

Fostering Independence for Sporting Success

Helping athletes develop self-drive, organisation and adaptability is crucial for success in high-level sports. Parents and guardians play a key role in developing these skills by enabling their child/young person to make decisions and take responsibility for things, as they mature.

Giving your child opportunities to learn through both successes and setbacks helps them build valuable skills for competition, training, travel, study, work, and life.



Support them to

PROBLEM SOLVE

When facing a problem or a decision, show them how to approach problems with curiosity. Ask open-ended questions like:

- “What is the problem you are trying to solve or decision you are trying to make?”
- “What is your biggest concern?”
- “What’s the worst-case scenario, and is it as bad as you think?”



Encourage them to

COMMUNICATE

Incrementally encourage your child to communicate directly with their trusted support team. Some examples might include:

- Helping them respond to emails (where appropriate).
- Allowing them to notify the coach if they cannot attend training.
- Helping them to book meetings or conversations with coach, pathway manager, wellbeing manager, school or university, etc.



Help them learn

TIME MANAGEMENT

Effective time management is crucial for athletes with competing demands across training, competitions, school/uni and work. Sit down with them at the beginning of each term to:

- Plan out the term on a visual calendar and mark the competition dates, assessments, family events, etc.
- Draft a weekly timetable capturing weekly commitments and downtime.



Expect them to do

HOUSEHOLD CHORES

Household skills prepare athletes for the extra requirements of camps and team travel, where they may need to cook, clean and budget for themselves.

- Teach them how to cook basic nutritious meals.
- Teach them how to manage money (even if it is just pocket money).
- Teach them how to wash their own clothes (with and without a washing machine).



Encourage them to have some

DOWNTIME

To thrive in life and high-performance, it’s important for athletes to prioritise their wellbeing and self-care. Encourage them to:

- Spend time with family and friends.
- Do things that are meaningful and fun.
- To look after their body and mind with good sleep, good music and good company.