

Best Practice Summary  
2. Participation Coaching

Club Respect – Developing AWESOME Coaches

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Great coaches matter most and their influence and contribution in community sport is pivotal in the development of great teams, clubs and people. People regularly acknowledge their local coach for their mentorship, life skills education, and role modelling. To create great coaches requires investment, this is a challenge when potential coaches are time poor and sports clubs have financial and human resource constraints. Club Respect was developed to meet this challenge and coach development was a major focus within the program. Club Respect was an initiative of the Victorian Women's Trust and NIRODAH. Together they have researched, developed, piloted and launched Club Respect, an online and outreach service that supports local sporting clubs to become great. Philosophically the Club Respect program is built on the belief that sport can provide a platform to deliver key messages about respect that can influence future behaviours of athletes and club members. The AWESOME coach education program (a sub-module) builds a coach's capacity to be an effective mentor and role model by focusing on communication and relationship skills. The education content includes topics on the coach as mentor, impact of attitudes, language and behavior of the coach, effective communication, using respect to increase performance outcomes and developing strengths based culture. The content is delivered online and includes written material supported by short videos. The program design was evidence based and an extensive literature review was conducted on participation and community sport, interviews were conducted with local sports clubs to identify their capacity to act as change agents in attitudinal change. The research identified the key areas of need for clubs, the issues they dealt with and their capacity to respond effectively to those needs. A pilot program was developed and tested with an Australian junior rugby league competition over a 3 year period. The results from the pilot program reported an increase in the safety of club members, reduced code of conduct issues, increased retention of club members and an improved club profile in the local community. Input from the pilot program and feedback from the club experience was used to develop the Club Respect online resource for use by all Australian sports clubs. An independent evaluation was put in place prior to the commencement of the project and will continue into the outreach phase.

Presenting Author – Paul Zappa

Paul Zappa is the founder and director of NIRODAH, a company that specializes in creating thriving cultures built upon respect. Paul and his team deliver strengths based positive education training and bystander education to schools, TAFE, workplaces, and sporting clubs. He is co-founder of Club Respect, member of the Men's Project advisory panel and delivers a range of workshops and education programs across Australia focused on violence prevention, building positive relationships, emotional intelligence and developing healthier masculinity.