



# Bowls Queensland

## Targeting Schools

## Handbook



# Bowls Queensland Targeting Schools Handbook

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### **Introduction**

Lawn bowls is one of Queensland's most popular sports and is perfectly suited as a school sport. There are no limitations as to who can play. Gender, physical fitness or disabilities are not an obstacle for any students wishing to play bowls as a school or competitive sport.

By implementing basic programs and targeting specific areas, bowls clubs can have successful and mutually beneficial primary and high school bowls programs. Once your club has these programs successfully up and running you will hopefully see an increase in junior membership which in turn will strengthen your club for the future.

This guide, produced by Bowls Queensland, has been designed as a tool to help with promoting and marketing your club to the local school community. It begins with how to Target Schools and continues through to Increasing Junior Members. Along the way it also covers such things as Volunteers, Blue Cards, and current programs in place. Each heading has been broken down into small easy to understand sections with most also containing a dot point checklist.

There are plenty of schools out there, think outside the box and don't be afraid to try new ideas and approaches. If it doesn't work the first time round, don't give up. Adjust and fine tune the idea and try again.





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### **Why Target School Students**

As we all know lawn bowls has an ageing membership and they will not be around forever, so we need to encourage younger players and members into our sport so the sport will be in good hands in years to come. What better place to start than at school level. Most people have fond memories of their school days, hopefully for the future generations lawn bowls can be one of those memories.

Realistically clubs may not gain many new members from school programs but the seed has been planted for later in life.

### **Where to Start**

The first place to start is by appointing a Junior Liaison Officer to your bowling committee. If you already have one, all the better. Make sure the appointed person is aware of their responsibilities and are “children” friendly. The Junior Liaison Officers’ main objective is to increase junior bowlers, including school students, using the club facilities. The role also includes running structured competitions for the juniors and school students, organising games against other clubs or schools and co-ordinating volunteers.

- Call for expressions of interest for Junior Liaison Officer
- Ensure candidates are aware of the roles and responsibilities required of them
- Review interested candidates –
  - Are they the right person for the job?
  - Do they have the “get up and go’ attitude that is required?
  - Do they have the temperament to deal with a lot of school aged children?
  - Do they think outside the square?
- Appoint a Junior Liaison Officer



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### What to Offer

Now that your club has a Junior Liaison Officer in place, it is a good idea for the committee to review the club's current programs and junior activities that are in place. By doing this, you can target failing areas and revamp existing programs. If no programs are in place now is the time to create new ones.

School sports usually run for between 1 and 1 ½ hours, so you need to establish when your greens are available to use for school sport. You will also need to determine the number of helpers that will be available; this will dictate the number of students you can comfortably accommodate. A good rule is 1rink (8 students) per helper. Once these factors have been established it's time to sell the sport and your club to the schools.

Put a cover letter together that can be sent to all schools outlining what you are offering as well as a package that goes into more detail. Some areas to focus on when doing this include:

- Very minimal cost compared to other school sports
- Non contact sport (some parents wont let their children play anything but non contact sports)
- Don't need to be athletically gifted to participate
- Disabled students can participate alongside able bodied students with no disadvantage
- Provides the 30 minutes of physical activity a day as per Education Queensland requirements (Smart Moves)
- The number of Blue Card holding volunteers you have
- The number of students you can accommodate per session
- Days and times you are able to host the students

Once you have your package together send it to all schools, primary, secondary, public and private, in your local area. One issue to bear in mind is the high cost of transport so it's better to try and stay local. Some schools have their own transport so you can try a little further a field with these schools.



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It is also a good idea to send two copies to each school, one to the headmaster and one to the head of the sport department. You would be surprised how often the information never gets passed from one to the other.

- Meet to discuss current and create new programs
- Establish times, days and helpers availability
- Put together package focussing on positive aspects
- Target schools in your local area



### **Who to Target**

Who not to target is probably easier to answer to this one. As we have already stated Lawn Bowls is a sport that can be played by just about anyone.

The only school students who probably won't be able to participate in a proper game of bowls would be the smaller students, say grades 1 to 4, only because bowls aren't made small enough for them. That doesn't mean they can't learn how to play the game still.



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It's easy enough to teach the smaller kids the basics of lawn bowls using tennis balls, markers, hoops etc. The same principles of grip, step, stance and delivery can be learnt using the tennis balls, and the added bonus is you don't need a bowls green to teach this, you could do it on any flat surface. The new Introductory Coach Course teaches a lot of these helpful methods.

