

AFL YOUTH GIRL'S COMPETITIONS

START UP GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY FOOTBALL ORGANISATIONS





ABOUT THIS GUIDE

THIS GUIDE IS DESIGNED TO ASSIST COMMUNITY LEAGUES AND CLUBS WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF YOUTH GIRL'S COMPETITIONS

Junior leagues and clubs are encouraged to offer structured youth girl's competitions and teams for female participants graduating from NAB AFL Auskick and mixed junior competitions. This guide provides easy to follow steps and advice to assist junior leagues and clubs with the establishment of youth girls competitions.

WHY SET UP YOUTH GIRLS COMPETITIONS?

The development of a participation pathway for female participants beyond AFL Auskick is critical to the long term growth and development of the game. Currently female participants can participate in NAB AFL Auskick (5 – 12 years) and mixed junior and youth competitions (8 – 14 years).

For the safety of female participants the AFL's Junior Match Policy states that female participants who turn 14 years by January 1 in the year of play will be excluded from playing in any competition that is not a female competition conducted specifically for females. (See p13 of the *Next Generation: Australian Football Match Policy* or go to www.aflcommunityclub.com.au and follow the links to the Female chapter of the AFL Junior Match Policy.)

FEMALE FOOTBALL PATHWAY

The policy endorses the following participation pathway options for female participants.

NAB AFL AUSKICK AND JUNIOR FOOTBALL

- **5 – 12 years** (AFL Auskick program or mixed gender junior fixtures using appropriate AFL junior rules, or All Girls Auskick centres or groups.)

YOUTH FOOTBALL

- **13 – 14 years** (Female participants can play in mixed competitions at this age level, however it is strongly recommended that girls aged 13 and 14 years participate in a structured youth girls competition conducted specifically for females.)
- **12 - 18 years** (Girls these ages should be participating in AFL Youth Girls competitions at U12, U15 and U18 years using appropriate AFL Youth Girls rules – see Appendix 2.)

SENIOR WOMEN'S

- **Senior Women's** (In 2011 Women's Leagues will implement a minimum age of 16 years for youth girls graduating to senior level.)





RECRUITING PLAYERS AND PROMOTING THE COMPETITION

This is the most crucial part to the successful establishment of the competition. Girls respond well to a personal and structured approach. When promoting a new idea/opportunity/competition putting up a detailed poster, an article in a community newspaper or posting a message on a website does not always attract female attention or enthuse them to register.

The best method to recruit an enthusiastic group of female players and their friends is through:

- Personal chats to school students – ask the Physical Education (PE) staff if you can address all the female PE classes and let them know what the competition entails, when it happens and where. Show the AFL's female promotional DVD or vision from other competitions operating in your state. Or send a women's league role model in to the schools to inspire the girls with her story.
- Facebook – get your female data base to spread the message.
- Twitter - likewise this social network site can be useful for spreading the word.
- Once you have a cohort of players (and this can be as little as 10 girls because that's 5 a side) get them to recruit a friend. Most of the competitions showcased in the next section of this kit started with modest numbers but grew once the initial players spread the word.
- Even providing incentives to the players to recruit a friend can be beneficial – on registration day offer a 2 for 1 (pays), or a personal football to the first 30 enrolments.

FACILITATOR

TO SET UP COMPETITION



GUIDELINES FOR SETTING UP

(See bubbles for extra tips)

FACILITATOR TO SET UP COMPETITION

State football bodies are available to assist with the establishment of youth girls competitions.

A good starting point is to contact your state or regional Game Development office so they can outline the support available and facilitate a meeting of key interest and stakeholder groups including:

- Junior Leagues
- Women's League
- Schools – AFL School Ambassadors

Funding must be available through your Game Development office to pay a small honorarium to a person to drive the competitions establishment. An interested person could be identified from the following stakeholders:

- Women's League
- AFL School Ambassador
- Tertiary Student on Practicum
- Female Physical Education Teacher (e.g. on maternity leave)



RESPONSIBILITY

FOR CONDUCTING COMPETITION



RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONDUCTING COMPETITION

To ensure the long-term sustainability of the competition it is recommend that existing community football leagues and/or clubs are encouraged to take on the responsibility of administering the competition e.g.

- Junior Football Leagues – integrate female competition/s into season fixture.
- Junior Clubs – may wish to conduct a localised female competition (teams play at a central venue).
- Women's League - Women's league and clubs offer youth girl's age groups.

