

# Supporting the Developing Age Group Swimmer

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# Today's Talk ...

- Discuss the cultural and organisational changes that are currently taking place within the National Governing Body
- Consider the role of the Parent/ Guardian in supporting the development of young swimmers, particularly during this time of change

# The Swimming Pathway

- Publication of updated long term athlete development resources:
  - ✓ *Stage 1:*  
*Domestic Competition Review*
- Creation and roll out of a National Development Syllabus.



# The New Competition Structure

- An increased emphasis on swimmers having clear periods in their training plan which focus on the development of skill and training capacities.
- The presence of clear competition periods where individuals learn to produce peak performance on the day when it most matters.
- More swimmers training for the full season with access to a quality end of season competition at a relevant standard.
- A progressive provision of Championship competition as swimmers get older and progress through the performance pathway.

# Competitive Swimming Pathway



# County Championships (x 35)



## Age

- 11 years and upwards (age as at 31<sup>st</sup> December)
- 10 year olds may compete if they meet the 11 year old qualification standard



## Qualification

- Time standards for each event
- Must be achieved in a licensed competition



## Additional Information

- Take place in January and February each year
- 25m or 50m pool
- Held over 2/3 weekends

# Regional Championships (x 8)



## Age

- 12 years and upwards (age at 31<sup>st</sup> December)
- 11 year olds may compete if they meet the 12 year old qualification standard
- Open SC competition (Junior/ Senior)



## Qualification

- Time standards for each event
- Must be achieved in a licensed competition



## Additional Information

- LC take place in May each year, held over 2/3 weekends
- SC take place in November each year, held over 1 weekend

# National Championships (x 3)



## Age

- British: 14 years and upwards (age as at 31<sup>st</sup> December) – 13 year olds may compete if they rank amongst the 14 year olds
- English: 13 years and upwards (age as at 31<sup>st</sup> December – 12 year olds may compete if they rank amongst the 13 year olds



## Qualification

- Top 44 ranking in each event (British: 24, Home Nations: 20)
- Must be achieved in a licensed meet within the qualification window (14<sup>th</sup> March – 31<sup>st</sup> May 2015)



## Additional Information

- Long Course Championships take place in July/ August each year (50m pool)
- Short Course Championships take place in December each year (25m pool)
- LC – British: 5 days, Home Nations: 5 days



# International Championships



## Age

- Junior and Senior Competitions
- Girls 13/14 years and Boys 15/ 16 years and upwards



## Qualification

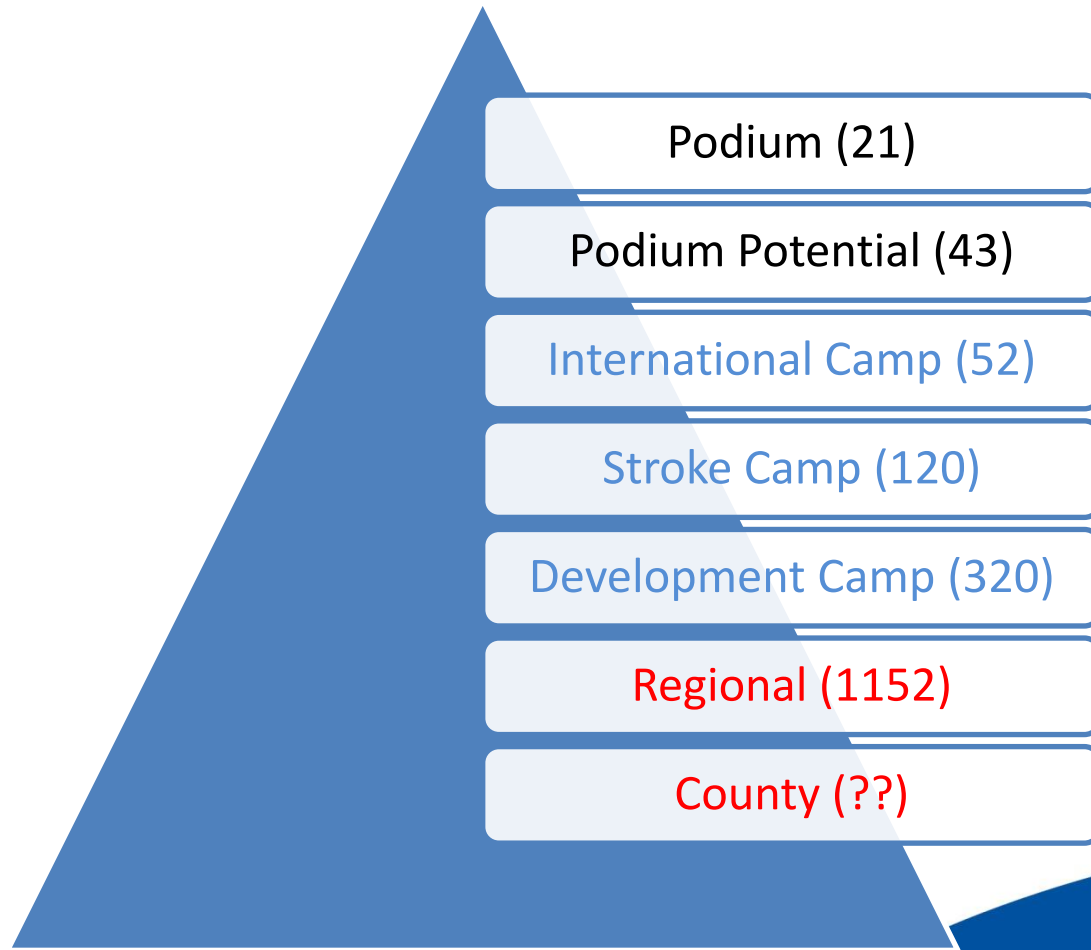
- Formal selection policies for each competition
- At Senior level this relates to funding targets agreed with UK sport



