- Sun Protection – *Sun Smart, Cancer Council Victoria*
- Injury Prevention – *Sport and Recreation Victoria*
- Inclusion – *Vicsport*
- Inclusion: Women & Girls – *WHISE and Office for Women in Sport & Recreation*
- Inclusion: People With Disability – *Disability Sport & Recreation*
- Inclusion: LGBTI+ – *Proud 2 Play*
- Inclusion: Older People – *COTA Victoria*
- Inclusion: Culturally & Linguistically Diverse – *Active Communities Team, City of Casey*
- Inclusion: Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders – *Casey Aboriginal Gathering Place, City of Casey*

# HEALTHY SPORTS CLUBS VISION

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*Healthy Sports Clubs* envisions a future where sports clubs are vibrant, safe, and welcoming spaces that bring people together. These clubs inspire mental, physical, and emotional health, fostering an environment where individuals and families can thrive. By creating healthier, family-friendly cultures, sports clubs become true champions of community wellbeing.



Unfortunately, many local sports clubs face challenges that hold them back. Outdated practices, policies, and cultural norms can create environments that are less inclusive or supportive. Club leaders often feel overwhelmed, lacking the time or resources to drive positive change, even when they recognise the need for it.

The good news is that change is possible, and support is available. More and more clubs are realising that the old ways aren't working—and they don't have to tackle the transformation alone. *Healthy Sports Clubs* offer free, tailored 1-on-1 support, empowering clubs to build safer, healthier, and more inclusive environments for everyone.



## WHY JOIN HEALTHY SPORTS CLUBS?

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Our unique initiative will help your club or association stand out. Using our free marketing materials, you can convey a vibrant, safe, and welcoming atmosphere and appeal to new members who are looking for a healthier, family-friendly club.

Importantly, *Healthy Sports Clubs* is also aligned with other initiatives you may have already completed, such as Good Sports, Vic Kids Eat Well, Fair Access Principles, and sporting-code specific programs. Your previous work will be acknowledged and recognised, avoiding duplicate efforts.

*Healthy Sports Club has been really great in providing health knowledge and support to the members of our club's community. It has been great to have support to work through these areas that otherwise would not necessarily be possible as a volunteer.*

Cardinia Shire sports club

*Users believe in us because we are going above and beyond. It adds to our credibility.*

City of Casey sports association

Other benefits of being involved in *Healthy Sports Clubs* include:

- Completely free to be involved.
- Qualified Health Promotion Practitioner assigned to your club/association.
- Official recognition and promotion for becoming a Healthy Sports Club/Association.
- Access to free health and wellbeing workshops.
- Access to resources such as policy templates and educational materials for your club.
- Support to organise events such as open days, come-and-try days and school holiday programs.
- Opportunity to enter our competitions with the potential to win prizes.
- Monthly newsletter with all the latest grants and information.
- Support with grant applications (including letters of support).
- Opportunities to meet and network with other participating clubs/associations.



# HOW DOES IT WORK?

*Healthy Sports Clubs* was designed with local clubs and State Sporting Associations to ensure that it is practical and achievable, and that the changes are sustainable.

Importantly, *Healthy Sports Clubs* takes a **whole-of-club approach** to address the needs of your club or association holistically. The whole-of-club approach includes the three main components that make up a club/association.

<p><b>CLUB ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>The physical club environment supports health, wellbeing and inclusion</p>	<p><b>CLUB CONNECTIONS</b></p> <p>Club officials, members, players, families and the wider community are connected and engaged to create a healthy club together</p>	<p><b>CLUB CULTURE</b></p> <p>Leadership and policies create a healthy club culture</p>
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Our team will guide you to ensure you are optimising each of these areas at your club/association.