- Target all school students
- Offer different teaching methods
- Think outside the square
- Attend an Introductory Coach Course



### **What to Charge**

In the current economic climate parents are trying to cut costs anywhere they can. School sport can be a very expensive exercise and Lawn Bowls can be a very cheap alternative to the expensive sports.

Some clubs who already have programs in place offer the service for free, but your club is offering a product and a service and should be remunerated for this. The other thing with offering free sessions is that it attracts the students who only seem to be there as they



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have nothing better to do and it's free. Charging will get this element out of the groups and make them easier to look after.

What you charge is up to you but \$2 as a minimum charge per student is still cheap. It also assists the clubs financial position, and what club doesn't need money in this day and age. \$2 may not sound like much but when you take into account you could have 25 students per week and most schools book in 10 week blocks that comes to a total of \$500. Not bad money for very little outlay.

- Establish what amount to charge
- Offer the sport as a cheap alternative to other sports
- Avoid offering your venue, services and the sport for free



### Activities

Don't be limited to just playing traditional bowls with school students. Some schools will want nothing other than the traditional game but you will need to work in with the school to see what they require, but always be prepared to offer something different to keep the students interested.

There are lots of variations that can be used on the green that still teach the basic skills of the game and can be fun for the students as well. This can vary between games like Bolf (a cross between bowls and golf) and Snake (drawing to the previous bowl to form a line of bowls or snake) to actual circuit training where the students can improve on their skills. The Australian Sports Commission in conjunction with Bowls Australia have a resource called Playing for





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Life which offers some great ideas on different games that can be played.

Once again with games think outside the square because the only limit is your imagination.

- See what the school would like its students to be playing
- Try different games away from traditional bowls
- Keep students interested with variety
- Think outside the square

### **Equipment**

Obviously your going to need the basic equipment, mats, jacks and bowls, but since most of the participants we are dealing with have smaller hands than the grown ups, smaller bowls are appropriate.

Bowls Queensland are able to offer Junior Bowls from size 00 through to 3 for \$250 per set thanks to a generous sponsorship arrangement with Henselite Australia. The bowls are Henselite Dreamlines and are normally in stock in every size, if not they only take a couple of weeks to order in.

You may also wish to put together a pack containing the equipment we mentioned earlier for use with the very young students. Tennis balls, hula hoops and markers are inexpensive. Just remember to get bright colourful balls and markers, this keeps the kids even more interested.

There are other advantages to having this equipment also:

- If it rains you can play indoors with any age school student
- You can go to the school and teach the students there
- If used on the bowling green it wont damage your green



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Most of the equipment in the pack can be sourced from most of the discount stores or variety stores.

- Try and purchase smaller sized bowls
- Put together a pack of non bowls equipment (tennis balls, hula hoops, markers)



## **Volunteers**

Volunteers are an integral part of every club, district and state association, without them there would probably be no sport for us to play. Volunteers fulfil very diverse roles, coaches, umpires and committees' right through to cooking barbeques.

Having quality volunteers is imperative to running a successful school program. Once again you will need to focus on volunteers who are “kid” friendly, but you will find the people who do put their hand up to help out will have the club and students best interests at heart.



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Volunteers who help with school programs generally find it a very rewarding experience, not only assisting the club but teaching the students a new sport and new skills.

### **Blue Card**

As per government legislation anyone that offers a service for children under 18 must hold a current Blue Card for Working with Children. This will include any committee members and volunteers involved in the running of a school program.

The Blue Card is provided free for volunteers and should be applied for through your club. The process takes between 6 – 8 weeks and forms can be obtained from:

Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian  
PO Box 12671  
Brisbane George Street  
QLD. 4003.

Or from the website: [www.bluecard.qld.gov.au](http://www.bluecard.qld.gov.au)

- Ensure you get volunteers suited to teaching children
- Ensure volunteers all obtain Blue Cards prior to starting

### **Active After School Communities**

The Active After-school Communities program is a national initiative that provides primary school children with access to free, sport and other structured physical activity programs in the after-school time slot of 3.00pm to 5.30pm.

The program aims to engage traditionally inactive children in sport and other structured physical activities and through a positive and fun experience, develop a love of sport that inspires them to join a local sporting club.



