

Title: The Role of Parental Affection and Psychological Control in Adolescent Athletes' Symptoms of School and Sport Burnout During the Transition to Upper Secondary School.

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Sports: Individual and team sports: alpine skiing, cross country skiing, ice hockey, athletics, football, swimming, orienteering, floorball & Finish baseball

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Aims: The present study aimed to examine the role of parental affection (e.g. responsiveness, warmth, involvement, acceptance, supportiveness) and psychological control (i.e., attempts to control adolescents' thoughts and emotions by psychological means) as possible risk or protective factors in the development of burnout in adolescents. School burnout has been defined as "a psychological syndrome or an emotional state that occurs as a result of chronic school-related stress and overload" whereas sports burnout is exhibited as "exhaustion, cynicism, and a feeling of inadequacy as an athlete."

Method. The present study was carried out with Finnish adolescent student athletes (n=391) who were aged between 15-16 years at the beginning of the study. Burnout symptoms in the two domains (school and sport) were measured using questionnaires at the beginning and at the end of the first grade of upper secondary school. Mothers (n=258) and fathers (n=191) also filled in questionnaires concerning their parenting behaviours at the beginning of the school year.

Results and Practical Implications: Results showed that, on average, athletes' symptoms of both school and sport burnout increased across the school year. The results also showed that a high level of maternal affection buffered against the increase in the case of school burnout, but only when not combined with simultaneous psychological controlling mothering. Mothers' and fathers' parenting behaviours did not predict the development of sport burnout, but a high level of paternal affection was associated with a low level of sport burnout, if not combined with simultaneous psychologically controlling fathering. Overall, the results suggest that mother's parenting behaviours play a role in student-athletes' symptoms of school burnout during the transition to upper secondary school, whereas fathers have a more important role when it comes to symptoms of burnout in the sports domain. Overall, the results showed that parents play a role in adolescent athletes' symptoms of school and sport burnout during the transition to upper secondary school. Although parental affection and support seem to protect athletes from the symptoms, this protective association is evident only if not combined with high parental psychological control. Interventions should aim to increase parental knowledge of beneficial and harmful ways to be involved in athletes' lives.

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