



Michael Gallacher MP

Minister for Police and Emergency Services

Victor Dominello MP

Minister for Citizenship and Communities

MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, 24 June 2013

WANDERERS AND POLICE WORK TOGETHER FOR YOUTH

A joint youth initiative led by the NSW Government between the Western Sydney Wanderers, Blacktown Police, the Police Citizens and Youth Clubs, and a local multicultural football association was launched by Minister for Citizenship and Communities Victor Dominello and Minister for Police Michael Gallacher today.

The NSW Government, through the Community Relations Commission (CRC), will support the Western Sydney Youth Football Project to work with young people from multicultural backgrounds in Western Sydney to become an active and engaged part of the broader community.

Mr Dominello said the 12-month trial project will also assist young people who play football increase their knowledge of law and order issues.

As part of the project the Wanderers will assist members of a local multicultural football association to complete certified coaching courses; provide business coaching to officials to properly manage football clubs and; mentor officials on how to attract sponsorship.

The Wanderers will also give the football association 100 footballs to train with.

The CRC is providing funding for the football association to use a training pitch at Mount Druitt, to be managed by the PCYC, three times a week for 12 months. The club will also receive CRC assistance to help it attract and recruit players from the wider Blacktown community.

“Through sport, the police and the Wanderers can reach out to young people from multicultural and disadvantaged backgrounds to promote inter-cultural harmony,” Mr Dominello said.

“Getting young people together through sport helps them learn more about different cultures and grow their understanding of each other.

“While we recognise our differences we are united by our Australian identity, which includes our great love of sport,” Mr Dominello said.

Mr Gallacher, who was joined at the launch by NSW Police Commissioner Andrew Scipione, said as part of their engagement work with the multicultural community, officers from Blacktown have been dropping into training sessions with local teams to give the young people an opportunity to ask about law and order issues.

“An increased awareness of issues such as alcohol, drugs and driving could lead to a reduction in local crime rates,” Mr Gallacher said.

Wanderers’ chairman Lyall Gorman said the announcement reflects the club’s commitment to make a real difference in the Western Sydney community.

“It exemplifies the integrated nature of the three pillars that drives our approach to our business and our club: fostering and nurturing grass roots football in Western Sydney; being the catalyst for true social change and; partnering with community stakeholders.

“We acknowledge and applaud this initiative by the NSW Government and are proud to be associated with its objective to make a difference,” Mr Gorman said.

Today the Wanderers also launched its Western Sydney Wanderers Foundation that will manage its community engagement activities designed to promote increased social connection and wellbeing as well as improved physical and mental health among local youth.

Commissioner Scipione said that the NSW Police find that the great majority of youth want to lead healthy, productive lives.

“And we see that right here before us today. Together we can help to build a place where people have a sense of belonging, where they feel connected and where they feel they can make a positive contribution.

“I would like to congratulate everyone involved in this fantastic initiative,” Commissioner Scipione said.

CRC Chair Stepan Kerkyasharian, said: “Sport provides one of the essential social ointments required in a multi-faith society.

“The standing of a newer community rises when one of its youth excels at the sports that all Australians love. This directly benefits community harmony,” Mr Kerkyasharian said.

Mr Dominello said that following a review of the initiative, the model may be expanded to other areas and other clubs in western Sydney.

**Media: Jim O’Rourke (Mr Dominello) 0409 185 431
Clint McGilvray (Mr Gallacher) 0413 285 186
Craig Green (The Wanderers) 0418 836 147**