## Additional Information

- Held throughout the year
- SC: Winter (Dec/ Jan) LC: Summer (July/ August)

# Athlete Development Programme

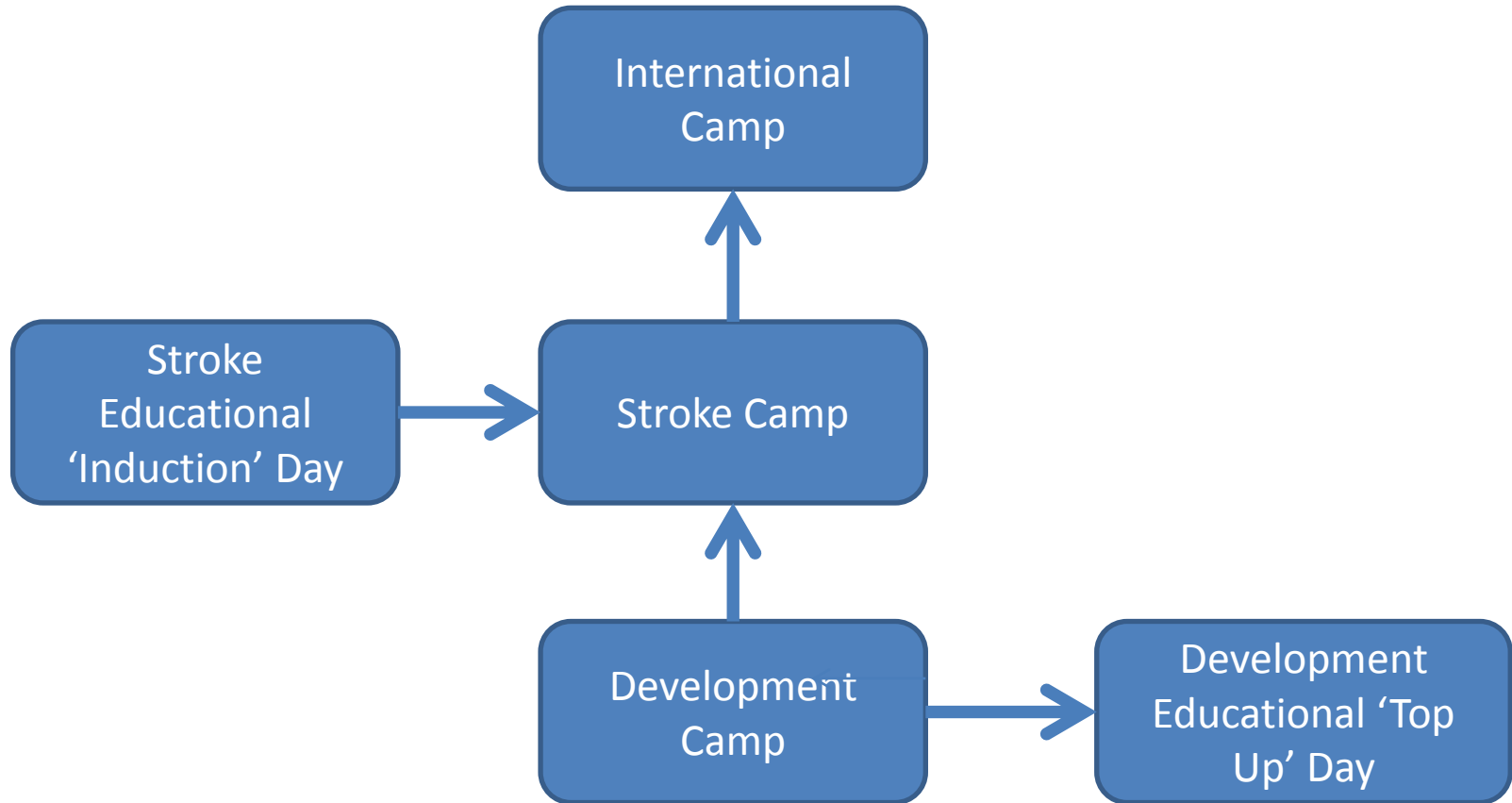


# Regional Athlete Programme

- Selected from Regional Age Group Championships (criteria on websites)
- 72 swimmers (36 girls and 36 boys aged 11 years)
- 72 swimmers (36 girls and 36 boys aged 12 years)
- Multi stroke approach plus education on land training, and key areas such as lifestyle management and nutrition
- Inclusive and less 'selective' – chance to spread the message for cultural change



# National Programme



# Development Camp

- Girls aged 12/13 years
- Boys aged 13/14 years  
(age as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015)
- 1 day camp in September/ October (**Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> October**)
- Progressive athlete, coach and parent education
- Possibility of progressing either to a **top up education day (5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> December)** or **Phase 2 (21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> December)** – not a pass or fail, each individual develops at their own pace.

