



PARENTS' GUIDE TO SUPPORT **CLEAN SPORT**



SPORT INTEGRITY
AUSTRALIA

In
partnership
with



WADA

YOUR ROLE AS A PARENT



As parents or guardians, you know that the pressure to train hard, compete and achieve at a high level can lead athletes to entertain dangerous options presented as shortcuts, such as extreme dieting, excessive training, taking supplements, and doping.

The importance of your role as parents to help your children achieve their sporting goals, while also teaching them respect for and appreciation of the true spirit of sport, cannot be over-emphasised. You must be the consistent voice promoting safety, good health, integrity, balance, and enjoyment of clean sport throughout their pursuit of excellence. This resource is designed to help you enhance your children's knowledge of how to protect themselves in their sport or career.



PROMOTING GOOD VALUES

Sport can enhance work ethic, respect, friendship, joy, resilience, and healthy lifestyles. However, if these values are not ingrained, sport can also encourage cheating, lying, arrogance, and winning at the expense of personal health and integrity. Here is a list of things you can do to promote good values:



Teaching children to respect their opponents and themselves, to value skill development above winning, to win and lose with dignity, and respect the true spirit of sport.



Model these values for your children by encouraging and praising them regardless of the outcome of their competition; by keeping positive in the stands as you watch their match; and by speaking positively about their opponents once the competition is over.



Rank respect, personal improvement, integrity and equity above winning. Remind your children of these priorities regularly.



Open up a dialogue with your children about the values promoted in their sport / club / training centre.



Emphasise that participation in sport is more about personal growth and developing into the best version of themselves.



Notice when children take shortcuts or cheat to win and use the situation as an opportunity for learning. Start a conversation about ethics and the dangers of performance enhancing drugs. Make it clear that you expect your children to avoid them and compete with integrity.

IDENTIFYING A HEALTHY SPORT CULTURE

The sport culture or environment that your children spend significant time in will have an impact on their thinking. Assess whether it is a beneficial one that will enhance their growth and development. Here is a list of ways you can identify a healthy sport culture:



Look for key support personnel and assess whether they create a supportive culture – one that values respect, personal growth, and equity.



Does the coach lead with integrity and good character? Is the coach invested in continual learning?



Determine if perceived failures are seen as opportunities for learning.



Find out if peers are encouraging of others while striving to better themselves.



Monitor stress levels.

Consider removing your children from an unhealthy sport culture.

FINDING BALANCE



Teach them to be organised with schedules, calendars, and agendas.



Teach children to seek help and ask for what they need when they are feeling overwhelmed.



Prioritise health, enough sleep and proper nutrition.

Young athletes need your guidance to learn how to balance their many responsibilities, from demanding training schedules to schoolwork, to time with family and friends. These are ways you can help your children find balance.

CHECKING MEDICATIONS

Many medications contain banned substances found on the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) Prohibited List.



Advise your doctor that your child is an athlete and that certain substances are banned in sport.



Check all medications using [Global DRO](#) or the 'Medication Checker' in the Sport Integrity App.



You must enter the full brand name of the product or check the ingredient list shown on the package.



If a doctor prescribes a medication which contains a prohibited substance, first ask if there are any alternatives which do not contain the prohibited ingredient.



If no alternative medications are suitable then your child may be eligible for a Therapeutic Use Exemption (TUE).



For more information refer to the Sport Integrity Australia [TUE webpage](#) or search the 'Therapeutic Use Exemption Checker' in the Sport Integrity App.



NUTRITION

The right food and hydration choices increase the odds of optimal athletic performance and life-long health. Here is a list of ways you can promote proper nutrition:



Model good nutrition and hydration choices for your children.



Promote body positivity and encourage a healthy relationship with food.



Teach your children to read ingredient lists and how to read food labels.



Inform yourself about the appropriate diet for your children and consult a nutritionist / dietitian for specific advice and menus if possible.



Plan meals ahead and keep your kitchen stocked with healthy food choices.



Try to ensure your children never get too hungry, as this is when poor selections happen.

THE RISK OF SUPPLEMENTS

A planned and balanced diet can meet all of a competitive athlete's nutritional needs. There is little, if any, evidence indicating that supplements are needed to complement a healthy diet, and they can pose a risk to both the health and career of athletes. Here are some key pieces of information you need to know:



There is **NO GUARANTEE** that supplements are free of prohibited substances!



Excellent nutrition is the safest and best way to achieve peak athletic performance, promote clean sport and establish healthy life-long eating habits.



There are safety issues with certain supplements – some present serious risks to health and anti-doping.



No organisation can guarantee the safety of supplements. Be an informed consumer and recognise “too good to be true” marketing promises.