This also eliminates the need to duplicate the resources and infrastructure required as female football is integrated with the existing football network.



COACHES

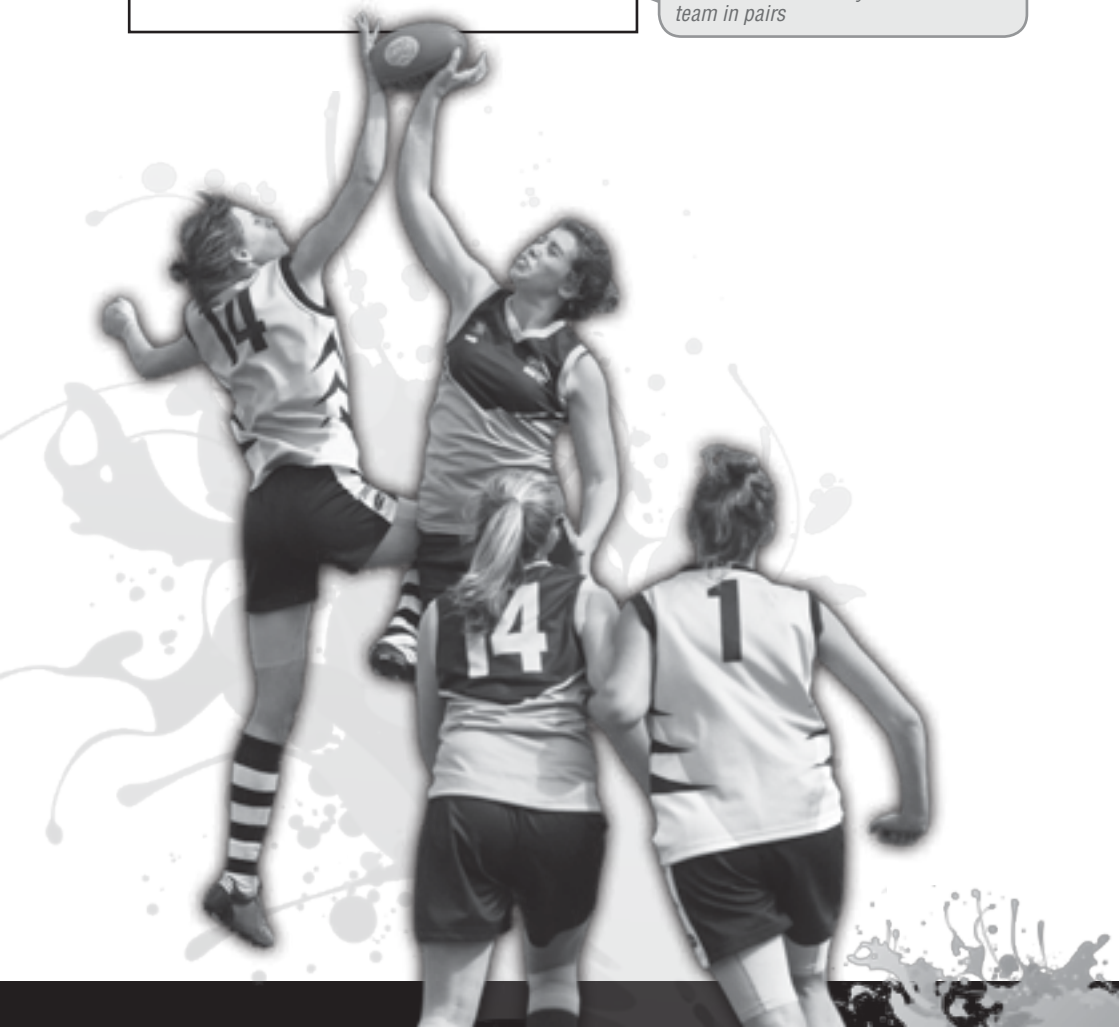


COACHES

Suitable youth girls coaches can be recruited from the following sources:

- Mother, father or brother of participating players
- Junior coaches from local community clubs
- Players from the male club aligned with youth girls team
- Women's League players and coaches
- State talent academy members (role models)
- Tertiary Human Movement/ Physical Education Students
- Secondary Physical Education Studies Students

Albany in WA put their PE studies students through Level 1 Coach Accreditation and they coached a team in pairs



COMPETITION FORMAT



COMPETITION FORMAT

To eliminate as many barriers and impediments in the establishment of a youth girls competition flexibility is highly recommended.