# Stroke Camp

- Girls aged 13/14/15 years
- Boys aged 14/15/16 years  
(age as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015)
- Swimmers can join at the stroke camp or progress from the development camp (girls 13 years and boys 14 years)
- **Induction day on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2015** for swimmers entering the programme at the Stroke Camp stage (G: 14/15, B: 15/16)
- Progressive athlete, coach and parent education
- **2 day camp from the 21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2015: Liverpool/ Coventry/ Millfield**

# International Camp/ Competition

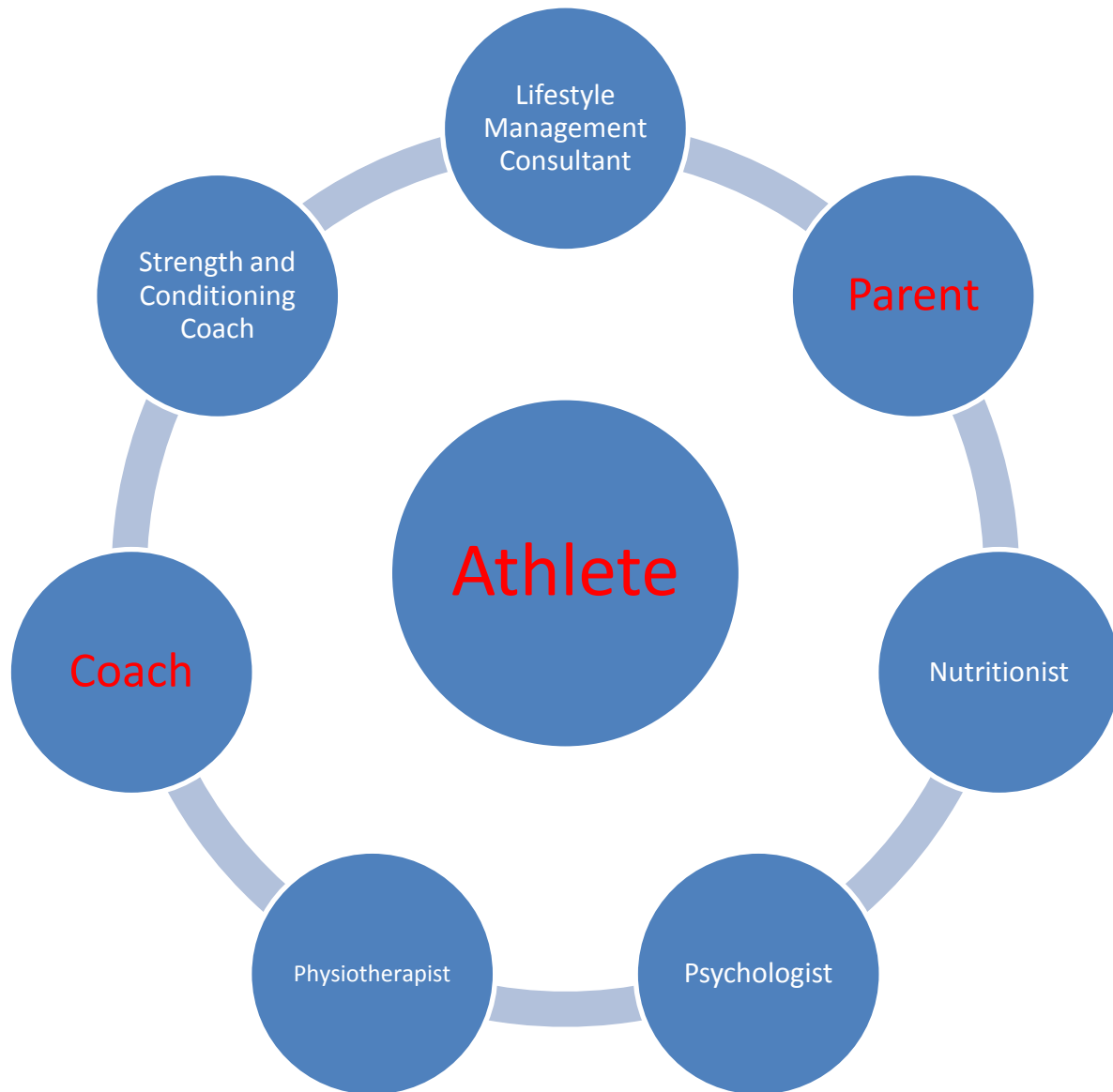
- Girls aged 14/15/16 years
- Boys aged 15/16/17 years  
(age as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015)
- Athletes can join at phase 3 or progress from phase 2 (girls 14/15 years and boys 15/ 16 years).
- Progressive athlete, coach and parent education
- The international programme will typically involve an opportunity to compete internationally. Aim to schedule this in **February** – prior to the opening of the competition window.

