

<p>Project</p> 	<p>Social Glue? The Contribution of Sport and Active Recreation to Community Wellbeing</p>	<p>Partner</p>	
		<p>Year</p>	<p>2008–2012</p>
<p>Purpose</p> 	<p>This Australian Research Council and VicHealth funded research project aimed to determine:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The nature of the relationship between individuals' involvement in sport and active recreation and perceptions of social inclusion and connectedness; 2. How involvement in sport and active recreation impacts on the social connectedness experienced by individuals and their subsequent wellbeing; and 3. The role of formalised sport and recreation organisations in facilitating or supporting social inclusion and connectedness of individuals. 		
<p>Method</p> 	<p>Data collection was undertaken in two stages.</p> <p>Stage 1 involved the collection of quantitative data (3659 survey responses) to identify the nature of the relationship between individuals' involvement in sport and active recreation and perceptions of social inclusion and connectedness using a variety of measures.</p> <p>Stage 2 involved the collection of qualitative data (16 organisations, 142 interviews) to investigate how involvement in sport and active recreation impacts on the social connectedness experienced by individuals and their subsequent wellbeing; and the role of formalised sport and recreation organisations in facilitating or supporting social inclusion and connectedness of individuals.</p>		
<p>Application</p> 	<p>Several conclusions were made around the three aims of the project. It is clear that membership of sport and active recreation clubs leads to the development of social networks which are used in four primary ways: (1) the development of friendships, which reduce people's isolation and provide them with joy or happiness, (2) enabling members to access a network of resources, which can reduce transaction costs and provide people with access to opportunities and experiences to which they would not otherwise have, (3) providing people with support and assistance at times of stress, hardship and crisis, and (4) allowing members to engage with the broader community.</p> <p>Another major conclusion was that the creation, development and maintenance of social connections among members is clearly an outcome that is generated through the very nature of being associated with an organisation made up of people with a common interest.</p>		