Study, social and part-time work pressures and other sporting commitments are all factors that should be considered when determining an appropriate competition format.

Competitions need to meet the needs of participating players so flexibility in the timing and days games are played, reducing team numbers and innovative competition formats together with the following should be considered:

- Reduced playing numbers - 9, 12, 15 or 18 a side
- Central venue – all games played
- Club based grounds – home and away season
- School teams align with clubs but play after school at school ground
- Skills clinic then evenly matched teams play
- Games only with regular training at clubs
- Spring/Summer Twilight games
- Ask prospective players when they would most like to play

Consider when other dominant sports for Youth Girls are played eg (soccer & netball)



RULES & RESOURCES



RULES

Refer to AFL Youth Girls Rules in Appendix 2
Modified formats to meet the development needs of youth girl participants e.g. 9 a side = 4 x 12 minute quarters with no kicking off the ground allowed.

Ball size = size 4 (15 years and over), size 3 (if under 15)

RESOURCES

As outlined previously funding maybe available from your State football body to assist with equipment and resources required to establish the competition.

Other funding and resource support options include:

State government (Department of Sport & Recreation)

Local council

User pays

Sponsorship

Local League

AFL Canberra funds the Youth Girls competition/s in Canberra



RECRUITING PLAYERS & PROMOTING THE COMPETITION



RECRUITING PLAYERS AND PROMOTING COMPETITION

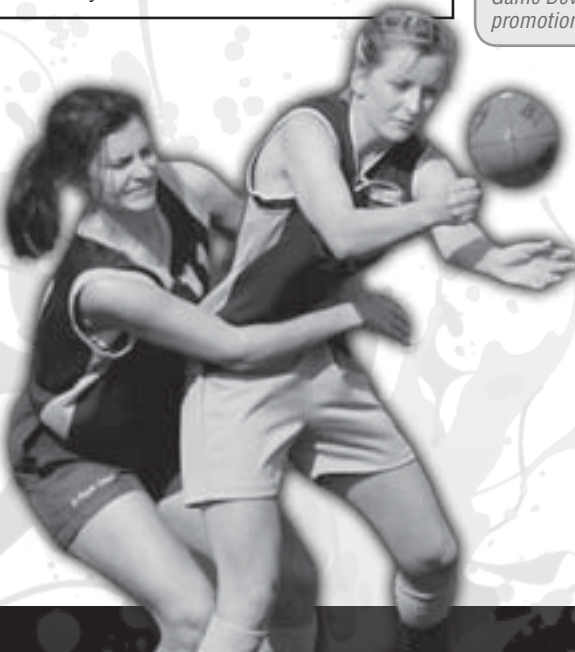
Competition promotion and player recruitment are critical elements to the successful establishment of a youth girls competition. The following list of promotional activities will assist in ensuring the competition kicks off on the right note:

- Part of State/Territory Registration Day
- Schools – seek assistance from your AFL School Ambassadors to advertise in school newsletter, place posters up, visit classroom, conduct clinics, run a school based gala day.
- Set up Facebook page for the competition
- Website articles – club homepage, League page, State Game Development
- Current Junior/Youth Girls bring a friend
- Community newspaper articles
- Radio announcements
- Posters at shopping centres/recreation centres/on community boards

What you need to know about girls ...

- *In general, boys will 'have a go' at anything new – girls require more structure and "certainty" before making a commitment. Therefore advertising is not enough – need to try and get something happening so that there is an opportunity for the girls to come and see what it is about*
- *the best "recruiters" are the girls themselves – if teams can get some key players then they will recruit other girls*
- *for girls, the opportunity to participate and play is more important than the "result" aspect so marketing needs to focus on the fact that a new competition is providing an opportunity for girls to do something that was previously not available to them*
- *most of the girls play, and are proficient at, other sports – therefore need to structure the competition to avoid clashing with other sports. The girls, their parents and other coaches need to see football as an additional opportunity NOT just an alternative*
(John Edsall – Geelong Youth Girls)

Leagues and Clubs ensure that their competition details appears on the Game Development calendar/any promotion around Registration Day





UMPIRES

The AFL has a number of umpire education and recognitions programs to support the growth and development of umpiring. They are:

1. The basic umpiring course
2. The AFL Green shirt program (first year umpires)
3. AFL umpire accreditation program

Each year more and more females participate in the game as umpires with the programs above in place to support their development.

