

INJURIES, INSULTS AND APPLAUSE

WHAT YOU TOLD US ABOUT INJURY, RECOVERY AND MENTAL HEALTH IN SPORT

Recently, we've been speaking to young people about what it feels like to have a sports injury that stops you training and competing in sport or PE. Our aim was to find out how coaches, family and friends in a club or team help when you're injured and when you come back to sport. We also wanted to find out what the biggest pressures and worries in sport are, and what's need to create a positive sport experience.

We're sharing these experiences and ideas with the people who run sport, so together we can work to keep sport healthy, positive and fun for everyone. **Here's what we heard...**

WE ASKED:

What does it feel like to be injured and unable to play sport?

YOU SAID:

- I feel lost and aimless
- I'm anxious, frustrated and scared
- I'm confused about who am and what I'm worth without sport
- I feel discouraged and worried about future performance
- I'm forcing myself to recover from injury
- I'm relieved to take a break

WE ASKED:

What would you find helpful when injured and recovering?

YOU SAID:

- Having a recovery and return plan: what's happened, how I'm feeling, how long before I'm back?
- Support from coach, family and friends in the team or club
- People accept I need time off, and that I can come back when I'm ready
- Keeping involved by helping out with training or staying in touch with the team

WE ASKED:

What are the biggest pressures and worries in sport?

YOU SAID:

- Will my performance be good enough?
- Will I make the team – or will I be deselected?
- Will I get injured – and what happens then?
- I'm so busy: can I do my homework and see my friends and train and compete?
- Will I let other people down?
- I'm worried about preparing right for competition

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Podium
ANALYTICS

CENTRE FOR
MENTAL
HEALTH

WE ASKED:

What makes sport feel positive and enjoyable?

YOU SAID:

- When people in my club or team encourage, motivate and respect me – and are friendly outside of sport
- When coaches encourage and motivate me
- When coaches listen to me, want what's best for me and give me constructive feedback
- When coaches include everyone and don't have favourites or ignore people who struggle
- When families are encouraging without pressure

WHO DID WE SPEAK TO?

We heard from 32 young people who all played competitive sport at a range of levels.

11 years 16.2 mean age 18 years

16 Black, Asian & Minority groups 15 White

21 males 11 females

We met in online groups to talk about sport, injury and mental health. Injuries included concussion, broken bones, torn muscles and sprains.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Informed, wrap-around support for injured people from sport and family
2. Peer-to-peer support
3. Guidance for families
4. Club injury champions and return-to-play plans
5. An implementation and evaluation framework

“...with some people I know, once they come back from an injury, our coach forgets about them and focuses on the new players that replaced them so I think coaches can be more inclusive.”

(MALE, 12, HOCKEY)

“I couldn't walk for a while, but as soon as I could walk again, a few days later I was at training. Looking back on that, I wish I didn't do that because I knew that doing that set me out for longer.”

(FEMALE, 17, RUGBY)

“...it felt like a big part of me was missing...”



HAVE YOU HAD A SPORT INJURY?

WHAT HELPED YOU?

WHAT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER?

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