

The Development and Evaluation of an Education and Support Program to Enhance Sport
Parents' Emotional Intelligence

by

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Abstract

The overall purpose of this dissertation was to develop and evaluate a web-based education and support program to enhance parents' emotional intelligence (EI) in youth sport. This dissertation contains three projects which depict the development and evaluation of the program created. The first project was a scoping review aimed at exploring how parents identify, express, use, understand, and manage their own and others' emotions in relation to youth sport. The scoping review was based on the tripartite model of EI (Mikolajczak, 2009) and conducted using Levac et al.'s (2010) scoping review guidelines. Eighty relevant sport parenting studies were reviewed, and consultation focus groups were conducted with ten sport parents and six former youth athletes. The findings demonstrated parents' emotion knowledge and abilities in youth sport. Parents were able to articulate their emotions and empathize with their children, understand their children and engage in emotionally supportive behaviours, and employ strategies to manage their own emotions. The results were used to inform the educational content of a web-based the sport parent education and support program designed for youth ice hockey parents, called the Sport Parent Emotions and Coping Support (SPECS) program.

The second project was a paper outlining the development of the SPECS program. The development of the program was guided by the scoping review and the tripartite model of EI. A logic model was created, which outlined the program's objectives, theoretical assumptions, available resources, and desired outcomes. In addition to describing the development of the SPECS program, this paper includes recommendations for researchers and sport psychology practitioners interested in implementing sport parent education and support initiatives (e.g., using a logic model, knowledge tailoring, and identifying partnerships).

The purpose of the third project was to deliver and evaluate the SPECS program. A sequential explanatory mixed methods program evaluation approach was used (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Canadian ice hockey parents ($N = 29$) were assigned to an experimental or control group and were administered pre- and post-program questionnaires to assess their trait EI. Qualitative interviews were also conducted with 11 parents from the experimental group at the end of the program. The quantitative results yielded a significant interaction effect and increased levels of trait EI following parents' completion of the SPECS program. The qualitative results revealed aspects of the program content (e.g., relevance, provision of tools and strategies) and delivery (e.g., convenience, interactivity), and lightbulb moments (e.g., learning about themselves, their children, and ice hockey) that contributed to the program's positive effects. Taken together, the projects in this dissertation provide a novel, theoretically informed approach to supporting sport parents. Furthermore, this research yields practical implications and future directions for researchers, sport psychology practitioners, coaches, and members of sport organizations who are interested in sport parent education and support initiatives.

Preface

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Dedication

To Mom and Dad.

"We weren't supposed to be here, you made us believe..."

You sacrificed for us. You're the real MVP."

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CHAPTER 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

Youth sport is largely facilitated by parents, as they fulfill the roles and provide the resources and support that are necessary for their children to participate (Knight et al., 2016). Indeed, parents are a significant part of a complex youth sport system (Dorsch et al., 2020). Parents' attitudes, behaviours, and beliefs can influence how children understand and interpret their sport experiences (Danioni et al., 2017; Partridge et al., 2008). Children's perceptions of parental support (e.g., receiving praise and encouragement) have been positively associated with increased levels of enjoyment, perceived competence, self-confidence, and intrinsic motivation in sport (Babkes & Weiss, 1999; Furusa et al., 2021; Leff & Hoyle, 1995; Ullrich-French & Smith, 2006). On the other hand, children who perceive excessive parental expectations and pressure in sport may experience heightened anxiety, lowered self-esteem, reduced self-confidence, along with increased burnout and dropout (Crane & Temple, 2015; Collins & Barber, 2005; Gould et al., 1996; Leff & Hoyle, 1995).

Parents are often required to make significant financial, emotional, and time investments to support their children's sport participation (Sutcliffe et al., 2021). They may also face a range of stressors and demands arising from their children's participation in sport (Harwood et al., 2019). Research in developmental psychology has shown that parents' exposure to high levels of emotional distress and stress increases the likelihood of them engaging in problematic parenting behaviours (Belsky, 1984; Woodward & Ferguson, 2002). Researchers have expressed a need for more sport parent education and support initiatives to help address some of these issues (Holt et al., 2018; Dorsch et al., 2019). Specifically, there is a need for structured parent education and support programs that go beyond simply prescribing discrete parenting practices and, instead, focus on enhancing parents' knowledge and skills so

they may have a positive influence on their children's sport experiences (Harwood & Knight, 2015).

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a construct that may be used to inform parent education and support programs (Harwood & Knight, 2015; Pynn et al., 2019; Teques et al., 2018). EI is the ability to “monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions” (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 189). The construct of EI is associated with a range of positive outcomes, such as improved psychological and physical well-being, social relationships, and resilience (Armstrong et al., 2011; Nelis et al., 2011; Sanchez-Alvarez et al., 2016). Although EI has not been studied extensively in the area of youth sport parenting, studies of EI among athletes, coaches, and sport organizations suggest that EI abilities are valuable when it comes to dealing with the emotional demands of the sport environment (Chan & Mallett, 2011; Crombie et al., 2009; Wagstaff et al., 2012). Furthermore, certain parenting practices that have been identified as key features of positive sport parenting are consistent with elements of EI (e.g., the ability to properly read and react to children's emotions and manage one's own emotions during competitions; Harwood & Knight, 2015; Knight & Holt, 2014; Pynn et al., 2019). As such, improving parents' EI, (i.e., their ability to identify, express, understand, use, and manage their emotions) may be useful for enhancing parental involvement in youth sport.

Purpose and Dissertation Overview

The overall purpose of this dissertation was to develop and evaluate a web-based education and support program to enhance parents' EI in youth sport. This dissertation contains three projects, presented in paper format, which depict the development and evaluation of the program created. In this dissertation I begin with a review of relevant literature (Chapter 2). The literature review presents the core concepts and studies that underpinned the design of this

dissertation. More focussed reviews of the literature are also provided in the papers presented in Chapters 3-5. Chapter 3 is a scoping review which explores the dimensions of EI in relation to sport parents' behaviour. Chapter 4 describes the development of a program called the Sport Parent Emotions and Coping Support (SPECS) program. Chapter 5 outlines the delivery and evaluation of the SPECS program with a group of ice hockey parents using a mixed methods program evaluation approach. The overall findings, strengths and limitations, future research directions, and practical implications of this dissertation are presented in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature Review

Researchers have expressed a need for more sport parent education and support initiatives (Dorsch et al., 2019; Holt et al., 2018), suggesting that such initiatives should go beyond simply prescribing discrete parenting practices and, instead, focus on enhancing parents' knowledge and skills so they may have a positive influence on their children's sport experiences (Harwood & Knight, 2015). Furthermore, members of sport organizations, coaches, and parents themselves have expressed a need for initiatives that promote more positive parental involvement in sport (Elliot & Drummond, 2015; Holt et al., 2018; Knight, 2019). It is clear that developing parent education and support programs in sport is a pressing need.

In Canada, many National Sport Organizations (NSOs) have mandatory parent education initiatives. This dissertation focuses on the sport of ice hockey. The sport's national governing body (Hockey Canada) mandates that at least one parent or guardian per child must complete the Respect in Sport Parent Program (RiSPP) prior to the start of each season. The RiSPP is a web-based program designed to define "a standard of behaviour for all parents and create a more rewarding, safe and respectful environment for everyone involved" (Respect Group, 2023). RiSPP is neither evidence-based or theoretically informed, and it was not subjected to rigorous development and evaluation with parents. Although findings from one recent study provided some preliminary evidence that RiSPP can have a positive impact on youth ice hockey players' psychosocial outcomes (Tamminen et al., 2020), the fact remains that the only mandated sport parent program in Canada is not based on a sound foundation of research.

Even if parents complete programs such as RiSPP before a season commences, they are often left to their own devices to learn about how to be a sport parent. Some may enthusiastically set about this task, researching information about the sport, using trial and error-type approaches,

and reflecting on their own successes and failures as a sport parent (Knight, 2019; Knight & Holt, 2013). But being a youth sport parent is a complex task; it is not merely behaving appropriately on the sidelines while watching competitions or trying to engage in behaviours that may be perceived by children as supportive. Sport parenting also involves, for example, creating a supportive emotional climate – both in the family home setting and the sport environment – and being responsive to the unique needs of their children (Harwood & Knight, 2015; Knight et al., 2014; Pynn et al., 2019).

Positive Parental Involvement in Youth Sport

Parents today are more highly involved in their children's sport than in the past (Stefansen et al., 2018). However, their level of involvement, in and of itself, is not inherently positive or negative. Rather, the *ways* in which parents are highly involved is critical (Holt & Knight, 2014). For example, parents can have a negative influence on their children's sport experiences when they exert too much pressure, have unrealistic expectations, criticize their children, and overemphasize winning (Bean et al., 2016; Ross et al., 2015). Such practices have been associated with reducing children's enjoyment in sport, lowering their self-esteem, and even causing them to drop out of sport (Crane & Temple, 2015; Gould et al., 1996; O'Rourke et al., 2012). On the other hand, children's perceptions of parental support (e.g., when parents provide praise and encouragement) have been positively associated with increased levels of enjoyment, perceived competence, self-confidence, and intrinsic motivation in sport (Babkes & Weiss, 1999; Furusa et al., 2021; Leff & Hoyle, 1995; Ullrich-French & Smith, 2006).

It is important to note that most children *want* their parents to be involved as it is a way for them to spend more time and feel closer to their parents (Clarke et al., 2016; Strandbu et al., 2019). Some research has looked at how children want their parents to support them in sport. Knight et al. (2011), for example, conducted interviews with girls who competed in team sports

to identify how they wanted their parents to behave before, during, and after competitions. Before competitions, athletes wanted parents to help them prepare physically and mentally. Athletes also preferred when parents helped them relax and avoided discussing their performance before a competition. During competitions, athletes preferred their parents to encourage the entire team, maintain control of their emotions, focus on effort rather than outcome, and to be positive throughout the competition. Athletes did not like it when parents drew attention to themselves, attempted to coach from the sidelines, and argued with the officials. After competitions, athletes preferred their parents to provide positive, yet honest, feedback and to avoid putting too much emphasis on the negative aspects of their performance.

In a subsequent study, Knight et al. (2016b) provided further contextual understanding of youth sport athletes' preferences for parental involvement at home, in training, and during competition. In all three contexts, athletes found it positive when parents provided practical and logistical support, developed a growth mindset through a task-involving climate, were able to read and react to situations, had a willingness to adapt their involvement, and demonstrated that they valued sport. Additionally, athletes wanted parents to manage their emotions and maintain a positive perspective toward sport at home and during competitions. The findings from both studies (i.e., Knight et al., 2011; Knight et al., 2016b) highlighted examples of positive sport parenting practices, while also demonstrating that positive parental involvement in sport goes beyond the immediate competitive environment and extends to parental involvement before and after competitions, at home, and in the training context.

Therefore, it is necessary to understand the broader context of sport parenting in order to promote positive parental involvement in sport (Holt et al., 2009). In an attempt to further understand the broader context of youth sport parenting, Knight and Holt (2014) examined

parenting practices that contributed to “optimal” parental involvement in youth tennis. Through interviews and focus groups with youth tennis players, parents, and coaches, they found that optimal parental involvement involved understanding the individual needs of their children and the sport. Specifically, they suggested that parents should (1) share and communicate goals with their children, (2) develop an understanding emotional climate, and (3) engage in enhancing parenting practices at competitions. Ultimately, Knight and Holt (2014) highlighted the need for parents to be able to individualize their involvement by understanding the unique needs of their children and the sport and tailoring their involvement based on those needs. Thus, Knight and Holt (2014) called for more parent education and support initiatives that consider the overall environment parents create for their children rather than only focusing on discrete “good” or “bad” behaviours during competitions.

Furthermore, Harwood and Knight (2015) conducted a narrative literature review to formulate a position on sport parenting “expertise”. They defined sport parenting expertise as “parental involvement that increases the chances for children to achieve their sporting potential, have a positive psychosocial experience, and develop a range of positive development outcomes” (p. 25). Specifically, sport parenting expertise involved parents demonstrating a range of intrapersonal, interpersonal, and organizational skills (e.g., providing the necessary types of support, applying appropriate parenting styles, managing the emotional demands of competition, and fostering healthy relationships). According to Harwood and Knight (2015), having certain intra- and interpersonal skills (e.g., self-awareness, meta-emotion skills, listening, and empathy) would allow parents to foster more positive psychosocial experiences for both children and themselves. The researchers suggested that concepts such as EI could help inform those skills (Harwood & Knight, 2015). Ultimately, these examples of research on positive parental

involvement (e.g., Harwood & Knight, 2015; Knight & Holt, 2014) provided a platform for the program of research presented in this dissertation.

Factors That Influence Parents' Involvement in Sport

In order to develop initiatives that promote positive parental involvement in sport, it is helpful to understand *why* parents behave the way that they do. Some research has sought to understand how parents' beliefs, attitudes, and expectations influence their involvement in youth sport. For example, Knight et al. (2016a) identified the individual and environmental factors that influenced parents' involvement in youth sport using online surveys with parents from the United States and United Kingdom. On an individual level, they found that the type of involvement parents engaged in was largely influenced by the knowledge, experience, and values parents held regarding sport participation. For example, parents' knowledge of how they might have a negative influence on their children led them to carefully regulate their behaviours. Parents' own youth sport experiences provided insight on how to navigate the complex sport system and better support their children. Further, the values parents placed on sport participation, particularly in terms of the learning experiences and life skills their children could develop, influenced the sporting opportunities they provided and how they discussed sport with their children. On an environmental level, parents' involvement was influenced by the demanding nature of the youth sport environment and other parents and coaches (e.g., seeking to be different from parents and coaches they perceived as negative).

The demands that parents face in the competitive youth sport environment can certainly influence their involvement (Knight et al., 2016a). As their children grow older and become more specialized in sport, parents are required to make significant financial, emotional, and time investments (Dorsch et al., 2009; Sutcliffe et al., 2021). Such extensive investments from parents can cause high levels of stress and impact parents' personal, social, and family life choices

(Dunn et al., 2016; Trussel, 2009). A study of Canadian ice hockey mothers found that the demands of having a child in youth ice hockey forced mothers to make sacrifices in their personal and professional lives (Bean et al., 2019). For instance, some mothers resigned themselves to only having a social life that surrounded their children's ice hockey participation, while others only worked seasonal or part-time jobs to accommodate the busy ice hockey season.

The investments and sacrifices that parents make for their children to participate in sport can lead to significant financial and emotional hardships (Bean et al., 2019; Sutcliffe et al., 2021). Parents' exposure to such hardships increases their likelihood of engaging in problematic parenting behaviours (Belsky, 1984; Woodward & Ferguson, 2002). It is also possible that such investments result in unrealistic expectations as parents may use their children's playing time and sport performance as a measure of the "return" on their investments (Bean et al., 2016; Dorsch et al., 2019). Such financial and emotional hardships can also result in conflict with their children, spouses, and coaches (Bean et al., 2019; Jowett & Timson-Katchis, 2005).

Parents' desire to invest and be highly involved in their children's sport may also stem from broader societal expectations of what it means to be a "good" parent (Coakley, 2006; Pynn et al., 2019; Vincent & Maxwell, 2015). Some parents enroll their children in a range of extracurricular activities with the belief that it will help them develop qualities and skills that are needed to succeed later in life (Lareau, 2003). Parents may feel obligated to invest in their children's sport participation, and are afraid that if they stop, they will limit their children's cultivation of important life experiences (Coakley, 2006). As a result, parents today engage in more "intensive" levels of involvement than in the past, which requires extensive time and labour in order to oversee their children's physical, social, and emotional development (Vincent & Maxwell, 2015). For instance, a study by Stefansen et al. (2018) explored how changing

societal expectations have influenced parents' involvement in organized sport across generations. In the past, parents were largely absent from children's sport activities. In contrast, contemporary parents show a greater interest in their children's activities and view sport as an important avenue for children to cultivate life skills. Parents in the Stefansen et al. (2018) study were deeply involved in their children's sport, which allowed them to form an emotional closeness and carefully monitor their children's sport experience. Parents reported that this type of involvement was highly demanding, however they considered it both a responsibility and moral duty as a parent.