The establishment of youth girl's leagues also provides greater opportunity for young female participants to take up umpiring. Umpires for youth girls competitions can be sourced from the following groups:

- Local umpiring group
- Women's league players
- Female talent academy players
- Community football panel umpires
- Mums, dads, brothers, friends – basic umpiring course required.
- Suspended players from Senior Women's or Men's competitions

As part of their penalty suspended players are required to umpire a game as determined by the Tribunal.

SUCCESSFUL MODELS



SUCCESSFUL MODELS

CASE STUDY 1: ILLAWARA YOUTH GIRLS

AREA	YEAR 1	YEAR 2
FACILITATOR TO SET UP COMPETITION	District Game Development staff plus volunteer	Key volunteer involved in first year
RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONDUCTING COMPETITION	Regional local junior league committee.	Regional local junior league committee
COACHES	Individual club coaches	Individual club coaches some older female players
COMPETITION FORMAT	Aligned with clubs as an extra team H and A 12 a side – 18 by the midway through competition Off set with boys competition	Aligned with clubs as an extra team H and A but going back to central venue 18 a side with equalisation rule Parallel with boys competition
RECRUITING PLAYERS AND PROMOTING COMPETITION	Launched under lights with television and media presence High Schools Gala Day gathered data as a competition with prize Clubs introduced to girls	Clubs promotion Interdistrict competition with ACT
RESOURCES	AFL Small Grant, State, user pays (minimal amount)	AFL Small Grant, State, user pays (more in line with boys)
UMPIRES	Panel with some senior umpires with discipline and coaching aspect	Panel

Key contact: Dave Johnson
dave.johnson@aflnswact.com.au

Dave's #1 tip: "It's all in the setting up. Once you've established the infrastructure the girls come."

CASE STUDY 2: SWANS DISTRICT YOUTH GIRLS

AREA	YEAR 1	YEAR 2
FACILITATOR TO SET UP COMPETITION	District Game Development staff with paid honorarium	District Game Development staff with paid honorarium from women's league
RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONDUCTING COMPETITION	Honorarium paid ie casual paid personnel	Honorarium paid ie casual paid personnel from Women's League
COACHES	Club coaches and women's league players in pairs	Club coaches and women's league players in pairs
COMPETITION FORMAT	Central venue, teams aligned with clubs, 12 a side	Central venue, teams aligned with clubs, 12 a side
RECRUITING PLAYERS AND PROMOTING COMPETITION	Honorarium paid personnel visited schools, spoke to teachers, engaged clubs Representative team with ACT	Invites to previous year's players, bring a friend, word of mouth, clubs promotion
RESOURCES	State, District	State, District, user pays
UMPIRES	Women's League	Women's League

Women's players are great coaches in that they provide a link between the Youth Girls and Women's Competitions and they provide the players with mentors they regularly see as their Coach.

Eventhough clubs didn't yet have any female teams, brothers in the club had sisters!

Important to get the state bodies involved to assist with the development of female football. State bodies have numerous resources that can be utilised to assist the competition.

Key contact: Angela Doyle
adoyle@swandistrictsfc.com.au

Ange thinks fun is the key. "The girls are keen to improve their skills but first and foremost they want to have fun."

