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***Build a culture of  
Respect together***

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## **CULTURE OF RESPECT | RESPECT ROUND TOOL KIT**

**THIS TOOLKIT IS DESIGNED TO BE EASILY  
ADAPTABLE TO YOUR COMMUNITIES NEEDS**



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- **WHAT IS THE CULTURE OF RESPECT**
- **HOW TO ACTIVATE THE ROUND AT YOUR CLUB**
- **TELLING THE STORY**
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## **Who is Respect Ballarat and Ballarat Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA)?**

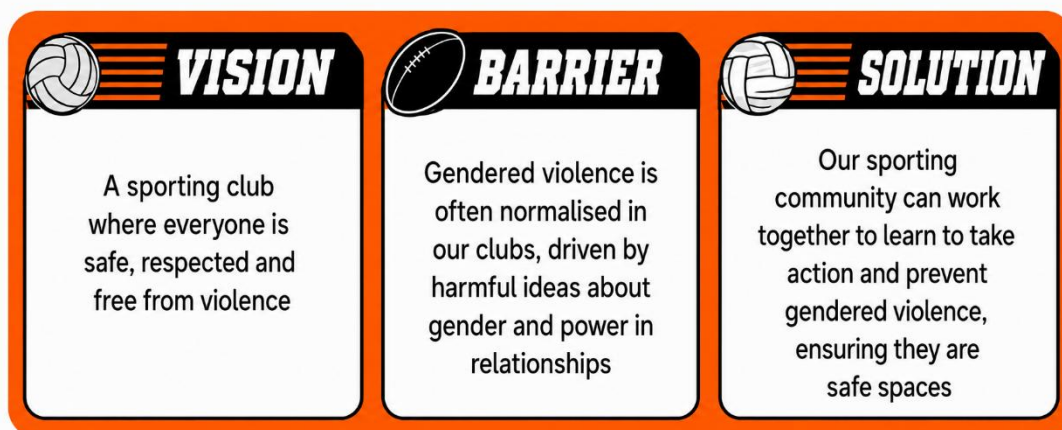
**Respect Ballarat** is a national first saturation model focussed on stopping gender-based violence, is run by Respect Victoria and funded by The Ballarat Foundation. It is an evidence-based primary prevention and early intervention media – it targets community leaders, sporting arenas, young fathers and education settings.

**Ballarat CASA** (part of Grampians Health) is one of 19 state government funded organisations across Victoria to provide therapeutic support and advocacy to victim/survivors of sexual assault and their non-offending family members. They service the Central Highlands region and are considered a specialist family violence service. They also provide:

- 24 hour/7 days on-call service for people who have recently experienced sexual assault
- therapeutic intervention for children under the age of 18 engaging in harmful sexual behaviours
- brokerage support to victim/survivors of sexual assault
- support groups, projects and community education

## **What is the Culture of Respect?**

The Culture of Respect is part of the saturation model Respect Ballarat, an Australian first initiative to help eliminate gendered violence. Devised by the Ballarat Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA), in partnership with Respect Victoria, Ballarat Foundation and other key stakeholders, the initiative aims at tackling gendered violence at a community sport level.





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A culture of respect is our vision, where everybody can feel heard, valued and safe, both physically and psychologically. Free from gendered violence. This is achieved by actively practicing inclusion, transparency and empathy, ensuring clear boundaries and accountability for everyone, regardless of who they are.

### **What is gender-based violence?**

Gender-based violence is any harmful physical, sexual, psychological, or economic abuse directed at someone based on their gender or sexuality.

Gender-based violence is driven by gender inequality and power imbalances, and while it can affect both females and males, it predominantly impacts women, girls, and LGBTQIA+ individuals globally.

- Physical and sexual violence includes:
  - assault
  - rape
  - domestic violence
  - female genital mutilation.
- Coercive control and emotional abuse can take the form of sustained patterns of intimidation, stalking, and monitoring meant to instil fear and strip away autonomy.
- Economic abuse includes withholding access to finances, education, or employment to create dependency.
- Technology-facilitated abuse includes non-consensual sharing of intimate images (image-based abuse), cyberstalking, and online harassment.

