



## Challenging homophobia

Within clubs it is vital that under both your Equality Policies and Anti-discrimination policies that you make provision for challenging any form of homophobia and you create a culture of acceptance. Do not assume all your players are heterosexual and openly discuss the club's views on challenging homophobia. If any players open up about their sexual preference then ensure the club listens to and reacts positively to the players.

1. Develop policies which recognise and include the existence of homophobic bullying. Behaviour and anti-bullying policies should specifically reference homophobic bullying along with racism and sexism and other forms of discrimination.
2. Provide appropriate training on recognising and responding to homophobic bullying for club leaders, including lunchtime supervisors, support and admin staff. Make partnerships with local authorities and outside agencies that have specialist knowledge and can share best practice.
3. Consistently challenge homophobic language
4. Don't make assumptions: don't assume that all players and volunteers and their families are heterosexual, and don't assume that players suffering from homophobic bullying are gay
5. Provide information and support for players: posters advertising local LGB services and support groups ensure that there is someone either in the club or within an organisation your club is connected to is trained and confident that players can talk to.
6. Don't reinforce gender stereotypes: provide equality of opportunities for sports and activities.



### Challenge in your club

1. Challenge the discriminatory attitudes and behaviour, rather than the person ignoring issues such as this won't make them go away, and silence sends the message that you are in agreement with such attitudes and behaviours. Make it clear that you will not tolerate homophobic language, racist language or any actions that demean any person or group.
2. Expect tension and conflict and learn to manage it Sensitive and deep-rooted issues are unlikely to change without some struggle and, in some situations, conflict is unavoidable tension and conflict, if harnessed correctly, can be positive forces that foster growth.
3. Be aware of your own attitudes, stereotypes and expectations

Be open to the limitations your own attitudes and expectations can place on your perspective. Be honest about your own prejudices and biases. It is important not to get defensive when discriminatory attitudes or behaviours are brought to your attention

4. Actively listen to and learn from others' experiences. Don't minimise, trivialise or deny other people's concerns and feelings.
5. Use language and behaviour that is nonbiased and inclusive modelling an inclusive way of being is important when educating players. The words we choose to use, even in a light hearted manner, give loud messages to what we feel is acceptable or otherwise.
6. Provide accurate information to challenge stereotypes and biases  
Take responsibility for educating yourself about LGB issues. Don't expect LGB people to always educate you about their experiences or to explain homophobia to you. You will then be able to confront prejudice with more confidence and with the view of re-educating others.
7. Acknowledge diversity and avoid stereotypical thinking. Don't ignore or pretend not to see our rich differences. Acknowledging obvious differences is not the problem, but placing negative value judgements on those differences is! Stereotypes about those differences are hurtful because they generalise, limit and deny people's full potential.
8. Be aware of your own hesitations. Acknowledge that it is not always easy to intervene, but if you can confront your own fears it will become easier.
9. Project a feeling of understanding, respect and support. When confronting individuals, firmly address the behaviour or attitude whilst supporting the dignity of that person.
10. Establish standards of responsibility and behaviour working collectively with others such as players and your committee. Hold yourself and others accountable. Demonstrate your personal and club commitment in practice, both formally and informally. Maintain high expectations of all people and act as club role models.