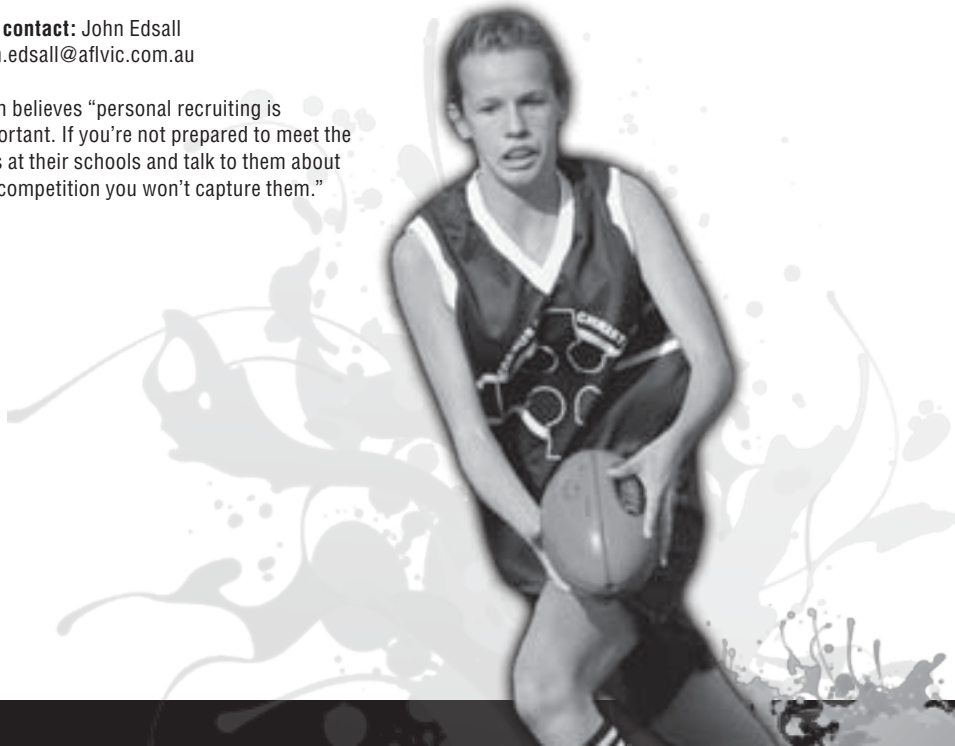


CASE STUDY 3: GEELONG YOUTH GIRLS

AREA	YEAR 1	YEAR 2
FACILITATOR TO SET UP COMPETITION	Regional Game Development staff (RDO)	RDO mentoring a volunteer on work experience to become the competition coordinator
RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONDUCTING COMPETITION	RDO	Volunteer as competition coordinator
COACHES	Combination of teachers, club coaches	Combination of teachers, club coaches
COMPETITION FORMAT	4 teams of 12 – 15 a side	6 teams of 15 – 18 a side with equalisation rule
RECRUITING PLAYERS AND PROMOTING COMPETITION	Advertising without personal approach to girls didn't work. Word of mouth once a handful of players nominated did!	All original players invited back and encouraged to bring a friend
RESOURCES	State and user pays	AFL Small Grant, user pays
UMPIRES	Panel umpires	Panel umpires

Key contact: John Edsall
john.edsall@aflvic.com.au

John believes “personal recruiting is important. If you’re not prepared to meet the girls at their schools and talk to them about the competition you won’t capture them.”



CASE STUDY 4: BUNBURY YOUTH GIRLS

AREA	YEAR 1	YEAR 2
FACILITATOR TO SET UP COMPETITION	District Game Development staff and paid honorarium	District Game Development staff and paid honorarium
RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONDUCTING COMPETITION	Honorarium paid ie casual paid personnel	Honorarium paid ie casual paid personnel
COACHES	Mums – one pair per team, accredited level 1 with mentoring from Development Staff	Mums – one pair per team, accredited level 1 with mentoring from Development Staff and club coaches
COMPETITION FORMAT	Central venue, with teams aligned with schools, 12 a side	Central venue, with school teams aligned with clubs, 15 a side
RECRUITING PLAYERS AND PROMOTING COMPETITION	Schools through AFLSAs and PE teachers Community newspaper, radio, local television promotion	Word of mouth, invite to previous participants, schools, community media
RESOURCES	State, District	AFL Small Grants, State and user pays
UMPIRES	Community Football Panel Umpires	Community Football Panel Umpires with mentoring from female panel coach

This is a great way to get parents involved and educated on the game. A good initiative to adopt

New competitions are an excellent opportunity to mentor new umpires (and other officials) for future benefit of your Youth Girls, Juniors and Women's competitions.

Key contact: Shane Atherton
shane.atherton@dsr.wa.gov.au

The key to Shane's model is "I didn't have the time to recruit and promote a youth girls but there was definitely a large number of girls that wanted more than just school footy. Once I got a well organised Competition Coordinator on board, the competition happened."

CASE STUDY 5: CANBERRA YOUTH GIRLS

AREA	YEAR 1	YEAR 2
FACILITATOR TO SET UP COMPETITION	Community Competition Office	Community Competition Office
RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONDUCTING COMPETITION	Community Competition Office	Community Competition Office
COACHES	Women's League players, Dads, Senior men's players	Women's League players, Dads, Senior men's players
COMPETITION FORMAT	<p>Twilight Competition:</p> <p>6 week, H&A competition</p> <p>6 teams - 3 school based teams aligned with a community clubs and 3 community club teams</p> <p>Winter Competition:</p> <p>10 week home & away season + plus 2 weeks finals</p> <p>4 teams, minimum 9-a-side, players aged 13 – 16 years</p>	<p>Twilight Competition:</p> <p>6 week, central venue competition</p> <p>6 teams – all community club based (players from schools were to join a community club to join the competition)</p> <p>Winter Competition:</p> <p>12 week home & away season + 3 weeks finals</p> <p>U15's and U18's divisions</p> <p>4 teams in U15's</p> <p>4 teams in U18's</p> <p>minimum 9-a-side for each competition</p>
RECRUITING PLAYERS AND PROMOTING COMPETITION	Schools promotion	Schools promotion
RESOURCES	AFL Small grant (Twilight Competition) User pays (Winter Competition)	User pays (Twilight Competition) User pays (Winter Competition)
UMPIRES	Community football competition umpires and new Green shirt umpires with an experienced mentor	Community football competition umpires and new Green shirt umpires with an experienced mentor