### **What is Respect Round?**

Respect Round is part of the Culture of Respect project, which is working closely with Central Highlands Football Netball League Clubs with the core objective of addressing the drivers behind gender-based violence, taking a whole community approach.

This project uses a strength-based model to upskill leaders (coaches, team managers, committee members) within the clubs to model and communicate healthy relationships and respect.

Sports clubs are not just where our kids learn how to play, they are also where they learn how to engage with one another and develop a sense of who they are in relationships.

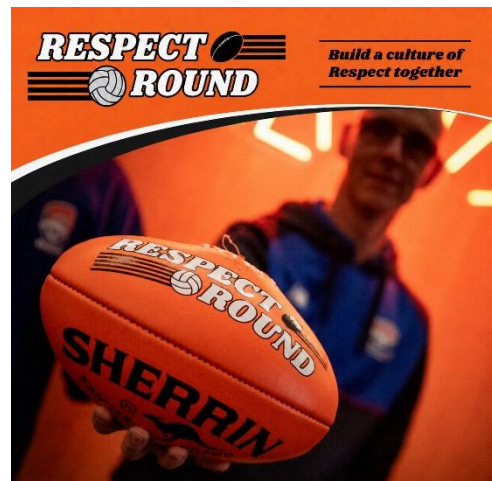


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### **What we did in 2026:**

Clubs participated two separate panel events, one aimed at juniors and one at seniors, where they heard from sport and violence-prevention leaders about the changes that can be made at a grassroots level.

Respect Round saw these learnings taken back to club level, starting community-wide conversation assisting clubs to make a commitment to make sport safe, inclusive and welcoming for everyone.



### **Where did Respect Round taking place?**

All Central Highlands Football Netball League clubs participated in Respect Round, in what was an Australian first of its kind.

### **Respect Round games were hosted at:**

- Springbank
- Skipton
- Rokewood Corindhap
- Newlyn
- Dunnstown
- Daylesford
- Waubra
- Hepburn
- Creswick

### **Why sport?**

Sport is so important to the Australian culture and identity and plays an integral role in the prevention of gender-based violence in Australia. Community sport is a significant place to ensure we are creating communities where all women are safe, respected and free from violence.



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Local sport was chosen for this initiative as sporting clubs are the lifeblood to so many of our regions communities. From a young age children love being around their local clubs, and they impact on so many ages and stages of our life. Modelling non-violence behaviours in these arenas is imperative in keeping the communities safe. When our coaches and club leaders speak, they are listened to.

### **How will Respect Round make a difference?**

Respect Round will help generate meaningful discussion around what we can all do to create safe spaces, develop upstanders and challenge negative behaviours.

Through this round we will build on the learnings of club leaders at the Culture of Respect panel events, bringing them to a grassroots level and modelling respectful behaviours from junior through to senior grades, as well as at a leadership and committee level.

Sporting clubs provide so many opportunities to call out gendered violence and Respect Round helps clubs continue to normalise intervening when witnessing disrespect or harassment. Encourage those at your club to start, or continue to:

- Support victims within and around your community by challenging everyday disrespect, call out:
  - sexist jokes
  - demeaning language
  - unfair gender expectations
- Advocate for and promote gender equality:
  - challenge harmful gender stereotypes
  - promote healthy masculinity
  - encourage men and boys to develop positive male peer relationships that value emotional expression, empathy and equality over dominance
- Educate your juniors – help by modelling respectful behaviours for young people



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## How to activate Respect Round at your club, whether Home or Away

Regardless of if you're playing at home or away on Respect Round, you can get involved and help create a Culture of Respect at your club.

