

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the purpose of this research?

- To study the prevalence and the management of mental health concerns among developing athletes in relation to the sport environment.

Who is conducting this research?

- Principal Researcher Dr. Véronique Boudreault (USherbrooke), Co-Researchers Natalie Durand-Bush (uOttawa), Sylvie Parent (ULaval), Jacinthe Dion (UQAC), Lara Pomerleau-Fontaine (USherbrooke) and Juliette Maurin (USherbrooke) and Collaborators Sophie Brassard (USherbrooke) and Amélie Soulard (uSherbrooke).
- This research is also in partnership with the Game Plan program, the Institut National du Sport du Québec (INS), the Fondation de l'athlète d'excellence du Québec (FAEQ) as well as the following provincial federations: the Quebec Swimming Federation, the Quebec Gymnastics Federation, the Quebec Weightlifting Federation, the Quebec Cycling Federation and the Quebec Diving Federation.

Is this research funded?

- This research is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the MITACS programme and the Game Plan programme.

Why is this research important?

- Our mental health is an essential asset that influences our daily functioning and performance.
- Research on the mental health of developing athletes (identified as Elite or Relève by MELS) is rare in the world and we currently have no baseline data on Canadian developing athletes.

What are the benefits of this research?

- Understand how mental health can help athletes achieve optimal performance and reach the national team.
- Assist in the optimization of mental health support for all developing Canadian athletes.
- Develop policies, resources and training programmes that will protect the mental health and performance of athletes.

Why are data collected repeatedly?

- Mental health fluctuates over time and can deteriorate during long periods of high demand, stress and lack of resources. It is therefore essential to measure mental health over an extended period to fully understand its impact and to be able to periodize the support offered.

Why are several variables included in the research?

- Mental health is influenced by many factors. For example, mental performance and sport culture can serve as protective factors in achieving and maintaining good mental health. Thus, it is important to examine these variables in order to develop appropriate training programmes and resources.

Will athletes be interested in this research?

- Yes, of course. The literature suggests that high performance athletes want to be able to talk about mental health and get support from their coaches, support staff and organization: *"My relationship with my coach is now much more open and honest and I don't feel like I have to make something up when my mental health interferes with my ability to train and perform. Having a coach who can understand this and encourage me to seek help makes a big difference."*

Are there any participation risks associated with this research?

- The risks are minimal. However, if athletes require support as a result of completing the questionnaire or participating in an interview, they will be encouraged to contact a psychologist, mental performance consultant, or other additional resource available to them.
- Their participation and responses to the questionnaire and interview will remain **anonymous** and **confidential**.