

**SPORT AND RECREATION AND
COMMUNITY BUILDING**

**Literature Review for the
NSW Department of the Arts, Sport and Recreation**

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1. Introduction

The NSW Department of the Arts, Sport and Recreation has commissioned this literature review on strategic approaches that use sport and recreation to bolster community development. NSW Sport and Recreation, a division of the Department, has already undertaken a considerable amount of research and policy development in this area - this work is summarised in the first section of this paper. The literature review examines international sources (from England, Scotland, Canada and USA) and material from Australia, including from other States (Victoria, Western Australia). The material includes government strategy documents, research into the impacts of sport¹ on community building and community cohesion, details of programs and approaches to promote the role of sport in this context, and evaluations of such programs.

The paper examines the literature on a range of related topic areas:

- The role of sport in supporting community building, particularly in strengthening residents' commitment to their neighbourhood or local area;
- The role of sport in developing social capital – the building of groups of mutual interest, acting together to achieve their objectives, including through sports volunteering;
- The role of sport in promoting pro-social and diminishing anti-social behaviour; and
- Strategies for encouraging groups with low levels of sport participation to become involved, with perceived benefits to promoting social harmony.

2. NSW context and summary of recent activities

The NSW sport and recreation industry five-year plan - "Game Plan 2012" – sets out a new direction for sport and recreation that is "*community-centred, building the social capital of our state and recognising the important role of sport and recreation in shaping our community for a sustainable future.*" The Plan describes this new direction in the following terms: "*The aim of the Plan is to position sport as a key contributor to building a strong community and shaping its core values of teamwork, friendship, respect for others, discipline, fair play, commitment; where members model the behaviours, co-operating and collaborating to ensure the sustainability of resources, fun, an inclusive culture which embraces cultural diversity and disability i.e. sport for all.*"

The NSW Premier's Council for Active Living has initiated work in 2007 and 2008 to support the strategic role of sport in community building. A report was prepared for the Council in 2007 by Josephine Chau of the NSW Centre for Physical Activity and Health, entitled "*Physical Activity and Building Stronger*

¹ The word 'sport' is used throughout this paper to represent sporting, recreational and physical activities.

Community.” This report examines the evidence base for the beneficial impacts of sport on community building, and includes:

- Examination of the concepts of community and social capital;
- Evidence of the value of the networking and skills development effects of sport participation on broader community cohesion; and
- Barriers to sports participation in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and Indigenous communities.

The report, which includes an extensive bibliography, identifies the following aspects of good practice in sports programs that aim to build stronger communities:

- Connecting the social, cultural, environmental and economic spheres in the community;
- Improving the quality of life of community populations and gaining mutual benefit among community members;
- Creating opportunities and encouraging community members to participate in community activities, from employment to social events to civic duties;
- Empowering communities, helping them take advantage of opportunities and take shared responsibility for their wellbeing;
- Recognising the diversity of interests within a community and how that may affect capacity building; and
- Engaging people from the community, government and private sectors to work together to address community issues, solve problems in their community and achieve common goals.

In 2008, the Premier’s Council for Active Living has prepared Guidelines for the Use of Physical Activities for Community Development Purposes. The guidelines include a useful analysis of community development practice which should inform the planning and delivery of sporting activities which aim to promote community building. A review of the literature identifies the following key dimensions:

- Programs that target specific groups, who are less likely to participate in sufficient physical activity;
- Programs that are culturally specific, recognising that the perception of and role of sport in different cultures varies considerably;
- Programs that demonstrate clear links to policies are more likely to be sustained;
- Programs that build social networks, particularly at the neighbourhood level;
- Programs that promote participation and social interaction rather than excellence;
- Programs that provide social support (friendly, enjoyable, personally rewarding, promotes reciprocity);
- Programs that use local facilities and promote local access;

- Programs that provide opportunities to develop new social norms – particularly personal and group development leading to greater community engagement;
- Programs that foster partnerships between local organisations – strengthening local networks;
- Programs that build capacity to manage projects or support skill acquisition;
- Programs that focus on local sporting opportunities;
- Programs that consider the role of the built environment – in terms of access to sporting activities, safety, opportunities for informal activities in the outdoors;
- Programs that provide regular feedback to participants; and
- Programs that aim to develop safer environments.

These criteria are used in the guidelines to evaluate 21 projects that had attempted to integrate physical activity with community development principles.

3. Strategies for sport and community development: international and interstate

England

The potential for sport to contribute significantly to community building and community cohesion is strongly recognised in England, and reflected in a range of Government strategies:

- Community building;
- Neighbourhood renewal – focusing on “reducing the gap” in relation to the most deprived areas; and
- Addressing crime and anti-social behaviour

as an integral aspect of all community-based and location-based planning.

The literature on government (central and local) strategy in England is particularly informative.

