

# FINAL REPORT

## STARS: Standing Together Against Racism in Sport



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
MELBOURNE

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### Suggested Citation

Block K, Young D, Carpenter L, Wells M, Simango B. (2025) STARS: Standing Together Against Racism in Sport (STARS) – Final report on co-developing, implementing and evaluating an intervention to tackle racism in community sport clubs. University of Melbourne.

# PREFACE

This is the final report for The Australian Department of Health for the funded project 'Co-designing, implementing and evaluating an intervention to tackle racism and Islamophobia in junior sport' conducted between 2020 - 2023 (Grant ID: 4-ENJ01IS). For community settings (and for the remainder of this report) the project was named 'STARS: Standing Together Against Racism in Sport'.

## Acknowledgment of Country

The authors would like to acknowledge that we live, work and conducted this project on the unceded lands of the Traditional Custodians, the Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung people of the Kulin nation, and we pay respects to their Elders past and present, and acknowledge the importance of Indigenous knowledge in the Academy.

## Funding

This project was supported by the 'Driving Social Inclusion through Sport and Physical Activity' Grants Program by the Australian Department of Health, University of Melbourne Faculty of Arts-MDHS Collaborative Research Initiative seed funding, Merri-Bek City Council and Welcoming Clubs (Welcoming Australia).

## Acknowledgements

We thank the following local sports clubs who enthusiastically participated in this project as partners – Youlden Parkville Cricket Club, Northern Saints Football Club, Footscray Hockey Club, Fawcner Soccer Club, Wyndham Track and Field and Diamond Valley Basketball Association. We thank Springvale Districts Football Club for providing their time during the piloting of the survey tool. We are grateful for the in-kind support provided by each member of the advisory committee for their invaluable input into the design and delivery of STARS. We remember our bright, community-driven team member Azraf Ezaz, who sadly lost his life far too soon.





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Despite Australian community sport being recognised as a cultural and racial 'equalizer', participation rates for migrant and minority ethnic groups are low compared with majority ethnic groups. One significant barrier to equal sport participation is racism. Racism in sport at both an elite and grassroots level (as in society generally) is well documented, as are its insidious negative impacts on social inclusion, participation, wellbeing and mental health.

STARS aimed to co-design an effective, evidence-based anti-racism intervention. The project was developed in response to an identified need to strengthen racial literacy and the capacity to respond to racism and Islamophobia within sports clubs, and the lack of evidence for effective anti-racism interventions in the community sport settings. STARS followed on from 'Count Me In' (CMI), a participatory action research project that aimed to increase participation by migrant and refugee young people in sports clubs in the Local Government Areas of Merri-Bek and Hume. Count Me In successfully addressed multiple participation barriers and engaged almost 300 young people in sports clubs however, racism and Islamophobia remained persistent barriers to sustained participation. Some participating clubs described resistance to greater diversity and inclusion from their own members. They also reported racist abuse from opposing teams, coaches and parents. It was clear that young people, parents, and club officials were ill-equipped to deal with these reported experiences of resistance and racism (Young and Block 2023; VicHealth 2020).

The STARS research team partnered with Welcoming Clubs to deliver Active Inclusion and Upstander anti-racism training to clubs. This report details the project activities and key research findings.

# TERMINOLOGY

**Everyday Racism** (also referred to as casual racism and microaggressions: “everyday” expressions that perpetuate racist stereotypes and ideas. This can include jokes, slights, exclusion, stereotypes or offhand and condescending comments to or about an individual or racial group.

**Institutional racism:** involves the perpetuation of discrimination on the basis of “race” by organisations and institutions. It includes policies and practices that guide how organisations and institutions run, which result in consistently inequitable outcomes on the basis of racialised characteristics.

**Overt racism:** intentional and/or obvious harmful attitudes or behaviours towards an individual or group because of their racial, cultural or religious background.

**Racial Literacy:** increased knowledge and skills to recognise and understand racism in society, to be empowered to create change.

**Racialised:** the process by which groups of people come to be seen, treated and to understand themselves as belonging to a distinct racial group.

**Systemic Racism:** is the way a society or institution’s cultural norms, laws, ideologies, policies, and practices result in inequitable treatment and outcomes. Systemic (and structural or institutional) racism can be more difficult to identify than individual or interpersonal racism, because it is often so entrenched in our societies or institutions that it is perceived as ‘normal’.

**Upstander:** someone who chooses to do something to support a person who is being abused or harmed.



# INTRODUCTION

## Project Rationale

Participation in sport is demonstrated to produce physical and psychosocial health benefits for children and young people. Despite its benefits, racism persists as a barrier to sport participation for young people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds (Young and Block 2023; Farquharson et al. 2019; Spaaij, Knoppers, and Jeanes 2020).

In the Australian context, Indigenous young people, refugees and migrants from minority ethnic groups are disproportionately affected by racism (Elias, Mansouri, and Paradies 2021). Interpersonal experiences of racism among young people in Australia consist of both verbal and non-verbal incidents, including name calling, sledging, racist jokes, and physical abuse (Mansouri et al. 2009). On an institutional level, racism manifests through attitudes reflected by dominant groups, false and harmful media representation of minority communities and power abuse demonstrated by authorities (Cunneen 2019).

While anti-racism interventions have been well documented in professional sport, little has been implemented within the community sport setting. Research by Farquharson et al (2019) revealed that on-field racial abuse was frequently experienced in junior sport, however it was unlikely to be reported by those directly impacted due to fear they would face personal negative repercussions e.g. be removed from the field and unable to continue participating, be ostracized by fellow team members or opponents (Farquharson et al. 2019).