Key contact: Tamarah Knox
tamarah.knox@afact.com.au

A key consideration from Tamarah's experience is "use the resources that are already in place. If there is a Junior Football League organising a boys competition encourage them to offer a girls competition."

APPENDICES





APPENDIX 1: SAMPLE MEDIA RELEASE (for when you launch your new competition)

New Youth Girls Cranks Up in Country Victoria

AFL Victoria will continue to grow its Under 18 Youth Girls competition in regional Victoria. Gippsland will become the State's seventh region to have its own all female community based football competition for teenage girls.

Teams from Sale, Traralgon, Warragul, Morwell and Moe are currently being established for a seven week competition to be staged in July and August. Interest in the competition continues to increase, but more players are needed to bring the competition together. Victorian Under 16s School Girls representatives, Monique Tracey and Rachael Drenan (*pictured*), are amongst the first to sign up.

The Youth Girls Competition is played at central venues and is specifically designed for girls aged 13 to 18, emphasising fun, fitness and friendship in a family friendly environment through a community football competition. The competition started in 2004 and will reach nearly nine hundred adolescent girls throughout Melbourne, Geelong, Bendigo and Gippsland this year. Managed by AFL Victoria and supported by local councils, the AFL, VicHealth and the Department of Sport and Recreation Victoria, the Youth Girls competition gives girls the opportunity to play in a local community football competition. The Youth Girls program welcomes teams and players from all schools, community football clubs and leagues. The Youth Girls competition will be expanded further into regional Victoria over the next few years.

The Youth Girls program now includes a comprehensive talented player pathway, providing girls with exciting opportunities to represent their league and Victoria. A Youth Girls Academy has been established to provide additional on and off field development opportunities for Victoria's most promising players. Metropolitan and Country State Championships are now held annually as part of AFL Victoria's Metropolitan Championships and the Victorian County Football League's VLine Cup, respectively. In 2010, the AFL will stage the first ever AFL Girls' Under 18 National Championships in Melbourne.

Interested girls should contact AFL Victoria's Female Football Development Manager, Chyloe Kurdas (0418 572 902 – chyloe.kurdas@aflvic.com.au).

More information on AFL Victoria's Youth Girls competition can be found at www.youthgirls.aflvic.com.au

APPENDIX 2: YOUTH GIRLS RULES

13-15 YEAR OLDS

12-A-SIDE OR 15-A-SIDE: AT AFL AUSKICK PROGRAM OR IN CLUB/SCHOOL COMPETITION

PURPOSE

To provide youth girl's with a fun, safe and positive experience through a well structured match program that considers the level of maturation in motor, cognitive, psychosocial and emotional skill ²of adolescents in this age group.

The consolidation of basic game specific skills is still the focus at this age level rather than competition and winning, while further developing technical and tactical concepts¹. These concepts include position specific, and basic performance capacities – e.g. warm up, cool down, nutrition, hydration, recovery and goal-setting.

SPIRIT OF THE GAME

Prior to the commencement of play:

- all players, coaches and umpires should gather on the ground and shake hands
- the umpire and coaches should ensure that players are aware of the rules and procedures to be followed in the conduct of the game

The spirit of the game is **to give all available players a game** of football. Therefore:

- where difficulty occurs fielding full numbers, both coaches must agree to even up player numbers.
- excess players should be given to the opposition team if they are unable to field the required numbers.
- coaches should consider modifying the numbers per side to ensure all players participate (for instance, if planning 9-a-side but only 12 players in total are available: play 6-a-side. Or if 30 players are available, simultaneously play two games of 6-a-side, or one 9-a-side game with one 6-a-side game)

The umpire should at all times:

- endeavour to apply the rules of the games whilst preferring to award kicks to players in preference to calling for “ball-ups”
- understand that the spirit of the AFL junior match rules for this age group is to enable all players to gather possession and that **“The player in possession of the ball should be given every opportunity to kick or handball”**. For this reason, restrictions are placed upon body contact (refer to **Contact/Tackling**).
- attempt to involve all players as the opportunities arise, particularly when indicating which players are to receive a “free kick” upon the ball being kicked out of bounds and ensuring the effective rotation of players through the three zones of play
- enforce the **“full possession rule”** at all ball-ups (see following page).