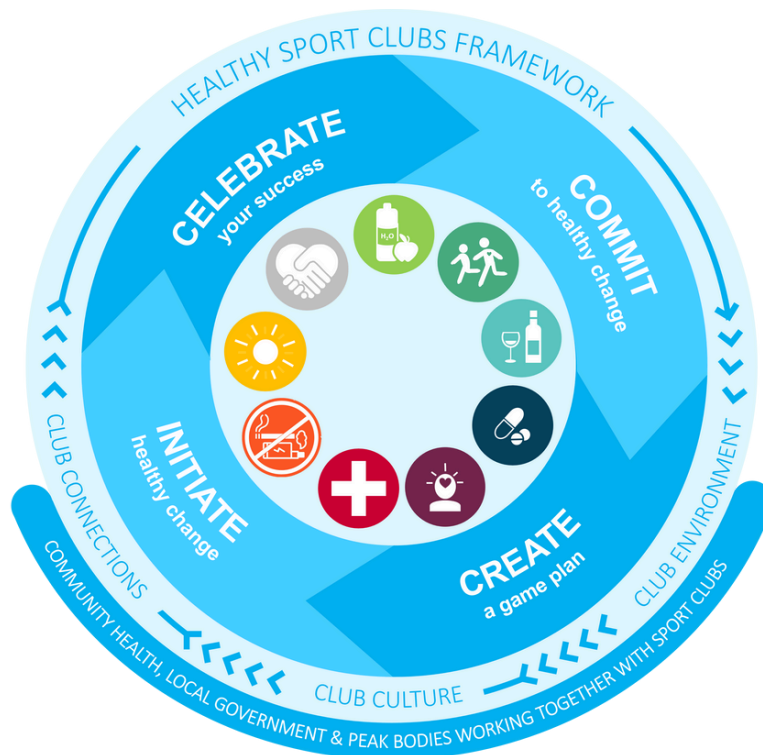


Figure 1. The Healthy Sports Clubs Continuous Improvement Cycle



To achieve recognition as a *Healthy Sports Club*, you will progress through the initiative using a simple and easy to follow cycle, called our Continuous Improvement Cycle (Figure 1). There are four main steps to complete.

## 1 COMMIT TO HEALTHY CHANGE

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- Connect with a Health Promotion Practitioner for a introductory meeting. Your assigned Practitioner will support you 1-on-1 throughout the entire initiative.
- Register for Healthy Sports Clubs by filling out a one-page form.

## 2 CREATE A GAME PLAN

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- Select one of our nine Health Areas according to your priorities.
- Meet with your Health Promotion Practitioner to talk about what you're already doing at your club/association, then work together to write a tailored Game Plan (action plan) to meet the targets for your chosen Health Area.

## 3 INITIATE HEALTHY CHANGE

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- Work through the targets and actions in your Game Plan at your own pace.
- Receive tailored resources and support to help you meet your goals.
- Schedule periodic check-in meetings (face-to-face or online) with your Health Promotion Practitioner to update on progress and work through challenges.

## 4 CELEBRATE YOUR SUCCESS

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- Share and celebrate your achievements with your club community.
- Receive formal recognition from Monash Health - a certificate, large outdoor sign and digital marketing material to promote that you are a healthy and inclusive club/association.
- Create a Sustainability Plan, ensuring the changes you implement remain in place.
- Choose another Health Area and start from Step 1!





## HEALTH AREAS

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Our health areas have been designed to optimise the mental, physical, and emotional health of everyone in your club community. By prioritising health and wellbeing at your club/association, you create a place where people can thrive both within and outside their sport.

Eighty-two percent of sports clubs/associations who have completed a health area noticed **an increase in the number of people at their clubrooms or venue acting in a way that promotes health**. For example, choosing healthier food or beverage options, not smoking or vaping, implementing injury prevention methods, using sun protection, or promoting inclusion.

There are nine different health areas as part of *Healthy Sports Clubs*. You can choose health areas that your club/association is already focusing on, or areas that are more challenging and need improving, it is your choice. Most clubs work on one health area at a time.



A Climate Change Lens sits across most of the health areas and has a focus on tackling climate change and its impact on health.





**HEALTHY FOOD & BEVERAGES (LEVEL 1-3)** Healthier food and beverage items are included in your canteen and/or events menu, providing more options for your club community.



**PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & ACTIVE RECREATION** Physical activity opportunities are offered outside the competition sport your club plays, providing everyone in your club community with a chance to get active when they're at the club. Your marketing and communications are also designed to welcome everyone, regardless of skill, ability, previously experience or fitness level.



**RESPONSIBLE ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION (LICENSED & NO LICENSE)** Clubs with a liquor license adhere to liquor licensing requirements and encourage safer alcohol consumption through applying Good Sports principles. Clubs with no liquor license create and promote alcohol-free environments for junior players through applying Good Sports Junior principles.



**PREVENTING DRUG HARM** Your club applies Good Sports principles to prevent drug use (recreational, performance enhancing, illicit and prescription) at the club and reduce the associated harmful impacts on your club community.



**MENTAL WELLNESS** Your club protects and prioritises the mental wellness of officials, members, players and their families. Your club community feels valued, safe and included and their mental health is supported.



**INJURY PREVENTION** Injuries at your club are prevented and players are kept safe allowing them to stay active and enjoy sports. There is a culture of positive member, player and family conduct and procedures are in place that ensure a safe club environment for all.



**SMOKE AND VAPE FREE CLUBS** Current tobacco and vaping legislation and a smoke- and vape-free club environment is upheld. Resources from QUIT Victoria are used to support club officials, members, players, their families and the community.



**SUN PROTECTION** Sun exposure and heat illness at your club are limited through practical strategies and resources from SunSmart Victoria.



**INCLUSION (CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE, ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER, WOMEN & GIRLS, OLDER PEOPLE, LGBTI+, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY)** People feel safe, valued and welcome to access, join or visit your club. Club officials, members, players and their families are provided equal opportunity to be involved in your diverse club.