In sport, everyday racism is frequently enacted through racial stereotyping and sledging using racial slurs. Attitudes about race can be so deeply ingrained that many people do not recognise that they are benefitting from a system that favours the majority group (Spaaij, Knoppers, and Jeanes 2020; Priest et al. 2021; Evans et al. 2015).

## Limited Evidence for Anti-Racism Interventions and Action in Sport

During 2020, a scoping review of anti-racism and anti-Islamophobia interventions in sport was conducted by Master of Public Health student Adriana Rizwan under the supervision of A/Prof Karen Block, Dana Young and Dr Lauren Carpenter to inform the development of the STARS intervention. The review found a paucity of research regarding anti-racism interventions and action, particularly in junior sports, with some research found for effective anti-racism interventions within school settings.

STARS therefore aimed to co-design an effective, evidence-based anti-racism intervention in response to an identified need to strengthen racial literacy and the capacity to respond to racism and Islamophobia within sports clubs. The STARS research team partnered with Welcoming Clubs to deliver Active Inclusion and Upstander anti-racism training to clubs and met frequently with community-based partner organisations via an advisory committee to discuss the design, delivery and evaluation of the project.

This research contributes to the identified gap in the literature of effective anti-racism interventions for the community sport setting.



# METHODOLOGY

## Research Team and Advisory Committee

Advisory committee meetings were held in March, May and August and November 2021 and Feb and August 2022. Stakeholders attending include representatives from a range of community-based organisations, local government and sporting organisations:

| Members   | Role                    | Organisation   |
|---|-------------------------|--|
| A/Prof Karen Block<br>Dana Young<br>Dr Lauren Carpenter<br>Ilundi Tinga<br>Azraf Ezaz | Researchers             | University of Melbourne<br>Melbourne School of<br>Population and Global Health |
| Maxine Wells<br>Blessing Simango  | Students                | University of Melbourne  |
| Prof Karen Farquharson<br>Dr Odette Kelada  | Investigators           | University of Melbourne<br>Faculty of Arts                                     |
| Maia Tua-Davidson<br>Vanbawi Thawng<br>Jessica Scannell                               | Community Partner       | Welcoming Clubs,<br>Welcoming Australia  |
| Bernadette Hetherington<br>Petr Svoboda<br>Tamara Mason<br>Sayanti Bhatta             | Community Partner       | Merri-Bek City Council   |
| Jillian Dent<br>Nazish Khan<br>Clara Adams<br>Breanna DeJong<br>Jackie Evers          | Community Partner       | Merri Health   |
| Linette Harriott<br>Simon Rodder  | Advisory Member         | Centre for Multicultural Youth   |
| Sean McPhillips   | Film Production Partner | Mighty Films   |
| Caitlin Honey   | Advisory Member         | Athletics Victoria   |
| Tom Dixon   | Advisory Member         | VicSport   |
| Voelcker Sapolu<br>Alisha Abate   | Advisory Member         | Maribyrnong City Council   |

## **Research Methodology**

### **Development and Piloting of a Tool to Capture Racial Literacy, Experiences and Responses to Racism**

Racial literacy refers to a learnt ability to understand and recognise how racism is perpetuated in society, which ultimately leads to informed anti-racist behaviours. A rapid evidence synthesis on racism and child health conducted by Priest et al (2021) suggested that any novel anti-racism interventions should aim to improve participants' racial literacy (Priest et al. 2021). In theory, having the ability to recognise, understand and discuss racism will lead to informed anti-racist behaviours (Brown, Kelada, and Jones 2021).

Covid related delays to working directly with sports clubs during 2021 provided the research team time to develop, pilot and refine a tool to quantitatively assess participants racial literacy in community sports clubs (Appendix 1). This tool was piloted with Springvale Districts Football Club in 2021 and refined based on feedback. Overall, the survey was deemed acceptable and feasible by the pilot cohort.

The survey was divided into three categories to assess racial literacy:

- attitudes associated with racism,
- understandings of racism,
- responses to racism.

Experiences of racism are underreported, specifically across First Nations Australians and migrant and minority ethnic groups. Self-reported data detailing frequency of racism is needed at a large scale to inform anti-racism efforts (Ben et al. 2022). Therefore, experiences of racism – either directly or indirectly were collected alongside any action taken in response to this experience.

The survey was administered using the online Qualtrics platform at the University of Melbourne.

### **Qualitative Interviews to Assess Program Impacts**

A selection of participants of the STARS program were also invited to participate in an interview, via phone or zoom, to further understand any experiences of racism in sport and the impacts of the STARS program on their capacity to respond to incidents of racism – either personally or as an Upstander. Twenty-four participants agreed to participate in either a zoom or phone interview (N=24).

## Intervention

### Anti-Racism Workshops

Six sports clubs/Association were initially recruited across Melbourne – which included an Athletics, Soccer, Australian Rules Football (AFL), Cricket and Hockey Clubs, and a Basketball Association. Project activities were significantly delayed across much of 2021 however due to the COVID-19 related lockdowns in Melbourne. This resulted in community club sport unable to resume in full capacity until November 2021. During this time, we further developed our partnership with Welcoming Clubs, an initiative of Welcoming Australia, and proceeded to engaged Welcoming Clubs manager Maia Tua-Davidson to deliver their Active Inclusion and Anti-Racism workshop.

Aligned with the co-design methodology, individual clubs needs were assessed and the workshop content was modified for each club. Workshop content included: promoting welcoming and inclusive behaviour at the club, discussing core club values, the impacts of exclusionary behaviour (including racism) and upstander actions against racism and discrimination. The STARS project provided participating clubs with drink bottles and posters with anti-racism messaging.