“Sport Playing Its Part” – The contribution of sport to building safe, strong and sustainable communities” is jointly published by the Home Office, the Local Government Association and Sport England (the central government agency responsible for sport administration and promotion). The brochure sets out how sport has helped improve community cohesion, reduce crime and anti-social behaviour, improve the quality of the built and natural environment and create a sense of place, and encourage sustainable travel.

In relation to community building and community safety, the brochure identifies the following aspects:

- Sport provides opportunities for social engagement which can create awareness of difference and break down barriers for individuals and communities;
- Sport can be used as an engagement mechanism, to build relationships with hard to reach individuals or groups;
- Sport can contribute to capacity building, particularly through volunteers being involved in decision-making and management;
- Sport can contribute to safer communities and tackling crime; and
- Sport can offer alternative role models and peer groups.

In relation to the built environment, the brochure emphasises that the building or refurbishment of local sporting facilities and open spaces can have a significant impact on the liveability and feeling of safety in neighbourhoods. In terms of travel, encouraging walking and cycling in safe environments has a major impact.

The brochure includes case studies of a range of successful sports interventions:

- Providing new sport and exercise activities and events to meet the needs of different sections of the community using local community venues and open spaces. Providing mobile equipment and systems that enable street games or other neighbourhood activities to be developed;
- Developing structured programs of sport and encouraging regular participation among all young people, and particularly those from disadvantaged areas or whose circumstances place them at risk of committing crime and anti-social behaviour;
- Supporting young people or adults to access education or employment through providing opportunities to develop new skills, receive training and obtain qualifications through sport;
- Supporting the development of new or improved community led sports facilities, activities and events, or social enterprises, which engage local people and develop community ownership and pride; and
- Implementing a co-ordinated approach to encouraging people to walk and cycle through improving footpaths, cycleways, information and signage; providing introductory recreational activities around walking and cycling.

“Bringing Communities Together Through Culture and Sport”, published by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, reports on a major seminar held in Oldham in 2004. The seminar examined key processes in planning and delivering inclusive sporting programs to enhance community involvement. The report is particularly useful in identifying elements of good practice in community development and applying those principles to sporting initiatives, in particular:

- Understanding in some depth the local population, its diversity and needs;

- Consulting creatively, in particular using existing networks and groups;
- Concentrate on the most hard to reach groups;
- Build partnerships across sporting and community activities – emphasising co-operation, not competition;
- Develop leadership from within the local community;
- Consider transport issues – affordability, convenience, safety;
- The importance of effective evaluation strategies; and
- Take every opportunity to have fun and celebrate.

The report of the seminar includes informative case studies of these approaches being applied in practice.

Three publications from England were identified which focus on joint working with sport and neighbourhood renewal. As indicated above, neighbourhood renewal in England focuses on the most deprived areas, and seeks to lift their socio-economic status through concerted and targeted action. The placed-based approach has relevance for such priority neighbourhoods in NSW.

Joint Working in Sport and Neighbourhood Renewal was published by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit in 2004. It is a research report on current practice, based on eight case study areas, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how sports and regeneration organisations work together. Key findings are:

- There is increasing evidence that sport can play a beneficial role in addressing the problems of areas of disadvantage – but interventions have to be carefully planned and implemented – the results have to be worked for;
- The evidence suggests that sports participation is lower amongst disadvantaged social groups in deprived areas;
- The range of players in sport and regeneration need to be understood, in order to create effective and lasting partnerships;
- Joint working should include the strategic level – ensuring alignment of strategies across partner organisations involving sporting activities;
- Joint working should make use of the range of formal and informal networks – getting sporting activities on as many agendas as possible; and
- Identifying and addressing key barriers – lack of interest in sport by regeneration bodies; inappropriate focus on short term sporting interventions to “fix” perceived issues, rather than a long-term systemic approach; links between sport and identification with the neighbourhood not sufficiently understood; lack of information on participation and barriers to participation of disadvantaged groups; voluntary clubs too insular and difficult to engage in broader community initiatives.

Teaming up – how joint working between sport and neighbourhood renewal practitioners can help improve deprived areas was published by the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit and Sport England in 2004. It identifies the

wider benefits of sport in addressing the needs of such areas, with examples of interventions and activities.

Healthier lifestyles, greater self confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GP referral schemes sending patients to supervised exercise programs in local recreation centres • Providing free 'taster' sports activities to promote first-time involvement
Tackling crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating more open spaces and play areas for sporting activity, with adult supervision • Providing coached sporting sessions in holidays • Using sport and mentoring to steer young people away from crime
Motivating learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve literacy, especially among boys, by linking sport and reading activities • Rewarding school attendance with free sports activities • Sports coaches working as learning assistants and mentors
Creating social networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing the skills and management capacity of sports volunteers • Using sport and team involvement to promote cultural diversity

The guidance suggests four key areas for improving joint working between sports bodies and place managers:

- Getting key players involved: a range of sporting organisations, sport and recreation administrators, health bodies, a range of neighbourhood bodies;
- Ensuring the cross-fertilisation of sport and renewal activities in the strategies of the range of organisations involved;
- Getting better information about the local population, sports participation, and identifying barriers to participation; and
- Effective program design, with clear targets and evaluation strategies.

Similar ground is covered by *Sport, Physical Activity and Renewal* a resource document produced by renewal.net.

Scotland

Strategies for the use of sporting activities to promote strong communities are also a significant feature of the work of **Sportscotland**, the Scottish government agency responsible for sport policy. In particular, Sportscotland has published a useful body of research and guidance on this issue. Two reports in particular are highlighted.

The *Local Government in Scotland Act 2003* places a duty on local authorities to develop community plans to advance the well being of their local areas – modelled on the community strategies which have been the centrepiece of local inter-agency service planning in England for almost a decade. *The Social Benefits of Sport – an overview to inform the community planning process*, by Professor Fred Coalter, was published by **Sportscotland** in 2005. The report summarises the evidence of the social impacts of sport to promote its prominence in the (then) forthcoming community planning process. Despite this promotional role, the report is admirably sanguine in its approach:

- Accepting that the empirical evidence base for the social benefits is relatively poor;
- Emphasising that interventions and targeted outcomes need to be clear – not all sporting activity will deliver community benefits for all groups;
- The nature of the sporting experience is not homogenous – it has wide variations, as will its effects;
- The approach of sporting leadership is crucial – in achieving both beneficial and harmful effects; and
- Effects of sports participation is strongly influenced by frequency of participation, intensity of participation and degree of adherence over time.

The report goes on to summarise the evidence for social benefits, including a chapter on community development:

- Sport builds social capital, in particular widespread involvement in the organisational life of the community;
- Sport represents the largest level of community participation by adults – involved in playing, and volunteering;
- Sports activities cannot be imposed on deprived neighbourhoods or disadvantaged groups – they need to be grown from the bottom up, with strong investment in listening to community aspirations and building community capacity and leadership;
- Volunteering in sport is one of the main forms of volunteering, and has high social and economic value; and
- Approaches to encouraging sports participation across culturally diverse communities needs to build ‘bridging social capital’ rather than ‘bonding social capital’. There is a real danger that the team and local loyalty emphasised in sporting activities can present barriers to communities not already ‘on the inside’.

The report also contains interesting commentary on youth crime and sport (see section ...below). *“Not all sports are relevant for many vulnerable and at-risk young people, and there is a clear need to adopt a needs-based rather than product-led approach. There is some evidence of the need for small-group or individual activities, which are non-competitive, emphasise personally-constructed goals and have a minimum of formal rules and regulations.”*

Sport and Community Development: A Manual, also authored by Professor Fred Coalter, was published by **Sportscotland** in 2002. It is a guide to practitioners in approaching the planning and delivery of sporting activities with an explicit community development purpose – similar to the objectives of the Practitioner Resource developed by the NSW Premier’s Council for Active Living. It usefully defines the role of sport in this context, distinguishing **the development of sport in communities** (where the main aim is sporting inclusion – participation by all community members) and **the development of communities through sport** (where sport is used as a means to an end – **social inclusion**). The manual contains both a conceptual framework and detailed practical approaches to developing and delivering sporting activities for community development purposes. It is particularly helpful in addressing the perspectives of a wide range of sporting organisations – from strategic planners and program managers, to local clubs wishing to make a contribution.

Canada

The Canadian Sport Policy, published in 2002 by Sport Canada, recognises the social benefits of sport, particularly for marginalised and under-represented groups. Its emphasis in this regard is therefore more on reducing barriers to participation than on broader contributions to community building (as is evidenced in England and Scotland). The policy in particular emphasises the value of sporting participation and adherence in promoting national and community harmony (see below for information on Canada’s Policy on Aboriginal Peoples’ Participation in Sport.)

Investing in Sport Participation is a research report produced by the Conference Board of Canada (a not-for-profit research and community development organisation) examining impacts and benefits of sport participation on individuals and communities. The methodology involved a literature review and analysis of the National Household Survey. Key findings around community building and social capital include:

- Sport participation develops a wide range of skills and attitudes, including teamwork, leadership, problem solving, decision-making, communications, personal management and administrative skills.
- Sport improves social cohesion. Participants experience a high degree of interaction with other individuals, building trust and capacity to work together to achieve common goals.

Western Australia

The Department of Sport and Recreation in Western Australia has recently published *Sport and Recreation – It’s More Than You Think*. This publication reports on a community perceptions survey. It finds that Western Australian’s value sport and recreation very highly, and that the benefits can be narrowed down to three key areas:

Individual

- *Life skills*
- *Personal health and wellbeing*
- *Creating and managing a social network*

Family and social

- *Close friendships*
- *Strong family relationships*
- *Improving self-worth*

Community

- *Creating and maintaining a safe community*
- *Providing an opportunity for community relationships*
- *Providing an inclusive community*

In 2006, the Department also published *Sport and Community Cohesion in the 21st Century: Understanding linkages between sport, social capital and the community*, authored by Kim Atherley of the University of Western Australia. The aim of the research was to gain an insight into how sport and recreation can help provide more cohesive communities. The report is in three sections:

- Section 1 introduces the concept of social capital and provides a detailed discussion of linkages between sport and social capital. It refers to Putnam's work on social capital, and the bonds made between people who participate in a sporting or creative activity together. This is reinforced by recent work in the United States by De Graaf and Jordan, on the building of social capital through involvement in networks, including sporting organisations. The UK evidence (see above) of the positive role of sport in regeneration is also reviewed.
- Section 2 provides an outline of surveys and reviews pertaining to the social benefits of sports participation.
- Section 3 offers an outline of various policies, programs and conferences from Australia and Europe.

Victoria

In 2004, the Department for Victorian Communities published *Ministerial Statement: a focus on community sport and recreation*. The statement gives priority to the development of community-based sporting programs and providing sporting opportunities for all Victorians.

SportEngland supports the web-based **Value of Sport Monitor**, with abstracts of research material, including a category on social capacity and cohesion. The following is a summary of a selection of abstracts from this category, with full references provided in the bibliography at the end of this paper.

Title	Author
Creating community networks: can sporting events offer meaningful sources of social capital?	Misener and Mason
<p>This paper explores the potential role of large scale sports events in policies of social regeneration, increased social engagement and improved social infrastructure. Using Coleman's conceptualisation of social capital (relationships of mutual reciprocity embedded in social networks which enable action) the authors explore the potential contribution of differing aspects of the process of bidding for, acquiring, hosting and the legacy of sporting events. They illustrate their argument with examples from the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester. They put forward four propositions on how such processes can be developed to maximise their impact on social regeneration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community values should be central to the decision-making process – community aspirations from the process are crucial; • Community stakeholders should be involved in all aspects of the process – bid, management, legacy; • Collaborative action should empower community members to become agents of change – increasing their knowledge of how to make and influence decisions effecting their lives; and • There should be an emphasis on open communication to minimise power broking and community exclusion. <p>The authors argue that, rather than perceiving sporting events as having either positive or negative impacts on community they can be regarded as a context for the development of various forms of social capital.</p>	

Title	Author
Sporting capital: changes and challenges for rural communities in Victoria	Driscoll and Wood
<p>This research is based on work undertaken in six local government areas in South West Victoria to identify how sport and recreation clubs and organisations are managing in the context of social and economic change. It examines how sporting activities add to the social capital of the communities, and identifies a range of key contributions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social capital development via leadership, membership, participation, skill development and the community development work of clubs; • Creation of community hubs and key social places; • Environmental and physical development; • Health improvement and promotion; • Cultural values via the maintenance of traditions – although care needs to be taken to challenge the potential excluding aspects of this; • Economic development; • Community safety via development of social networks; • Community empowerment through a local sense of control; and • Community identity and local pride. 	

Title	Author
The role of sport in regenerating deprived urban areas	Coalter, Allison and Taylor
<p>Using extensive literature reviews and 10 case studies this report reviews both theoretical arguments and empirical evidence for claims that sport can contribute to improved health, reduced crime, young people's educational performance, employment and regeneration, community development and volunteering, the integration of minority ethnic groups and environmental improvements. It distinguishes between necessary conditions (participation in sport) and sufficient conditions (the use of community development approaches which allow sports participation, planning and delivery to have lasting community impacts.) The area-specific conclusions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport and health: among the least active, the promotion of a healthier lifestyle may have more impact than only offering traditional sports; the traditional product-led sports development approach needs to be reviewed, to adopt a more needs-based approach, based on an understanding of personal and social circumstances. Factors underpinning 	

the success of activity provision have included convenient local facilities, recognising the importance of friendship groups, providing reassurance that people like them are able to participate and gain enjoyment.

- Sport and crime: Large scale diversionary projects tend to have vague rationales, overly ambitious objectives and a limited understanding of the variety and complexity of the causes of criminality. Evidence suggests that traditional facility-based programs have a limited impact. Outreach schemes, with non-traditional and local approaches, and credible leadership have greater impact. Sport is most effective when combined with programs addressing wider personal and social development.
- Community development and volunteering in sport: Sports volunteering has considerable value in personal development, including for disadvantaged members of the community. However, volunteers need support in achieving this potential, and programs which are customised to the individual and group needs and circumstances are most likely to demonstrate success.
- Sport and ethnic minorities: there is a danger in over-generalising the barriers to sports participation by ethnic minority groups. Bottom-up initiatives which build on traditions, seek to address issues wider than sport and use workers recruited from the relevant communities are those most likely to succeed.

Title	Author
Empowering people, facilitating community development and contributing to sustainable development: the social work of sport, exercise, and physical education programs	Lawson
<p>This research is framed around two key questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do sport, exercise and physical development professionals empower the people they serve and contribute to community development? • Do sport and recreation policies, programs and practices contribute to sustainable economic and social development, making them worthwhile government investments? <p>The research concludes that sport can achieve community benefits, but only if appropriate community development and empowering approaches are employed – traditional product-based approaches, focused on encouraging participation in traditionally-delivered events, have minimal community building impact, and may even alienate some community members further. Sports bodies need new skills to play a community building role.</p>	

4. Sport and cultural diversity

One of the key community benefits perceived for sporting activity is its ability to break down cultural barriers between different ethnic (and sometimes language) groups in the community. Programs and policies in this area mainly focus on two aspects:

- Increasing sporting participation by members of cultural groups with lower than average rates of participation;
- Using sporting activities to promote community cohesion through different cultural groups gaining a better understanding of each others' values and perspectives through joint involvement in sport.

The literature review identified two research papers which investigate the impacts of sport on community cohesion across culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

Sport and Ethnic Minorities: aiming at social inclusion by Scott Porter Research and Marketing Ltd was published by Sportscotland in 2001. It aims to provide an insightful and actionable strategy that will eliminate the current barriers to sports participation amongst people from ethnic minority backgrounds. The research involved desktop research and interviews with sports professionals and members of ethnic minority communities.

The report starts by reviewing some of the broader societal barriers which may influence sporting participation rates in minority ethnic groups:

- Higher rates of self-employment, with longer hours and less time outside work;
- Employment in sectors with long hours and low pay;
- Higher unemployment rates; and
- Higher rates of incidence of some diseases which may affect the ability and willingness to engage in physical activity.

In reviewing previous research on barriers to sports participation by ethnic minorities, the report identifies:

- Cultural barriers – modesty, requirements of religious observance;
- Attitudes of parents on their children’s participation – particularly the emphasis on academic achievement, and regarding sports participation as competing for precious time; and
- Attitudes of teachers and sports clubs – lack of sensitivity to cultural issues.

The report emphasises that different cultural groups are not homogenous in their attitudes towards sport, and that individuals and groups have societal attitudes which influence their participation in a range of activities. These attitudinal types are characterised as:

- “Security seekers”, whose ethnic origin, culture (and religion for some) is a fundamental part of their lives. They tend to have a more traditional approach to their lives, with cultural adherence at the core. They have often had little involvement in sport, and do not value it, certainly as compared to work, family and cultural commitments. If they do participate, it will mainly be with other members of their cultural group. They need re-assurance that it is valid for “people like them” to participate.
- “Harmony seekers” also place high value on their ethnic origin and culture, but are more open to exploring and potentially valuing other ways of life. They tend to have a more open attitude to sport, but still have below-average levels of participation. Sport is seen as an adjunct to other social activities.

- “Independence seekers” tend to view themselves and conduct their lives as primarily part of the broader society. They are likely to be second or third generation, and have little or no experience of their family’s country of origin. They tend to believe that sport is, and should be, for anyone who enjoys it, and they tend to engage in ethnically integrated sporting activities.

The research provides commentary on the barriers to sports participation at various stages:

- Precontemplation – where sport participation is not even considered as a possibility – barriers identified are:
 - The “accepted” face of sport acts as a barrier: competitive, jingoistic, emphasis on excellence, rule-bound, administration dominated by white men;
 - Cultural beliefs and expectations: modesty, regarding sport as frivolous;
 - No perceived value in sport – sporting achievement being seen as irrelevant to progressing in life;
 - Lack of awareness of participation by others “like me”; and
 - Lack of awareness of facilities and opportunities available.
- Contemplation – when considering becoming involved in sport, there are key barriers which need to be addressed:
 - Fear of racial discrimination, particularly for groups who experience such discrimination in other aspects of their lives;
 - Attitudes and expectations of “significant others” if these are hostile to sporting activity;
 - Perceived lack of ability – particularly if their exposure to sport is through media channels which emphasise excellence rather than involvement;
 - Lack of confidence;
 - Lack of awareness of ‘appropriate’ sporting environments – ones which are culturally sensitive and not white-dominated; and
 - Cost – of attendance, clothing and equipment – for households on tight budgets.

The report concludes with suggestions for strategies to overcome these barriers for sports organisations – too detailed to summarise, but very comprehensive and challenging. It includes 35 case studies of good practice by sporting organisations.

Engaging cultural and linguistically diverse communities in physical activity was published in 2006 by The Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health in Melbourne. The report sets the challenge as follows: “*The ways in which service providers develop and implement physical activity programs is critical*

if they are to engage people from CALD backgrounds who make up a large percentage of the population.” The methodology involved a literature review, interviews, focus groups and case studies. The findings are summarised as follows:

- Attitudes to physical activity: these vary within and across CALD communities. For some ethnic groups, sport is not a part of traditional culture, and such organised physical activity is seen as artificial. For some communities, lack of appropriate indoor and outdoor venue was an issue. Parental attitudes differed between ethnic groups, and in relation to the cultural appropriateness of specific sports. For some groups, culturally specific teams were seen as a means of maintaining cultural integrity.
- Gender is an important factor. The (relative) male domination of sport in Australia compounds the barriers to female sports participation in CALD communities. Again, finding suitable venues for maintaining modesty and safe access was an issue.
- Engaging communities for the development of physical activity initiatives: partnership approaches between sports providers and ethno-specific organisations were seen as crucial – building links through community development, rather than merely marketing the availability of already existing clubs and venues.
- Avoiding the ‘one size fits all approach’ – attempting to transfer a program which works well for the English-speaking community is unlikely to succeed – programs need to be customised to the needs and cultural setting of specific CALD communities.
- Communicating for success – acknowledging language barriers and opportunities – using community language speakers as ambassadors.
- Programs and activities that reflect our diverse communities – the types of sporting activities accepted and/or enjoyed by specific communities differ. Detailed engagement with specific communities is needed to design appropriate programs.
- Getting the timing and costing right – given other time and expenditure demands in CALD communities.
- Organisational planning for cultural difference – providing real opportunities for involvement in planning and delivery; this means that traditional approaches which have worked for sporting organisations in the past have to change; they have to be open to different leadership and decision-making methods, with all the challenges of change.

A key target group for greater participation in sporting activities in Australia is the Indigenous community – for reasons of community cohesion and improving health. The Australian Sports Commission runs a National Indigenous Sport Development Program, and States and Territories have parallel programs and policies in this area.

One international example was identified in the literature review – *Canada’s Policy on Aboriginal Peoples’ Participation in Sport*, issued by Sport Canada in 2005. The policy builds on legislation passed in 2003, the Physical Activity and Sport Act. This Act confirmed the Government of Canada’s policy

regarding the full and fair participation of all persons in sport and mandated the federal Minister responsible for sport to facilitate the participation of under-represented groups in the Canada sport system. The rationale for the policy is to extend the perceived social benefits of sports participation to Aboriginal communities in Canada. It envisages sporting organisations and activities which serve specific population groups, as well as mainstream organisations adapting their practices to attract Aboriginal participants.

The policy notes that forms of sport and physical activity have traditionally played an important cultural and social bonding role in Aboriginal communities, but that this role has tended to be undermined as Aboriginal cultural integrity has come increasingly under threat. The policy identifies major barriers to Aboriginal peoples' participation in sport:

- Lack of awareness of the individual and community benefits of sport;
- Economic circumstances – relative poverty militating against sport participation;
- Cultural insensitivity – sporting venues and practices which do not acknowledge Aboriginal cultural values;
- Lack of Aboriginal coaches;
- Distance – remote locations making it difficult to access a range of sporting activities;
- Jurisdiction – lack of clarity for funding Aboriginal sports development in a federal system of government;
- Racism; and
- Lack of sport infrastructure in Aboriginal communities.

The guiding principles set out in the policy are as follows:

- Aboriginal cultures are an integral part of Canada's culture and heritage;
- There is increasing evidence of strong correlations between cultural continuity and other factors that affect the quality of life of Aboriginal Peoples. Some of these factors include sport, language revitalisation, community cultural activities, and bilingual education;
- Aboriginal Peoples have significant traditional knowledge and cultural teachings of play, games and sport;
- First Nations, Inuit and Metis, including Aboriginal women, experience unique living conditions and social realities;
- Aboriginal protocol must be respected when consulting or promoting sport policies and program developments to Aboriginal Peoples;
- Aboriginal Peoples in Canada live in a complex environment and geography. Challenges exist in transportation and provision of competition and training opportunities;
- Increasing Aboriginal Peoples' participation in sport is enhanced by working with Aboriginal sport leaders and through partnerships to achieve objectives of common interest;
- The sport continuum includes participation in activities from the playground to the podium; and

- Aboriginal Peoples' participation in sport is a strong, viable and integral component of Canadian sport that should be recognized and valued by all Canadians.

The policy concludes with strategic directions and proposals for implementation in four groupings:

- Enhanced participation
- Enhanced excellence
- Enhanced capacity
- Enhanced interaction

which represent a holistic approach to sport policy for Aboriginal communities.

5. Sport for people with disabilities

Increasing opportunities for sporting participation for people with disabilities is an important part of the social inclusion and health promotion agendas. In New South Wales, NSW Sport and Recreation has engaged over the past year with the disability sector to develop the *You're in the Game Framework*, a guide for all organisations in the provision of sport and physical activity to people with a disability.

The literature search identified two international examples of work in this area.

Sport and People with a Disability: Aiming at Social Inclusion, by Scott Porter Research and Marketing Ltd was published by **Sportscotland** in 2001. The aim of the research was to provide direction for increasing access to sport amongst people with a disability in Scotland. This remit includes the wide spectrum of sports participation, from the 'elite' sports person to someone taking part in light physical activity for recreational purposes. The report summarises previous research on sporting participation for people with disabilities around three main themes:

- Beliefs about the role and importance of physical activity: there may be a lack of understanding about the role of physical activity in promoting health outcomes for people with a disability;
- Motivations of people with a disability: feeling different, unable to fit in at a sporting facility, self-consciousness, lack of confidence, fear of failure; and
- External barriers: lack of information, lack of physical and emotional support, lack of appropriate facilities, problems with transportation, financial constraints, attitudes of others, lack of time.

The research identifies three broad groups of people with disabilities, and their attitudes to sport:

- *Dependents* – who are characterised by their lack of confidence. They generally consider their disability to be a severe restriction impacting

on all aspects of their life. They are most likely to regard sport as beyond their ability – they need significant amounts of support and encouragement, especially from peers, to get involved. A ‘segregated’ sporting environment can assist, until a level of confidence is attained.

- *Unconfidents* – tend to lack confidence in their ability to do sport, but do not exclude the possibility altogether. They also need support to participate, but are more likely to respond and stay involved once a certain threshold is reached.
- *Independents* – have an independent attitude towards their disability, and do not accept it limiting their involvement in a range of activities, including sport. They are most likely to relish competition, and to look for choices in sports in which to engage.

The research identifies barriers to sports participation by people with disabilities, using a five stage model of participation – precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, confirmation – similar to the work by the same authors on sports and ethnic minority groups (see above). The report concludes with a comprehensive set of strategies to overcome these barriers and with 41 examples of good practice of projects which have sought to do so.

Inclusive and Active, a Sport and Physical Activity Action Plan for Disabled People in London, was released as a consultation draft by Sport England in February 2007. It states the challenge as follows: *“Increasing regular participation in sport by everyone, including disabled people, is quite a challenge. Participation rates among disabled people living in London, particularly adults, are much lower than among non disabled people. Disabled people do not have the same choice of sports or activities available to them. Disabled people with sporting talent are not spotted early enough and the sporting pathways needed to help them to succeed are seldom there. All this has to change if we are to achieve our aspirations and participation rates.”* An action plan has been developed, to deliver:

- More disabled people in London participating regularly in sport and physical activity; and
- More disabled people in London achieving sporting success in competitions at every level.

The action plan is structured around six themes:

- Changing the culture
- Being inclusive
- Getting people active
- Creating sporting pathways
- Developing people
- Taking the lead and being accountable.

Against each of these themes are set out targets, responsibilities and timeframes, to ensure that implementation can be effectively monitored.

6. Sport and community safety

The Australian Institute of Criminology published, in 1993, a research report entitled *Sport, Physical Activity and Antisocial Behaviour in Youth*. The report identifies two principal objectives articulated for programs in this area:

- Reduce boredom in youth; and
- Decrease the amount of unsupervised leisure time.

Its findings are based on a survey of 175 sports programs for young people, some general, and some targeted specifically to young people “at risk.” The conclusions as regards the most successful programs include:

- Involve youth in program delivery and provide opportunities for leadership;
- Create a safe and engaging environment for youth; and
- Provide follow-up care and activities within the community.

The case studies show that successful programs did not target antisocial behaviours in isolation; rather, they tried to address problem behaviours and the underlying risk factors that may predispose an individual to seek out this activity.

Much of the sports policy and program development work, particularly in England and Scotland, focuses on the potential for sports participation to divert people (particularly young people) from crime and anti-social behaviour. The theory is that sports participation gives young people at risk or already involved in crime an alternative, rewarding and pro-social experience, and that sport can promote skills and self-esteem which encourage positive participation in society.

Launched in 2001, *Positive Futures* is a national sports and activity based social inclusion program in England. It operates through 121 local projects in England. Its principal aims are to help young people living in some of the most deprived communities avoid an involvement in offending behaviour and substance misuse by engaging them in activities and creating routes back into education, volunteering and employment.

The 2007 Positive Futures Monitoring and Evaluation report examines the achievements of the program over its first six years. The report assesses the impact of the program in terms of key government strategies for social inclusion, including crime and substance misuse prevention, and community cohesion.

Crime and substance misuse preventions

The program targets individuals and groups of young people who are at risk, based on a robust analysis of risk factors. Over time, *Positive Futures* has sought to distance itself from any direct causal relationship between activity

provision and crime reduction, and the focus on 'protective factors' has become more central to the approach. Four broad types of protective impacts are identified:

- Reduce the impact of, or exposure to, risk;
- Reduce chain reactions to negative experience;
- Promote self esteem and achievement; and
- Provide positive relationships and new opportunities.