Evidently, parents' involvement in youth sport can be influenced by a range of individual, environmental, and societal factors. It is important for those developing sport parent education and support initiatives to consider the factors that enable or prevent parents from engaging in their children's sport in positive ways (Furusa et al., 2021). Such initiatives should take into account both parents' and children's unique preferences and needs, while also understanding the demands and expectations that parents face and the support they may require to fulfill those expectations.

Parent Education and Support Programs

Researchers have posited that parent education initiatives should move toward not only educating, but also *supporting* parents (Knight, 2019; Knight et al., 2017). Given that being highly involved in their children's sport is now a normative expectation for parents (Stefansen et al., 2018), it may be more productive to welcome parents' involvement and find ways to enhance the knowledge and skills of those who are highly involved, rather than attempting to reduce their involvement or keep parents at arm's length (Knight, 2019). Some research has been conducted to further understand parents' education and support needs. For example, Thrower et al. (2016) produced a grounded theory of tennis parents' sport education and support needs. They

suggested that structured education programs targeting parents' knowledge, affective states, and skills, delivered in supportive learning environments, are needed to address parents' needs.

Furthermore, Dorsch and colleagues (2019) examined parents', coaches, and administrators' perceptions of parent education and support initiatives. Parents were interested in learning more technical sport knowledge and developmentally appropriate sport parenting practices, in hopes of improving their knowledge, attitudes, and communication in youth sport. Evidently, structured evidence-based programs are needed to equip sport parents with knowledge and skills to support their children and promote more positive parental involvement in sport.

There is a small, emerging body of literature pertaining to evidence-based education and support programs for sport parents (see Burke et al., 2022 for a review). Early programs (e.g., Richards & Winter, 2013; Vincent & Christensen, 2015) demonstrated the utility of engaging parents in activities that enhanced their knowledge and understanding of their involvement in youth sport. For example, Richards and Winter (2013) designed a series of educational sessions aimed at teaching parents about different goal orientations (i.e., individuals' self-referenced [task-oriented] or other-referenced [ego-involved] perceptions of competence; Nicholls, 1984) and parental behaviours that foster a task-oriented motivational climate in sport. They reported that 100% of the parents in the program found it useful, with 75% of parents reporting that they would use the strategies that were provided. Parents also provided reflections and recommendations regarding the design and delivery of the program, such as keeping the session lengths short and having coaches and managers encourage parents' participation. Similarly, Vincent and Christensen (2015) conducted a series of workshops for parents to help them reflect on their roles and how their involvement changes as their children develop in sport. During the facilitation of the workshops, Vincent and Christensen faced challenges regarding parent

attendance, cohesion, and disagreements. However, through informal feedback from participants, they found that parents viewed the program positively. Specifically, the parents enjoyed the interactive and conversational aspects of the workshops.

Although these reports of early programs (e.g., Richards & Winter, 2013; Vincent & Christensen, 2015) provided some valuable recommendations for future program development, they were not rigorously evaluated, and their actual impact is unclear. One of the first studies to formally evaluate the effectiveness of a parent education and support program was conducted by Dorsch and colleagues (2017). The program involved providing a sport parent guide and a 45-minute seminar intended to educate parents on topics such as children's development in sport, communication strategies, working with coaches, and positive sport parenting. Children whose parents took part in the program reported more perceived support and warmth and less perceived pressure and conflict from their parents than the children whose parents who did not participate in the program. Further, the children whose parents took part in the program experienced more enjoyment, high levels of competence, and lower levels of stress. Although Dorsch et al.'s (2017) study demonstrated the effectiveness of an evidence-based parent intervention on children's perceptions and outcomes, the study did not assess parents' experiences in the program, or if and how the program impacted parents' knowledge, attitudes, skills, and sport parenting behaviours.

Thrower et al. (2017) conducted a qualitative evaluation of an education and support program designed to meet the specific needs of British tennis parents. The program consisted of six workshops on topics such as how to support their children during tennis, information about the organization of the youth tennis system, and parents' role during their children's competitions. Parents reported changes in their knowledge, attitudes, affective states, and sport

parenting behaviours following their attendance in the workshops. The program was well received; however, program attendance was an on-going challenge due to parents being unable to attend the weekly in-person sessions. Furthermore, Thrower and colleagues' qualitative findings provided valuable insights regarding the underlying mechanisms that influenced how parents learn in such programs (e.g., providing a safe and supportive learning environment). There were some limitations to this research – namely the lack of an experimental design and control group – which limited the extent to which the effectiveness of the program could be evaluated.

The face-to-face delivery mechanisms that have been used in some parent education and support programs (e.g., Dorsch et al., 2017; Thrower et al., 2017) can limit the extent to which programs can be delivered on a wider scale. Sport parents often have extremely hectic schedules (Bean et al., 2019; Knight, 2019), which creates challenges in delivering widespread (in-person) parent education and support programs. Given that sport psychology practitioners have shown an increased interest in the use of technology in service delivery (Price et al., 2022), it seems timely and relevant to create a web-based program for youth sport parents.

Researchers have recently begun to consider the implementation of web-based, digital delivery methods for sport parent education and support (e.g., Kwon et al., 2020; Thrower et al., 2019). For instance, Kwon et al. (2020) explored the use of educational video resources to support parents' involvement in youth sport. Youth soccer parents and coaches in Australia were presented with soccer-specific educational videos. Parents and coaches perceived the videos to be most useful when they had a targeted curriculum (e.g., contained information specific to soccer), used versatile platforms (e.g., blended, web-based delivery methods), and included strategies to maximize impact (e.g., fun, relatable videos, and additional resources to complement the videos). They suggested that researchers interested in developing parent

education and support initiatives consider using sport-specific, blended, web-based delivery methods.

Thrower and colleagues (2019) adapted the workshops presented in their earlier article (i.e., Thrower et al., 2017) to be delivered online and evaluated using a mixed methods design. Their workshops were adapted into a series of eight short online educational videos that were delivered on a website that also contained quizzes and a discussion forum. They measured parents' emotional experiences, goal orientations, and self-efficacy, in addition to collecting qualitative data using comment boxes, an online discussion forum, and post-program emails from participants. Although their findings were not statistically significant (except for the variable of parent-parent relationships), they found positive directional changes in all variables, with moderate to large effect sizes. Furthermore, their qualitative findings highlighted how web-based online sport parent education and support programs could help reduce the logistical barriers of parents' attendance, particularly if parents are able to pause, fast-forward, and rewatch the workshops in order to tailor their learning environment to their needs.

The results from the aforementioned studies (Dorsch et al., 2017; Kwon et al., 2020; Thrower et al., 2017; 2019) suggest that evidence-based sport parent education and support programs can be effective. In a recent systematic review, Burke et al. (2021) identified a total of 12 studies describing programs aimed at enhancing positive parental involvement in sport. All 12 studies demonstrated either a significant result and/or an improvement in some aspects of parents' knowledge and skills. However, Burke and colleagues criticized the lack of the explicit use of theory in existing research, particularly when it came to how theory was used in the development of programs. This is an important limitation that must be addressed. Theory can

provide a guide for intervention research, enabling researchers to identify constructs that may influence behavioural change (Prestwich et al., 2015).

Emotional Intelligence

The sport parent education and support program featured in this dissertation was based on the construct of EI. Research has demonstrated that parents' EI is related to positive family qualities, such as efficient communication among family members along with parental warmth and affection (Alegre & Benson, 2010; Platsidou & Tsirogiannidou, 2016). Furthermore, EI has been associated with a range of positive outcomes such as improved psychological and physical well-being, social relationships, and resilience (Armstrong et al., 2011; Nelis et al., 2011; Sanchez-Alvarez et al., 2016). In their position paper on sport parenting expertise, Harwood and Knight (2015) suggested that expert sport parents are able to manage the emotional demands of competition and serve as emotionally intelligent role models for their children. Furthermore, they encouraged researchers to "further explore the concept of parental emotional intelligence" (p. 29) specifically regarding how it influences parents' behaviours in sport.

Previous sport parenting research further suggests that EI may be associated with positive parental behaviours in sport. For example, Lauer and colleagues (2010) found that effective parent-child communication in sport involved parents being "emotionally intelligent about communications with the child" (p. 490), and knowing what, when, how, and how much to talk to their children about sport. In Pynn and colleagues' (2019) conceptualization of exemplary parenting in sport, parents appeared to possess qualities congruent with EI abilities. For example, parents were able to read and recognize their own emotions, as well as their child's emotions, those of the coach, the rest of the team, and even the opponents. The emotions they recognized guided their thinking and actions (e.g., cheering for the whole team, not cheering if the opponent made a mistake).

Despite these indications that EI may be a valuable framework for understanding sport parent' behaviours, only one study to date has specifically examined EI among sport parents. Teques and colleagues (2018) examined parents' EI and coping strategies in relation to their verbal behaviours during children's soccer games. Parents' verbal behaviours during games were assessed using an observational system designed by Holt et al. (2008). That is, parents' verbal behaviours were categorized as praise/encouragement, performance-contingent feedback, instruction, striking a balance, negative comments, or derogatory comments. Following the observations, parents completed questionnaires to measure their EI, emotion regulation, and coping strategies. The researchers found that parents' emotion regulation was positively related to comments of praise/encouragement, and negatively related to negative and derogatory comments. Thus, parents who were able to regulate their emotions exhibited fewer negative verbal behaviours. Further, participants' EI scores were positively associated with adaptive coping strategies, and negatively associated with maladaptive coping strategies, suggesting that parents with higher EI were perhaps better able to manage their emotions and more likely to employ appropriate coping strategies while watching their children compete. Overall, Teques and colleagues' (2018) study provides a further indication that improvement of parents' EI may promote parents' desirable behaviours while watching their children compete. However, they did not examine parents' verbal behaviours across different contexts (e.g., at home) or different emotion-laden situations during a game (e.g., their child getting hurt or benched). Therefore, a more comprehensive understanding of how EI relates to parents' sport-related behaviours in the broader context of parenting is needed.

Models of Emotional Intelligence

Most of the research on EI is informed by one of three perspectives: ability EI (Mayer & Salovey, 1997), trait EI (Petrides & Furnham, 2001), or a mixed/tripartite model of EI (Mikolajczak, 2009). The academic work on EI began in the early 1990s when Salovey and Mayer (1990) referred to EI as a cognitive ability in which individuals can “monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions” (p. 189). Mayer and Salovey (1997) divided their ability model into four skills that can be learned and mastered over time: (1) The ability to *perceive* and recognize emotion accurately and adaptively; (2) the ability to *use* emotions to generate cognitive activities; (3) the ability to *understand* and analyze emotions, how they develop, and the relationships that exist among them; and (4) the ability to *manage* emotions in oneself and others in the context of the individual’s goals, self-knowledge, and social awareness. From the ability perspective, EI is measured by maximum performance-based, skill-testing questionnaires similar to an intelligence quotient (IQ) test (e.g., the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test [MSCEIT]; Mayer et al., 2002). Some researchers have argued that the conceptualization of EI as an ability that can be developed and improved is well-suited for enhancing sport-related behaviours (Meyer & Fletcher, 2007).

Critics of the ability model of EI suggested that, given the subjectivity of emotional experience, conceptions of EI should consider typical performance and individual differences, rather than maximal performance (Petrides & Furnham, 2003). As such, researchers began to move toward trait EI, whereby EI is not necessarily an “intelligence” but rather a constellation of emotion-related self-perceptions and dispositions (Petrides, 2009). As a trait, EI is considered relatively stable over time and across situations, and includes facets such as emotion expression, perception, management, and regulation (Petrides et al., 2008). Although trait EI is considered to

be relatively stable, it is nonetheless amenable to changes through short-duration training programs (e.g., Nelis et al., 2009; Levillain et al., 2023). To date, the perspective of EI as a personality trait has been more widely used in sport and exercise psychology research compared to other EI models (see Laborde & Dosseville, 2016 for a review).

Recently, researchers have suggested the tripartite model of EI is more suited to use in sport settings because it is a more complete and encompassing framework (e.g., Laborde & Dosseville, 2016). The tripartite model includes the ability and trait perspectives of EI and adds a knowledge component. Therefore, the tripartite model is designed to capture individual differences in EI on three emotion-related levels: knowledge, abilities, and traits (Mikolajczak, 2009). The *knowledge* level refers to the knowledge an individual has about emotions and how to deal with emotional situations. The *ability* level refers to an individual's ability to implement strategies in emotional situations. The *trait* level refers to how an individual typically behaves in emotional situations. According to Mikolajczak (2009), the distinction between the three levels is important because knowledge does not always translate into abilities, and abilities do not always translate into typical behaviour. However, there is an assumption that knowledge underlies ability, and ability underlies typical behaviours. That is, an individual is more likely to behave in an emotionally intelligent way on a regular basis if they have the knowledge and abilities to do so.

Emotional Intelligence Training

Previous research, both within and beyond the sport context, suggest that EI can be improved through formal training programs. A meta-analysis of EI training programs, conducted by Mattingly and Kraiger (2019), found that existing training programs were overall successful at increasing participants' EI with moderate to large effect sizes. Pool and Qualter (2012) used

the tripartite model of EI to inform an EI training program designed for university students. However, they used pre- and post-program measures of emotional self-efficacy and ability EI using the MSCEIT (Mayer et al., 2002). The program consisted of 11 classes with four modules based on the dimensions of EI. The intention of each module was to develop student's EI knowledge and abilities using theory, practice, and reflective learning. Significant interaction effects were found for emotional self-efficacy and participants' ability to understand and manage emotions, but not their ability to identify or use emotions. The lack of significant effect for certain abilities (i.e., identifying and using emotions) may be a reflection of the MSCEIT, which has been subjected to criticisms specifically regarding the emotion identification and using emotions subscales (Joseph & Newman, 2010; Pool & Qualter, 2012). Nonetheless, their study demonstrated that the EI training program was effective in increasing participants' emotional self-efficacy and some aspects of ability EI.

Nelis and colleagues (2009) investigated whether it was possible to increase young adults' trait EI using an evidence-based program informed by Mikolajczak's (2009) tripartite model. The program consisted of four sessions over a four-week period, with each session based on the dimensions of EI (identifying and expressing, using, understanding, and managing emotions). The program content focused on teaching theoretical knowledge about emotions and how to apply specific emotion abilities in their everyday lives. Using a controlled experimental design, participants' trait EI and emotion regulation were assessed pre- and post-program. Significant interaction effects were reported along with increases in both trait EI and emotion regulation for the experimental group from time 1 to time 2 compared to the control group. These findings suggest that EI training programs based on the tripartite model of EI can be effective in improving individuals' trait EI.

In sport, EI training programs geared toward athletes (e.g., Crombie et al., 2011) and members of sport organizations (e.g., Wagstaff et al., 2013) have been successful in increasing participants' EI scores. Recently, Levillain and colleagues (2023) examined the effectiveness of a web-based EI training program for tennis players, also using the tripartite model of EI as a framework. The training program consisted of nine, one-hour online sessions with a sport psychology practitioner. The sessions targeted the athletes' emotion knowledge (i.e., providing athletes with knowledge about emotions), abilities (i.e., providing opportunities to work on emotion regulation strategies), and traits/dispositions (i.e., developing athletes' autonomy in using the techniques in emotional situations). Tennis players in the training group experienced a significant increase in trait EI compared to those in the control group. Levillain et al.'s (2023) study provided valuable insights regarding the delivery of EI training using web-based methods, demonstrating that EI training can be both effective and delivered to participants in a convenient manner. However, the training was delivered via live, synchronous sessions with a sport psychology practitioner. Researchers have suggested a need for more research regarding the asynchronous delivery of EI training (Alkozei et al., 2019). Given sport parents' often hectic schedules, the flexibility offered by asynchronous programs may be valuable on a practical level.

Although trait EI is considered a relatively stable construct, studies of existing EI training programs demonstrate that trait EI it is amenable to change (Petrides et al., 2016). Some programs have reported changes in trait EI after relatively short training, spanning only a few weeks (e.g., Nelis et al., 2009; Kotsou et al., 2011). The notion of EI as a trait that can be improved is supported by dynamic perspectives of personality development, whereby social experiences, social learning, and individuals' ability to self-reflect can influence their more stable tendencies (e.g., Nowak et al., 2005). Levillain et al. (2023), for example, highlighted the

importance of using practical exercises in their ‘disposition’ phase as a way to improve trait-related outcomes that are relatively stable.