After the delivery of the first workshop, it became apparent that pre engagement of leaders within a club was a necessary first step. Therefore, a strategy was introduced, which involved conducting an online, introductory workshop with each club leadership group. This aimed to ensure that subsequent workshops with club members were appropriately tailored. It also proved an effective method of encouraging club leadership to discuss the project with club members and to encourage attendance at the workshops.



**Fawkner Soccer Club**

July 7 at 11:19 PM · 🌐



Tonight our special guest was Maia who spent time with our members discussing racism in sport.

Was a fantastic STARS training session and we can't wait to hit the next stage.

[Fawkner Soccer Club](#) will NOT tolerate Racism at our club or any club.... See more

## Communication Strategies

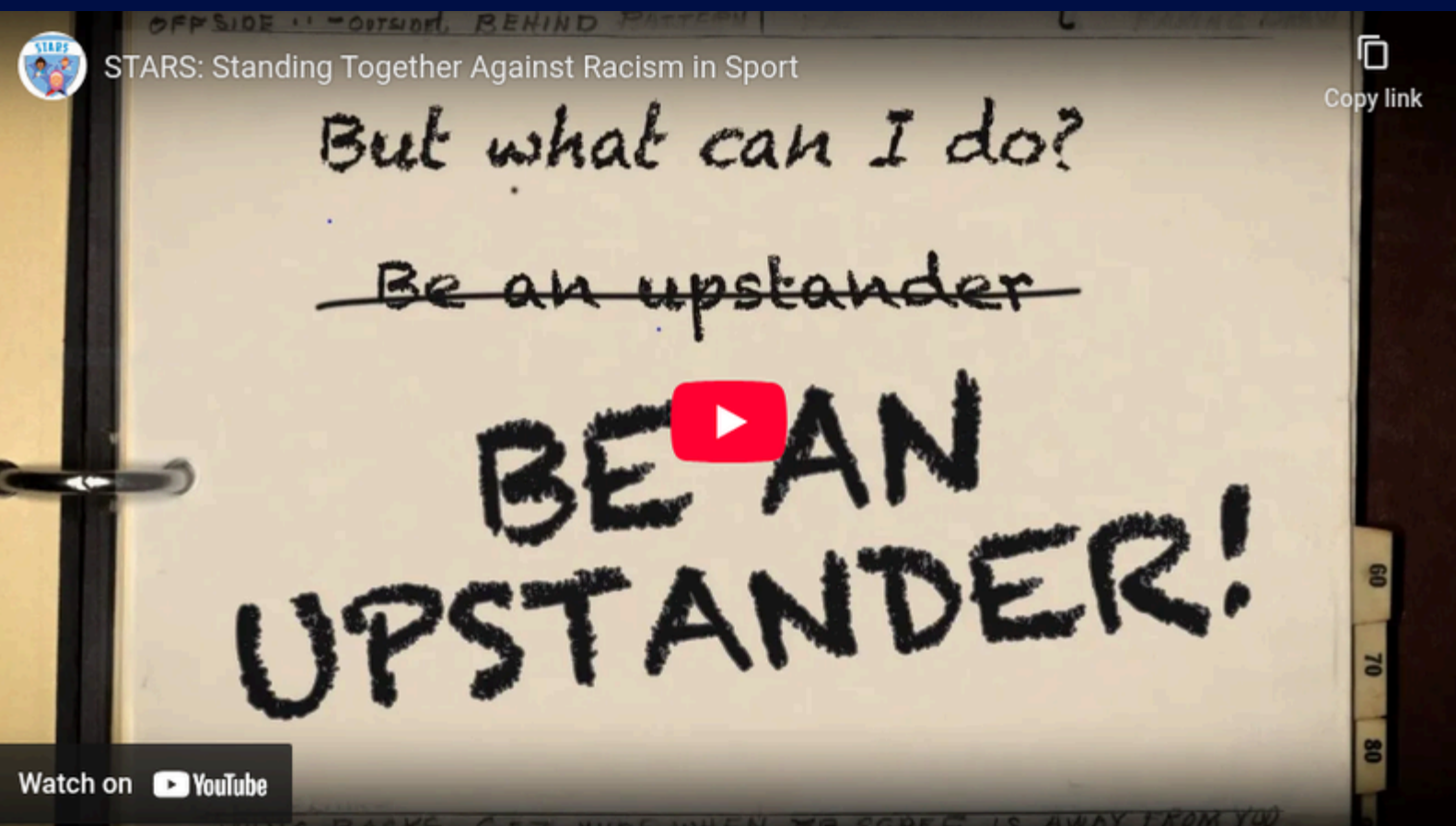
A STARS project Facebook page was created as a communication and dissemination tool, to promote anti-racism messaging and share project activities.

<https://www.facebook.com/starsunimelb>

Merri-bek City Council funded the production of a short promotional video to raise awareness of the issue of racism in community sport, the importance sport plays in the lives of our diverse community and encourage community members to be active bystanders against racism and discrimination.