### Highlight Respect Round:

- Share our supplied social content across your channels and with your communities, feel free to edit to make them your own, or create something unique to your club; and continue the social media conversation throughout the day, and post event, with reels, videos and photo update - #RespectRound
- Get your Coaches talking – at training and pre-game remind players that clubs are more than just the game, they are a community. Reference the key messages and help make them stick. Our **quick reference conversation starters** can help, with one for players aged **13 and under**:



**Before we start today, you might notice we're wearing these armbands.**

They're a way of remembering people who have been hurt by violence, and to show that we believe everyone deserves to feel safe and respected.



**In our team, we look out for each other.**

We treat each other with kindness, we speak up if something isn't right, and we make sure everyone feels safe being here.



**Wearing this armband is a small way of showing we care — and that we stand together for respect and safety.**

# **RESPECT** **ROUND**

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As well as for players **older than 13**:



**You'll notice we're  
wearing armbands today.**

They're to honour people affected by gender-based violence and to show that we don't accept that kind of harm.



**In this team, respect  
isn't optional.**

We look out for each other, we call out behaviour that isn't okay, and we make sure this is a safe space for everyone.



**Wearing this is about  
taking a stand — and  
being the kind of people  
who make things better,  
not worse.**

## **Spread the word:**

- Playing at home? Be sure to advertise the day. We recommend a sign announcing the round at your gate upon entry, but anywhere with high foot-traffic and plenty of eyeballs will work.
- Put up your Respect Round posters. These are perfect for your changerooms, clubrooms, canteen, social spaces and bathrooms.
- Tailor your own Respect Round poster or club-specific information sheet using our supplied Word template
- If you are holding a minute of silence before the game. make sure your community know and are prepared for it.

## **Get creative:**

- Encourage your committee, volunteers, and supporters to wear something orange as a sign of respect, and to get behind the round



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- Turn the club orange with balloons, bunting and flags – a sea of orange makes the cause impossible to miss
- Add some orange donuts or lollies as a special canteen menu item... Why not?!
- Recognise an 'Upstander of the Round' or an 'Upstander of the Game' or an 'Orange Volunteer' – think people who create a safe, welcoming and respectful club culture
- Appoint club ambassadors to deliver key messages and positive role modelling
- Create a Commitment Wall where leaders, players and supporters can write what they will do to help create a culture of respect. A possible idea is a prompt of 'I stand up for...' with response examples (to get things started) of respect, equality, my daughter, my teammates
- Consider equal gender representation – who is volunteering in your committee roles, at your gate, in your bar, kitchen and canteen?
- Finish the day in orange – get a club-wide group photo of everyone in their 'touch of orange' as a visual that you can share on your socials: *"Today our club wore orange. Tomorrow we continue the work. Respect is not just for one round—it is how we play, lead and live."*

**Prepare your leaders to share the key messages:**

## KEY MESSAGES FOR CLUBS

**AT OUR CLUB, WE COMMIT TO:**

|                                                                                                                         |                                                                        |                                                                     |                                                                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Creating a safe and inclusive environment, free of gendered violence for all players, volunteers and supporters!</p> | <p>Showing kindness, fairness and leadership in everything we do</p>   | <p>Challenging disrespectful behaviour, language, and attitudes</p> | <p>Supporting teammates and community members to feel valued and safe</p>                   |
| <p>Break free of stereotypes that harm women and girls</p>                                                              | <p>Ensure our leaders model A Culture of Respect from the top down</p> | <p>Being upstanders, and calling out sexist jokes and comments</p>  | <p>Positively influence the language and behaviour that younger players see as "normal"</p> |



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**Why not focus your day on a particular theme or aspect of Respect?**