Summary

The ways in which parents are involved in youth sport impact their children’s sport experiences, in both positive and negative ways, depending on the attitudes and behaviours they exhibit (Harwood & Knight, 2015). Researchers and sport organizations have called for parent education and support initiatives that promote positive parental involvement in sport (Holt et al., 2018; Knight, 2019). Such initiatives should go beyond prescribing “one-size-fits-all” recommendations of “good” and “bad” behaviours, but rather take into account the broader, contextual aspects of sport parenting. Researchers have begun to develop and evaluate structured sport parent education and support programs (e.g., Dorsch et al., 2017; Thrower et al., 2019). However, there is a need to develop more theoretically driven, evidence-based sport parent education and support programs (Burke et al., 2021) using web-based modes of delivery (Kwon et al., 2020). Targeting parents’ EI (i.e., improving parents’ ability to identify, express, understand, use, and manage their emotions) may be a useful approach to include in sport parent education and support initiatives (Harwood & Knight, 2015; Pynn et al., 2019; Teques et al., 2018). Therefore, the overall purpose of this dissertation was to develop and evaluate a web-based education and support program to enhance parents’ EI in youth sport.

CHAPTER 3: SCOPING REVIEW

Exploring Parents' Emotion Knowledge and Abilities in Youth Sport: A Scoping Review

A version of this chapter is being prepared for submission to be published:

Pynn, S. R. Vanstone, C., Jørgensen, H., Mosewich, A. D., & Holt, N. L. Exploring parents' emotion knowledge and abilities in youth sport: A scoping review.

I conceptualized, designed, and conducted the scoping review and focus group consultations; analyzed and interpreted the data; and prepared the initial draft of the manuscript. C. Vanstone assisted in conducting the focus group consultations. H. Jørgensen assisted with screening manuscripts to be included in the scoping review. A. D. Mosewich provided feedback on the concept and design of the review and contributed to the manuscript preparation and revisions. N. L. Holt was the supervisory author and provided feedback on the concept and design of the review and contributed to the manuscript preparation and revisions.

Exploring Parents' Emotion Knowledge and Abilities in Youth Sport: A Scoping Review

Parents typically provide the resources and support (e.g., informational, practical, and emotional) that enable their children to participate in youth sport (Harwood & Knight, 2015). Yet, parents may encounter numerous demands in facilitating their children's sport participation, such as organizational, competition, and developmental stressors (Harwood and Knight, 2009a, b; Knight, 2019). Parents who possess the abilities to manage these demands are more likely to have a positive influence on their children's sport experience and the developmental outcomes their children accrue (e.g., Dorsch et al., 2022; Harwood & Knight, 2015; Knight & Holt, 2014). However, some sport parents find it particularly difficult to manage the emotional demands of youth sport and have expressed a need for support in this area (Knight & Holt, 2013).

Previous research indicates that parents' emotional intelligence (EI) may influence their ability to manage the emotional demands of youth sport (Harwood & Knight, 2015; Teques et al., 2018). To better understand sport parents' EI, we conducted a scoping review of the existing sport parenting literature. Our objective was to explore how parents identify, express, use, understand, and manage their own and others' emotions in the context of youth sport. We anticipate that the results of this scoping review will provide a foundation for research on the development of parent education and support initiatives in the future.

Emotions arise when individuals appraise an event as being significant in relation to their own goals, values, and beliefs (Gross, 2008; Lazarus, 1999). Emotions are therefore relational, occurring in a transaction between individuals and their environment (Lazarus, 2000). Competitive youth sport is an emotionally-laden environment in which parents can experience a range of positive and negative emotions (Sutcliffe et al., 2021). For example, Harwood and colleagues (2019) found that parents experienced anger, anxiety, and dejection when faced with

organizational (e.g., time, finances, and training and coaching), competition (e.g., other parents, children's performance, and match outcomes), and developmental (e.g., children's future, and decision making) stressors, particularly when they appraised the situations as harmful or threatening to them and their children.

Parents' experiences of stress and emotions can influence the behaviours they exhibit during youth sport competitions (Gould et al., 2008). When parents are confronted with negative emotions in the sport environment, they may engage in less desirable behaviours (e.g., yelling comments, standing up from their seats, making gestures, walking away from or toward the field of play; Goldstein & Iso-Ahola, 2008). Indeed, research in developmental psychology has shown that parents' exposure to high levels of stress and emotional distress increases their likelihood of engaging in problematic parenting behaviours, such as physical punishment and abuse (Belsky, 1984; Woodward & Ferguson, 2002). In sport, such problematic parenting behaviours are reflected in the rare accounts of parents demonstrating physical and verbal abuse toward other parents, youth sport participants, and referees (Bean et al., 2016; Burke et al., 2022).

Parents communicate their beliefs and values regarding their children's sport development, performance, and success and influence their children's experiences through their own attitudes and behaviours (Holt & Knight, 2014). For example, parents' expression of anger or disappointment regarding their children's sport performance may negatively impact children's self-perceptions, enjoyment, and motivation to participate in sport (Babkes & Weiss, 1999; Bois et al., 2009; Keegan et al., 2010). During competitions, children can perceive verbal and non-verbal (positive and negative) emotional reactions from their parents and may find these reactions to be unhelpful, upsetting, embarrassing, or pressuring (Goodman & James, 2017; Jowett & Timson-Katchis, 2005; Knight et al., 2011; Knight & Holt, 2013). As such, sport

parents are encouraged to manage their emotional reactions during competitions (Gould et al., 2008).

The tripartite model of EI

The construct of EI was used as the conceptual lens to guide the current scoping review. EI was first conceptualized as individuals' ability to monitor their feelings and emotions and use emotional information to guide their cognitions and actions (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). The construct has evolved over time, with the tripartite model of EI capturing EI on three levels: knowledge, abilities, and traits (Mikolajczak, 2009). The knowledge level refers to what individuals know about emotions and how to deal with emotional situations (e.g., knowing which emotional expressions are helpful in certain situations). The ability level refers to individuals' ability to apply their knowledge in an emotional situation (e.g., being able to use an appropriate emotion regulation strategy). That is, individuals' EI ability is based on what they can do, rather than what they know. Lastly, the trait level refers to individuals' inclination to behave in a certain way in emotional situations (e.g., how they typically express their emotions). According to Mikolajczak (2009), emotion knowledge does not always translate into abilities, and abilities do not always translate into practice. However, the structure of the model implies that emotion knowledge and abilities underly the trait level.

Individuals with high EI can identify their emotions as well as those of others, express their emotions in a socially acceptable manner, use emotions to influence their thoughts and actions, understand the causes and consequences of emotions, and regulate their emotions based on what is appropriate in a given context. High levels of EI are associated with a range of positive psychosocial outcomes, such as improved empathy, social skills, cooperation with others, and resilience (Armstrong et al. 2011; Schutte et al., 2001). Studies of EI among athletes,

coaches, and sport organizations suggest that EI abilities are valuable when it comes to dealing with the emotional demands of the sport environment (Chan & Mallett, 2011; Crombie et al., 2009; Wagstaff et al., 2012).

Furthermore, certain behaviours associated with EI (e.g., parents' ability to properly read and react to children's emotions and manage one's own emotions during competitions) have been identified as key features of sport parenting expertise (Harwood & Knight, 2015). In their narrative review of the sport parenting literature, Harwood and Knight (2015) proposed that parents require specific intrapersonal, interpersonal, and organization skills to increase their children's chances at reaching their sporting potential and achieving positive developmental outcomes. They postulated that 'expert' sport parents are emotionally intelligent in their interactions with their children and others in the sport environment, understand their children's emotional needs, and can cope with the emotional demands of youth sport. Harwood and Knight (2015) went on to encourage researchers to "further explore the concept of parent emotional intelligence and how it influences behaviours at competitions..." (p. 29).

To provide further insight into Harwood and Knight's (2015) postulates, Pynn and colleagues (2019) conducted a study of 'exemplary' parenting in competitive youth sport among parents of female athletes. Although Pynn et al. (2019) did not set out to specifically set out to examine EI, the results of their study suggested that exemplary parents were emotionally intelligent. In one of the few studies that has specifically examined EI among sport parents, Teques and colleagues (2018) found that sport parents with higher levels of EI were more likely to employ appropriate coping strategies and engage in desirable behaviours during their children's participation in competitive sport. Hence, review papers (Harwood & Knight, 2015)

and a limited number of studies (Pynn et al., 2019; Teques et al., 2018) suggest that EI may be a useful framework for studying the emotional aspects of parents' involvement in sport.

Extending Previous Reviews

The current review was intended to extend previous reviews of the sport parenting literature. For example, Harwood and Knight's (2015) narrative review was not based on systematic search and selection procedures and, although they discussed the concept of EI, their review was neither driven by, nor specifically focused on, EI. Sutcliffe and colleagues (2021) conducted a qualitative meta-study examining parents' experiences in youth sport. Their review highlighted parents' positive and negative emotional reactions and suggested that youth sport participation required an ongoing emotional investment from parents. However, Sutcliffe and colleagues (2021) acknowledged that they did not capture "the full complexity of being a parent with a child involved in sport" (p. 14). For example, parents' emotional reactions were presented as an outcome of competition-related events and interactions with others in the immediate sport environment. However, they did not examine how parents navigated their own and their children's emotions throughout the course of their ongoing emotional investment, nor how those emotions might influence parents' behaviour within and outside of the competitive sport environment.

Other reviews have focused on parental involvement and their provision of social support (Bremer, 2012; Sheridan et al., 2014), factors that influence parents' involvement in youth sport (Knight et al., 2017), and how parents support dual-career athletes (Tessitore et al., 2021). Dorsch and colleagues (2021) reported an extensive historical summary of the existing sport parenting literature. Notably, all the aforementioned reviews called for the development of evidence-based sport parent education and support initiatives. In a systematic review, Burke et

al. (2021) identified 12 studies describing programs aimed at enhancing positive parental involvement in sport. All 12 studies demonstrated either a significant result and/or an improvement in parents' knowledge and skills. However, Burke and colleagues criticized the lack of the explicit use of theory among the existing programs, particularly when it came to explanations of how theory was used in the development of programs. Understanding more about youth sport parents' EI knowledge and abilities may provide a platform for future theory-based educational initiatives.

In summary, given the emotionally laden nature of parental involvement in youth sport, researchers have suggested that targeting parents' EI may be a way to enhance parents' (and, consequentially, children's) experiences in sport (Harwood et al., 2015; Teques et al., 2018; Pynn et al., 2019). Therefore, the overall purpose of this scoping review was to explore how parents identify, express, use, understand, and manage their own and others' emotions in relation to their children's sport participation, using the tripartite model of EI as a conceptual lens.

Method

Scoping Review Protocol

Scoping review procedures can be used to map a wide range of literature and to summarize and disseminate the findings of existing research on a particular phenomenon (Ehrich et al., 2002; Levac et al., 2010). Furthermore, by systematically searching, selecting, and synthesizing existing research, scoping reviews can be used to gain clarity on concepts that are complex or have not been reviewed comprehensively in the past (Colquhoun et al., 2014; Sabiston et al., 2022). This review was guided by Levac and colleagues' (2010) enhancements on Arksey and O'Malley's (2005) framework for conducting scoping reviews. The framework consists of six stages: (1) identifying the research purpose or question, (2) identifying relevant studies, (3) study selection, (4) charting the data, (5) collating, summarizing, and reporting the

results, and (6) consultations with key stakeholders. Additionally, the current manuscript was prepared in accordance with relevant items from the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews (PRISMA) extension for scoping reviews (see Table 3.1; Tricco et al., 2018) to ensure methodological transparency and reporting quality.

Table 3.1

PRISMA Checklist for Scoping Reviews

| Section | PRISMA-ScR Checklist Item |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Title | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Identify the report as a scoping review. |
| Abstract | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Provide a structured summary that includes (as applicable) background, objectives, eligibility criteria, sources of evidence, charting methods, results, and conclusion that relate to the review questions and objectives. |
| Introduction | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Describe the rationale for the review in the context of what is already known. Explain why the review objectives lend themselves to a scoping review approach. o Provide an explicit statement of the questions and objective being addressed with reference to their key elements. |
| Methods | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Indicate whether a review protocol exists; if so, state if and where it can be accessed. o Specify characteristics of the sources of evidence used as eligibility criteria and provide a rationale. o Describe all information sources in the search, as well as the date the most recent search was executed. o Present the full electronic search strategy for at least 1 database, such that it could be repeated. o State the process for selecting sources of evidence included in the scoping review. o Describe the methods of charting data from the included sources of evidence. o List and define all variables for which data were sought and any assumptions and simplifications made. o Describe the methods and handling and summarizing the data. |
| Results | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Give numbers of sources of evidence screened, assessed for eligibility, and included in the review, ideally using a flow diagram. o For each source of evidence, present characteristics for which data were charted and provide citations. o For each individual source of evidence, present the relevant data that were charted that relate to the review objectives. o Summarize and/or present the results as they relate to the review questions and objectives. |
| Discussion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Summarize the main results (including an overview of concepts, themes, and types of evidence), link to the review questions and objectives, and consider the relevance to key groups. o Discuss the limitations of the scoping review process. o Provide a general interpretation of the results with respect to the review questions and objectives, as well as potential implications and/or next steps. |
| Funding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Describe sources of funding for the scoping review. Describe the role of the funders of the scoping review. |

Note. Checklist is adapted from *Annals of Internal Medicine*, Tricco et al. (2018), PRISMA Extension for Scoping Reviews (PRISMA-ScR): Checklist and Explanation, 169(7), 467-473. Copyright © American College of Physicians. All Rights Reserved. Reprinted and adapted with the permission of American College of Physicians, Inc.

Identifying the Research Purpose

The identification of the research purpose clarifies the focus of the scoping review and is used to establish an effective search strategy. Levac and colleagues (2010) recommended combining a broad research purpose or question with a clearly articulated scope of inquiry. The scope of inquiry for the present review was framed by the concept of EI. Specifically, the focus on how parents ‘identify’, ‘express’, ‘use’, ‘understand’, and ‘manage’ emotions in youth sport was based on the dimensions of EI (Brasseur et al., 2013; Mayer & Salovey, 1997). The application of this framework defined the parameters of the review, specifically the study selection process and what information should be extracted from the included studies (Arksey & O’Malley, 2005).

Identifying Relevant Studies and Study Selection

Search Strategy. A comprehensive electronic search was conducted up to May 2022 and updated in March 2023. The search strategy was developed with the assistance of a research librarian (see Table 3.2 for the full search strategy). The initial electronic search yielded 1480 records. All records identified in the search were imported into Covidence, a systematic review management system. Duplicate records ($n = 215$) were removed using the automatic duplicate removal feature in Covidence. The remaining records ($n = 1265$) were then subjected to an initial title and abstract screening by the first author, reducing the sample to 203 records. The first and second authors independently assessed the full texts of the remaining 203 records for inclusion.