The film is available to view on Youtube: <https://youtu.be/uE7aJ1gk3mU>

Please click the video below to watch:



# RESULTS

## Delivered Workshops and Project Reach

| CLUB   | 2022 DATES  | TAILORED TO   | ATTENDEE NUMBERS |
|--|---|---|------------------|
| Wyndham Track & Field  | 17 <sup>th</sup> February   | Club Members<br>(Mixed positions)   | 20               |
| Footscray Hockey Club  | 28 <sup>th</sup> June<br>5 <sup>th</sup> July<br>7 <sup>th</sup> July | Leadership Group (online)<br>Players - Senior Women<br>Players - Senior Men | 8<br>12<br>24    |
| Fawkner Soccer Club  | 7 <sup>th</sup> July  | Club Members  | 7                |
| Northern Saints Football Club  | 28 <sup>th</sup> July<br>11 <sup>th</sup> August                      | Leadership Group (online)<br>Players, Parents, Volunteers                   | 5<br>80          |
| Diamond Valley Basketball Association                                      | 17 <sup>th</sup> August   | Leadership Group of<br>Association staff and<br>member clubs (online)       | 13               |
| Youlden Parkville Cricket Club   | 8 <sup>th</sup> November<br>28 <sup>th</sup> November                 | Leadership Group (online)<br>Players  | 9<br>22          |
| Hosted by<br>Monash City Council<br>(Various sports clubs from<br>the LGA) | 21 <sup>st</sup> November   | Club Representatives  | 12               |
| Hosted by<br>Hockey Victoria<br>(Various Hockey clubs)                     | 22 <sup>nd</sup> November   | Club Representatives  | 14               |
| <b>Total</b>   |   |   | <b>195</b>       |

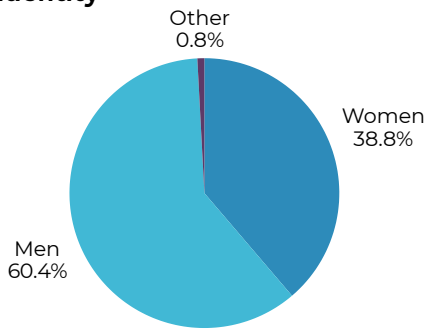
# SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

**231** completed the STARS survey

## Demographics

**34 years** median age

### Gender identity



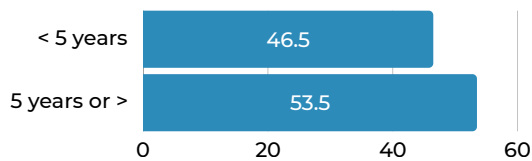
**33.8%** did not identify as white

**28.1%** were born overseas

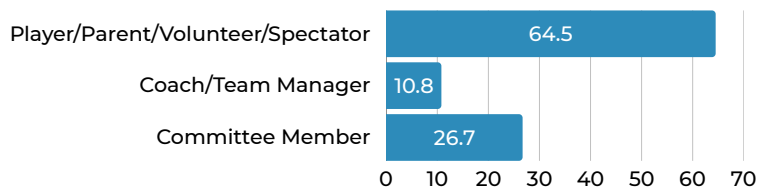
**10%** have English as a second language

**1.7%** identified as Aboriginal

### Duration at Sports Club (%)



### Role at the Sports Club



Roles at the club were also analysed by whether a respondent considered themselves white or not.

- Of participants with the most **influential roles at the sport club** (Committee member/Coach), **76%** identified as white.
- Of those with relatively less influence (players/parents/volunteers) **61%** identified as white.





# KEY FINDINGS

STARS aimed to co-design an effective, evidence-based anti-racism intervention. It responded to an identified need to strengthen racial literacy and the capacity to respond to racism and Islamophobia within sports clubs following the conduct of the Count Me In project. The STARS research team partnered with Welcoming Clubs to deliver Active Inclusion and Upstander anti-racism training to clubs.



**6 PARTNER SPORTS CLUBS**



## PROGRAM REACH

**195 club members** attended the Active Inclusion & Upstander anti-racism workshops.

## RESEARCH PARTICIPATION



**231 Surveys**  
**24 Individual Interviews**

## EXPERIENCES OF RACISM

**40%**

of survey participants had one or more experiences of racism in public spaces

**1/10**

had experienced racism at their sports club



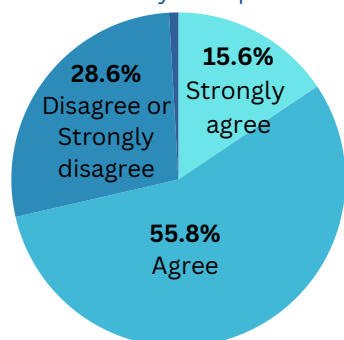
**1/4**

had witnessed racism at their sports club

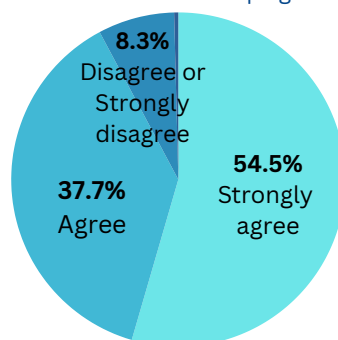
Perpetrators were most frequently reported to be players, parents or spectators from opposition teams

Prior to the STARS program, most participants said they were confident to stand up against racism, but 28% reported they did not know the best way to respond. 84% also wanted more knowledge and practical strategies regarding how to respond to racism.

I know the best way to respond to racism



Am confident to stand up against racism



**84%**

of survey participant stated they would like to **know more** about **how to stand up to racism**

## FEEDBACK ON THE STARS PROGRAM

"SOMETHING THAT I REALLY LIKED WAS TALKING ABOUT REASONS WHY PEOPLE MIGHT NOT PARTICIPATE IN SPORT: THEY DON'T FEEL WELCOME, THEY DON'T FEEL INCLUDED. AND I THINK THAT'S REALLY IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND"

"[THE STARS PROJECT IS] GIVING PEOPLE TOOLS : IF THEY SEE SOMETHING, THEY CAN SAY SOMETHING AND HOW THEY CAN DO THAT...THE FOCUS ON STRATEGIES WAS QUITE HELPFUL."



## Attitudes associated with racism

Measurement of attitudes associated with racism was drawn from a pre-existing scale, the Racism, Acceptance and Cultural-Ethnocentrism scale (RACES) (Griggs & Manderson, 2015, 2026).