# The Athletic Triangle

The athletic triangle, consisting of the coach, athlete and parent(s), is a natural aspect of the youth sport setting. The coach's and parents' roles in this process are critical to the success of any program.







# 23:1 Rule

**23: 1? 2? 3? 4? 5? 6? 7? 8?**

- Time away from the training environment often allows the athlete to undermine their hard work in the pool!
- England programmes commitment to parents/guardians to improve education on how they can better support their child.

# Coach and Parental Support

## Coaches provide:

- Informational Support
- Emotional Support
- Esteem Support

## Parent/ Guardians provide

- Emotional Support
- Esteem Support
- Tangible Support



# Social Support

Perceived sport competence

Self – confidence

Self – esteem

Enjoyment

Commitment

Successful performance  
outcomes



Anxiety

Drop Out



# Self – Determination Theory (SDT)

SDT supports three basic psychological needs that must be satisfied to foster health, well – being and athletic performance; these needs can be universally applied.

## **Competence**

Seek to control the outcome and experience mastery

## **Relatedness**

Is the universal want to interact, be connected to, and experience caring for others

## **Autonomy**

Is the universal urge to be causal agents of one's own life and act in harmony with one's integrated self; however, this does not mean to be independent of others.

# Fostering Competence

- Provide positive and constructive support.
- Value effort over achievement.
- Support the coach when they encourage 'process focused' goals – always ensure there is always something positive to take away from the performance.
- Do not offer technical advice or feedback to your child as this may conflict with coaching advice.



# Fostering Relatedness

- Attend social activities to improve team cohesion.
- Support the club yourselves as parents.
- Adhere to and help to enforce squad rules i.e. compulsory Team Kit.
- Allow your children to attend overnight camps/ competitions where the team is accommodated together overnight or attend finals sessions to support team mates.

# Fostering Autonomy

- Providing an element of choice within limits (choice of physical activity/ commitment level of squad).
- Allow your child to voice their opinions and feel that these are valued.
- Encourage and support the athlete in adopting an increased level of self – sufficiency (relative to stage of development).



# Thwarting Competence

- Providing negative and unconstructive feedback.
- Promoting outcome focused goals where the athlete has little or no control over the result.
- Fabricating entry times for swimming competitions.



# Thwarting Relatedness

- Allowing your child to not to follow squad rules/ club policies.
- Humiliating your child in front of their peers.
- Fail to really listen to their concerns particularly when they are critical of your parenting approach.



# Thwarting Autonomy

- Nanny Culture of over protectiveness! Let the young swimmers learn to do things for themselves and take responsibility.
- Offering solutions to swimmer's problems as opposed to allowing the individual to think for themselves (guided problem solving).
- Providing a safety net to ensure that they never fail or develop coping strategies to help them deal with failure.

# The Dream Starts Here ...



# Any Questions?



# Further Information

## Key Websites

- [www.swimwest.org](http://www.swimwest.org)
- [www.britishswimming.org](http://www.britishswimming.org)

Click: ASA - Teaching and Coaching - Talent Development

Email: England Programmes Officer – SW Region

- [lindsay.dunn@swimming.org](mailto:lindsay.dunn@swimming.org)