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Partnership secures RACV Minor Sponsorship Grant

Local sport and active recreation development group, Eastern Recreation and Leisure Services (ERLS) in partnership with local sporting provider, Mini Shooting Stars, has been successful in the latest round of RACV Minor Sponsorship Grants.

ERLS Access for All Abilities Coordinator, Olivia Nam, who is working with the group said, "The support of RACV through their Minor Sponsorship Grant is a much needed boost and will enable the purchase of additional and modified sporting equipment that will encourage greater inclusion and participation of children with a disability."

Mini Shooting Stars has specifically designed an inclusive basketball training program in Croydon South for children aged 3-6 years old. The program is open to all children but has a particular interest in including children with a disability. Sabina Clark, Program Co-ordinator of Mini Shooting Stars believes "providing positive experiences in a supported environment will give children with a disability greater confidence when integrating into junior or 'all ability' programs offered by community sport clubs and associations."

"It is a great way of giving children of all abilities a chance for positive interactions and raising awareness for the inclusion of people with a disability in sport and recreation."

"The program was inspired by Knox City Council Access Inclusion Plan 2003-2008 which identified the need *to enhance participation in mainstream and specialist programs to effectively include people of all abilities*. Through organisations like ERLS we receive the support to promote our inclusive program."

The program has been a positive experience for all the children involved. Brett and Deb Johnston of Ivanhoe said, "Mini Shooting Stars Basketball has been a wonderful program for our three year old daughter Lucy. The sessions are well planned and are the perfect way to introduce a child to sport in a non-competitive, safe environment. The coaches do a great job of encouraging the children in both individual and group activities. We'd recommend Mini Shooting Stars to anyone looking for an activity for their young child."

Kathryn Muscat, Bayswater, found the program to be a great opportunity for her son, "We have enjoyed watching Liam to learn and grow at Mini Shooting Stars. He learns so much

from watching and participating with the other children and the coaches are so enthusiastic and encouraging.”

The program is held during school terms on Saturday afternoons 4:15-5:15pm at the John Frost Stadium in Croydon. To register for the Term 3 program please contact Sabina Clark on 0400 086 614.

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Background information:

Eastern Recreation & Leisure Services Inc. (ERLS) is a not for profit, community based organisation that operates across the Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR) of Melbourne.

ERLS is the provider of the State government, Access for All Abilities Program for the Eastern Region, and aims to facilitate the development of accessible and inclusive sport and recreation environments to increase the participation of people of all abilities in their community.

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