

VALUING WELL-BEING OVER PERFORMANCE

WELL-BEING VS PERFORMANCE

Sports participation contributes positively to the overall development of young people. It meets several of their needs by allowing them, among other things, to be physically active, release energy, relieve pressure, and build connections with peers.

However, certain conditions are essential for sports to truly support holistic development. The concept of a **positive experience** is central to gaining the benefits of sports participation.

For student-athletes, a great deal of time and energy is devoted to sport, and adolescents can end up losing themselves in their pursuit of performance. This is why it is important to support them in learning to put performance into perspective, value their efforts, and maintain a sense of balance and well-being.

Student-athletes' experiences: insights from the field

- **Strong identification with the athlete role:** Young athletes primarily define themselves as hockey players. Without attributing value to other aspects of themselves, they may feel worthless when performance is lacking or in the event of an injury.
- **Emotions closely tied to performance:** Mood and self-esteem often depend on the last game or performance. A good result brings pride, confidence, and lightness, while a poor performance brings discouragement, doubt, and a sense of failure.
- **Constant pressure:** This dependence on results creates performance anxiety that extends beyond the ice. Sport stops being a place of fulfillment and becomes a condition for "earning the right" to feel good about themselves.



CONCRETE ACTION

Introduce a weekly “non-performance moment.”

Once a week, off the ice, each player shares a positive moment or a source of pride unrelated to hockey.

This can take place during a team discussion off the ice, before or after practice, where each player briefly shares something positive or a personal achievement not related to sports performance.

- Young people discover that their worth goes beyond performance.
- Their sources of well-being become more diverse.
- A more balanced identity promotes a healthier team climate.
- Performance-related pressure decreases, making motivation more sustainable.