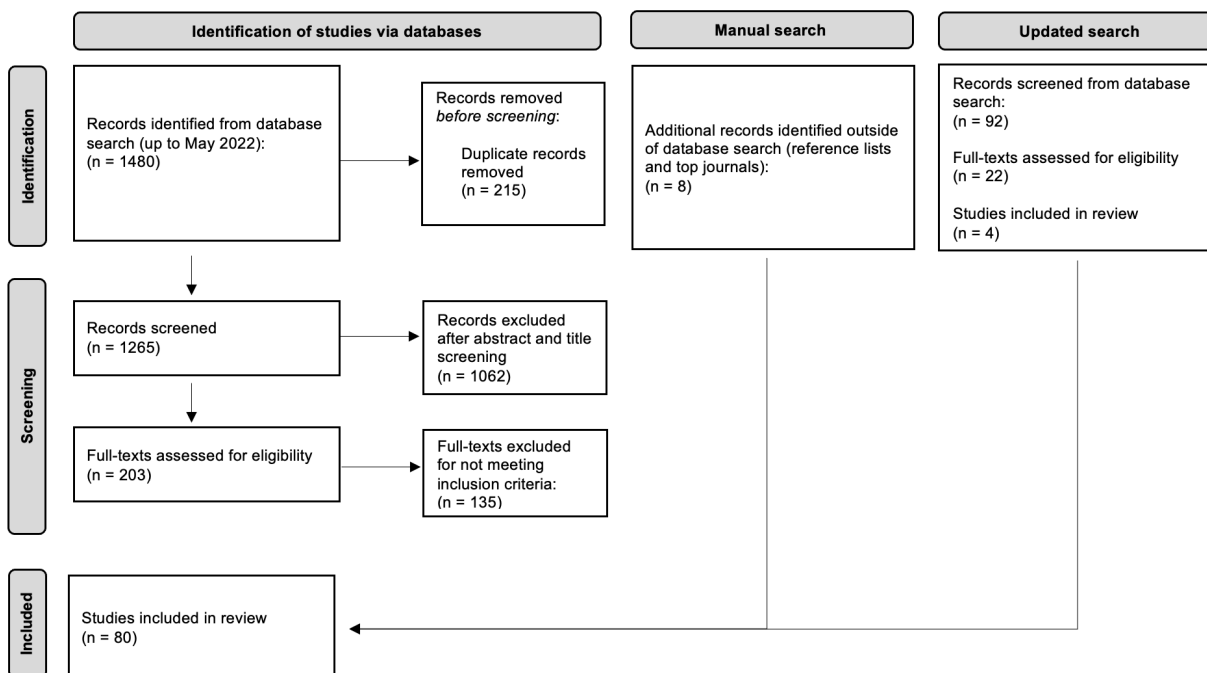
Table 3.2*Scoping Review Search Strategy*

| Databases | Search Terms |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| EBSCO Academic Search Complete SPORTDiscus Child Development & Adolescent Studies CINAHL Plus with Full text ERIC 1860– May 2022 May 2022- March 2023 | S1 (parent* OR mother* OR father* OR caregiver*) AND (emotion* OR affect* OR mood*) AND (youth sport* or organized sport* or competitive sport* or team sport*) S1 (parent* OR mother* OR father* OR caregiver*) [mp=abstract, title, heading word, identifiers] S2 (sport* or athlet*) S3 (youth sport* OR organized sport* OR competitive sport* OR team sport*) S4 S2 OR S3 S5 (emotion* OR affect* OR mood*) S6 S1 AND S4 AND S5 S7 Limit 6 to (english language and '0100 journal') |
| Elsevier Scopus 1960–2022, May 2022- March 2023 | (TITLE-ABS-KEY (parent* OR mother* OR father* OR caregiver*) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (youth AND sport* OR organized AND sport* OR competitive AND sport* OR team AND sport*) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY (emotion* OR affect* OR mood*)) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , "English")) |
| ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, 1861–2022, May 2022- March 2023 | |

In addition to the electronic database search, the first author conducted a manual search of the included studies' reference lists and three top sport psychology journals, based on their Impact Factor (i.e., *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*; *Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology*; *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*), to reduce the likelihood that articles were missed due to a database search error. The studies identified during the manual search ($n = 8$) underwent a similar inclusion process as those identified in the electronic database search (i.e., initial title and abstract screening followed by a full text assessment). The March 2023 search yielded an additional 92 records subjected to an initial title and abstract screening, 22 full texts that were assessed, and 4 additional articles were selected for inclusion. A PRISMA flowchart depicting the full study selection process is presented in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1

PRISMA Flowchart of the Study Selection Process



Inclusion criteria. Studies were included in the review if they: (1) examined organized youth sport, (2) included parents as the central focus of the study (i.e., parents were sampled or participants were asked about parents), (3) were available in English, (4) were classified as an original, empirical, peer-reviewed research article or approved dissertation/thesis (book chapters and reviews were excluded), and (5) included at least one meaningful piece of data (theme, quote, questionnaire or subscale) related to parents and emotions in the results. With respect to criterion number 5, it is important to note that a study did not need to explicitly examine emotions as a purpose or objective for the study to be included. Rather, studies were included based on the reported results. For example, Brown (2013) was included because it contained the higher-level *theme* of “emotional support” (p. 236). Jowett and Timson-Katchis’ (2005) study was included because their results included several *quotes* about parents’ provision of emotional support and outward expression of emotions during competitions. Dorsch et al.’s (2016) study

was included because they measured parents' positive and negative affect using a *questionnaire* that included self-report items such as, "To what extent have you felt angry this season as a result of your child's sport participation?" (p. 134).

The researchers met frequently to review and refine the search strategy and inclusion/exclusion criteria, discuss their rationale for including and excluding studies, and resolve any discrepancies on study inclusion. Levac et al. (2010) recommended that, should a disagreement on study inclusion occur, a third reviewer may determine the final inclusion. However, the first and second authors were able to reach agreement on all the studies included.

Charting the Data

A data charting form (Appendix A) was created to document the nature of the studies included in the review (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). The following information was extracted from the articles and entered in the data charting form: (1) study author(s), (2) study purpose, (3) study location, (4) sport in which the participants were involved, (5) methodological design, and (6) participant information. In addition to the data charting form, excerpts from the studies' results that addressed the purpose of the current review were extracted into a separate document to be subjected to data analysis. Arksey and O'Malley (2005) recommended that, in presenting the findings of a scoping review, researchers should prioritize certain aspects of the research findings rather than attempting to capture the full breadth of reported results. As such, we prioritized and extracted the emotion-related findings found in each of the studies' results sections. These extracted findings included descriptions of higher- and lower-order themes, raw data (i.e., participant quotes), and the researchers' descriptions and interpretations of relevant statistical findings.

Collating, Summarizing, and Reporting the Results

Data Analysis. Following Levac and colleagues' (2010) suggestion to use qualitative content analytical techniques for collating, summarizing, and applying meaning to the results, extracted data from the results sections of included studies were subjected to Miles and colleagues' (2020) approach to qualitative data analysis. This iterative approach follows three major "flows" of activity: Data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The process of data condensation is characterized by "first cycle" and "second cycle" coding, whereby chunks of data were assembled in a way that fit together into readily analyzable units (Miles et al., 2020). During first cycle coding, initial codes were assigned to data units to detect recurring patterns. During second cycle coding, these patterns were analyzed, and similar codes were clustered together to create a smaller number of concepts and themes. For instance, emotion coding (i.e. labelling the emotions recalled or experienced by the participant) and in vivo coding (i.e., using the participants' own words) were used to code phrases such as "Sometimes I almost burst into tears..." (Knight & Holt, 2013, p. 180) and "It makes me happy that he is successful..." (Dorsch et al., 2015, p. 7) as "frustration" and "happiness", respectively. The different emotions identified during first cycle coding came together to form a pattern code which resulted in the theme "parents' emotional reactions" during second cycle coding. In addition to coding, analytic memos were used throughout the entire review process. For example, memos and jotting were made concerning different ideas and concepts helped address the research purpose during data extraction and helped to inform data extraction of subsequent studies.

The second major flow of activity, data display, began during the coding process. A data network display was created to arrange the data systematically and coherently to note potential patterns and themes, demonstrating interrelationships between the different variables. As the

coding process progressed, the data display was continuously refined to reflect emerging patterns and new insights. Arranging the condensed data in such a way allows for higher level analyses, such as mapping processes and developing hypotheses and theories that would inform the third major flow of activity, conclusion drawing and verification (Miles et al., 2020). In the current study, conclusion drawing and verification involved focus group consultations with stakeholders in order to discuss the scoping review's patterns and themes (Miles et al., 2020). The focus group data was used to explore in greater detail the relationships between variables and triangulate the data.

Focus Group Consultations

Consultations with key stakeholders adds methodological rigor to a scoping review (Levac et al., 2010). As such, focus group consultations were conducted to enable parents and former youth athletes to build on the evidence present in the scoping review and offer a higher level of meaning and perspective to the preliminary findings. Data collected from the focus groups were then analyzed and participant quotes were integrated into the presentation of the scoping review results.

Participants

Upon receiving Research Ethics Office approval, purposeful sampling was used to recruit sport parents and former youth athletes to discuss the findings of the scoping review (Patton, 2015). The sampling criteria for the parents were that they had at least one child aged 13-18 who participated in organized youth sport at the time of the study. The sampling criteria for the former youth athletes were that they were between the ages of 18-24 at the time of the study and participated in organized youth sport before they were 18 years old. This particular age group

was chosen because they were able to reflect back on their youth sporting experience and how their parents behaved.

A total of 10 sport parents (nine mothers and one father; $M_{\text{age}} = 44.9$, $SD = 4.6$) and six former youth athletes (five women, one man, $M_{\text{age}} = 22.3$, $SD = 0.8$) served as key stakeholders in the consultation focus groups. The sport parents had a total of 24 children (12 daughters, 12 sons; $M_{\text{age}} = 15.3$, $SD = 2.6$) who played a variety of sports (e.g., baseball, basketball, dance, gymnastics, hockey, martial arts, swimming, and volleyball). All but one of the parents had participated in youth sport themselves. All of the parents had a college diploma or university degree. The former youth athletes had an average of 16.6 years of experience ($SD = 2.3$) in youth sport. While all the former youth athletes had a history of playing multiple sports, they considered their “main” sports to be volleyball ($n = 3$), soccer ($n = 2$), and swimming ($n = 1$). Three of the former athletes played at a college level, two had played at the provincial level, and one played high school sport.

Data Generation and Analysis. A total of four focus groups were conducted (i.e., two parent focus groups and two former youth athlete focus groups). Each focus group was moderated by the lead researcher and an undergraduate research assistant. Separate questioning routes were created for the parents and former athlete focus groups (Appendix B). Questions were created based on the four themes of the scoping review, *identifying and expressing emotions* (e.g., What kinds of emotions do you feel when you watch your child play?), *using emotions* (e.g., What do you say to your child when they are upset?), *understanding emotions* (e.g., How do you think your child’s emotions affect your own emotions?), and *managing emotions* (e.g., What strategies do you use to control your emotions?). The moderators used follow-up prompts to facilitate discussion between the stakeholders. The data generated in the

focus groups were analyzed using the same process as the scoping review (i.e., Miles et al., 2020) and participants' views were used to refine the final data network display.

Results

Study Characteristics

Eighty records (Appendix C) met the inclusion criteria and were included in the review. The majority of the studies were conducted in North America ($n = 39$, 49%) and in the United Kingdom ($n = 19$, 24%). The samples included in the studies were of parents ($n = 26$), athletes ($n = 13$), coaches ($n = 2$), or a combination of parents, athletes, coaches, or others (e.g., sport administrators, officials, $n = 39$). The studies were predominantly qualitative ($n = 54$), while 19 studies used quantitative methodologies and seven used a mixed- or multi-methods design. Most of the studies investigated included participants from multiple sports ($n = 31$, 39%), soccer ($n = 12$, 15%), or tennis ($n = 11$, 14%). An overview of the study characteristics is presented in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3

Characteristics of Included Studies

| Study Location (Country) | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| United States ($n = 24$) | Brown (2013); DeFreese et al. (2018); Dorsch et al. (2009); Dorsch et al. (2015); Dorsch et al. (2016); Dorsch et al. (2019); Garst et al. (2019); Goldstein & Iso-Ahola (2008); Gould et al. (2006); Gould et al. (2008); Kanters et al. (2008); Lauer et al. (2010a); Lauer et al. (2010b); Legg & Rose (2022); McCann (2005); Omli & LaVoi (2012); Palmer (2011); Partridge & Wann (2015); Peter (2011); Power & Woolger (1994); Sanchez (2017); Weiss & Fretwell (2005); Wiersma & Fifer (2008); Wings (2012) |
| United Kingdom ($n = 19$) | Burgess et al. (2016); Clarke et al. (2016); Furusa et al. (2021); Goodman & James (2017); Harwood & Knight (2009a); Harwood & Knight (2009b); Harwood et al. (2019); Hayward et al. (2017); Johnston (2014); Keegan et al. (2009); Keegan et al. (2014); Knight & Holt (2014); Knight, Little et al. (2016); Kramers et al. (2022); Lafferty & Dorrell (2006); Newport et al. (2021); Rouquette et al. (2021b); Thrower et al. (2016); Wolfenden & Holt (2005) |

| | |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Canada (<i>n</i> = 15) | Azimi & Tamminen (2022); Battaglia et al. (2022); Camiré et al. (2009); Felber Charbonneau & Camiré (2020); Holt et al. (2008); Holt et al. (2009); Kerr & Stirling (2012); Knight et al. (2011); Lally & Kerr (2008); Neely et al. (2017); Pynn et al. (2019); Tamminen et al. (2017); Trussell (2009); Trussell & Shaw (2012); Wall et al. (2020) |
| Other (where <i>n</i> = 5 studies or less) | Australia (<i>n</i> =5); Belgium (<i>n</i> =1); Brazil (<i>n</i> =2); France (<i>n</i> =2); Germany (<i>n</i> =2); Israel (<i>n</i> =1); Italy (<i>n</i> =1); Lithuania (<i>n</i> =2); Norway (<i>n</i> =2); Portugal (<i>n</i> =1); Republic of Cyprus (<i>n</i> =1); Multiple countries (<i>n</i> =2) |

Sport

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Multiple sports/Undisclosed (<i>n</i> = 31) | Azimi & Tamminen (2022); Battaglia et al. (2022); Bois et al. (2009); Camiré et al. (2009); DeFreese et al. (2018); Dorsch et al. (2009); Dorsch et al. (2015); Dorsch et al. (2016); Dorsch et al. (2019); Felber Charbonneau & Camiré (2020); Furusa et al. (2021); Keegan et al. (2009); Keegan et al. (2014); Knight, Dorsch et al. (2016); Knight et al. (2011); Legg & Rose (2022); Lienhart et al. (2020); Lisinskiene & Lochbaum (2018); McCann (2005); Neely et al. (2017); Omli & LaVoi (2012); Partridge & Wann (2015); Pynn et al. (2019); Ross et al. (2015); Rouquette et al. (2021a); Stefansen et al. (2018); Strandbu et al. (2019); Tamminen et al. (2017); Trussell (2009); Trussell & Shaw (2012); Wiersma & Fifer (2008) |
| Soccer (<i>n</i> = 12) | Clarke et al. (2016); Eckardt et al. (2022); Goldstein & Iso-Ahola (2008); Goodman & James (2017); Holt et al. (2008); Holt et al. (2009); Kramers et al. (2022); Lobinger et al. (2021); Newport et al. (2021); Palmer (2011); Teques et al. (2018); Weiss & Fretwell (2005) |
| Tennis (<i>n</i> = 11) | Gould et al. (2006); Gould et al. (2008); Harwood & Knight (2009a); Harwood & Knight (2009b); Harwood et al. (2019); Knight & Holt (2013); Knight & Holt (2014); Lauer et al. (2010a); Lauer et al. (2010b); Thrower et al. (2016); Wolfenden & Holt (2005) |
| Other (where <i>n</i> = 5 studies or less) | Australian football (<i>n</i> =2); Basketball (<i>n</i> =1); Baseball (<i>n</i> =2); Equestrian (<i>n</i> =1); Figure skating (<i>n</i> =2); Golf (<i>n</i> =1); Gymnastics (<i>n</i> =5); Indoor climbing (<i>n</i> =1); Ice hockey (<i>n</i> =2); Martial arts (<i>n</i> =1); Rugby (<i>n</i> =2); Slalom canoe (<i>n</i> =1); Swimming (<i>n</i> =5) |