The evaluation found that there was a strong fit for the program with these impacts:

- There is considerable success in retaining the involvement of participants;
- There is good social support for participation;
- There is good engagement with partner agencies responsible for reducing crime, drug abuse and anti-social behaviour; and
- Sporting activity is increasingly integrated with other activities which promote social engagement of young people – it is one of a suite of responses, rather than a response in isolation.

Community cohesion

Evidence is emerging that the *Positive Futures* program is moving beyond beneficial impacts on individuals to the building of useful social capital. This effect is attributed to the more successful projects engaging disadvantaged young people through a respect for the cultural context in which they live, whilst striving to open new avenues of opportunity and transition gateways. The analysis notes that increased commitment from participants over time is linked to the building of 'bridging' social capital – social engagement and respect between individuals and groups who may start from a position of distrust or hostility.

The report contains numerous case studies of impacts on individuals and approaches employed in the various projects.

Sport and community safety published by renewal.net in England, provides an overview of the issue and a useful checklist for sporting organisations wishing to attract participation by at risk youth.

Current-Generation Youth Programs – What Works, What Doesn't and at What Cost? was published by the Rand Corporation in 2008. The report evaluates the effects and costs of a range of youth programs, most of them school-based, and including some with a significant sport and recreation component. It concludes that such programs may have negative impacts on the behaviour in school of general participants. However, those programs which targeted "at risk" young people specifically had positive impacts – largely because of a partnership approach between agencies in designing and implementing such programs. A key factor in this success is seen as the

offering of one-to-one counselling and mentoring, alongside the activities offered to the whole group of participants.

Promoting resilience in young people in long-term care by Robbie Gillian was published in the Journal of Social Work Practice in March 2008. It examines, through individual case studies, the effects in promoting resilience in young people in care of participation in recreational activities. It notes that recreational activities draw the young person into the wider world beyond home, and thus widen and strengthen the range of relationships the young person can access in their social network. Participation may also act as a pathways to employment or educational opportunities. These positive effects are seen to be built on a number of key propositions:

- The young person is an active agent in their own development;
- Most young people live in a social network; such networks may prove to be a source of support and sometimes of stress;
- Formal and informal social support both matter;
- Gender may influence how young people access support or display resilience along their developmental pathway; and
- Having a range of social roles is important for health and well-being.

The *Value of Sport Monitor* (see above) includes a number of abstracts of research on crime reduction and community safety.

Title	Author
Sport and anti-social behaviour: a policy-related review	Coalter
<p>This digest seeks to clarify the nature of anti-social behaviour and the properties of sport that are assumed to be able to address such a variety of behaviour. Potential impacts of sport are identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An avenue for achievement and identity formation; • Exposure to different peer groups and values; • Development of self-discipline and control; • Compensation for blocked aspirations and low self esteem; and • Improved fitness and psychological health. <p>It includes recommendations to improve the effectiveness of diversionary and rehabilitative programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need for all initiatives to recognise the complexity of causes of anti-social behaviour; • The need to recognise gender-bias in the theory and practice, with limited 	

- understanding of female delinquency;
- Need to understand the differential effects of different sports in reducing or increasing aggression and delinquency;
- The need for coaches to possess good diagnostic and inter-personal skills to motivate continued participation;
- The success of most schemes depends on voluntary participation; and
- Sport should not be seen in isolation and is most effective in programs that also address issues of educational development, training for employment and are integrated into community structures.

Title	Author
A review of the impact of adventure programs on at-risk youth	West and Crompton
This presents a review of the role and effectiveness of 21 North American outdoor recreation programs in reducing recidivism rates of juvenile delinquency. Results from recidivism studies tended to be positive, with 8 out of 14 studies reporting reduced rates. However, the authors give only tentative support to the hypothesis, because of methodological concerns with much of the research, and the lack of proven causal links.	

Title	Author
Splash 2002 final report	Splash National Support Team
The report provides an analysis of 427 holiday programs in high crime estates in England and Wales. The programs included sports, music, drama and arts. Reductions in crime were detected in some Splash areas, although the sample sizes were small. The report includes recommendations for improving the program.	

Title	Author
Measuring the impact of crime reduction interventions involving sports activities for young people	Nichols and Crow
<p>This article considers the complexity of measuring the impact on crime reduction of different types of sports-based interventions with young people. The authors identify three typologies of interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs of primary prevention, directed at modifying the criminal/community/neighbourhood conditions that are likely to give rise to offending; • Secondary prevention schemes which focus on identifying and involving those at risk; and • Tertiary programs that work with offenders and seek to reduce recidivism. <p>The paper also identifies assumptions on the impact of sport on crime:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sport provides short term diversion from crime; • Sports programs in some locations deter criminality; and • Sport enables self-development and directs towards pro-social behaviour. <p>The authors provide detailed examples of evaluation methods examining different combinations of typologies of interventions and assumptions. In particular, they emphasise that a variety of evaluation methods is required to make robust judgements, and caution of the danger of</p>	

adopting an evaluation approach which tends to support the assumption without examining alternative evidence.

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