

Project van Noorden (The Netherlands)

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Using the influence of coaches, parents, and peers on adolescent elite athletes' doping cognitions to enhance doping prevention effectiveness

The 2015 World Anti-Doping Code (WADC) states that prevention programs should be directed primarily at young athletes and their entourage, in a way that is appropriate for the athletes' stage of development, in school and sports clubs (WADC; article 18.2). The athlete's entourage comprises a broad spectrum of individuals including support personnel (coach, trainer, manager, agent, team staff, official, medical, paramedical personnel) as well as family members and friends. The 2015 WADC explicitly states that each member of an athlete's support personnel has the responsibility "to use his or her influence on athlete values and behavior to foster anti-doping attitudes" (WADC; article 21.2.3). In order to adhere to this responsibility, we first need to understand the role of the young athletes' entourage.

Therefore, Study 1 will be a qualitative investigation of the thoughts and experiences of the adolescent athletes' social entourage regarding doping through focus groups with coaches, parents and peers. Do they think doping is an issue in the life/career of their athletes? Do they discuss the topic with their athletes and what kind of advice do they give their athletes? A specific focus is on moral reasoning in the context of doping. This is further explored by discussing hypothetical doping dilemmas (adopted from an existing doping prevention program). In turn, the insights from Study 1 will be used to improve the effectiveness of existing anti-doping interventions and strategies.

Study 2 will be a quantitative investigation in which we will test experimentally whether the influence the social entourage strengthens the effectiveness of anti-doping training targeting athletes' doping cognitions, such as doping attitudes, subjective norms, self-efficacy, moral disengagement, and doping intentions and use. For this study the Advanced Ethical Decision-Making Training (previously developed with funds from WADA) will be used. The results from this study will make it possible to more efficiently and effectively implement anti-doping prevention programs among adolescent athletes.