Research shows that use of **supplements can be a gateway to doping.**



If your children insist on using dietary supplements, **know how to recognise the risks** and reduce the chances of testing positive by seeking professional advice.



Ensure that you and your children understand the principle of **‘Strict Liability’**.



If your children are told to take supplements by a medical professional, make sure they use only ‘batch tested’ supplements. Batch tested supplements do not offer a 100% guarantee of being clean, but they have a much lower risk of containing a prohibited substance.



A full list of batch tested supplements can be found in the Sport Integrity App.



DOPING RISK FACTORS

Identifying athletes who are more at risk and vulnerable to doping behaviours is important for parents as it allows for proactive action and prevention.

The following personal characteristics, personality traits, and attitudes may make an individual more vulnerable to doping:

- Low self-esteem
- Results / achievement-driven
- Perceived parental pressure to be perfect
- Body image dissatisfaction / concern about weight maintenance
- Type of sport (weight categories, endurance, pure speed or strength)
- Success judged largely by comparison with others rather than on mastery of skills
- Impatience with obtaining results
- Propensity for cheating / bending the rules
- Belief that everyone else is doping
- Disbelief in harmful effects of doping
- History of substance abuse in family
- Admiration for achievements of known doped athletes.

PERIODS WHEN ATHLETES ARE MORE VULNERABLE TO DOPING

The following are moments when any athlete may be more at risk of doping:

- Return from injury
- Change in clubs / environment
- Change in level (entering a high performance centre, elite level)
- Recent competitive failure.

Career-related circumstances

- External pressure to perform / high stakes placed on performance (by sponsors, agents, family members, sports organisations, etc.)
- Overtraining or insufficient recovery time
- Recovering from injury
- Absence or weakness of deterrents (such as doping controls, severe sanctions, etc.)
- Lack of resources (such as qualified coaches, sports training information and technology).

Temporary situations

- Breakdown of personal relationships (with parents, peers, etc.)
- Emotional instability caused by life transitions (puberty, graduation to higher education levels, dropping out of school, geographical moves, severed relationships, death of significant other)
- Upcoming career-determining events (team selection, major competition, scouting or recruitment activities)
- Performance setback or plateau.



PREVENTING THE USE OF PERFORMANCE ENHANCING SUBSTANCES

EDUCATE



- **Be clear with your children** and tell them that you expect them to avoid drugs.



- **Ensure that your children understand that doping is cheating.** Maintain ongoing discussions about ethics, proper training, nutrition, and hard work.



- **Explain the health risks** of using doping substances.



- **Identify the signs of doping** and steroid abuse.

ADVOCATE



- **Maintain ongoing dialogue** about how to improve athletic performance through appropriate levels of training, recovery, and a carefully planned diet.



- **Encourage and inspire** your children to seek their personal best.



- **Urge coaches to reinforce these messages** and maintain a zero-tolerance policy for drugs.

COMMUNICATE



- **Reassure children and be supportive** even when they do not perform well; remind them that these times are valuable opportunities for learning and highlight moments that went well.



- **Make it clear** that you expect your children to avoid the use of performance enhancing substances.



- **Speak with your children's coach** regularly.



- **Monitor any over-the-counter supplement use** and speak to your children about the dangers of these.



PROTECTING THE CLEAN ATHLETE

SAMPLE COLLECTION PROCESS



Educate yourself on the principle of 'Strict Liability' (every athlete is responsible for what they put into their bodies) and ensure that your children are familiar with what constitutes doping.



Ensure that you and your children **understand all 10 anti-doping rule violations** (ADRVs).



Ensure that your children understand that **competitive athletes are tested for doping substances regularly**, in and out of competition, in order to protect clean sport and clean athletes.



Review and discuss information on the stages of the sample collection process together with your children. Consult these [WADA](#) and [Sport Integrity Australia](#) web pages for resources to assist you.



Make sure your children know their rights and responsibilities when it comes to the doping control process.





RECOGNISING POSSIBLE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF DRUG USE

At-risk behaviours:

- Use of other substances, alcohol or tobacco
- Non-discretionary use of dietary supplements
- Relying on untrustworthy or misinformed sources
- Frequenting gyms / fitness centres where steroids can be obtained
- Setting unrealistic goals
- Self-medicating
- Engaging in other risk-taking behaviour
- Frequent reading of muscle/fitness magazines.

Athletes using anabolic steroids may show one or more of the following:

- Quick weight gain
- Acne
- Hair loss
- Becoming more masculine (for females) such as body hair growth and deepening of voice
- Developing of abnormally sized breasts (males)
- Evidence of injections (needle marks).