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The Australian Sports Commission manages the AASC program nationally through a network of locally based regional coordinators. The coordinators assist schools and after-school care centres to facilitate the program, recruit/train community coaches and work with local sporting clubs and organisations to increase junior membership.

AASC regional coordinators coordinate the delivery of the program in primary schools and Out of School Hours Care Service (OSHCS) using local sporting clubs, volunteers, private providers, teachers and OSHCS staff, retirees, senior secondary and tertiary students, and parents.

The cornerstone of the AASC program is the involvement of the local community in the delivery of the program. This involvement will offer opportunities to support and strengthen community cohesion and development.

Organisations interested in delivering junior sport and structured physical activity must be recognised by the Active After-school Communities program. Before individuals representing the organisation can become deliverers for the program they must satisfactorily meet registration requirements.



Each semester, schools and Child Care Benefit approved OSHCS, identify the types of activities they would like delivered to the children participating within the program. Activities are generally selected in consultation with the children and or teachers involved, to identify what would be the most suitable program to engage traditionally inactive children. Once these activities have been identified, AASC regional coordinators will facilitate links between



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local sports clubs, community organisations and private providers to identify suitable deliverers to meet these needs.

For further information:

[http://www.ausport.gov.au/participating/schools\\_and\\_juniors/aasc](http://www.ausport.gov.au/participating/schools_and_juniors/aasc)

### **All Schools Cup Challenge**

In 2005 Bowls Queensland implemented the All Schools Cup Challenge to increase high school involvement in the sport and provide a structured, state wide competition. This program continues to build with significant steps forward each year continuing for the promotion of the sport in schools and communities.

It is anticipated that once again in 2010 schools will take the opportunity to participate in this state-wide event. Participation rates grew again in 2009 and hopefully the number of schools involved will rapidly increase in coming years. The ultimate aim is to see all schools in Queensland become eager and enthusiastic competitors in a competition that will continue on to a national level, increasing numbers, popularity and publicity for the sport.



For the competition to be successful, clubs will be required to host their local schools. The student teams will need access to a training venue, access to bowls, coaching and a competition venue.

A teacher or guardian from the school will liaise with the club to arrange suitable times for training and competition.



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For more information and the 2010 conditions of play contact Brett at Bowls Queensland on 33559988 or follow the link:

[http://www.bowlsqld.org/fileadmin/user\\_upload/bowls\\_qld/events/All\\_Schools\\_Cup\\_2010.pdf](http://www.bowlsqld.org/fileadmin/user_upload/bowls_qld/events/All_Schools_Cup_2010.pdf)

### **Funding**

Although setting up and running a school program requires very minimal outlay there are some areas where funding may be available to assist.

The main area of expense would be the purchase of junior bowls. Grants that would assist in this area are available from:

- Department of Sport and Recreation
- Local Council
- Community Benefit Fund

There is also funding available to assist with equipment and costs involved in participating in the Active After School Community Program. More information is available on their website.

### **Where to from Here**

Like we said earlier, don't expect to gain too many members from a school program, it's more a case of planting the seed for later in life. In saying this it doesn't mean you should just forget about them once the school year has finished.



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It has proved advantageous to offer junior coaching on weekends so those that are interested can take what they have learnt to the next level. This also gives the juniors a chance to see if they enjoy it enough to become a member. Don't however push the juniors to join, they will make up their mind in their own time once they have experienced the more of the sport.

When and if the school students do progress to becoming members try and accommodate them by playing with or against other members their own or similar age. A lot of younger members will only get the opportunity to play during school holidays and this will ensure their experience is more fun for them.

With Districts gradually starting to form Junior Academies and Development Squads it is opening another avenue for Juniors to participate in a more structured competition.

At present Victoria is currently leading the way in this area and Bowls Queensland will be endeavouring to replicate some of the good work that is being done south of the border. Of course this will take co-operation and assistance from Districts and Clubs alike and wont happen overnight but it is worthwhile goal for our state to achieve.

- Offer Junior coaching outside of school hours
- Don't push new juniors into joining the club
- Cater for junior members if possible when playing at the club
- Work with Districts so Juniors can gain more experience



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Just remember the important part.....

# Make it Fun

**Once again please do not hesitate to contact the Bowls Queensland Development Team should you have any further questions or require more information or support for your club's school programs. Good Luck!**