



MEDIA RELEASE

2nd September 2009

Basketball Victoria Clamps Down on Poor Spectator Behaviour

Basketball Victoria has joined forces with the Victorian Government and VicHealth to stamp out poor spectator behaviour in junior basketball.

"Encourage the Kids, Support the Game" is a community education campaign, funded by the Victorian Government and VicHealth, which aims to discourage poor spectator behaviour in junior sport and encourage safe, fun and friendly games that everyone – players, parents, all spectators and officials – can enjoy.

The campaign will be officially launched by 5-time Olympian, Andrew Gaze on Friday 11th September, 2009. The launch will take place at the Melbourne Sports & Aquatic Centre (MSAC) at 8pm, coinciding with the first night of VJBL Grand Finals for 2009.

"Junior sport is about children having fun, being active and developing life skills, such as teamwork and social interaction. Spectator passion is great, provided it leads to positive support and encouragement. Poor spectator behaviour ruins the game for other spectators and discourages involvement and participation. We want all our young players to be able to pursue their sporting goals with confidence – win, lose or draw, and enjoy the support of their parents." Wayne Bird, CEO of Basketball Victoria said.

The campaign targets poor spectator behaviour such as unpleasant, threatening or violent behaviour. Examples of poor spectator behaviour include verbal abuse and swearing, entering the court during a game, throwing objects onto the court and, in extreme cases, physically handling players, officials, spectators and others.

Campaign ambassador, Andrew Gaze, said: "Sport should be a fun and healthy environment, not one that is compromised due to the inappropriate behaviour of coaches, parents and spectators. If sport is not a positive experience then it is highly unlikely juniors will maintain their participation and fulfil their potential."

All spectators are being urged to be a good sport by following these simple guidelines:

- Respect officials and their decisions and don't publicly criticise them.
- Respect players and spectators from both teams.
- Know the spectator rules – read and abide by the club's Code of Conduct.
- Be a good sport yourself and set a good example for your child.
- Encourage your child and support his or her efforts.
- Be supportive, whether your team is winning or losing.
- Discourage negative behaviour within your club.
- Alert a club official if someone is behaving inappropriately.

Basketball Victoria will be promoting the campaign throughout the Victorian Junior Basketball League (VJBL) Finals Series. All venues hosting VJBL finals have received materials to display and distribute on game nights in the lead up to the Grand Finals.

Launch Details:

Date: Friday 11th September, 2009
Time: 8.00pm
Location: Melbourne Sports & Aquatic Centre (MSAC)
Aughtie Drive
Albert Park, VIC

For further information regarding the *"Encourage the Kids, Support the Game"* campaign contact:

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