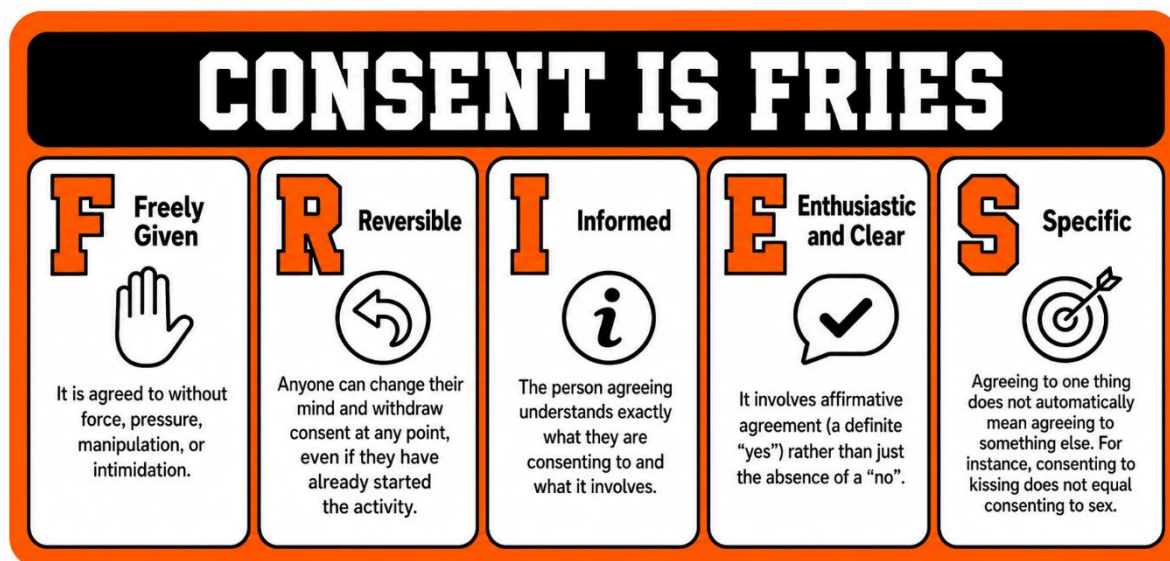
**Here are some examples:**

- **What is gender equality?**

*Gender equality essentially means that all individuals, regardless of their gender identity or biological sex, have equal rights, responsibilities, opportunities, and protections. It ensures fairness across all aspects of life, including sports clubs, to eliminate discrimination and harmful societal stereotypes. Women and girls represent half of the world's population, gender equality is not only about women's rights, it also speaks to basic human rights.*

- **What is consent?**

*Consent is the voluntary, informed, and uncoerced agreement to an action or proposal. It means giving clear, active, and ongoing permission for something to happen, and can be withdrawn at any time. While it applies to everyday interactions, like borrowing items or sharing photos, understanding consent is especially vital in healthy, respectful intimate and sexual. Getting your club familiar with the **FRIES** acronym is an effective way to embed the message.*



- **What are gender norms?**

- How people of all genders are good at lots of different things
- What gender stereotypes are, and what expectations do we have on ourselves to conform to these



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- What does it mean to be a boy or man, girl or woman, gender diverse or fluid - what kind of person do we want to be?
  - What is gender identity and what does this mean for you
  - What does gender equality mean to you, and why is it important
  - How different genders are portrayed in the media (movies/shows/online etc.)
  - What is an equal and healthy relationship
- **What is Respect?**
    - What respect means and why it's important
    - Treating people how you would like to be treated
    - What respectful behaviours look like and how to be a role model
    - Respect in the family, between friends and peers at school
    - Self-respect
    - Respect in sports teams
    - Respectful relationships between people of all genders
    - Respectful behaviour online
- **How do you recognise disrespect?**
    - Bullying, teasing, name-calling and laughing at others
    - Degrading behaviour on the sports field
    - Violence and harassment online and through social media content, comments and posts
    - Intimidation and public harassment, catcalling or whistling at girls in public
    - Physical violence
    - Persistently pursuing or annoying someone if they are not interested
    - Controlling or jealous behaviour, emotional manipulation
- **What is a respectful relationship?**
    - Respectful, romantic and intimate relationships
    - Freedom of choice, independence
    - Doing things you both want to do and are comfortable with
    - Acknowledging and apologising when you have crossed a line
    - Communicating and listening
    - Being clear about what behaviours you won't tolerate
    - How to tell if a relationship is not healthy or equal

