

DE-ESCALATION: KEEPING CALM ON AND OFF THE FIELD

1 Stay calm and grounded

- Keep your voice low, slow, and steady
- Breathe deeply – your calm helps calm others
- Avoid reacting emotionally or matching aggression
- Avoid a battle, don't provoke

5 Reduce stimulation

- Move to a quieter area if safe to do so
- Minimise the number of people involved
- Keep instructions simple and clear

2 Give space and respect personal boundaries

- Don't crowd or touch the person
- Stay at least 2 metres away if they seem agitated
- Maintain open, non-threatening body language

6 Know when to step away or call for help

- If safety is at risk, step back and seek support
- Encourage all club members and family to move away from the crisis and to not engage physically or verbally
- Alert club leaders or **call 000** if violence or threats occur
- It's okay to walk away if things escalate beyond your control

3 Use supportive language

- Stay respectful and avoid blaming or lecturing
- For example: "I can see you're angry, tell me what's going on..."

Use phrases like:

"How can I help you?"
"What do you need right now?"
"I hear you."
"I can see why you are angry."
"Tell me what's going on."

7 After the moment: support and reflect

- Check in later when things have cooled down
- Offer support or professional help if needed
- Reflect with the team – what worked, what didn't

4 Acknowledge feelings – don't argue

- Validate their emotions, even if you don't agree
"I can see this is really frustrating for you."
- Don't tell someone to "calm down" – show it through your own behaviour; both feet grounded, hands gently open and at your side, deep, slow, controlled breathing, blank expression
- Give them time to express their feelings without judgement or interruptions

De-escalation is a skill – practice helps.

Your calm, respectful approach can change the outcome.

Need help? Lifeline: 13 11 14
In danger? Call 000

Train leaders in **Mental Health First Aid and Youth Mental Health First Aid** through **Richmind WA: rw.org.au**

Remember:
An escalated adult cannot de-escalate another escalated adult or child