Athletes using or abusing certain drugs may show one or more of the following:

- Mood swings
- Aggressive behaviour
- Sudden increase in training regime
- Signs of depression
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty sleeping
- Quick weight gain or loss.

WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS DOPING

Despite your best efforts, children may be exposed to poor influences that could lead them to dope. Denying and ignoring warning signs can lead to disastrous consequences, so it is important to know what to look for and to maintain open communication with your child as much as possible.

If you think your child may be using – react quickly.

INTERVENE



You must intervene to protect your child's well-being.



Get to the truth – seek understanding by speaking with your child about your concerns.



Talk to their doctor.



Seek professional advice about healthy alternatives and proper recovery.



Never give up – you are a vital influence in your child's life.



SPORT INTEGRITY APP

Download the Sport Integrity App – a tool to help you continue supporting your children to compete clean.

The Sport Integrity App can be used to:



Check if a medication is banned in sport.



Find low-risk supplements.*



Learn about the sample collection process, including athlete rights and responsibilities.



Find information on Therapeutic Use Exemptions (TUEs).



Link to Sport Integrity Australia's online education modules.



Check facts on all 10 Anti-Doping Rule Violations (ADRVs – or 'the Rules'), health effect of doping, additional Sport Integrity topics, and more (found in the MENU).



Report a concern or ask a question.

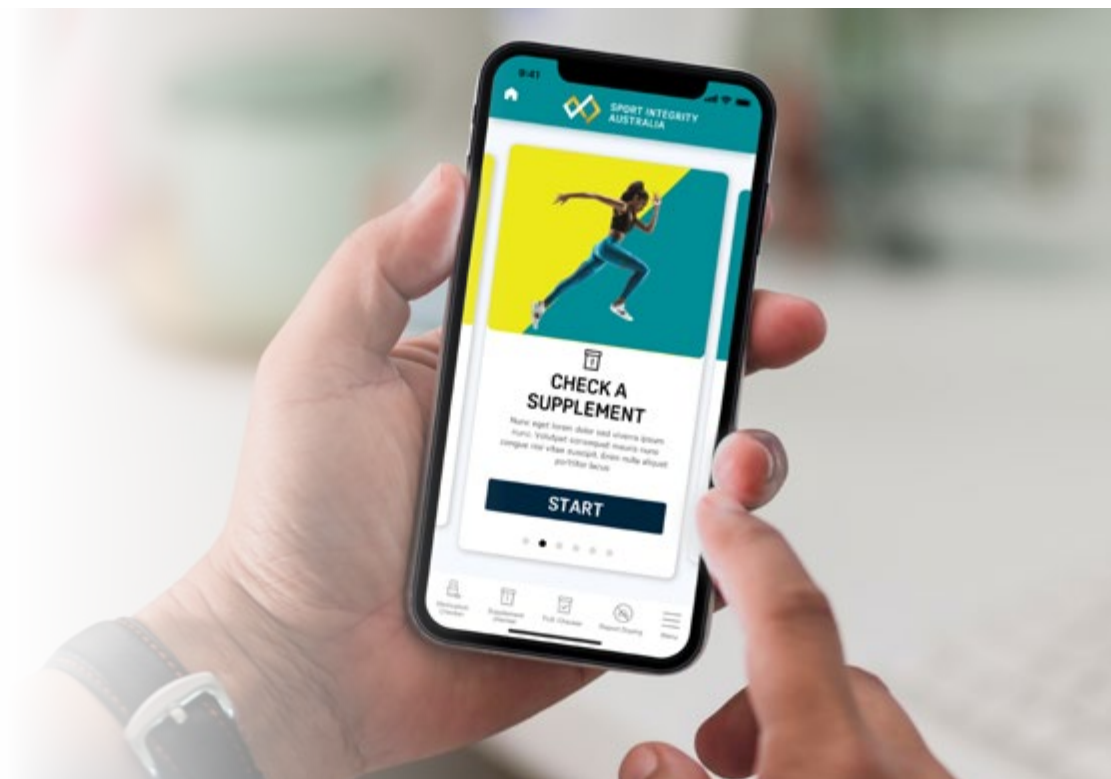


Give feedback on testing missions.



Find information on travelling overseas.

For even more information and helpful links, check out our free online courses including the 'Parents' Course', 'Clean Sport 101' and more. Found at:
elearning.sportintegrity.gov.au



Download the Sport Integrity App from the App Store or Google Play



* The Sport Integrity App gives a complete list of all supplements sold in Australia that have been screened for prohibited substances by an independent laboratory – called 'batch testing'. These cannot give athletes a 100% safety guarantee, but does significantly lower the risk of a positive test. For non-tested supplements the App gives athletes access to a quiz to assess the risk of that product.



for more information

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