



# #Play it Fair Online

## Strategies to manage negative online experiences

Athletes and staff across all sporting codes are increasingly subjected to high levels of serious online abuse including threatening, racist, sexist and homophobic comments. This abuse can quickly intensify in scale and nature with devastating impacts on a person's wellbeing and their sense of safety.

This resource outlines key tips to support athletes, social media managers and other professionals that may manage an athlete's online presence.

# Key strategies

There are a number of ways you can respond to a negative experience online. You should always do what feels right and safe for you.



## Collect evidence

It is important that you take screenshots of what's happening and record the account details such as the username or account URL.



## Intimate images shared without consent

If your intimate images have been shared or threatened to be shared without your consent (image-based abuse) reach out to eSafety for help. Image-based abuse is a crime, so you may consider reporting what's happening to police.



## Report and block online abuse

Abusive posts and comments are never acceptable. If you are being harassed, intimidated, humiliated or threatened, report it to the site where it is happening and block or mute the person doing it. If the platform does not help you, report serious online abuse to eSafety.



## Pause and reflect

Online abuse can be overwhelming. Give yourself space and time so that you respond rather than react. Don't deplete your emotional strength and energy by giving negative online experiences more attention than they deserve.



## Surround yourself with supportive people

You don't need to handle any negative online experiences on your own. Talk with family, friends, peers and mentors. Consider [professional support from a counselling service](#), if needed.



## Maintain balance

Online social contact can be a lifeline. But it is also important to set boundaries around how much time you are spending in front of a screen. Focus on balancing screen time with other ways of connecting and communicating. Practice self-care through exercise, good nutrition, adequate sleep and relaxation techniques.



## Focus on your values

It is important to stay committed to your values, especially during adversity. If you come across racism, bigotry or other abuse online stay true to your character and your sense of right and wrong. Call out bad behaviour when it is safe to do so.



## Be a role model for positivity

Set the standard for positive online behaviour by communicating with respect, tolerance and empathy. Show support to other people online. Share positive stories. Share encouragement. Show that we can cultivate the online world we all deserve.



## Further information

esafety.gov.au has lots of tips for staying safe online. The [eSafety guide](#) provides comprehensive information on a range of apps, social media and games, including how to protect your information and report inappropriate content.