In relation to all **ball-ups**, the **full possession rule** applies as follows:

- A player contesting a ball-up may not grab the ball and play on
- The player must knock, palm or punch the ball to a teammate or open ground, and may not play the ball again until it has either been touched by another player or hits the ground.

THE GAME - PREMIERSHIP POINTS COMPETITIONS

The football match program to be offered to youth girls 13-15 years of age must comply with the modified match program presented in this document. Premiership points, finals, ladders and representative teams are allowed.

PLAYING GROUND and OFFICIALS

The playing field is approximately 130m x 80m

This field size is the optimum size and flexibility is often needed, in particular, smaller field sizes may be required depending on the number of players per team, age and ability level.

A field umpire is needed.

There are no boundary throw-ins (no boundary umpires) but two goal umpires are required.

THE BALL

A synthetic or leather size 3 football made specifically for this age group should be used.

THE TEAM

Twelve to fifteen players participate. There are no rucks or rovers. Reserves: max of 5 recommended. To ensure maximum participation, if numbers of players are such that two teams can participate in a game of 12-a-side, this should be considered. Where this is impracticable, sharing of players with other sides should occur.

Interchange may take place at any time, but all players must play at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the match.

Equalise the teams and opponents as much as possible (match sizes, abilities).

Rotate players every quarter to provide opportunities in several positions.

PLAYING TIME

AFL Junior Fixture – Maximum of 4 x 15 minute quarters with no time on.

START OF PLAY and RESTARTING AFTER A GOAL

When all players are in their own positions, a ball-up is conducted between two centre players of similar height as nominated by the umpire in the centre of the ground.

Only centre line players attend centre bounces. (20 metres clearance from all other players). The umpire is to enforce a similar 20-metre area for field bounces.

No more than three players from each team shall be closer to the ball-up than approximately 20 metres (**Full Possession Rule Applies**).

(Note: there is no requirement to have a centre square marked on the ground).



SCRIMMAGE and FIELD BALL-UPS

Conducted between two players of equal size selected by the umpire. Before the throw up, the umpire should clear the area by sending players back to their positions. No more than three players from each team shall be closer to the ball-up than approximately 20 metres. (**Full Possession Rule Applies**).

OUT OF BOUNDS

A free kick is awarded against the player who last kicked the ball.

If there is doubt, or if the ball came off hands or body, the umpire shall call a ball-up 5 metres in from the boundary.

Full possession at the ball-up is not permitted. (**Full Possession Rule Applies**).

BUMPING

As per the Laws of Australian Football.

TACKLING

“The Wrap Around Tackle”

A player in possession of the ball may be tackled by an opponent wrapping both arms around the area below the top of the shoulders and on/above the knees. The tackle may be from either side or from behind providing the tackle from behind does not thrust forward the player with the ball (That is push back the player in the back).

- A player in possession of the ball, when held by an opponent applying the wrap around tackle, should be given a reasonable chance to dispose of the ball by kick or by handball, or by attempting to kick or handball, otherwise a free kick shall be awarded to the tackler for holding the ball.
- The Field Umpire shall conduct a ball-up when the player with the ball has the ball held to the body by an opponent, unless the player has had a reasonable time to dispose of the ball **prior to** being tackled, in which case a free kick shall be awarded to the tackler for holding the ball.
- The Field Umpire shall allow play to continue if the ball is knocked out of a player’s hands by an opponent.
- A player not in possession of the ball, when held by an opponent, shall be awarded a Free Kick.
- No player shall be deliberately dumped / thrown to the ground by a tackle.

BARGING

No barging or chopping past opponents is allowed. A free kick is awarded. Fending off, with an open hand to the body (not above the shoulders or in the back), is allowed.

MARK

Any player catching a ball directly from the kick of another player, provided the ball has travelled at least 10 metres, shall be awarded a mark.





BOUNCING THE BALL

No more than two bounces are permitted.

