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Sporting Ambassadors Join Forces to Champion Respectful Relationships in Sport

[Melbourne, Australia] – Relationships Australia Victoria (RAV) has unveiled five elite sportspersons as new ambassadors for its Preventing Family Violence Through Sport program.

A leading initiative supported by the Victorian Government’s Preventing Violence Through Sport Grants Program, Healthy Clubs works with sporting clubs, associations and codes across Victoria to promote gender equality, respectful relationships, and the prevention of violence against women, children, and gender-diverse people.

RAV leads the program, which is delivered in partnership with the Victorian Amateur Football Association, Tennis Victoria, NRL Victoria, Melbourne City Football Club, and Women’s Health in the North. With the support of high-profile sporting figures, the program is set to expand its reach and impact across the state.

Introducing the Healthy Club ambassadors

The newly appointed ambassadors bring a wealth of experience and leadership from various sporting codes:

- **Damien Fleming** – Former Australian cricketer and commentator
- **Dean Ieremia** – Melbourne Storm NRL player
- **Luke Beveridge** – Senior coach of the AFL Western Bulldogs
- **Bec Goddard** – Inaugural AFLW premiership coach and WNBL championship assistant coach
- **Scott Jamieson** – Melbourne City FC assistant coach, who captained Melbourne City FC to its first ever grand final win in 2021 and a record-breaking 3 straight premierships, and former Australian Soccer.

These ambassadors will play a key role in engaging clubs, attending club workshops, leading education panels, and fostering conversations about gender equality and respectful relationships in sport.

Whole-of-Sport Approach to Prevention

For the past 2 years, RAV’s Learning and Innovation Department has been delivering healthy relationship workshops to sporting clubs across Victoria. The workshops focus on key topics such as gender roles, building respectful relationships, resilience, and bystander action. Using a whole-of-sport approach, Healthy Clubs works with people at all levels of club hierarchies—from supporters to executives—to drive meaningful and universal cultural change.

The program is built on the understanding that respect underpins gender equality, and is essential for safe and fulfilling relationships. Positive relationships, in turn, are strongly linked to health, wellbeing, and life satisfaction. Since respectful relationships begin forming early in life—often during a time of life when involvement in sport is peaking—sporting clubs and associations have a unique opportunity to champion gender equality and drive cultural change within and beyond their club rooms.

“RAV is privileged to collaborate with sporting codes in Victoria and to have such a professional and passionate group of elite sportspersons on board as Healthy Clubs ambassadors,” said Donna Plavljanic, RAV’s Senior Manager Learning and Innovation.

“The support the program has received has been outstanding, and with our ambassadors’ help, we look forward to expanding its reach, engaging more clubs and codes, and making a real difference by preventing violence through sport, now and for future generations.”

Reflecting on his role as an ambassador, Damien Fleming highlighted the importance of the program’s work. “I’m proud to be an ambassador for the Healthy Clubs project because it’s about creating real change through sport—one of the most influential parts of our community,” Mr Fleming said.

“This program is tackling critical issues like gender equality and respectful relationships, while supporting clubs to lead the way in preventing violence. It’s exciting to see how sport can bring people together to foster safer, more inclusive environments for everyone, on and off the field.”

Get Involved

Sporting clubs interested in hosting a workshop or embedding gender equality within their club, league or association can contact Donna Plavljanic on 0427 808 350 or at ravtraining@rav.org.au. For more information about the Healthy Clubs program and to watch our ambassadors in action at our launch event, visit rav.org.au/specialised-programs/healthy-clubs/.

Healthy Clubs is delivered with support from the Victorian Government’s Preventing Violence Through Sport Grants Program. For more information, download the [Safe and Inclusive Sport: Preventing Gender-Based Violence Report](#).

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