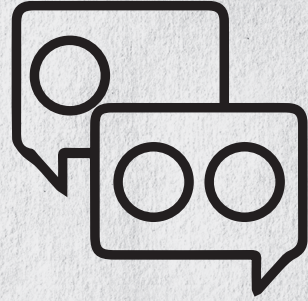


**“It’s just  
a joke...”**



**THINKING BACK TO REFLECT FORWARD...**

Our words show people what we think and feel. We can reveal that we respect and care about others. We can also reveal thoughts and beliefs that hurt. Our words can make a person feel alone and insignificant, and impact their rights and opportunities, and how they see themselves and their place in society. This includes words in the form of jokes that put someone down – and their consequences are not funny at all.

Do you remember ever feeling uncomfortable when someone made a joke at someone else’s expense? If this has ever happened with your team for example – maybe a sexist joke that belittled a girl or woman in terms of her personal or professional abilities – did you or anyone else speak up?

*“Growing up, if it was someone who I knew loved and backed me, I wouldn’t question the intent because I knew I had their support.” - Moises Henriques*

**ARE RACIST JOKES LESS HARMFUL WHEN THE INTENTION IS NOT TO HURT?**

When it comes to racist jokes – and any joke that is made at someone else’s expense – our intention doesn’t matter. It’s about how what we say is received by the person and those who support them.

When we make or laugh at a racist joke, we make it seem normal and ok to use words that can hurt.

Often racist jokes are told by a person who, without realising, has advantages in life that were never earned or questioned, and a higher chance of accessing what they need for a comfortable, productive, and safe life.

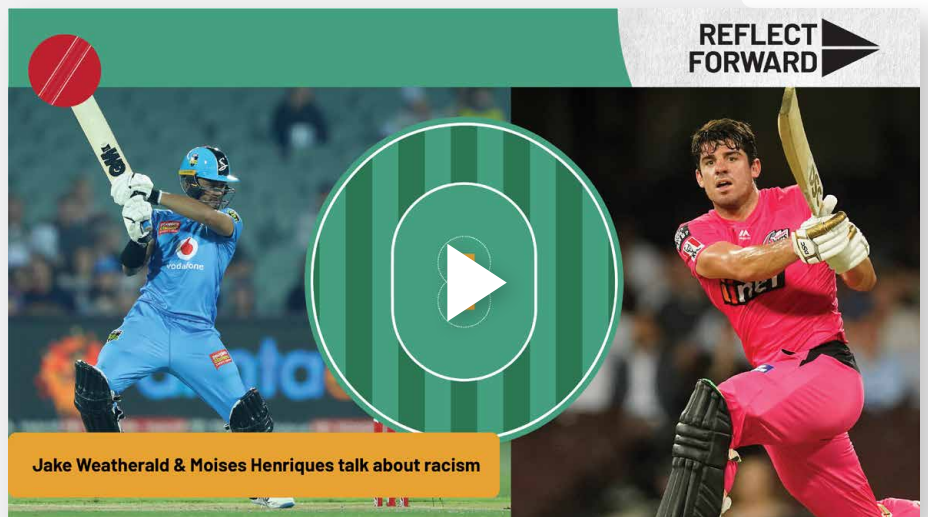
This is also known as privilege and power and it can happen around us, to us, and through us every day. Not just in terms of race, but also gender, sexuality and so much more.

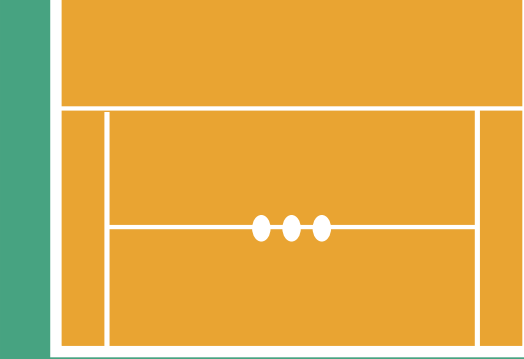
**WATCH THE VIDEO HERE.**

*Simply scan the QR code using your camera app, and follow the link to see Moises Henriques and Jake Weatherald talking about racist jokes.*



VIDEO 3:19





*“I found myself getting offended when the same jokes were made by someone I didn’t know. I remember asking the umpire, are you going to do anything about this?” - Moises Henriques*

### IF THE JOKE IS MEANINGLESS, WHY ARE WE SAYING IT? WHAT ARE WE REALLY TRYING TO SAY?

We often see different perceptions of sensitivity come into play when racist jokes are told.

“Don’t be so sensitive. I didn’t mean it. You can’t take a joke. You’re blowing this out of proportion. This is political correctness gone mad.”

Heard it all before? Somehow the person who told the joke ends up being cast as the victim. They hide in their ‘humour’ of hateful language, ideas, and stereotypes.

They call on those who are offended by the joke – the butt of the joke and those who identify with them – to support them and laugh. But when this doesn’t happen, they’re cast as lacking the special human quality of a sense of humour and being too sensitive.

*“The more that I move on, I think the things that are questioning the equal opportunity of humanity are just things that maybe shouldn’t be joked about.” - Moises Henriques*



If we accept the possibility that people may not admit how they feel, why is it so important to have the right to make these jokes? What are we getting out of it?

You can assume intent when someone makes a racist joke, but it’s important to ask what they really mean.

If you’re asking yourself whether it’s ok, then maybe it isn’t ok.

Just because racist jokes are common and people laugh, that it doesn’t make it right. And just because people stay silent, it doesn’t give someone a free pass to denigrate another human being.

To help understand where you personally draw the line with people that love and care about you, and people that you don’t know, it can help to get to know your belief system.

Remember that as you start to find your voice and say no to racism with your team, friends, and family, you can do so with kindness. The person you are speaking to may not be racist, just not educated themselves about race.

They might not give you the answer you hope for. They might not even support you. But you might set them on the path to think twice next time they go to make a racist joke.