Method

| | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Qualitative (<i>n</i> = 54) | Battaglia et al. (2022); Brown (2013); Burgess et al. (2016); Burke et al. (2023); Camiré et al. (2009); Cavallerio et al. (2022); Clarke et al. (2016); de Oliveira et al. (2022); Dorsch et al. (2009); Dorsch et al. (2015); Dorsch et al. (2019); Elliott & Drummond (2017); Elliott et al. (2018); Felber Charbonneau & Camiré (2020); Furusa et al. (2021); Garst et al. (2019); Gould et al. (2008); Harwood & Knight (2009a); Harwood & Knight (2009b); Hayward et al. (2017); Holt et al. (2008); Holt et al. (2009); Jowett & Timson-Katchis (2005); Keegan et al. (2009); Keegan et al. (2014); Kerr & Stirling (2012); Knight, Dorsch et al. (2016); Knight & Holt (2013); Knight & Holt (2014); Knight, Little et al. (2016); Knight et al. (2011); Kramers et al. (2022); Lally & Kerr (2008); Lauer et al. (2010a); Lauer et al. (2010b); Legg & Rose (2022); Lienhart et al. (2020); Lisinskiene & Lockbaum (2019); Neely et al. (2017); Newport et al. (2021); Nunomura & Oliveira (2013); Pynn et al. (2019); Ross et al. (2015); Sanchez (2017); Stefansen et al. |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | (2018); Strandbu et al. (2019); Tamminen et al. (2017); Thrower et al. (2016); Trussell (2009); Trussell & Shaw (2012); Wall et al. (2020); Weiss & Fretwell (2005); Wiersma & Fifer (2008); Wolfenden & Holt (2005) |
| Quantitative (<i>n</i> = 19) | Bois et al. (2009); DeFreese et al. (2018); Dorsch et al. (2016); Goldstein & Iso-Ahola (2008); Goodman & James (2017); Gould et al. (2006); Johnston (2014); Kanters et al. (2008); Lafferty & Dorrell (2006); Lev et al. (2020); Lobinger et al. (2021); McCann (2005); Palmer (2011); Partridge & Wann (2015); Power & Woolger (1994); Rouquette et al. (2021a); Rouquette et al. (2021b); Rynne et al. (2022); Teques et al. (2018) |
| Mixed Methods (<i>n</i> = 7) | Azimi & Tamminen (2022); Eckardt et al. (2022); Harwood et al. (2019); Lisinskiene & Lochbaum (2018); Omli & LaVoi (2012); Peter (2011); Winges (2012) |

| Participants | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Parents only (<i>n</i> = 26) | Burgess et al. (2016); Camiré et al. (2009); Cavallerio et al. (2022); DeFreese et al. (2018); de Oliveira et al. (2022); Dorsch et al. (2009); Eckardt et al. (2022); Garst et al. (2019); Goldstein & Iso-Ahola (2008); Harwood & Knight (2009a); Harwood & Knight (2009b); Harwood et al. (2019); Kerr & Stirling (2012); Knight, Dorsch et al. (2016); Knight & Holt (2013); Kramers et al. (2022); Lally & Kerr (2008); Legg & Rose (2022); Omli & LaVoi (2012); Partridge & Wann (2015); Peter (2011); Rynne et al. (2022); Stefansen et al. (2018); Teques et al. (2018); Trussell & Shaw (2012); Wiersma & Fifer (2008); |
| Athletes only (<i>n</i> = 13) | Bois et al. (2009); Burke et al. (2023); Elliott et al. (2018); Furusa et al. (2021); Keegan et al. (2009); Keegan et al. (2014); Knight, Little et al. (2016); Knight et al. (2011); Lafferty & Dorrell (2006); Nunomura & Oliveira (2013); Rouquette et al. (2021b); Strandbu et al. (2019); Winges (2012) |
| Coaches only (<i>n</i> = 2) | Gould et al. (2006); Gould et al. (2008) |
| Any combination of parents, children, coaches, and others (<i>n</i> = 39) | Azimi & Tamminen (2022); Battaglia et al. (2022); Brown (2013); Clarke et al. (2016); Dorsch et al. (2015); Dorsch et al. (2016); Dorsch et al. (2019); Elliott & Drummond (2016); Felber Charbonneau & Camiré (2020); Goodman & James (2017); Hayward et al. (2017); Holt et al. (2008); Holt et al. (2009); Johnston (2014); Jowett & Timson-Katchis (2005); Kanters et al. (2008); Knight & Holt (2014); Lauer et al. (2010a); Lauer et al. (2010b); Lev et al. (2020); Lienhart et al. (2020); Lisinskiene & Lockbaum (2018); Lisinskiene & Lockbaum (2019); Lobinger et al. (2021); McCann (2005); Neely et al. (2017); Newport et al. (2021); Palmer (2011); Power & Woolger (1994); Pynn et al. (2019); Ross et al. (2015); Rouquette et al. (2021a); Sanchez (2017); Tamminen et al. (2017); Thrower et al. (2016); Trussell (2009); Wall et al. (2020); Weiss & Fretwell (2005); Wolfenden & Holt (2005) |

Parents' Emotion Knowledge and Abilities in Youth Sport

The findings of this review are collated and summarized using Mikolajczak's (2009) tripartite model of EI as a framework. Specifically, the extracted data were contextualized within the dimensions of EI: Identification and expression of emotions, using emotions, understanding emotions, and managing emotions.

Identification and Expression of Emotions.

Identifying and expressing one's emotions is considered the most basic aspect of EI (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). It involves being able to recognize emotions in oneself and in others and to know how, and be able to, express those emotions accurately. The findings of this review revealed ways in which parents expressed their emotions in relation to their children's sport participation, how their emotions were influenced by their children's sport experience, and parents' capacity to identify their children's emotions through the concept of empathy.

Parents' Emotional Reactions. Parents experience a range of different emotions in relation to their children's sport. Among the studies included in this review, anger/frustration (e.g., Ross et al., 2015), anxiety (e.g., Burgess et al., 2016), pride (e.g., Clarke et al., 2016), and happiness (e.g., Peter, 2011) were the most frequently reported emotions that parents encountered. Watching their children succeed and having fun in sport appeared to be associated with more positively valenced emotions such as pride, happiness, and excitement (Dorsch et al., 2015; Peter, 2011). On the other hand, incidences such as watching their children underperform, exhibit misbehaviour during competition, and potential injury appeared to lead to more negative emotional reactions, such as anger/frustration, anxiety, embarrassment, or helplessness (Harwood & Knight, 2009b; Partridge & Wann, 2015; Trussell, 2009).

A key feature of EI is one's knowledge regarding their *own* emotions. Parents were able to articulate what they were feeling and the sources of their emotional reactions (e.g., Omli & Lavoi, 2012; Peter, 2011; Wiersma & Fifer, 2008). For example, a participant in Wiersma and Fifer's (2008) study described how their frustration toward other teams' coaches and players turned to aggression, "...If I'm coaching or being a parent on that team that's being taken advantage of, I get very aggressive. I don't like that, so I'll get verbal and aggressive, just to put a stop to it" (p. 522). Similarly, Omli and LaVoi (2012) found that parents became angry due to actions conducted by referees and coaches (e.g., missed calls, yelling at athletes, lack of knowledge; Omli & LaVoi, 2012). Other studies have identified children's poor performances, other parents' hostile remarks, discourteous behaviours from opponents, and parents' personality characteristics as potential sources of anger (Goldstein & Iso-Ahola, 2008; Wings, 2012).

Sport parents' anger is commonly attached to what might be considered *negative* parental behaviour (Omli & LaVoi, 2012). For example, Goldstein and Iso-Ahola (2008) found that during children's sport competitions, parents' aggressive behaviour increased the angrier they became. One focus group participant shared a story of when her father became angry after her team lost a championship: "We ended up losing the match in a fifth set... When I got home, I found out that my dad had punched a hole in the wall because we lost..." (A1). The participant explained that her father became "worked up" and "couldn't handle the pressure because he's so involved..." suggesting that parents' high level of involvement in their child's sport may lead to intense emotional reactions.

Parents' own emotions were often influenced by their children's emotions. Wiersma and Fifer (2008) used the term "vicarious involvement" (p. 514) to depict ways in which parents experience satisfaction and joy from their children's achievements. When discussing vicarious

involvement with our consultation focus groups, P4 illustrated how she shared her son's hockey experience: "I skate every shift with him from the stands and I make every pass." From the athletes' point of view, A3 echoed that her parents shared in her successes and failures:

My parents kind of went through the highs and lows with me. It was kind of like when I got cut, they were always there, and they always felt it too. And then when we won provincials, my mom cried.

Furthermore, parents in Neely et al.'s (2017) study of deselection viewed the experience as a shared problem that elicited negative emotional reactions from both children and parents. The parents viewed the aftermath of their children's deselection as their responsibility and they tried to buffer the negative emotions their children may have been experiencing.

Identifying Children's Emotions. Several studies showed that parents' emotion knowledge and abilities were influenced by their empathy for their children. Empathy is the capacity to sense and experience the feelings of others (Ewing et al., 2019) and is an important feature of EI (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Holt and colleagues (2008) found that parents' verbal reactions while watching their children compete were influenced by parents' perceptions of their children's emotions. For example, one parent explained, "when they are expecting to do well and they don't, you feel the pain they feel. When they're disappointed, you're disappointed" (Holt et al., 2008, p. 676).

Parents' empathy for their children in sport may be derived from the knowledge and understanding of the experiences their children are having and the inherent challenges of the competitive sport environment (Knight & Holt, 2014). The parents in our consultation focus group suggested they *knew* how to identify their children's emotions by spending time and getting to know them. P3 explained, "I don't think it's necessarily sport specific. I think it's just

your child in general, knowing how they process their own emotions and the environment around them.” For some parents, their own childhood sport experience enhanced their capacity for empathy due to first-hand knowledge of the sport context and what their children might be feeling (Knight, Dorsch et al., 2016). For example, P4’s experience of getting cut from a team helped her understand how her child felt in the same situation: “For me, I got cut as well. When I was younger, I was the last cut off a team and I knew how much it hurt me.”

Using Emotions

Using emotions is about having the knowledge and ability to harness emotion information to facilitate cognitive activities. Sport parents demonstrate their knowledge and ability to use emotions when they can perceive their children’s emotions and know how to provide appropriate emotional support.

Emotional Support. Emotional support is characterized by how individuals provide comfort and security in ways that convey they care about others (Cutrona & Russell, 1990; Rees & Hardy, 2000). Individuals’ propensity to provide emotional support can be influenced by their EI (Lopes et al., 2004; Yip & Martin, 2006), particularly in terms of experiencing empathy and perspective taking (Schutte et al., 2001). Among the studies included in this review, the provision of emotional support involved parents providing their children with warmth, comfort, encouragement, love, and expressions of empathy during times of distress (Camiré et al., 2009; Dorsch, 2013; Johnston, 2014; Jowett & Timson-Katchis, 2005; Nunomura & Oliveira, 2013; Trussell, 2009; Wall et al., 2020).

Parents frequently provided emotional support after practices or games by listening without judgement and allowing their children to vent their emotions. In turn, parents listened, empathized, acknowledged their children’s concerns, and offered encouragement or alternative

perspectives (Harwood et al., 2019; Pynn et al., 2019; Wall et al., 2020). For some parents in our consultation focus groups, emotional support was about providing encouragement. For example, P1 said “you just want to keep encouraging them and say ‘don’t give up!’, ‘keep going!’, that sort of thing. When you can see that they’re getting tired or frustrated, you want to give them your strength and enthusiasm.” For one of the former youth athletes, emotional support was about “being on your child’s side” and “being your child’s best advocate” (A5).

In the literature, the car ride home was a popular venue for the provision of emotional support. While the car ride home was described by many as challenging, particularly if parents were unsure of what to say, some children enjoyed the car ride home because their parents helped them feel better and more relaxed after venting their emotions (Tamminen et al., 2017). In our focus groups, P1 explained how she carefully approached the car ride home with her daughters after a game: “Sometimes it’s dead silence all the way home. Sometimes, you have to say ‘OK, I just want to say one or two things and then we’ll end it, or sometimes you ask them how they feel about it.”

Understanding Emotions

To understand emotions is to understand complex feelings, the causes and consequences of emotions, and the relationships that exist among emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Sport parents can use emotion information (as mentioned previously) more appropriately when they understand their children’s emotions and have knowledge of the sport context.

Reading Child’s Emotions. Several studies highlighted parents’ efforts to read their children’s mood and adjust their behaviours accordingly (Clarke, 2014; Elliott & Drummond, 2016; Holt et al., 2009; Lauer et al., 2010a). It is particularly important for parents to know *what* to say and *when* it is appropriate to speak about sport (Lauer et al., 2010a). For example, one

former youth athlete in our focus groups would seek out her parents after a game because her mother knew what type of comfort she needed:

I really didn't want to talk about it, but I'd still come up to them because I still wanted to see them... My mom was very empathetic and she kind of knew how to make me feel better all the time, so I really would always go to her. She just always knew the right things to say to me. (A1)

A feature of understanding emotions is recognizing the causes and consequences of emotions. Some studies (e.g., Knight & Holt, 2013; Knight, Dorsch et al., 2016) highlighted how knowledge of different performance outcomes, and the various external factors that could influence sport performance, could help parents understand their children's emotional reactions during competition. Children have expressed preferences for parents to understand their emotions and provide the appropriate type of support at the right time based on their individual needs (Knight et al., 2011; Knight et al., 2016). However, some studies reported that parents were often unsure of the type of support to provide in certain situations, unable to read or understand their children's feelings, and lacked the skills to manage their children's emotions (Clarke, 2014; Harwood & Knight, 2009a; Holt et al., 2009). When parents are unable to understand their children's emotional reactions, children may perceive that their parents do not understand them or the competitive sport environment (Knight & Holt, 2013). According to P3, parents should "just know how to read their kids and how to react. How they are in sport typically translates in their everyday character. You just know your child and know who needs what at what time."

Managing Emotions

Individuals demonstrate the knowledge and abilities required to manage emotions when they can monitor and reflect on emotions in themselves and others in the context of their goals, self-knowledge, and social awareness (Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Salovey & Grewall, 2005). Thus, this theme highlighted parents' efforts and strategies used to manage their emotional reactions in the sport context.

Managing Emotional Reactions. A key feature of high-quality parental involvement is parents' ability to manage their emotional reactions in the youth sport setting (Harwood & Knight, 2015; Knight et al., 2011; Pynn et al., 2019). Although children's sport competitions can be emotionally-charged environments (Knight & Holt, 2013), parents are expected to demonstrate self-discipline and restraint when it comes to their own emotions (Knight et al., 2011). Consistent with Mikolajczak's (2009) knowledge level of EI, some sport parents have the self-knowledge and social awareness to conceal their emotions because of how they might be perceived by others (e.g., "There's a few times where I will say something, but I try to hold it in and not look like the 'crazy' mom" [P4]) or how they might influence their children. One mother in our focus groups did not want her own emotions to influence her children or take the focus away from their experiences:

I don't want the stress to be put on them. I don't think that's something more they need to take on. They're busy focusing on what they need to focus on so they don't need to also make me feel better about what's happening. I just don't want to influence them by either getting more stressed or more excited. I want it to be about them, not about me.

Athletes have expressed that parents' outward displays of emotion during competitions are unhelpful and have the potential to negatively influence their sport development and performance (Goodman & James, 2017; Lauer et al., 2010). As such, parents often make a

concerted effort to monitor and conceal their emotions (Lienhart et al., 2020; Pynn et al., 2019) to better support their children and attend to their needs (Knight & Holt, 2013). However, parents' attempts to conceal their emotions can be a source of stress in and of itself and, as such, have expressed a need for more support in developing appropriate coping strategies (Harwood & Knight, 2009a; Knight & Holt, 2013; Wiersma & Fifer, 2008).

Strategies for Emotion Management. Parents employ a range of different strategies to manage the emotional demands they encounter in the youth sport setting, from venting to others (Burgess et al., 2016), to avoiding situations that elicit negative emotions (Lienhart et al., 2020), and trying to keep calm with internal regulation exercises, such as deep breathing (Harwood et al., 2019). Some parents in our focus groups described how they reframed emotional situations by focusing on the positives. For example, P4 said “I focus on some of the things that they’ve done well” and P1 said “I try to remind myself to cheer for everybody, all the good plays regardless of who is making them.”

A variety of different ways to classify the strategies parents use to manage or cope with their emotions have been reported in the literature (see Burgess, 2015; Burgess et al., 2016; Harwood et al., 2019; Hayward et al., 2017; Lienhart et al., 2020). Harwood and colleagues (2019) conducted a study investigating the psychological stress, emotions, and coping among parents of British tennis players. Specifically, they examined the way parents appraised and coped with the negative and positive emotions they encountered in relation to their children's sport. The parents in Harwood et al.'s (2019) study reported using a variety of mastery (i.e., attempts to take control of a stressful situation and eliminate the stressor; Nicholls et al., 2016), internal regulation (i.e., attempts to manage their internal responses to stress; Nicholls et al., 2016), and goal withdrawal (i.e., ceasing effort to attain a goal; Nicholls et al., 2016) strategies.

Parents perceived mastery and internal regulation strategies to be the most effective, however they were only used when parents experienced moderate to low levels of anger and anxiety. When parents experienced high levels of anger and anxiety, they most frequently selected goal withdrawal strategies (Harwood et al., 2019). Examples of goal withdrawal strategies were discussed in our consultations when some parents in our focus groups expressed that they “can’t watch” (P1) or “go somewhere else” (P3) when their children are in anxiety-inducing situations. Some parents, like P4, were relieved when their children did not play in those stressful moments: “I get nervous. I’m glad, actually, when he’s not out in the last two minutes if the game is tied or something like that.”

Discussion

The purpose of this scoping review was to explore how parents identify, express, use, understand, and manage their own and others’ emotions in the context of youth sport. We included 80 sport parenting studies and contextualized their emotion-related findings within the dimensions of EI, guided by Mikolajczak’s (2009) tripartite model. Parents demonstrated emotion knowledge and abilities regarding *identifying and expressing emotions* by being able to articulate the sources of their own emotions and empathize with their children. Their capacity for empathy allowed them to *use* their children’s emotion information to engage in emotionally supportive behaviours. Parents’ *understanding* of emotions, specifically their knowledge and understanding of their children and the outcomes of their children’s sport performance, contributed to their ability to engage in appropriate supportive behaviours. Lastly, parents’ self-knowledge and awareness of the sport environment influenced their desire to employ a range of different strategies to *manage* their own emotions.

Although only Teques et al. (2018) specifically studied EI, and other studies (e.g., Harwood & Knight, 2015; Pynn et al., 2019) touched briefly upon the potential influence of EI

among sport parents, the current findings indicate that EI may be a valuable framework to use for enhancing parents' involvement in youth sport. This is potentially important because the use of theory in the development and implementation of sport parent education and support initiatives is limited (Burke et al., 2021). Indeed, there are some examples of sport-based initiatives to improve EI in sport among athletes (Crombie et al., 2011) and individuals operating sport organizations (Wagstaff et al., 2013). Thus, designing programs around parents' ability to identify, express, use, understand, and manage emotions may be fruitful, and the findings of the current review have the potential to inform the content of such programs.

One area to target is parents' knowledge and abilities regarding the perception and expression of their own and their children's emotions. Parents' awareness of their own emotions allows them to evaluate their behaviour and may help them determine how and when to communicate with their children (Azimi & Tamminen, 2022). Consistent with our findings, a parents' capacity for empathy facilitates their ability to accurately read their children's emotions so that they may provide the support their children need and desire (Ewing et al., 2019). If a parent lacks empathy or is uncertain about what their child is feeling in a given situation, they are likely to respond in a stereotypical way rather than in a way that is tailored to their child's unique needs (Brems & Sohl, 1995). Sport parent education and support programs have the potential to increase parents' awareness of themselves and their ability to empathize with their children (Azimi & Tamminen, 2022; Thrower et al., 2019). Such initiatives may assist parents in meeting their children's individual needs, both in and outside of sport.

In terms of sport parents' knowledge and ability to use emotions, the findings from our review and focus groups emphasized how parents used *their children's* emotion information. According to the functionalist perspective on emotions, children's emotions carry a specific

interpersonal function (Campos et al., 1994). That is, individuals can emit social signals to generate similar feelings or actions among others by making an emotional transaction significant. For example, children may express fear to elicit comfort and reassurance from their parents or express anger to elicit their parents' help in solving a problem (O'Neal & Magai, 2005). This perspective aligns with our findings that sport parents used their children's emotional information to guide their emotionally supportive behaviours.

One area that may require more examination is how parents use *their own* emotions. A key aspect of Mikolajczak's (2009) tripartite model is the emphasis of both intra- and interpersonal aspects of EI (Brasseur et al., 2013). From an intrapersonal perspective, an individual's ability to harness their own emotions can allow them to capitalize fully on their feelings to best fit the task at hand (Salovey & Grewal, 2005). For instance, being in a sad mood may help people conduct careful, methodical work, while being in a happy mood can encourage creative and innovative thinking (Isen et al., 1985). When parents experience concern or worry, they are more motivated to engage in challenging parenting situations and act to solve problems (Hajal et al., 2019). However, it is less clear how sport parents can take the range of emotions *they* experience in relation to their children's sport (e.g., anger/frustration, anxiety, pride, happiness) and use them to facilitate positive sport parenting behaviours.

Sport parents' ability to understand emotions was characterized by parents' ability to read their children's mood and knowledge of what to say and when to talk about sport. When parents understood the different potential outcomes of their children's sport performance, they were better able to anticipate and understand their children's emotional reactions (Knight & Holt, 2013; Knight, Dorsch et al., 2016). One way for parents to deepen their understanding of their children and their sport is to know and share their children's goals for sport participation.

Previous research has highlighted the importance of sharing and communicating goals between parents and athletes (Harwood & Knight, 2015; Knight & Holt, 2014; Pynn et al., 2019). Parents can optimize their involvement in their children's sport when they know what their children want to achieve and base their behaviours and expectations on what their children value (Knight & Holt, 2014; Pynn et al., 2019). Because emotions are dependent on how individuals appraise different situations in relation to their goals, values, and beliefs (Gross, 2008; Lazarus, 1999) parents' understanding of their children's goals may also influence their own emotional reactions. For example, a parent may be less inclined to feel anger after a loss if they know their child achieved their goal to have fun with their friends. As such, future sport parent education and support initiatives may seek to create formal opportunities for parents to communicate with their children about goals and expectations.

In regard to how parents manage emotions, our review suggests that parents possess self-knowledge and social awareness when it comes to how their behaviours might be perceived by others in the sport environment. In Wagstaff and colleagues' (2012) study of emotion abilities within sport organizations, they found that strategies individuals used to manage their emotions were not only influenced by their emotion abilities, but also by their knowledge of social norms (e.g., behavioural expectations, rituals, and responsibilities). Parents are often fearful of negative labels (e.g., 'that' parent, 'helicopter' parent, 'crazy' parent) and feel pressure to be perceived as a 'good' parent (Watchman & Spencer, 2020). Their awareness of what is expected or acceptable in the sport environment, together with their inherent, dutiful responsibility to care for and protect their children (Eekelaar, 1991) may cause them to conceal their emotions and maintain focus on their children (Knight & Holt, 2013; Lienhart et al., 2020; Pynn et al., 2019). However, attempts to eliminate or conceal emotion can stifle an individual's EI, highlighting an important

distinction between being able to conceal one's emotions versus being able to manage them appropriately (Salovey et al., 2002). Being able to disclose one's emotions (either by communicating them to others or writing them down) can be an effective way for individuals to reflect on their own emotions and decide how to manage them (Salovey et al., 2002). Thus, initiatives to educate and support sport parents may consider including opportunities for parents to disclose their emotions by implementing social support or reflection activities.

The tripartite model consists of three levels of EI: knowledge, abilities, and traits. Whereas we identified and coded parents' emotion knowledge and abilities, we did not locate sufficient information in the literature that reflected EI traits (i.e., how individuals typically behave in emotional situations). This is an important factor to consider because the tripartite model is based on the relationship between the three levels, whereby knowledge underlies ability, which in turn underlies traits (Mikolajczak, 2009). As such, the presence of emotion knowledge and abilities are likely to influence parents' emotionally intelligent behaviours at the trait level (Laborde et al., 2018). Future research that focuses on EI traits could make valuable contributions to the literature.

This review had other limitations. First, although the search strategy was created with an expert research librarian, it is possible that the search terms and parameters used may have limited the number of articles identified. A manual search of reference lists and relevant sport psychology journals was conducted in an attempt to limit the number of potentially missed articles. We also did not assess the quality of the identified studies. The quality appraisal of articles is an optional step in Arksey and O'Malley (2005) and Levac et al.'s (2010) protocol. Future reviews could apply more quality-based methods to capture the literature on parents' emotions in sport (e.g., systematic review). Further, whereas some studies in our review

considered how sport parents' behaviour can be influenced by the concept of EI (e.g., Lauer et al., 2010; Pynn et al., 2019; Teques et al., 2018), most did not set out to specifically examine or measure EI. For example, Lisinskiene and Lochbaum's (2018) study on athletes' prosocial behaviour and the parent-child relationship did not explore the concept of EI, but their results highlighted the importance of sport parents being able to perceive their children's emotions and adjust to their children's mood as they move through adolescence and become more independent (an example of both identifying and using emotion information to guide their parenting behaviours). We interpreted these findings as being reflective of certain EI knowledge and abilities but acknowledge that this study (and other included studies) did not directly assess EI.

Further, the majority of the studies included in this review were conducted in North America ($n = 35$) and the United Kingdom ($n = 20$) among soccer ($n = 13$) and tennis ($n = 11$) parents. Our results reflect the limitations of the general sport parenting literature, whereby researchers have identified a need to diversify participant populations (Knight, 2019). The general sport parenting literature tends to be dominated by research on Caucasian and moderate-to-high earning families (Dorsch et al., 2019). Thus, the lack of diversity in the literature results in a homogenous sample that fails to capture the range of cultural and economic factors that might influence parents' thoughts, feelings, and behaviours. Our focus groups, for instance, were limited and reflected this homogeneity, having been conducted with predominantly white, North American women. Some sport parenting research has begun to look at diverse cultural models and how they may shape parents' involvement in their children's sport (e.g., Chung & Green, 2021; Lev et al., 2020; Rynne et al., 2022). There remains a need for further research on the parenting practices, attitudes, and beliefs of sport parents across different contexts to promote

culturally relevant initiatives to enhance parental involvement in sport (Burke et al., 2021; Knight, 2019).

Conclusion

In conclusion, this scoping review responded to calls for further research examining EI among sport parents (e.g., Harwood & Knight, 2015; Teques et al., 2018) by identifying in the literature what is known about parents' EI in youth sport. Previous research has suggested that parents' EI, specifically their emotion knowledge and abilities, may influence how they manage the emotional demands of youth sport. Our findings suggest that parents demonstrate EI by identifying their emotions, empathizing with their children, and using their knowledge of themselves, their children, and the sport environment to provide emotional support and employ a range of strategies to manage their own emotions. Ultimately, these findings may be useful in developing future sport parent education and support initiatives that focus on enhancing parents' tendency to behave in emotionally intelligent ways.

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CHAPTER 4: PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Developing A Web-based Program to Enhance Ice Hockey Parents' Emotional Intelligence

A version of this chapter is being prepared for submission to be published:

Pynn, S. R., & Holt, N. L. Developing a web-based program to enhance ice hockey parents' emotional intelligence.

I designed the program logic model, designed the SPECS program website, created the program's learning modules and educational content, and prepared the initial draft of the manuscript. N. L. Holt was the supervisory author and provided feedback on the development of the program and contributed to the manuscript preparation and revisions. Prior to submission for publication, co-investigators on the funding grant will be invited to contribute to the manuscript and may be included as co-authors.

Developing A Web-based Program to Enhance Ice Hockey Parents' Emotional Intelligence

Youth sport parent education and support has become an increasingly important matter for researchers, sport organizations, and sport psychology practitioners (Knight, 2019). For example, representatives from Canadian Provincial Sport Organizations identified parent education as a top priority for their organizations (Holt et al., 2018). Specifically, these representatives highlighted the need for youth sport parent research to inform parent education initiatives and knowledge that could help coaches and practitioners effectively work with parents to create more positive experiences for children in sport. The purpose of this article is to describe the development of a web-based education and support program designed for youth ice hockey parents.

Whereas some sport parent education initiatives have been developed, and some promising results have been reported (see Burke et al., 2021 for a review), many existing programs are based on in-person delivery methods. This can create challenges for program attendance and completion because sport parents often have extremely hectic schedules (Knight, 2019). Given that sport psychology practitioners have shown an increased interest in the use of technology in service delivery (Price et al., 2022), it seems timely and relevant to create a web-based program for youth sport parents. In designing the program reported in this paper, we also considered that existing (in-person) sport parent education programs have been criticized for either lacking a strong theoretical basis or failing to specify how theory informed program development (Burke et al., 2022). Theory can provide a guide for intervention research, enabling researchers to identify constructs that may influence behavioural change (Prestwich et al., 2015).

We created the Sport Parent Emotions and Coping Support, or SPECS, program (www.specsprogram.ca) to address these limitations in the literature. The main objective of

SPECS is to deliver evidence-informed education and support to minor ice hockey parents in order to promote more emotionally intelligent sport parenting behaviours. The SPECS program uses online, asynchronous delivery that allows parents to learn at their own pace using a device (mobile, tablet, or computer) of their choosing. From a theoretical perspective, SPECS is based on the tripartite model of emotional intelligence (EI; Mikolajczak, 2009).

SPECS Program Development

Theoretical Framework

EI is a person's "ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 189). EI has the potential to positively influence an individual's occupational, physical, and psychological well-being (Meyer & Fletcher, 2007). The tripartite model of EI has three levels: knowledge, ability, and trait. The knowledge level represents what an individual knows about emotions, the ability level represents the skills or abilities an individual possesses and can employ in emotional situations, and the trait level represents what an individual typically does when faced with an emotional situation (Mikolajczak, 2009).

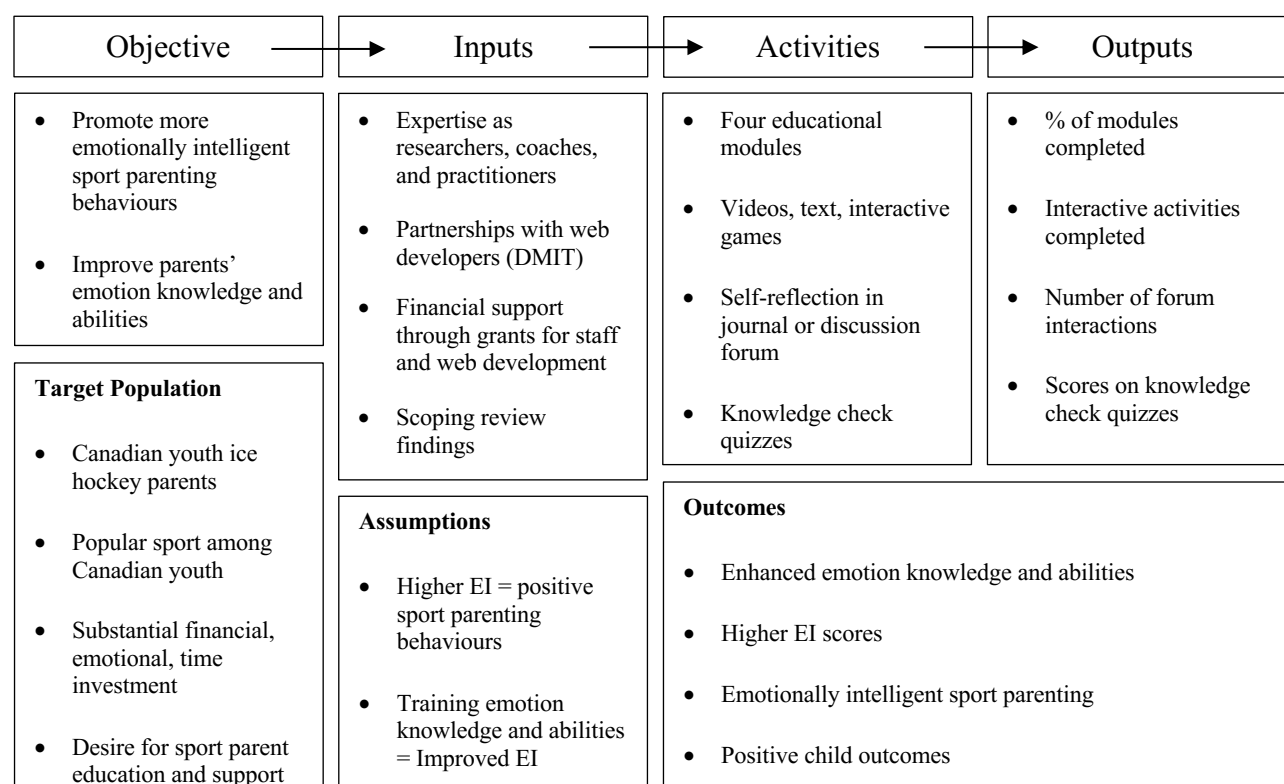
Evidence suggests that training an individuals' emotion knowledge and abilities can lead to improvements in trait EI (Campo et al., 2015; Kotsou et al., 2011). The SPECS program was designed to increase parents' emotion knowledge and abilities in order to promote more emotionally intelligent behaviours in the context of their children's ice hockey participation. Following Laborde and colleagues (2018), the program targets five dimensions of EI (i.e., parents' ability to identify, express, understand, use, and regulate their own and others' emotions; Brasseur et al., 2013; Laborde et al., 2018).