This scale measures three domains;

**Racist attitudes** - reflecting out-group denigration and derogation,

**Accepting attitudes** - reflecting out-group endorsement and acceptance,

and **Ethnocentric attitudes** - reflecting in-group favouritism and loyalty.

Eight items were selected from the 34-item scale to keep survey length minimal (Table 1).

Table 1. Modified RACES Scale

|  | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Agree | Strongly agree |
|--|-------------------|----------|-------|----------------|
| <i>I have respect for people of all backgrounds</i>                          | 1.7%              | 0.0%     | 15.0% | 83.3%          |
| <i>I only feel comfortable around people from my own background</i>          | 56.4%             | 28.2%    | 6.8%  | 8.5%           |
| <i>I don't trust people from some backgrounds</i>                            | 59.4%             | 29.9%    | 9.0%  | 1.7%           |
| <i>People from some backgrounds are more violent than others</i>             | 40.3%             | 43.3%    | 16.0% | 0.4%           |
| <i>I only have friends from my own background</i>                            | 49.4%             | 42.5%    | 5.6%  | 2.6%           |
| <i>Having people from different backgrounds in Australia is a good thing</i> | 0.0%              | 0.0%     | 20.6% | 79.4%          |
| <i>If people don't fit into Australian society, then they should change</i>  | 40.4%             | 47.8%    | 10.9% | 0.9%           |
| <i>I accept people from all backgrounds</i>                                  | 0.4%              | 0.0%     | 27.6% | 72.0%          |

See Appendix, supplementary table 1 for further results by demographic characteristics.

The scale was completed at baseline only due to COVID related delays, so any attitudinal change due to involvement in STARS was unable to be captured.



## Recognising Racism

The survey also asked questions about recognition of different types of racism within sports settings (Appendix, supplementary table 2). Respondents were presented with nine situations and were asked to identify which situations were examples of racism using pre-coded responses: “Yes, this is an example of racism”, “This might be considered racism sometimes”, or “No, this is not an example of racism”. Situations included different types of racism (overt, systemic/institutional, and everyday) and situations that the research team would not consider to be examples of racism.

The majority of people (91.8%) could correctly identify overt racism (spectators yelling names at players/athletes because of their skin colour). However, there was more variation in respondents ability to identify casual or systemic/institutional forms of racism, with the percentage of respondents able to correctly identify more subtle forms of everyday racism varying from 41.1% “(e.g. Not trying to learn how to pronounce ‘Non- Australian’ names properly) to 89.2% (e.g. Telling a club member it was a joke if they get upset about being called a name) (Figure 1).

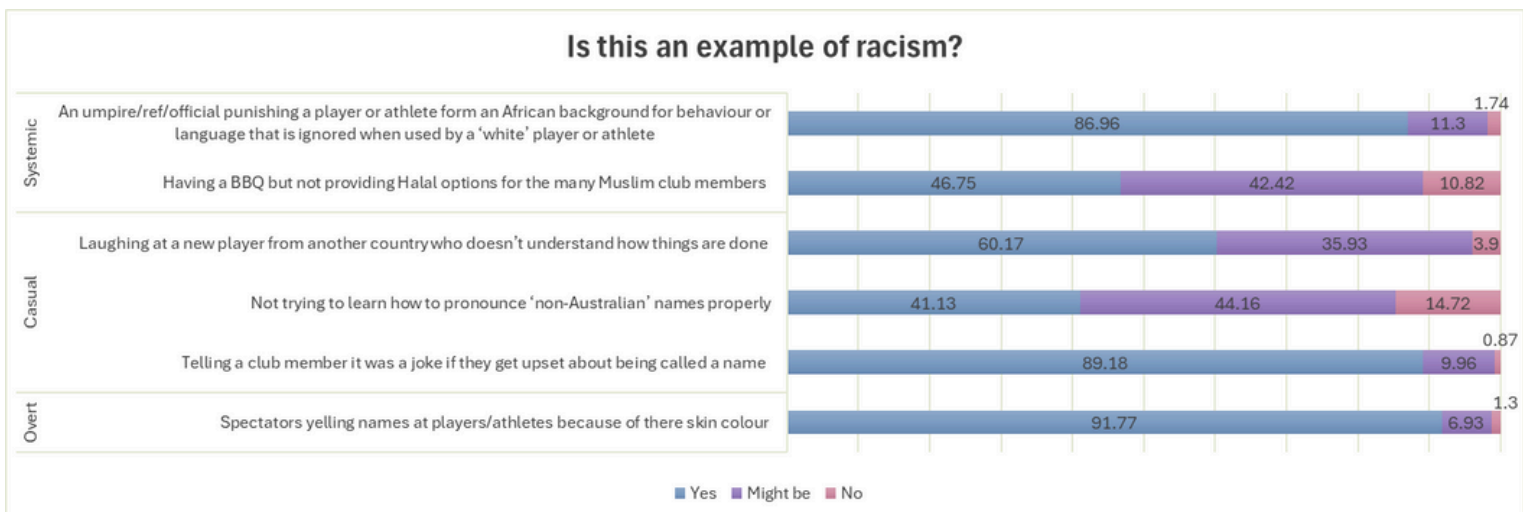


Figure 1. Percentage of survey respondents who could identify examples of overt, casual/everyday and systemic/institutional forms of racism

Gender and whiteness were associated with levels of racial literacy. Compared to females, males were less likely to have answered more than 50% of the questions correctly (OR: 0.42 95%CI: [0.2,0.9], p=0.022). Those who did not consider themselves as white were also less likely to have answered more than 50% of the questions correctly (OR: 0.34 95%CI: [0.2,0.7], p=0.002). No significant associations were observed based on age, role at club and language spoken at home.





