Parents & Supporters

Engagement & Implementation Plan
For the Home Nation Talent programmes mission statement of **Best Developed, Best Supported** to be achievable, the engagement and support of parents is essential. Our learning philosophy revolves around the development of ‘excellence’ and the **4 E’s** describe the learning process that we hope parents/supporters will follow as they accompany their athlete on their journey through the Pathway.

At the outset we aim to expose the parents to the guiding philosophies of the Pathway and the aims, objectives and expectations at each stage. We then hope to see them exploring information, resources and experiences to enhance their athlete’s experience along the Pathway journey.

Finally, with the foundations truly laid, parents can excel in guiding and supporting not only their athlete but other parents too.
Often forgotten or simply under-appreciated, parents are a critical stakeholder for the Home Nation Talent Programme to engage when referring to athlete development and creating a seamless pathway.

As can be seen in the graph, parents play a vital key role in owning and influencing a young triathletes programme through the Skills School and Regional Academy pathway stages, moving to a more supportive role at Home Nation Talent Squad and beyond.

This document outlines how we plan to engage, inform and support parents through each stage of the pathway.
Expose
1. Providing sufficient information for parents which outlines philosophies, aims and objectives at each stage of the Pathway. This will help inform parents what they need to know at their stage in the pathway and will go some way to managing parental expectations.

Explore
1. Creating a greater curiosity for parental learning that will further support athletes moving through the pathway.
2. Greater access to information through the British Triathlon Talent Pages
3. Asking questions of their athletes to aid learning, understanding and develop reflective skills.
4. Exploring the “handover” of responsibility for decisions relating to a programme, to the athlete allowing them to explore “Learning to Lead”

Enhance
1. Implementation of knowledge and information gained in order to help the developing athlete.
2. Support through a parental community – being able to reflect and share challenges and experiences from each stage of the pathway.

Excel
1. Over time and with appropriate support from Programme staff, coaches, resources and drawing on their own experiences, parents may assume a mentor role not only for other parents, but for their own athlete.
2. Ownership and responsibility of the programme fully transferred to athlete allowing parents to support and simply be “Mum” or “Dad”.

THE 4E's
Exposure
Enhancement
Explore
Excel
At a very simple level, it is essential that Programme staff and coaches at each level build good rapport and working relationships with parents; simply engaging, being open, listening and showing understanding and empathy will provide us the opportunity to help manage parental expectations and will give us a greater understanding of the challenges and barriers that may affect an athlete’s development.

Opportunities need to be created to allow parents to approach Programme staff and coaches to break down barriers in communication. Quite often, parents don’t know who to ask, or where to find the answers to questions and queries they may have.

As a programme, we also don’t know what parents don’t know. Through greater engagement, we start to understand more and can produce resources and learning opportunities such as workshops or webinars to help improve understanding. Stronger relationships created also allow for tougher conversations to be held openly around emotive subjects such as selections.
Youth & Junior

**Regular updates**

Via the Pathway Parents email group and/or the Pathway Parents closed Facebook group keep parents up to date of Programme and Pathway developments, progress and activity. Contact Sophie Lewis for more information and/or to be added to the contact list

**Greater number of online resources**

Creating and making available fact sheets, videos and links to information that will better inform and educate parents - accessed via the Talent Pages on the BTF website

**Performance Assessments**

Held annually every April, this event provides a big opportunity for face to face parent: programme communication. A variety of workshops/presentations are held that will expose and allow parents to explore and enhance their understanding of a wide range of relevant topics relevant to whole athlete development

**Online Webinars**

Similar to workshops; presentations will be created, advertised and published on a variety of topics and subjects. These can be held live or pre-recorded, which would help those individuals that may be unavailable to participate or attend workshops due to other commitments, allowing for greater accessibility.

**Workshops**

Additional workshops/seminars will be delivered as part of the Regional Academy/Home Nation Talent Squad training year.
Through the development of the Skills School framework, a supporter’s guide has been produced to help inform and educate parents of the principles, philosophy and aims of Skills School. Both documents are available in pdf form and are accompanied by a simple supporter’s guide leaflet. This gives examples of the type of questions parents can ask children after a Skills School day to further develop the child’s learning, understanding and reflective skills. Parental workshops are also planned to be run during Skills School days. These are envisaged to be informative sessions of around 30-45 mins, held on a variety of subjects such as:

- Understanding the Pathway – Performance and Participation
- Understanding the competition Pathway
- Nutrition
- Robustness (including prehab)
- Planning and goal setting
- Expectations
Excellence in Supporting Athlete Development will be co-ordinated and led both by the Home Nation Talent Programme staff and practitioners. The intention is very much to create an open and inclusive programme of parental support and development that in consultation with parents meets the needs at each stage of the Pathway. Further it is hoped that collaboration above, below and across the Pathway will help more effectively share experiences and best practice.