

# A Healthier Focus

## Geelong Softball Association

### Background

Geelong Softball Association (GSA) is a member of Softball Victoria which comes under the banner of Softball Australia. They are based at the Geelong region's only softball pitch, Stead Park in Corio. There are currently 5 softball clubs that form the Association, all sharing the clubrooms at Stead Park, for which GSA acts as the governing association. GSA run a men's and a women's competition as well as a newly formed junior program, "Batter Up".

Geelong Softball Association committed to becoming a healthier sporting organisation by signing up to VicHealth's Healthy Sporting Environments Demonstration Project in 2010. Supported by Leisure Networks, the association nominated a contact person who would drive the change. Through this the Association Board grew to understand their responsibilities towards their members, what they were already doing well, and the changes they would pursue.

### The Process

Since commencing the Project, the Geelong Softball Association has made significant progress, starting with the development of a mission statement that reflects their commitment to being a welcoming and inclusive sporting environment. The mission statement is proudly displayed on the noticeboard at the club, and GSA website and is also in the new member booklet. The member booklet developed also includes the Association's Code of Conduct, information about lodging complaints, and their policies around being smoke free club and an association that promotes responsible use of alcohol.

The introduction of a Welcoming Officer has also had a positive impact. The Welcoming Officer is a non-Board representative and is available at all games and other times to talk to members and follow up on any questions they may have. The Welcoming Officer is supported by the nominated Club Contact and the project team at Leisure networks.

## SUCCESS FACTORS:

- ✓ Having a consistent nominated contact person to drive the change
- ✓ A number of club members including a Board Member undertook VicHealth's Everyone Wins Training to increase knowledge and support the drive for change
- ✓ Being part of the healthy Sporting Environments Demonstration Project meant that the Association had support to implement the changes.