## Experiences of Racism in Sport Settings

Survey participants were asked “Whilst part of this sports/athletics club have YOU EXPERIENCED racism or been treated badly because of your racial, cultural or religious background”.

11.8% (n=26) of respondents, answered “Yes” to the question.

When asked “Whilst part of this sports/athletics club have you SEEN OTHERS FROM THIS CLUB experience racism or be treated badly because of their racial, cultural or religious background?”

26.4 % (n=61) of all respondents, answered “Yes” to the question

The following incidents of racism confirm the urgent need to address racism within community sport.

### Overt Racism

Many survey participants who were players reported that spectators and opposition players were commonly perpetrators of direct and overtly racist comments and provided some examples of this harmful commentary:

*“I was called a filthy Arab from both players and supporters”*

*“Player referred to me as a black animal”*

*“Called me names because of my hijab”*

*“Mocking of my accent”*

*“One of our junior players was called a name in relation to the colour of his skin”*

## Indirect and Systemic Racism

It was also reported that many racist comments were being made indirectly on the sideline:

*“Racist jokes, stereotypes, derogatory comments about a person with a race overlay. I have only observed them between “white” people, never directly to a person of another race.”*

Respondents also reported examples of institutional and systemic racism:

*“I felt one my coaches gave preference to other [white] players. I was captain the previous year and didn’t get selected the following year with this particular coach.”*

*“The umpire has had multiple complaints but was not fired due to umpiring shortages last season”*

It was also observed that some clubs did not create an openly, welcoming environment where players and families of all ethnicities were actively included:

*“Parents are not [directing] abuse to others in my experience, and not conscious of indirect discrimination, but white Anglo parents congregate together rather than actively seeking out people of colour, particularly at the start of new season”*

*“I left the club to play somewhere else where I would be welcomed, and then I experienced the same thing”*



## Reporting Racism

Those who personally experienced racism (N=26) were then asked if they did anything in response to which 38.5% reported yes (N=10), 42.3% reported “I did nothing” (N=11), and 19.2% preferred not to answer the questions (N=5). They were also asked if other club members did anything of which the majority reported “they did nothing” (46.2%) or “I prefer not to answer” (34.6%).

When racism was reported, the response rarely led to a sense of justice being achieved for the victim:

*Yes, [we went to] tribunal, but nothing happens”*

*“And then we've reported to... the governing body, [who] say they take everything serious, but they don't. They don't. Because we put reports in you know, there was racial vilification! ...That literally is the most disgusting thing I've ever probably read in a report, I don't feel that [the governing take it serious. They only take it serious when you go to the media.”*

*“The biggest problem we have is that a lot of these incidents are not reported and the problem is much bigger than we would like to admit. It is something that is not addressed because people have not been given the tools to work through it. People tend to get defensive when they are accused of religious, cultural or racist remarks.”*

## Upstander Action Prior to Participating in the STARS Project

Survey participants were asked prior to attending the training if they **stood up** against all forms of discrimination and actively discouraged them, and 50.22% reported they agreed with this statement, 40.26% strongly agreed and 9.52% disagreed (Table 2).

Participants were also asked if they **knew the best way to respond to racism**, and 55.84% reported they agreed with this statement, 15.58% strongly agreed, 27.71% disagreed and 0.87% strongly disagreed.

Participants who agreed/strongly agreed that they knew the best way to respond to racism had a **15x greater odds** of also agreeing that they stand up to racism and discrimination, compared to those who said they didn't know the best way to respond to racism.

Table 2. Responses to Racism scale (N= 231)

| Responses to Racism scale  | Strongly Agree/<br>Agree | Strongly disagree/<br>disagree |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| People in my sports club stand up against racism   | 89.6%                    | 10.5%                          |
| I feel safe at my sports club  | 97.8%                    | 2.2%                           |
| I am confident to stand up against racism  | 92.2%                    | 7.8%                           |
| I know the best way to respond to racism   | 71.4%                    | 28.6%                          |
| I stand up against all forms of discrimination and actively discourage them  | 90.5%                    | 9.5%                           |
| There is a coach or other adult at this club who I trust and could go to for support if I experience or witness racism | 91.4%                    | 8.6%                           |
| I am a leader  | 82.7%                    | 17.3%                          |

*“The biggest problem we have is that a lot of these incidents are not reported and the problem is much bigger than we would like to admit. It is something that is not addressed because people have not been given the tools to work through it. People tend to get defensive when they are accused of religious, cultural or racist remarks.”*

*STARS Survey Participant*



## Common Responses to Racism Prior to Participating in the STARS Project

There were some proactive steps taken in response to witnessing racism during matches which were captured in open-text responses via the survey.

*“Sorted it out by talking in a good tone of voice but got my message across”*

A common response by players was to report the behaviour directly to the club through the committee. The incident was often escalated to the appropriate sport governing body, or if relevant the club was able to discuss the issue directly with the committee of the opposing club.

