

Boys Retention and Recruitment

Vision

The vision of Netball NSW is that netball becomes the leading sport of choice and opportunity in NSW. A key pillar in our strategic plan is to grow the game and be ambitious in our efforts to supercharge step-change. We can't do this without our Clubs and Associations understanding the need to grow and feeling supported in their efforts to attract boys to netball. This resource is designed to help you be proactive in driving boys participation.

Boys netball is in its infancy, however boys participation and interest in netball is definitely on the rise. It can feel overwhelming to think about where to start when wanting to grow boys or mixed netball within your Club or Association and how they fit into the "traditional" Saturday winter netball competitions. Here are a few suggestions to start:

Non-Traditional Playing days/times

Consider running male or mixed netball competitions outside of the traditional Saturday format. A lot of males will not choose netball as their number one sport, however they will consider it for their second sport. Remove the need to make them choose and run a male or mixed social competition on another day other than Saturday. Have a think about the other sports in your area and when they are played. Try not to choose a day that conflicts with a popular boys sport.

If you are struggling with numbers, combine age groups like U/12's, U/14's and opens or start with a mixed social competition, encouraging existing female players to put together mixed teams. Ask your current female players to bring their dads, brothers and boyfriends. From there, you can start to offer male only competitions.

To start either a male competition, or a mixed social competition, you might need to ask players to register to your Association rather than to Clubs. This will take an extra hurdle away from new participants and enable you to pool all the boys together, and potentially form teams and/or competitions, rather than rely on Clubs to find a team or teams.

Friday Nights

If you run Woolworths NetSetGo on a Friday night, consider running a male or mixed competition after or alongside NetSetGo. Your volunteers are already there and your courts are already set up. Having a competition after NetSetGo allows younger boys to see what they can be.

Hello Neighbour

Male numbers may be too low to run a male only competition at your Association at first. If this is the case, consider reaching out to your neighbouring Association to put together a male round robin. You could run a 6-8 week comp where teams alternate the Association they play at each week and play it in a round robin format on a day other than Saturday.

Spring Comp

The Spring Comp format is a relaxed introduction to netball and a great opportunity to engage with males in the local community. By running male and mixed competition for Spring this can start to promote a boys winter competition.

Swap the Sport Week

During the winter season consider reaching out to a male dominated sport like rugby league or soccer etc that is in your local community and suggest a swap the sport week for Coaches as well as players. Create a fun atmosphere that has a sense of community and exposes players to different sports, this is a great opportunity to connect with families outside of the netball community. One code can each run a warm up and training activity and then end with a game of each sport.

Bring your Summer Sports Team into Winter

Consider connecting with the local sports that only play during the Summer like cricket, baseball, touch etc and advertise bringing their team to netball for winter.

Where Do I Find All the Boys?

Schools Cup

Netball NSW run Schools Cup competitions throughout NSW for boys and girls from years 5 through to year 10. At these competitions we have a number of boys playing who don't have anywhere to play netball once the Schools Cup is over. Clubs and Associations can contact the schools team at schools@netballnsw.com and ask how you can be involved in your local Schools Cup day to engage with potential male participants.

Schools

Reach out to your local Primary & High School and develop a relationship with the Principal and/or sports coordinator. Here is the link to our [Schools Engagement Tip Sheet](#) to help you with the process

Creating a Welcoming Environment

Players want to feel welcomed and that they belong so consider how your Club/Association looks like to a new boy registering. Consider:

- Is there an inclusive uniform option?
- Do you have images of boys playing netball on your website and social media?

Refer to our link how to create a welcoming club (*coming soon*)

Advertising

Ensure that your marketing material shows a male playing netball. You can't be what you can't see. If you do not have access to images of males playing netball, please contact us at community@netballnsw.com for help.