

SHAPING ATTITUDES: EXPOSURE TO WOMEN COACHES AND OFFICIALS INFLUENCES CHILDREN AND PARENT PERCEPTIONS

RESEARCH OVERVIEW

- **Objective:** This study explored perceptions of women and men coaches and officials among young athletes and their parents in community sport, Victoria.
- **Participants:** 150 individuals—75 children (aged 4-17 years), and 75 parents/carers—completed a *survey* and an *implicit cognition task* on their sporting history and perception of women and men as coaches and officials.
- **Scope:** Focused on experiences primarily across eight sports. Australian Rules Football, Basketball, and Swimming emerging as the top three in which children actively participated.



KEY FINDINGS

DISPARITIES IN EXPOSURE BY GENDER

- **96%** of children experienced **men as coaches**.
- **65%** of children experienced **women as coaches**.
- Girls were more likely to report having been coached by a woman.
- **100%** of children experienced **men as officials**.
- **90%** of children experienced **women as officials**.

SOCIAL NORMS ON WOMEN AS COACHES AND OFFICIALS

- Both parents and children generally prefer men in coaching and officiating roles.

PARENTAL INFLUENCE ON CHILDREN'S SATISFACTION

- Children's satisfaction with women coaches and officials closely aligned with their parents.
- Children whose parents prefer women in coaching roles were **6 times more likely** to prefer women in coaching roles.
- Children whose parents prefer women in officiating roles were **2.6 times more likely** to prefer women in officiating roles.
- Children who were coached by at least one woman were **3 times more likely** to prefer women in coaching roles and **1.5 times more likely** to prefer women in officiating roles.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Expose children at an early age to women coaches and officials.**
2. **Influence positive parental attitudes towards women as coaches and officials.**
3. **Commit to attracting and retaining more women in coaching and officiating roles.**

To view the full research summary and access a recommendations **checklist**, scan the following QR Code:

Research conducted by Dadswell, K., Sambol, S., and Hanlon, C. (2023).

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