*“Made a complaint to the league against the opposing player and club”*

*“Committee raised issue with other club. I spoke to their president who apologised and took action to address issue with their player.”*

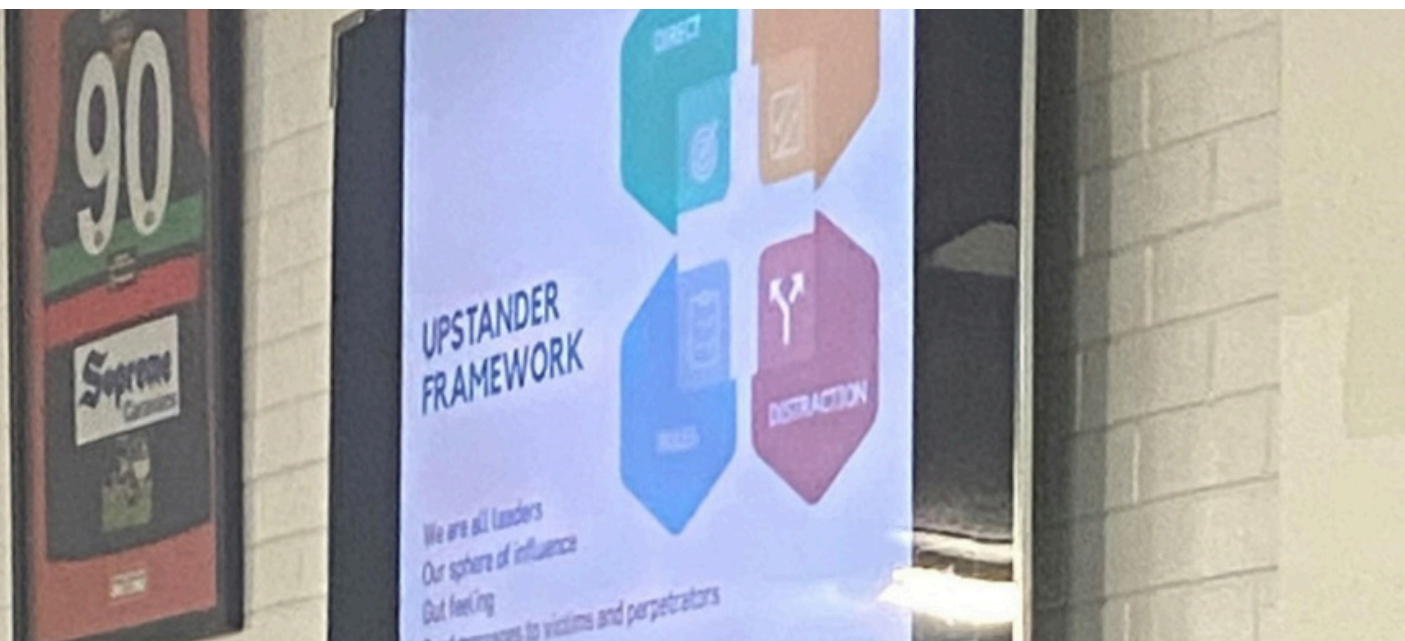
In some cases the victim of racism was supported by another club member to report the issue, but declined.

*“Encouraged the victim to take it further, but he declined”*

However, some participants identified that were dissatisfied with their previous action when witnessing racism:

*“[I did] not[hing] of substance. [I] passively expressed disapproval through comments such as “that’s a bit on the nose” or shaking my head. But nothing in any meaningful way, [and the] reaction from the perpetrator has always been laughing etc about [my] comment.”*

Some participants also reported that they responded to the racist incident through being physical and ‘starting a fight’.





## Views on the STARS Project & Positive Changes

A post evaluation of the STARS training was undertaken via qualitative interviews (n=24).

Interviewees were invariably positive about the Active Inclusion and Upstander workshops with most expressing a view that they were a valuable start to what needed to be an ongoing conversation. Providing practical 'upstander' strategies for all club members whether they experienced or witnessed racism was seen as helpful:

*"Giving people tools for if they see something, that they can say something and how they can do that... the focus on the strategies was quite helpful."*

*"I think I personally felt like it was very, it was very good... I've been subjected to [racism] playing on the field from spectators and players, I know my own teammates have been subjected to racism... So, yeah, so I felt like [the STARS program is] good because it helps clubs try and be more aware. Yeah. And like, actually take action."*

*"[Regarding the upstander model] I think it is a powerful tool, and I liked the way you flipped it and made it a positive, proactive action you can take"*

STARS workshops were often seen as a good foundation for beginning conversations about racism and inclusion, although most recognised that these were issues that would not be solved through attending a single workshop:

*"I think we still have a lot of work to do, even just visually, like, if you came to the club, it comes across as a majority white sort of place... and obviously doing the STARS program that we're starting to take those steps towards building good foundations to make it a better place, that's a bit more aware of unconscious bias."*

Participants recognised both the need to educate people to become more racially literate and also to avoid backlash. They felt that the workshops constructively managed this tension; facilitating conversations about how to respond to racism, generally without provoking the kind of defensiveness that can prevent change.

*"I think, sometimes it's hard to identify for some people, like what's racist and what's not. And there's sort of a fine line in our culture for what we consider to be racist or not. So I think just putting more of the focus on strategies is helpful, because that brings a comfort level for people that sort of think they're not being racist, even though they are. And then if you're giving people strategies for how to talk to people, in all contexts, that that's a helpful way to sort of slowly bring people around. Without straight out calling them out for it."*

*"one of the [strategies] was to say something like, 'oh, that's an odd thing to say. What do you mean by that?' You know, I love that because it's not confrontational, but it's also getting that person to articulate what they actually did mean. If you then can open up a dialog to say, well, that's not cool. And that's not tolerated here"*

*"I would now just also say, obviously, and quite explicitly, that '[racism] is something we don't tolerate and if you experience it, or anybody on the team experiences it, let us know - we were involved in the STARS project, and there are resources out there if you need' - so that's positive."*

Sports club leaders in particular wanted to promote their sports, build participation and have their sport and their club be seen as inclusive. Interviewees commented that the workshops helped them to think more deeply about how to achieve this.