The SPECS Logic Model

Logic models are tools to guide program development and evaluation and can be used to foster thinking, planning, and communication about the goals of a program (W. K. Kellogg Foundation, 2004). Logic models specify how the components of a program are connected to the intended outcomes (Musoke et al., 2022). We created the SPECS program logic model (Figure 4.1) prior to developing the program to depict its objectives, target population, inputs, theoretical assumptions, activities, outputs, and intended outcomes.

Figure 4.1

The SPECS Program Logic Model



Note. Outputs are measured using the SPECS program learning management system.

Objective and Target Population

The main objective of SPECS was to deliver evidence-informed education and support to minor ice hockey parents to promote more emotionally intelligent sport parenting behaviours.

We identified the target population as the parents of youth ice hockey players. This population was targeted for three main reasons. First, ice hockey is a popular sport in Canada. In the 2021-2022 season, there were over 417,000 registered youth ice hockey players (ages 4-18 years) in Canada (Hockey Canada, 2022). Second, supporting their children's involvement in ice hockey can be challenging for parents financially, logistically, and emotionally (Lajoie & Valjje, 2020). Finally, problematic parenting behaviours in Canadian youth ice hockey settings have been reported in research (Bean et al., 2016) and the media (e.g., Soucy, 2022).

Assumptions

One of the underlying assumptions in developing the program was that more positive parental involvement in sport can be promoted by enhancing parents' EI. There is a small body of empirical evidence that supports this assumption (e.g., Pynn et al., 2019; Teques et al., 2018). Some researchers have claimed EI is a feature of sport parenting expertise (i.e., parental involvement that increases children's chances at achieving positive outcomes and experiences in sport; Harwood & Knight, 2015). Another assumption was that training sport parents' emotion knowledge and abilities would lead to improvements in trait EI. Emotion knowledge and emotional abilities may exist independently. For example, a person might know how they should behave in an emotional situation (i.e., knowledge), but may not possess the skills or abilities to react accordingly (i.e., ability). On the other hand, a person might possess the skills to manage their emotions, yet do not have the self-knowledge or social awareness to employ those strategies at the right time or in an effective way. As such, the SPECS program activities and outputs were designed to focus on enhancing parents' emotion knowledge and emotion abilities.

Inputs

Inputs are the resources available that enable program development and implementation. Although the research team possessed knowledge and experience from years of studying sport parenting, coaching youth sport, and engaging in applied sport psychology work, additional inputs were required to develop the SPECS program.

A critical input was a partnership with the Digital Media and Information Technology (DMIT) department of a local polytechnic college. This partnership added individuals with the technical skills required to develop the web-based program (i.e., a DMIT student group assisted with creating the website, coding, and setting up the learning management system [LMS]). Funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and Sport Canada's Sport Participation Research Initiative supported the development of the SPECS program. This financial support was used to support research assistants and purchase web hosting and course creation software. Finally, during the early stages of program development, we conducted a scoping review of the sport parenting literature (Chapter 3), which informed the educational content of the SPECS program. Specifically, we identified sport parenting behaviours that reflected the dimensions of EI, areas where parents may need more support, and developed the program's learning objectives accordingly.

Program Activities

The activities portion of the logic model describes the tools and actions of the planned program. The SPECS activities were developed around four online educational modules. The modules targeted the five dimensions of EI (i.e., identifying, expressing, understanding, using, and managing emotions) and included opportunities for parents to write self-reflections, participate in an anonymous discussion forum, and complete knowledge check quizzes. Each module contained videos, text, and interactive games to provide information about emotions, ice

hockey, and parenting (enhancing knowledge), as well as tools and strategies that parents could practice outside of the program (enhancing abilities).

Outputs and Outcomes

Outputs are the direct results, or the “main deliverables” of the program activities (Sartorius, 1991). For the SPECS program, we implemented an LMS to track participants’ outputs. The LMS allowed us to measure the number of modules parents complete, their participation in the interactive games, number of discussion forum interactions, and scores on knowledge check quizzes.

These outputs were intended to lead to the program’s beneficial short- and long-term outcomes. Program outcomes are short- and long-term indicators of a program’s success (Musoke et al., 2022). The intended outcomes for the SPECS program were changes in parents’ emotion knowledge, abilities, and traits, which will subsequently be assessed in an evaluation study (Chapter 5) using a measurement of trait EI (e.g., Profile of Emotional Competences; Brasseur et al., 2013). Moving forward, program outcomes may also be interpreted based on changes in parents’ thoughts and behaviours in the sport environment. By the end of the program, for example, it is expected that parents will be able to identify their own and others’ emotions, understand the causes and consequences of emotions in sport, use emotions to guide their thinking and actions, and manage their own and others’ emotions more effectively, which in the long-term, will contribute to more positive outcomes for children in sport.

SPECS Educational Content

As noted earlier, the SPECS program was divided into four modules based on the dimensions of EI: (1) Identifying and expressing emotions, (2) understanding emotions, (3) using emotions, and (4) managing emotions (see Table 4.1). Each online module contained the same types of materials: videos or text introducing the topic, definitions related to the lesson, 1-2 self-

reflection activities, a ‘take home’ activity for parents to use after they complete the module, and a knowledge check quiz.

Table 4.1

SPECS Learning Objectives and Activities

| Module | Learning objectives | Activity examples |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1: Identifying and expressing emotions | Describe the concept of emotional intelligence. Describe their own emotional reactions in ice hockey. Identify child’s emotions in ice hockey. | Video: Introduction to emotional intelligence. Self-reflection: How do you know when your child is upset? Interactive game: Enhancing empathy |
| 2: Understanding emotions | Understand the causes and consequences of theirs and their child’s emotions. Create an understanding emotional climate: 1) Identify parenting style, 2) communicate about goals, 3) learn about ice hockey. | Video: Parenting styles Self-reflection: Sharing and communicating goals Interactive game: The rules of hockey |
| 3: Using emotions | Use emotion to guide thinking and actions. Use information about child, ice hockey, and emotions to provide emotional support. | Video: Why do we need emotions? Self-reflection: How do you provide emotional support? Interactive game: The car-ride home. |
| 4: Managing emotions | Employ strategies to manage their emotional reactions in relation to ice hockey. | Text: Emotion regulation strategies Self-reflection: What is acceptable arena behaviour? Take-home activity: Traffic light system. |

Note. Examples of the SPECS activities are available upon request to the corresponding author.

Reflections and Recommendations

The SPECS program was developed to provide more evidence-informed education and support to youth ice hockey parents to promote more emotionally intelligent sport parenting behaviours. Sport psychology practitioners and coaches may be interested in delivering the SPECS program, or a variation of EI training, to sport parents they work with. Further, as more evidence-based parent education initiatives emerge both in research and practice, we offer some recommendations based on the development of the SPECS program.

First, we recommend that sport parent education and support initiatives be developed using logic models that are informed by theoretical frameworks. A logic model can serve as a

roadmap that connects theory to the program's activities and desired outcomes. This recommendation addresses criticisms regarding the limited use of theory in sport parent education research (e.g., Burke et al., 2021). To guide the development of future parent education and support initiatives, the process we used to develop the SPECS program, adapted from the Logical Framework Approach (Musoke et al., 2022; Sartorius, 1991), is recommended:

- 1) Set program objectives based on a needs assessment of the target population,
- 2) define indicators of the program's success (outcomes),
- 3) define critical theoretical assumptions that underlie the project,
- 4) outline activities required to achieve the program's objectives,
- 5) identify how to verify the program's accomplishments (outputs),
- 6) identify the resources required for program implementation (inputs).

Second, sport parent education and support initiatives should be tailored to specific sports. A key principle of developing evidence-based initiatives is knowledge tailoring, which involves adapting generic knowledge to the particular needs of the user (Graham et al., 2006). Previous research has highlighted the importance of tailoring sport parent education and support initiatives to specific sports and age groups to maximize impact (Kwon et al., 2020). The SPECS program content was tailored to ice hockey parents. However, we structured the content and format of the SPECS in such a way that it could be adapted for other sports without creating entirely new programming. For example, the "Rules of Hockey" activity in Module 2 could easily be adapted to the "Rules of Soccer" and images of children in an ice hockey arena could be replaced with images of children on a soccer pitch.

Lastly, we recommend identifying potential partnerships that can aid in the development of sport parent education and support initiatives. A critical aspect of the SPECS program

development was the partnership with a student group from a local polytechnic college to develop the program's website for their end-of-term capstone project. Partnering with a student group was a mutually beneficial, cost-effective way to develop the program. However, there were challenges associated with working with a student group, such as the students being constrained by the requirements of their project and having limited experience in developing certain elements of the program. As such, it is important to identify a potential partner's expectations and capacity to complete the project before entering a partnership.

Previous research has highlighted the benefits of partnering with sport organizations to develop and deliver sport parent education and support initiatives (e.g., Thrower et al., 2019). Partnering with a sport organization may be useful when it comes to developing sport-specific content, as they can provide insight into what the expectations are for parents in their organizations and areas where parents need assistance. In developing the SPECS program, we did not engage with local sport organizations until after the program was developed. However, we learned that local ice hockey organizations were interested in adapting the program with their own branding (e.g., logos, colors, images) to tailor the program specifically for the parents in their organization. Thus, partnering with such organizations prior to program development would be beneficial as they may add to the inputs available to develop the program.

Conclusion

Given the profound influence parents have on their children's youth sport experience, coaches, sport psychology practitioners, and researchers have shown an increasing interest in sport parent education and support. This chapter aimed to describe the development of the SPECS program and provide recommendations for the development of future parent education and support programs. For coaches and sport psychology practitioners, we presented a novel, web-based approach to working with sport parents (i.e., targeting their emotion knowledge and

abilities). For researchers, we provided an example of how theory (the tripartite model of EI) and logic was used to inform the development of a sport parent education and support initiative. We encourage researchers to further explore the use of logic models and application of theory in the development, delivery, and evaluation of sport parent education and support initiatives.

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CHAPTER 5: MIXED METHODS PROGRAM EVALUATION

Enhancing Ice Hockey Parents' Emotional Intelligence Through a Web-Based Parent Education and Support Program

A version of this chapter is being prepared for submission to be published:

Pynn, S. R., Ruissen, G. R., Mosewich, A. D., & Holt, N. L. Enhancing ice hockey parents' emotional intelligence through a web-based parent education and support program.

I conceptualized and designed the study; collected, analyzed, and interpreted the data; and prepared the initial draft of the manuscript. G. R. Ruissen provided feedback on the data analysis and contributed to the manuscript preparation and revisions. A. D. Mosewich provided feedback on the concept and design of the study and contributed to the manuscript preparation and revisions. N. L. Holt was the supervisory author and provided feedback on the concept and design of the study, the interpretation of the data, and contributed to the manuscript preparation and revisions. Prior to submission for publication, co-investigators on the funding grant will be invited to contribute to the manuscript and may be included as co-authors.

Enhancing Ice Hockey Parents' Emotional Intelligence Through a Web-Based Parent Education and Support Program

Parents are facilitators of their children's sporting experiences (Dorsch et al., 2022), providing the necessary tangible and emotional resources to support their children's participation in sport (Knight, Dorsch et al., 2016). Parents also play a critical role in supporting their children's psychosocial development through sport (Holt et al., 2017; Kramers et al., 2023). For example, parents can influence how children understand and interpret their own sport experiences by acting as role models of positive and negative behaviours, attitudes, and beliefs (Danioni et al., 2017; Hodge et al., 2017). Given parents' significant influence, sport parent education and support has become an important matter for youth sport stakeholders (Holt et al., 2018; Knight, 2019).

In Canada, some National Sport Organizations (NSOs) have mandatory parent education initiatives. The current study focused on the sport of ice hockey, which had over 417,000 children (aged 4-18 years) registered for the 2021-2022 season (Hockey Canada, 2022). Instances of negative parental behaviours, or *rink rage*, in Canadian youth ice hockey settings have been reported both in research (Bean et al., 2016; Heipel, 2022; Jeffery-Tosoni et al., 2015) and in media (e.g., Soucy, 2022). This is despite the fact that Canadian youth ice hockey organizations mandate that parents complete the Respect in Sport Parent Program (RiSPP) prior to the start of each season to "encourage positive sport behaviours and provide insight for parents into the roles of coaches and officials" (Hockey Canada, 2022). The RiSPP is a web-based program designed to establish "a standard of behaviour for all parents and create a more rewarding, safe and respectful environment for everyone involved" (Respect Group, 2023). Although the RiSPP was not evidence-based in its development, recent research has

demonstrated the program can have a positive impact on youth ice hockey players' psychosocial outcomes (Tamminen et al., 2020). However, RiSPP's influence on parents' perceptions, attitudes, or knowledge has yet to be examined (Tamminen et al., 2020).

The current study aimed to deliver and evaluate a sport parent education and support program that was developed and tailored specifically for youth ice hockey parents in Canada. Ice hockey was selected due to its popularity in Canada, the financial, logistical, and emotional challenges that have been associated with being an ice hockey parent (Bean et al., 2019; Lajoie & Valji, 2020), and the examples of rink rage that have been reported in research and media (e.g., Bean et al., 2016; Soucy, 2022).

The parent education and support program – named SPECS (Sport Parents Emotions & Coping Support) – was guided by the construct of emotional intelligence (EI; Mikolajczak, 2009). EI has been defined as an individual's "ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 189). According to the tripartite model (Mikolajczak, 2009), EI operates on three levels: knowledge, ability, and trait. The knowledge level represents what an individual knows about emotions, the ability level represents the skills or abilities an individual possesses and can employ in emotional situations, and the trait level represents what an individual typically does when faced with an emotional situation (Mikolajczak, 2009).

Additionally, EI is comprised of five dimensions: identification, expression, understanding, using, and managing emotions (Brasseur et al., 2013; Nelis et al., 2009). Identification involves being able to perceive emotion in oneself and others. Expression involves expressing emotions in a socially acceptable manner. Understanding involves being able to understand the triggering factors, causes, and consequences of emotions. Using emotion involves

being able to use emotion information to guide thoughts and actions. Lastly, managing emotions involves being able to regulate one's own and others' emotions as they relate to an individual's well-being and context.

The construct of EI was selected to guide the program because it has been associated with positive sport parenting behaviours (see Lauer et al., 2010; Teques et al., 2018; Pynn et al., 2019). Teques and colleagues (2018), for instance, found that sport parents with higher levels of EI were more likely to employ appropriate coping strategies and engage in desirable behaviours during their children's participation in competitive sport. Furthermore, certain parenting behaviours that are viewed favorably by athletes, such as parents' ability to read and react to their child's mood and manage their own emotions during competitions, align with dimensions of EI (i.e., identification and managing emotions). As such, targeting parents' EI may be a useful framework for helping parents manage the stressful demands of being an ice hockey parent and promoting more positive parenting behaviours.

It is important to note that, whereas EI has not been used previously to inform sport parent education and support programs, other programs targeted at sport parents have been presented and evaluated. Such programs have covered a wide range of topics (e.g., athlete development, types of parental involvement and behaviours, identifying abuse, and managing expectations) and have been delivered via both face-to-face and web-based methods (see Burke et al., 2021 for a review). This growing body of sport parent education and support research suggests that these types of programs can have a positive impact on both parent and child outcomes, such as parent-child communication (e.g., Azimi & Tamminen, 2020), parents' supportive and pressuring behaviours (Dorsch et al., 2017), parents' sideline communication

(Sampol et al., 2019) and parents' attitudes, beliefs, and values toward sport (Thrower et al., 2017).