# RESPECT ROUND

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## Tools to keep the conversation, and behaviours, going

- Collaborate with local services and arrange speakers to come to your club to discuss key topics like Respect, Gender Norms, Consent, Respectful Relationships, Gender Equality and Recognising Disrespect
  - Appoint a Respect Ambassador to your committee
  - Ensure there are people within your club who are identifiable as those who recognise, respond and refer if there is a disclosure of gendered violence.
- Responding to a disclosure can be broken down into **5 steps**:

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1 1 - BE PERSON CENTRED</b><br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Make sure the person feels safe and in control</li> <li>✓ Build trust, and ensure they have choices around what comes next</li> <li>✓ Work with them, not around them</li> </ul> | <b>2 2 - USE THE LIVES APPROACH</b><br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Listen with care and empathy</li> <li>✓ Inquire about what they need, worries and their safety</li> <li>✓ Validate their experience</li> <li>✓ Enhance safety</li> <li>✓ Support with options, such as support organisations</li> </ul> | <b>3 3 - AVOID FURTHER HARM</b><br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Do not blame them</li> <li>✓ Validate what they tell you</li> <li>✓ Do not downplay what they have said</li> <li>✓ Ensure they remain in control of what happens next for them</li> <li>✓ Be transparent about constraints</li> </ul> | <b>4 4 - BE CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE</b><br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Make sure your response is respectful of different cultures</li> <li>✓ Do you need an interpreter?</li> <li>✓ Would this person prefer to speak with someone from their culture</li> <li>✓ Do you know where to refer them to? Or do you know who might?</li> </ul> | <b>5 5 - KNOW YOUR ROLE</b><br><br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ You are not expected to be a counsellor</li> <li>✓ Listen and support</li> <li>✓ Help the person feel safe</li> <li>✓ Know the policies and procedures to follow</li> <li>✓ Offer choices for support options and help connecting them in</li> </ul> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|



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And it can be useful to have some examples on hand of **what to say**, and **what not to say** when responding to a disclosure:

| WHAT TO SAY                                                   |                                                          |                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| ✓ "Thanks for telling me that. It must have been really hard" | ✓ "I'm so sorry this happened to you"                    | ✓ "You are not to blame for this happening"           |
| ✓ "Are you safe right now?"                                   | ✓ "If you would like, I can share some support services" | ✓ "How can we help to keep you safe around the club?" |

| WHAT NOT TO SAY                                                                      |                                                                                       |                                                                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| ✗ "Why did you....."<br>Sounds like blame                                            | ✗ "You probably did something"<br>Sounds like blame                                   | ✗ "Why didn't you say something?"<br>Makes them feel guilty    |
| ✗ "That sort of thing doesn't happen here"<br>Sounds as though they are not believed | ✗ "That happened ages ago, surely you are over it now?"<br>Minimises their experience | ✗ "This is what you need to do..."<br>Takes away their choices |

- Ensure your policies and procedures reflect your stance around gendered violence
  - Develop and/or review your policies around gendered violence. Ensure that a Culture of Respect is embedded in your code of conduct
  - Appoint a representative for those around your club to provide feedback to
- Resources are available to help get you started:
  - AFL | [Respect and Responsibility Policy](#)
  - Sport and Recreation Victoria | [Safe and Inclusive Sport: Preventing Gender Based Violence](#)
  - Sport and Recreation Victoria | [Preventing Violence Through Sports Grants Program – Case Study](#)
  - Our Watch | [Equality and Respect In Sport](#)
  - [The Line](#)
  - Respect Victoria | [Sexism and Sport: Call It Out](#)

Remember to have material from support services that are *local to you* available.

**Together we can build a Culture of Respect – where sport is safe for all of us**

# ***RESPECT*** ***ROUND***

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