

You might have noticed that not all people are the same! Diversity exists everywhere across age, gender, culture, race and ethnicity, and is even captured in different physical, mental, religious and political characteristics, beliefs and traditions people hold. Discovering what makes someone different enables greater appreciation of others and leads to great collaboration and cooperation.

Last Saturday I was fortunate enough to see the AFL Diversity team come together and play against the Vic Country Under 16 team. Taking the score away from it, the enthusiasm from the players, and the excitement from family members was so lovely to witness. It proves that it doesn't matter what background you have – you can still enjoy the game that we call Australian Rules Football.



Football should be a vehicle that bridges the gap between Australia's diverse communities and promotes inclusion within the wider Australian community. In fact it's important that sport and recreation organisations (not just the AFL) reflect the diversity of the communities in which they operate. Organisations need to have practices in place to help them achieve their inclusion goals. Junior sport is a great place to start the conversations about promoting diversity and social inclusion. Positive sport experiences at an early age can encourage lifelong involvement, with important social and health benefits to the community.