DISTANCE RUN

While a player in possession of the ball is moving, the player must bounce the ball within 15 metres, irrespective of whether that player is running in a straight line or otherwise. As above – two bounces only, then dispose for the ball.

KICKING OFF THE GROUND

Not permitted except when accidental.

DISTANCE PENALTY

A player **can** be awarded a 25m advancement towards their goals if, after a mark or free kick the umpire is of the opinion that an opposing player hinders that player. This includes: overstepping the mark; wasting time; using abusive language/behaviour; etc

ORDER OFF RULE

To be applied at the umpire's discretion (or the Controlling Body where applicable). Bad language, poor sportsmanship and disputing umpiring decisions should be actively discouraged.

COACHES

The coach is not allowed on the ground. Messages may be delivered by a Runner. However, the Runner must abide by the procedure of going directly to the player involved, delivering the message and returning directly to the coaching bench.

At the end of the game all players and coaches should gather on the ground and shake hands. The umpire should also take this opportunity to address the players.

HOW TO STRUCTURE MATCH PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH GIRL'S COMPETITIONS

16-18 YEAR OLDS:

15-a-side or 18-a-side: Community club and school competitions.

PURPOSE

Learning how to train and the consolidation of basic skills is the focus at this age level. Advanced technical and tactical skills start to be introduced, including decision making through games and training, position specific skills (competency in a position), and basic performance capacities – e.g. warm up, cool down, nutrition, hydration, recovery, goal-setting, pre and post match routines.

It is important for players in this age group to feel an essential part of the team to develop self efficacy, self worth and identity formation within the community (club/team). Commitment and loyalty to the club/team, social responsibility on and off the field in accordance to quality adult standards should be engendered and acknowledged.

SPIRIT OF THE GAME

Prior to the commencement of play:

- all players, coaches and umpires should shake hands.
- the umpire and coaches should ensure that players are aware of the rules and procedures to be followed in the conduct of the game.

The spirit and intention is **to ensure that all games are played in a competitive and fair manner in an environment that:**

- permits a player whose sole objective is to contest and gain possession of the ball, to do so in a safe and fair manner.
- rewards and acknowledges commitment and loyalty to the team, club and or school.
- allows all players to feel an essential part of the team while enabling each individual to develop self-efficacy, self-worth and an identity within the community (team/club/school).
- engenders and reinforces community values and social responsibility.

The player whose sole objective is to contest the ball must be permitted to do so. Ethically it is the responsibility of coaches to provide the best possible teaching and learning conditions; therefore the use of negative defensive tactics where the opposing players' **sole objective is to prevent a player from gaining possession** is strongly discouraged at this age level. Tactics such as **tagging** and **flooding** are elements of the modern game; however they are detrimental to the philosophy of providing an environment that maximizes the desired fair, fun, fast, skilful and competitive elements of the game at this level.





Umpires should at all times:

- endeavour to apply the laws of the game whilst preferring to award free kicks to players in preference to calling for “ball-ups”
- understand that the spirit and intention of the laws is to ensure that a match is played in a fair manner and to protect players from sustaining injury. For this reason restrictions are placed upon **tackling for this age group**.

At the end of the game all players and coaches should shake hands.

LAWS OF AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

The “**Laws of Australian Football**” apply to all AFL Youth Girl’s competitions at the 16-18 age level with the following modifications:

THE BALL

A size 4 leather or synthetic football made specifically for this age group should be used.

TACKLING

Tackling is permitted as per the **Laws of Australian Football** however:

- No player shall be deliberately slung, dumped or thrown to the ground via any tackle.

KICKING OFF THE GROUND

Not permitted except when accidental.

ORDER OFF RULE

To be applied at the umpire’s discretion (or the Controlling Body where applicable). Bad language, poor sportsmanship and disputing umpiring decisions should be actively discouraged.

APPENDIX 3: STATE GAME DEVELOPMENT CONTACTS

STATE	NAME	MOBILE	EMAIL
ACT	Tamarah Knox	0421 768 663	tamarah.knox@aflact.com.au
NSW	Simon Wilson	0405 112 696	simon.wilson@aflnswact.com.au
NT	Breeanna Brock	0414 482 586	bbrock@aflnt.com.au
Q	Julia Price	0420 980 504	jprice@aflq.com.au
SA	Emma Gibson	0412 117 869	emmag@sanfl.com.au
V	Chyloe Kurdas	0418 572 902	chyloe.kurdas@aflvic.com.au
WA	Clint Degebrodtt	0430 868 145	cdegebrodtt@waflc.com.au



