

**Policy Document:** EBVJFC Empowerment Strategy  
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**Date:** 15<sup>th</sup> May 2019  
**Date for Review:** 15<sup>th</sup> May 2021

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## PURPOSE

In alignment with the implementation of the Child Safe Standards as of the 1 January 2017 East Brighton Vampires Junior Football Club (EBVJFC) has worked towards creating and implementing strategies that align with the requirements of the Child Safe Standards.

Empowerment is one of the South Metro Junior Football League (SMJFL)'s main priorities to ensure all clubs are working towards a club environment where children feel confident and safe to talk up about any issues or concerns. Empowerment is about helping the children find their voice by building a culture in which the players have opportunities to speak up, give input and be involved in decisions. It not only allows the players to build confidence but also means that if an incident should ever occur they may be more willing to speak up because they know their voice will be heard.

Within this Strategy document are some initiative ideas that can assist in children feeling empowered around the Vampires club and how ideas of how these ideas could be implemented. The main goal behind these initiatives is to place children in situations or roles where they feel as though they have a voice within the club and that their membership within the club and team is valued, whether it be to have them talking in front of their team or their efforts on game day acknowledged.

## VAMPIRES EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVES

Team Code of Conduct: At the start of each season each team can have the children decide on approximately 5-10 rules which players, coaches, team managers, volunteers and parents will need to abide by. These rules will differ for each team ie younger teams may have 'be respectful to your coach when he is speaking during training', 'arrive ready to play ie mouthguard in and shoes tied'.

Allow time for players to voice opinions: Designate time each training for players to share what they believe the team did well in and areas for improvement.

Role within the club: Implement roles which the children can participate in each week ie those who are subbed off can assist the person keeping the stats, fill up the water bottles etc. This is especially useful for disability inclusion or for players who are injured but still watching.

Allow players to take charge in training: Assign a different child or group to come up with a stretch or drill to get team to do. Try and chose a different child each week and help them to explain the drill in front of the team and take charge. Especially useful if players have older siblings at the club and have watched them do a drill or activity at that training.

Presentation Evening: Have the children more involved with handing out the awards if age appropriate ie respectful to those receiving the award and to the coaches/managers saying a few words about each respective player. Have the players who won the award the year before hand the winner of the current year the award.

**Responsibility:** Designate a child each week to say something on game day to motivate the team or say something after the game to congratulate and/or encourage teammates. After team losses find 3 things that are positive to say about the match.

**Leadership:** Have a player from an older age group assist in coaching. Can be an older sibling. Ask your players if they would like to assist with younger teams coaching as a one-off. Teach them how to run the drills as well as participate. If appropriate pick a different child each week as captain and explain why you think they would be a great captain on that day. Empower the players.

**Buddy System:** If a new player has joined the team and/or club assign a buddy to introduce them to the team and show them around the club. If appropriate introduce them to the club personnel and advice parents of who the CSO is and how to contact them should there ever be the need.

**Parent Involvement:** Encourage parents to help around the club. Last training of every month encourage the parents to join in with the training and come dressed accordingly.

**Feedback:** Implement two surveys throughout the footy season – one just after week 4 grading period and one at the end of season. The aim is to obtain the parents' feedback and opinions of how the season was run, how Vampires created an inclusive environment and how the club's personnel were supportive and encouraging.

**Child Safety Officer:** If able to have the Child Safety Officer introduce themselves to the teams at the first training session of the season. Inform the children and parents of the role so that they can talk to them about anything. Highlight in the club emails again the role of the CSO and how to contact them if required.

The role of the Child Safety Officer is detailed on the next page. This document is to be sent to parents of players at the start of every season.