

Information Sheet



What is Good Sports?

The Good Sports program is a national initiative of the Australian Drug Foundation (ADF) operating in partnership with Hunter New England Population Health and the 'Good for Kids. Good for Life' project to develop safer and healthier communities.

Good Sports is a free program and was designed to help community sports clubs change their culture to become more focused on young people and families by providing leadership and support to build viable and friendly environments in which –

- alcohol is managed responsibly;
- healthy eating is promoted;
- physical participation is encouraged; and,
- 'on-site' smoking is restricted as required by law.

Good Sports works to create sustainable community development by enabling sporting clubs to change their systems and practices. It has been developed to:

- Change the behaviour of players, supporters and members of community sporting clubs;
- Increase the viability and impact of sporting clubs in their communities;
- Improve the community's health.

Displaying the Good Sports logo sends an important message to club members and the community. It confirms that the club promotes a responsible attitude towards alcohol and that it provides a safe environment for players, members, families and supporters.

Introduction:

Alcohol - Alcohol and sport are historically closely linked in Australia and evidence is growing which demonstrates that community-based sports clubs contribute to alcohol problems by accepting and promoting excessive drinking and providing inappropriate role models for young people. A study of more than 500 young people found:

- more than 30% of 13–17 year olds had participated in unsupervised drinking at a sports club... 71% of these had never been asked for proof of age.¹

Another survey among sporting club members found:

- 51% of drinkers at sports clubs are consuming alcohol at harmful or hazardous levels.²

A study of community football clubs in 2000 showed:

- 13% of 18-20 year olds drank 13 or more standard drinks each time they visited the club
- 83% left the club as the driver of a vehicle.³
- 70% of males (30% of females) believe drinking is an important tradition at their club.

Further research conducted in community sports clubs across Australia found:

- 20% of men aged 18-30 consume 10 or more standard drinks each time they visit the club.⁴

Obesity and Overweight - The health and social consequences of childhood overweight and obesity are widespread yet the prevalence of obesity and overweight is increasing in western countries and has been declared an 'epidemic' in many countries. The NSW Schools Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey, conducted in 2004 indicated that overall almost 25% of students aged 5 -16 were overweight or obese. From 1985 to 1997 the proportion of overweight and obese children in Australia doubled, whilst the proportion of obese children alone tripled. There is a suggestion that this rate of change is accelerating. The long term outcomes of childhood obesity manifest from its continuance into adulthood.⁵

There is a need to utilise existing community infrastructures (such as sports clubs) to provide a platform upon which enhanced childhood obesity prevention initiatives can be implemented.

¹ Survey conducted by Australian Drug Foundation, Centre for Youth Drug Studies (CYDS) 1998

² Survey conducted by CYDS 1999, Hazardous Levels as defined by National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia

³ Survey conducted by CYDS 2000

⁴ National Attitudes and Behaviours study—conducted by CYDS 2004

⁵ Hunter New England Population Health 2007

Good Sports Benefits to Clubs

- 'New' club culture welcoming to families and juniors
- More attractive to sponsors
- New and diverse revenues streams
- Increase in membership, volunteers and teams
- Improved relationships with community organizations (local govt., police)
- Improved public image
- Reduced risk of liability
- Reduced alcohol-related problems (eg. Binge and underage drinking, violence, etc.)
- Applications for funding and grants strengthened.

#Source: Australian Institute for Primary Care—Latrobe University, 'Evaluation of the Good Sports Program 2003'

Good Sports Benefits to Communities

- Residents more connected and satisfied with their community
- Reduced violence, noise, injury and damage to facilities
- Reduced road trauma and drink driving incidents
- More young people protected from the misuse of legal and illegal drugs
- Improved health and fitness of community members
- More viable and family focused sporting clubs

How does the program work?

The key strategy of Good Sports is the accreditation program. The three level accreditation criteria consist of a set of management standards. Clubs are required to move through the levels in a set amount of time (maximum 5 years), maintaining all the criteria from previous levels as they do so. A Good Sports Project Officer assists the club through the entire process.

Level 1:

- Liquor license
- Registered food business
- Bar management (RSA training) and basic nutrition, and safe food handling techniques.
- Certified coach accreditation

Level 2:

- Maintenance of Level 1 criteria
- Enhanced bar management (RSA training, etc.)
- Drink (low and non alcoholic) options
- Healthier food options
- Junior participation policy
- Safe transport policy
- Diverse revenue generation
- Smoke-free

Level 3:

- Maintenance of Level 1 & 2 criteria
- Alcohol, healthier food options and junior participation management policies

At each level, the club must promote their involvement in the program to their members and clubs that **do not serve or consume alcohol** may apply for **Level 0**.

Good Sports has been adopted by a diverse range of community sports clubs. It is currently operating in every state of Australia with over 1700 clubs involved.

Further information:

Visit the Good Sports website on www.goodsports.com.au or contact Good Sports Hunter New England office 02 4924 6348 for more information or to register your club.