

# THE RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS: AN ADDITIONAL SOURCE OF PRESSURE?

## ROLE OF PARENTS

During adolescence, wanting to distance oneself from parents is completely normal. Despite this desire for autonomy, parents continue to play a central role in both the young person's development and the support of student-athletes.

However, it is important to prioritize support and encouragement while avoiding adding extra pressure on the young person. Pressure, excessive ambition, and high expectations from parents can become a source of stress, reduce enjoyment of sport, and even negatively impact well-being. A young person who perceives a lot of pressure from their parents may, for example, lose motivation or continue in sport only to meet family expectations.

## Student-athletes' experiences: insights from the field

- **Weight of parental expectations:** The pressure felt by young people is often linked to the time, energy, and resources parents invest in their athletic journey.
- **Hesitation to share limits:** They may fear disappointing their parents or appearing ungrateful, making it difficult to talk about stress, fatigue, or overload.
- **Impact on well-being and enjoyment:** This dynamic can increase stress or reduce enjoyment, but having a safe space for discussion can help restore balance.



# CONCRETE ACTION

## Create a ritual of recognition among teammates."

- **When to use this card:** After the presentation for young people, once the topic of relationships with parents has been addressed.

### Suggested questions to discuss with players:

→ "When you think about your parents and your sport, how do you feel?"

→ "What do you think your parents expect from you in your sport?"

→ "What would you like your parents to understand about your reality?"

- **Active listening and care:** The coach shows they understand the pressure young people feel and is there to listen without judgment.
- **Normalization and modeling:** The coach shares their own experiences to show that talking about stress or overload is normal.
- **Individual mini-exercise:**
  - Each player confidentially writes down a situation where they feel pressure related to their parents and a small strategy to cope with it.
  - **Voluntary sharing:** Players can then share (if they wish) part of what they wrote to show that these feelings are normal and that the group can talk about them openly.

