

The benefits of planning recreational activities in the psychological development of high-level sports adolescents

Submission date 26/03/2024	Recruitment status No longer recruiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered
		<input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
Registration date 26/03/2024	Overall study status Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan
		<input type="checkbox"/> Results
Last Edited 26/03/2024	Condition category Mental and Behavioural Disorders	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data
		<input type="checkbox"/> Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

A large number of teenagers participate in sports with the goal of becoming top-tier athletes by focusing on one sport early on. However, this early specialization in sports can bring about both physical and mental challenges for young athletes. They face immense pressure to perform at very high levels, and if they fall short of expectations, it can affect their self-confidence. Moreover, dedicating all their time and energy to sports leaves little room for other aspects of their personal growth. This intense focus on sports can lead to an identity solely centered around being an athlete, which can make them more vulnerable if their sports career ends unexpectedly. The rigorous training schedules they follow also give them little time to rest, which can increase the risk of mental health issues.

Our study aims to see how effective a program is for elite teenage athletes. We introduced a program called Organized Leisure-Time Activities (OLT3A) and compared it to a group of athletes who didn't participate in the program yet. We looked at their self-confidence and their feelings of happiness or sadness – all crucial factors in the mental well-being of teenagers. Additionally, we wanted to make sure that the athletes didn't see our program as something that disrupted their breaks or leisure time.

Who can participate?

Elite teenage athletes aged 13 -15 years

What does the study involve?

In this study, we're using a method called randomized controlled design, which means we've split the participants into two groups randomly. One group will receive the OLT3A program, while the other group will be put on a waiting list and won't receive the program immediately. The group sessions will happen once a week for seven weeks, and they'll last about 30 minutes each. These sessions will be led by a sports psychologist who's also a researcher. We're mainly interested in seeing how the participants' self-esteem and emotions change throughout the program, so we'll be checking in with them at the end of each week using a method called ambulatory assessment, which involves both qualitative and quantitative methods. We're also

looking at whether the program disrupts their breaks or leisure time. We'll be doing these assessments every week.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

Main benefits: feeling more pleasant emotional states and less unpleasant emotional states; preservation of self-esteem in stressful environments. Main risks: alteration of break time leading to an increase in environmental stressors and reduction of recovery window, this risk is controlled by using the RESTQ-36-R-Sport subscale "disturbed breaks"

Where is the study run from?

Alliance Universitaire Bretagne (France)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

September 2019 to March 2024

Who is funding the study?

Investigator initiated and funded

Who is the main contact?

Dr Phillippe Vacher, philippe.vacher@univ-brest.fr

Contact information

Type(s)

Public, Scientific, Principal investigator

Contact name

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Additional identifiers

Clinical Trials Information System (CTIS)

Nil known

ClinicalTrials.gov (NCT)

Nil known

Protocol serial number

Study information

Scientific Title

Organized leisure time activities for adolescent athletes: impact on physical self-esteem and emotional states

Acronym

OLT3A

Study objectives

The primary objective of this study is to assess the effects of an Organized Leisure Time Activities protocol in promoting adolescent athletes key mental health variables (i.e., self-esteem and emotional states).

We hypothesize that both active interventions are more effective than a waiting-list control condition in promoting self-esteem and functional emotional states.

Ethics approval required

Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)

approved 15/12/2023, Alliance Universitaire Bretagne Comité d'Ethique pour la Recherche (3 rue des Archives, 29238 BREST, Brest, 29238, France; +33 297017066; dg@aub.bzh), ref: 2312152

Study design

Interventional randomized controlled trial

Primary study design

Interventional

Study type(s)

Prevention, Quality of life

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Prevention of self-esteem and emotional states development in elite adolescent athletes.

Interventions

The presented trial uses a randomized controlled design with two groups, comparing OLT3A and a waiting list control condition. Group intervention will last seven weeks, one session per week (~30 minutes each), and will be administered by a sports psychologist researcher.

The first step will consist of an individual interview with each athlete to (1) diagnose their schedule and identify break periods; (2) find individual preferential leisure activities (e.g., playing music, cooking, reading, social activities like a family meal or social event with friends, reading). The principal criterion will be that athletes should consider activities as a priori resourcing and pleasant. According to the OLTA literature, video games and watching television will be the only activities excluded from the possible choices. Complementary physical activities will be allowed if they are done in leisure and not competitively.

The second step of the study will consist of 6-weeks of individualized guidance. During this period, athletes will complete questionnaires each Saturday morning (before the last training of the week) to monitor their emotional states and physical self-inventory and evaluate the impact of the OLT3A protocol on their break time perception. In addition, once per week (on Monday), a half-hour interview will be organized with the first author to plan the week (which activities, at what time, with whom, and how much time for each activity). Complementary, qualitative semi-directive interviews (30 minutes in addition to the previous conversation) will be conducted once a week with volunteered athletes from the global sample. These semi-directive interviews will aim to obtain qualitative evaluations of the protocol's benefits and risks for the seven volunteers.

Intervention Type

Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)

Self-esteem (PSI6b) and emotional states (SEQ) were measured each week using psychometric questionnaires

Key secondary outcome(s)

1. Disturbed breaks (specific subscale of the RESTQ36-R-Sport) were assessed each week using a psychometric tool
2. Qualitative interviews were done on a subpanel of the treatment group each week in order to explore their subjective feeling and behavioral transformation throughout the protocol.

Completion date

31/03/2024

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

1. Elite adolescent athletes
2. Members of a high-level training organization
3. Engaged in an early sport specialization process

Participant type(s)

Healthy volunteer, Other

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Child

Lower age limit

13 years

Upper age limit

15 years

Sex

All

Total final enrolment

25

Key exclusion criteria

1. Likely mental disorder
2. Less than 18 hours of athletic training per week
3. Less than 6 years of competitive training experience
4. Less than 2 years at a national performance level
4. Being younger than 13 years
6. Being older than 15 years

Date of first enrolment

01/09/2019

Date of final enrolment

01/12/2019

Locations

Countries of recruitment

France

Study participating centre

Alliance Dijon Natation

Piscine de la Fontaine d'Ouche

All. de Ribeauvillé

Dijon

France

21000

Sponsor information

Organisation

Alliance Universitaire Bretagne - CERNI

Funder(s)

Funder type

Other

Funder Name

Investigator initiated and funded

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study will be available upon request from Philippe Vacher (philippe.vacher@univ-brest.fr)

IPD sharing plan summary

Available on request

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Participant information sheet	Participant information sheet	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes