



The Mentoring GALS Gang

Diving Australia

Women in High Performance Coaching



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Supported by Diving Australia



Online catch-ups
Ad hoc meetings at events and camps



Initiated by National Pathway Lead Coach
Supported by DA



NIN, State and GEN32
Coaches across Australia

Aim and Objectives

The Mentoring GALS Gang was created as an opportunity to connect women coaches across the country, build a supportive peer network, share knowledge, and foster a stronger sense of collaboration across the high-performance system.

Description

The program operates as a collaborative network offering mentorship, virtual catch-ups, technical deep-dives, and guest speaker sessions to support female coaches across the sport.

Vyninka Arlow, National Pathway Lead Coach initiated the network. She wanted to create an inclusive group for these coaches as most of these women are the only female coach in their program, state or NIN.



Challenges and Opportunities

Diving Australia recognised that many female coaches were professionally isolated, often being the only female coach within their program, state, or National Institute Network.

The Group has organically developed over the past 4 years. The benefit of ongoing leadership has meant the group has evolved a great deal and the group has grown closer. Travelling on national teams and other experiences has strengthened the relationships.

Outcome

Diving Australia discovered that creating a regular and safe forum for female coaches to connect leads to stronger relationships, increased confidence, knowledge sharing, and a greater sense of belonging.

The mentoring group provided a trusted space where coaches could discuss challenges, seek advice, share resources, and learn from both peers and guest speakers.

“We’ve learnt how to support one another, lean on each other during busy competitions, and work together as a genuine team.”





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Recommendations

- Establish regular peer-support and mentoring networks for female coaches and other under-represented groups.
- Create safe and inclusive spaces where coaches can openly discuss challenges, seek advice, and share experiences.
- Facilitate knowledge sharing through practical resources, case studies, and collaborative problem-solving.
- Incorporate guest speakers and role models from sport and other industries to broaden perspectives and inspire learning.
- Complement virtual engagement with periodic face-to-face gatherings to strengthen relationships and community.
- Foster a "one team" mindset that prioritises collaboration, connection, and collective success over competition between program

Application for others

Other sports and organisations can learn that peer mentoring and community-building initiatives can be highly effective in supporting under-represented groups, particularly when individuals may be geographically dispersed or professionally isolated. Regular opportunities for connection, collaboration, resource sharing, and open discussion can strengthen coach confidence, wellbeing, and professional development while fostering a more connected coaching community.



Igniting Networks and Connections That Impact





“I’m so proud of all these women, and I’m already excited about the next generation. We recently held our National Skills Competition, which focuses on our youngest athletes through dryland and pool skill assessments. One of the moments that made me the proudest was seeing the women from the original mentoring group now serving as assessors and judges. They are the ones sharing their knowledge, mentoring the next generation of coaches, and every one of them is female”.

-Vyninka Arlow, National Pathway Lead Coach