*"...something that I really liked about [the training] was talking about reasons why people might not participate, because they don't feel welcome, they don't feel included. And I think that's really important for people to understand... And so I think that education and awarenesses and the importance of inclusion, and especially important to inclusion for people from culturally diverse backgrounds, goes a long way to having them participate in the sport"*





Momentum is growing for action against racism in sport. This project developed and piloted an approach for working with clubs that our formative evaluation found to be extremely promising. One of the key learnings however, was that interventions such as that implemented through STARS need to be ongoing. While building racial literacy more broadly is a longer-term mission, we are confident that the STARS project successfully enabled and empowered those who participated to:

- o agree on inclusive club values
- o commit to make an active stand against racism
- o enact this commitment in individual clubs code of conduct
- o draw on the 3 upstander approaches (Direct, Indirect, Rules) where most appropriate

Interest to receive the STARS intervention is high. Following the end of the funded project period The University of Melbourne team and Welcoming Clubs have already been approached by many sports organisations.

Supported through the University of Melbourne Proof of Concept fund we are currently developing an Anti-Racism and Upstander Train-the-Trainer program in partnership with Welcoming Clubs to scale up this model for anti-racism action in sports clubs.

Upstander training is most effective from a whole of club approach and much was learned through this project about how to more effectively engage club members as well as leaders.

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# APPENDIX

Supplementary Table 1. Mean scores for modified RACES scale, by demographic characteristics (N=234)

|                                 |                             | Accepting Attitudes |             | Racist Attitudes |             | Ethnocentric Attitudes |           |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|------------------------|-----------|
|                                 |                             | Mean Score          | 95% CI      | Mean Score       | 95% CI      | Mean Score             | 95% CI    |
| Overall participant score       | Categories                  | 11.3                | 11.1 - 11.4 | 9.9              | 9.6 - 10.1  | 6.7                    | 6.5 - 6.9 |
| Do you consider yourself white? | Yes                         | 11.4                | 11.3 - 11.6 | 10.2             | 9.9 - 10.4  | 6.8                    | 6.6 - 7.0 |
|                                 | No                          | 11.1                | 10.8 - 11.4 | 9.5              | 9.1 - 9.9   | 6.6                    | 6.2 - 6.9 |
| Age group                       | <18 years                   | 11.4                | 11.0 - 11.8 | <b>10.7</b>      | 10.2 - 11.3 | 6.6                    | 5.9 - 7.4 |
|                                 | 18 - 25 years               | 11.3                | -           | 9.9              | 9.4 - 10.4  | 6.8                    | 6.5 - 7.2 |
|                                 | 26 - 40 years               | 11.3                | 11.0 - 11.5 | 10.1             | 9.7 - 10.4  | 6.4                    | 6.1 - 6.7 |
|                                 | >40 years                   | 11.3                | 11.0 - 11.5 | 9.7              | 9.3 - 10.1  | <b>6.9</b>             | 6.7 - 7.2 |
| Role at club                    | Player/Parent/Volunteer/Fan | 11.2                | 11.1 - 11.4 | 9.8              | 9.5 - 10.1  | 6.6                    | 6.4 - 6.8 |
|                                 | Coach/Team Manager          | <b>11.6</b>         | 11.3 - 11.9 | 10.2             | 9.7 - 10.8  | <b>6.9</b>             | 6.4 - 7.4 |
|                                 | Committee Member            | 11.3                | 11.0 - 11.6 | 10.1             | 9.8 - 10.5  | <b>6.9</b>             | 6.6 - 7.2 |
| Gender                          | Woman                       | 11.4                | 11.2 - 11.6 | 10.1             | 9.7 - 10.5  | 6.8                    | 6.6 - 7.1 |
|                                 | Man                         | 11.2                | 10.0 - 11.4 | 9.8              | 9.5 - 10.1  | 6.6                    | 6.4 - 6.9 |
|                                 | Other                       | 11.5                | 10.5 - 12.5 | 9.0              | -           | 6.0                    | 2.1 - 9.9 |
| Language                        | English                     | 11.4                | 11.3 - 11.6 | 10.2             | 9.9 - 10.4  | <b>6.9</b>             | 6.7 - 7.0 |
|                                 | English & another language  | 11.1                | 10.8 - 11.4 | 9.4              | 9.0 - 9.9   | 6.5                    | 6.1 - 6.8 |

Supplementary Table 2. Scale developed by STARS study to assess ability to recognise racism

| <i>Understanding of Racism scale</i>  | Is this an example of racism?         | Available score (9) |
|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b><i>Overt Racism</i></b>  | Scoring<br>Yes = 1<br>Might Be/No = 0 | 1                   |
| Spectators yelling names at players/ athletes because of their skin colour  |                                       | 1                   |
| <b><i>Casual/Everyday Racism</i></b>  |                                       |                     |
| Telling a club member it was a joke if they get upset about being called a name related to their racial, cultural, or religious background  |                                       | 1                   |
| Not trying to learn how to pronounce 'Non-Australian' names properly  |                                       | 1                   |
| Laughing at a new player/athlete from another country who doesn't understand how 'things are done in Australia'   |                                       | 1                   |
| <b><i>Systemic/Institutional Racism</i></b>   |                                       |                     |
| Having a BBQ, but not providing Halal option for the many Muslim club members<br><i>(Halal food is food Muslims are permitted to eat according to their religion. Halal means permissible or allowed in Arabic)</i> |                                       | 1                   |
| An umpire, referee or official punishing a player or athlete from an African background for behaviour or language that is ignored when used by a 'white' player or athlete  |                                       | 1                   |
| <b><i>Non-racist examples</i></b>   | Scoring<br>No = 1<br>Might Be/Yes = 0 |                     |
| Telling an opponent that you are going to win today   |                                       | 1                   |
| Clapping when a player on your team scores a goal or wins their event.  |                                       | 1                   |
| Cancelling training because of bad weather  |                                       | 1                   |

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