Despite some promising evidence about the effects of sport parent education and support programs, a limitation of the existing research base is the minimal use of theory in the development, delivery, and evaluation of such programs. Burke and colleagues (2021) observed that programs either lack a strong theoretical basis or fail to specify *how* a theory was used to achieve and assess intended outcomes (Burke et al., 2021). The current program takes a theoretical perspective and targets an underlying construct (EI) that, if improved, may influence parents' more general parenting styles (e.g., Costa et al., 2018) and their behaviours in the context of sport (e.g., Teques et al., 2018).

SPECS Program

The SPECS program (www.specsprogram.ca) is an evidence-informed parent education and support program developed to enhance youth ice hockey parents' EI. The program was developed using a program logic model (see Chapter 4), which identified how the components of the program, such as the target population, theoretical assumptions, and program activities were connected to the program's intended short- and long-term outcomes (Musoke et al., 2022). In addition to the logic model, a scoping review of the existing sport parenting literature was conducted to contextualize sport parenting behaviours within the construct of EI (Chapter 3). The findings of the scoping review informed the educational content of the program.

The SPECS program consists of four online educational modules based on the dimensions of the tripartite model of EI: (1) Identifying and expressing emotions, (2) understanding emotions, (3) using emotions, and (4) managing emotions. Each online module contains videos or text introducing the topic, important definitions related to the lesson, 1-2 self-reflection activities, a 'take home' activity, and a knowledge check quiz. Throughout the

modules, parents are prompted to engage in reflection activities in a journal or with other parents using the anonymous discussion forum. An overview of the modules is presented in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1

SPECS Learning Objectives and Activities

| Module | Learning objectives | Activity examples |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1: Identifying and expressing emotions | Describe the concept of emotional intelligence. Describe their own emotional reactions in ice hockey. Identify child's emotions in ice hockey. | Video: Introduction to emotional intelligence. Self-reflection: How do you know when your child is upset? |
| 2: Understanding emotions | Understand the causes and consequences of theirs and their child's emotions. Create an understanding emotional climate: 1) Identify parenting style, 2) communicate about goals, 3) learn about ice hockey. | Quiz: What's your parenting style? Video: Understanding hockey. |
| 3: Using emotions | Use emotion to guide thinking and actions. Use information about child, ice hockey, and emotions to provide emotional support. | Video: Why do we need emotions? Interactive activity: The car-ride home. |
| 4: Managing emotions | Employ strategies to manage their emotional reactions in relation to ice hockey. | Self-reflection: What is acceptable arena behaviour? Take-home activity: Traffic light system. |

Note. Detailed descriptions of the SPECS activities are available upon request to the corresponding author.

The aim of the program was to enhance parents' EI. It was hypothesized that parents completing the SPECS program would see greater increases of trait EI compared to a control group. Using a mixed methods program evaluation design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018), the research was guided by three questions: (1) To what extent does the SPECS program improve youth ice hockey parents' EI? (2) What are parents' perceptions of the program? (3) How do parents' perceptions of the program inform any changes in EI resulting from completion of the SPECS program? The first question was addressed via quantitative methods, the second question was addressed via qualitative methods, and the third question was addressed via the integration of qualitative and quantitative data.

Methods

Design and Approach

A sequential explanatory mixed methods program evaluation design was used to deliver and evaluate the SPECS program (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Underpinned by a critical realist approach, this study was conducted with a realist ontology and a constructivist epistemology (i.e., there is a real-world that exists independently of our constructions; however, human knowledge is socially constructed and cannot be accessed objectively; Archer, 2007; Maxwell, 2012; Wiltshire, 2018). For critical realists, the use of multiple data sources provides an avenue to enhance explanation, interpretation, and understanding of unobservable processes and phenomenon (Ryba et al., 2020). For the current study, the use of qualitative interviews helped to explain how participation in the SPECS program influenced (or did not influence) parents' EI. Critical realists view individuals' ideas, meanings, feelings, and intentions to be as salient as physical objects and processes (Maxwell, 2012), therefore both quantitative and qualitative data sources were viewed as equally important.

Participants

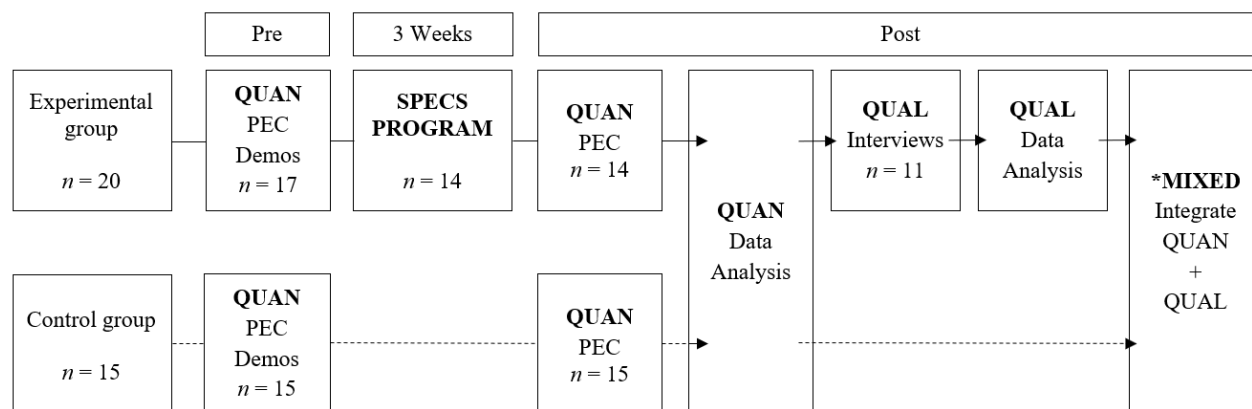
Upon receiving institutional REB approval, 35 Canadian parents with at least one child (age 13-15) who currently participated in youth ice hockey were recruited through emails, social media, and sport organization newsletters (Appendix D). Eligible parents were randomly assigned to one of two groups: the experimental group ($n = 20$) or the control group ($n = 15$). Among the 20 parents in the experimental group, 14 parents (11 mothers, 3 fathers, $M_{age} = 47.79$ years, $SD = 4.96$) completed all four educational modules and both pre and post-test questionnaires. Two parents completed only two modules, and four parents only completed one module and did not complete the post-test questionnaire. These parents were not included in the

analysis. Parents in the control group (12 mothers, 3 fathers, $M_{age} = 44.26$ years, $SD = 4.51$) did not complete any modules but all completed both pre- and post-test questionnaires.

The parents in the experimental group (13 Caucasian, 1 Chinese) who completed all procedures had been ice hockey parents for an average of 10.00 years ($SD = 2.90$). One parent played ice hockey as a child, nine had youth sport experience (but not with ice hockey), and four had no youth sport experience. Parents in the control group (all Caucasian) had an average of 9.20 years ($SD = 3.60$) of experience as ice hockey parents. Five of the parents played ice hockey as children, six had youth sport experience, and four had no youth sport experience. All the parents in the study had previously completed the RiSPP.

Procedure

The sequential explanatory procedures of the program evaluation are outlined in Figure 5.1. Upon recruitment, participant consent was obtained, and the online pre-test questionnaire was administered. Parents in the experimental group were given access to the program website and instructions to complete the modules in a two-week timeframe. Parents were also encouraged to complete no more than one module on any given day, allowing time in between modules to practice what they learned before moving on. Parents in the control group did not receive access to the program or any educational materials until after the study concluded. Three weeks after completing the pre-test questionnaire (i.e., one week after parents in the experimental group completed the program), participants from both groups were administered the post-test questionnaire. Eleven parents (8 mothers, 3 fathers, $M_{age} = 46.64$ years, $SD = 4.35$) from the experimental group were recruited to participate in individual semi structured interviews. Three parents did not respond to the request to be interviewed. In the final phase, the quantitative data and qualitative data were analyzed independently and integrated.

Figure 5.1*Sequential Explanatory Approach to the SPECS Program Evaluation*

Note. PEC = Profile of Emotional Competence (Brasseur et al., 2013). Dotted lines represent control group procedures.

*Point of interface between QUAN and QUAL.

Data Generation

Three sources of data were generated: 1) Quantitative pre- and post-test questionnaires were used to assess changes in parents' trait EI, 2) qualitative individual semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain parents' perceptions regarding the content, delivery, and effectiveness of the program, and 3) individual user statistics were collected from the program website to assess program fidelity.

Questionnaires

Demographics. Demographic information (i.e., age, gender, ethnicity), family information (i.e., number of children, children's gender, household income), and sport-specific information (i.e., youth sport history and experience with sport parent education) were collected as part of the pre-test questionnaire materials.

Trait EI. Parents' levels of trait EI were measured in both the pre- and post-test questionnaires using the 50-item Profile of Emotional Competences (PEC; Brasseur et al., 2013;

Appendix E). The PEC is a measure that aligns with the tripartite model of EI (Mikolajczak, 2009) and has two scales: intrapersonal and interpersonal, with each scale containing five subscales dedicated to a dimension of EI (i.e., identification, expression, understanding, using, and managing emotions). Each subscale contained five items and parents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with each item on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from one (*strongly disagree*) to five (*strongly agree*). The measure provided three scores: a global trait EI score, an intrapersonal score, and an interpersonal score. The internal consistency reliability of the measure has shown to be satisfactory with the two scales ($\alpha = >0.84$) and global scores ($\alpha = >0.88$), and has previously been used with parent (e.g., Bayot et al., 2021; $\alpha = 0.79$) and athlete (Campo et al., 2019; $\alpha = >0.86$; Schutz et al., 2020; $\alpha = 0.84-0.91$) populations. The Cronbach's alphas for the current sample were 0.90 (pre-test) and 0.89 (post-test).

Individual Interviews

Parents in the experimental group were invited to participate in individual semi-structured interviews following their completion of the SPECS program. Prior to recruitment, a pilot interview was conducted with an ice hockey parent not connected to the study to refine the interview guide (Appendix F). Parents were asked about the content (e.g., what module or activity stood out the most to you?), delivery (e.g., "How easy/hard was it to use the online platform?"), and perceived effectiveness (e.g., "Do you think the strategies you learned will be helpful in the future?") of the program. The interviews were conducted online via Zoom and lasted an average of 40 minutes. The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim, producing 148 pages of single-spaced written data.

Program Fidelity

The SPECS program was developed with a learning management system (LMS). The LMS was used as a fidelity measure to monitor participants' engagement in the program to assess the degree to which the program was delivered and received as intended (Gearing et al., 2011). Specifically, the LMS tracked how often each participant logged into the program, the percentage of the modules they completed, the length of time required to complete each module and activity, and the number of times the user interacted in the discussion forum.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Strand

Statistical analysis was performed with SPSS version 28.0. Changes in trait EI were analyzed using a 2 (group) x 2 (time) mixed ANOVA (Gamst et al., 2008). The between-subjects factor was group (experimental, control), and the within-subject factor was time (pre-test, post-test). Following significant group x time interaction effects, two separate 2 x 2 mixed ANOVAs were conducted on intra- and interpersonal EI scores to assess further differences. Post hoc linearly independent pairwise comparisons were used to analyze simple effects where there were significant interactions.

Qualitative Strand

Interview data were analyzed using Miles and colleagues' (2020) approach to qualitative data analysis. This iterative approach followed three major "flows" of activity: Data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The process of data condensation involved 'first cycle' and 'second cycle' coding (Miles et al., 2020). During first cycle coding, initial codes were assigned to individual data units in each interview. During second cycle coding, recurring patterns were analyzed, and similar codes were clustered together to create a smaller number of themes. In addition to coding, jottings and analytic memos were

used throughout the entire data collection and analysis process. The second major flow of activity, data display, began during the coding process. A series of data network displays (or ‘mind maps’) were created to arrange the data to note potential patterns and themes. As the coding process progressed, the data displays were continuously refined to reflect emerging patterns and new insights. The third major flow of activity, conclusion drawing and verification, involved drawing meaning from the patterns and themes and assembling a coherent understanding of the data (Miles et al., 2020).

Methodological Rigor

Specific strategies were embedded within the research design to ensure the quality and credibility of this study. To address the quality of the mixed methods aspects of the study, warrantedness, transparency of procedures, the process of integration, and the philosophical lens of the study were identified a priori (Onwuegbuzie & Poth, 2016). Before starting the study procedures, the SPECS program and questionnaires were discussed with co-investigators, colleagues, and one ice hockey parent not connected to the study to ensure that everything within the website and online questionnaires functioned properly. A pilot interview was also conducted with the ice hockey parent. Critical reflection was fostered throughout the research process using concurrent data generation and analysis, regular discussions between the co-investigators, and a reflexive journal maintained by the first author to keep track of unfolding ideas as the study progressed.

Results

Program Fidelity

Parents were considered to have completed the program as it was intended only if they completed 100% of the modules. Parents who did not complete all the modules were not

included in the quantitative analysis or invited to complete a qualitative interview. Details of participants' program engagement can be found in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2

LMS Engagement Statistics for the SPECS Program

| Participant | Logged-in | Complete | Module (mins) | | | | Forum | |
|-------------|-----------|----------|---------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | Days | % | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | Total | Posts |
| Parent 1 | 3 | 100 | 67 | 18 | 4 | 13 | 102 | 0 |
| Parent 2 | 3 | 100 | 17 | 25 | 11 | 9 | 62 | 1 |
| Parent 3 | 3 | 100 | 21 | 16 | 18 | 13 | 68 | 0 |
| Parent 4 | 5 | 100 | 19 | 39 | 10 | 34 | 102 | 2 |
| Parent 5 | 4 | 100 | 55 | 46 | 28 | 32 | 161 | 5 |
| Parent 6 | 4 | 100 | 30 | 50 | 34 | 12 | 126 | 4 |
| Parent 7 | 3 | 100 | 20 | 20 | 11 | 12 | 63 | 3 |
| Parent 8 | 4 | 100 | 17 | 55 | 7 | 44 | 123 | 0 |
| Parent 9 | 6 | 100 | 25 | 47 | 14 | 26 | 112 | 4 |
| Parent 10 | 2 | 100 | 19 | 19 | 30 | 4 | 72 | 0 |
| Parent 11 | 2 | 100 | 38 | 18 | 51 | 23 | 130 | 1 |
| Parent 12 | 2 | 100 | 19 | 21 | 11 | 8 | 59 | 0 |
| Parent 13 | 5 | 100 | 12 | 18 | 13 | 9 | 52 | 0 |
| Parent 14 | 1 | 100 | 61 | 27 | 7 | 43 | 138 | 0 |
| <i>Mean</i> | 3.36 | | 30.00 | 29.93 | 17.79 | 20.14 | 97.86 | |
| <i>SD</i> | 1.34 | | 17.42 | 13.67 | 12.76 | 12.98 | 33.77 | |

Note. The program was completed as intended if the participants completed 100% of the modules.

Quantitative Results

The quantitative strand of the mixed methods program evaluation involved two groups of ice hockey parents (experimental, control; $N = 29$) who completed the PEC at two time points

(pre, post), three weeks apart. All effects found in the quantitative strand met the equality of covariances matrices as tested by Box's *M* test and the equality of error variances as evaluated by Levene's Test.

A summary of the 2 x 2 mixed ANOVA results is presented in Table 5.3. The main effect of time for trait EI ($F [1, 27] = 4.39, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .14$) was statistically significant, while the main effect of trait EI between groups ($F [1, 27] = .184, p = .67, \eta_p^2 = .01$) was not statistically significant. However, the effect of the program on trait EI can be best understood in the context of the significant group x time interaction ($F [1, 27] = 5.48, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .17$). The graph of the interaction is presented in Figure 5.2. Simple effects analysis indicated that the experimental group's trait EI increased significantly from pre- to post-test ($p = .005, \eta_p^2 = .261, d_{RM} = .43$). The control group reported no significant changes ($p = .861, \eta_p^2 = .001, d_{RM} = .02$).

Table 5.3

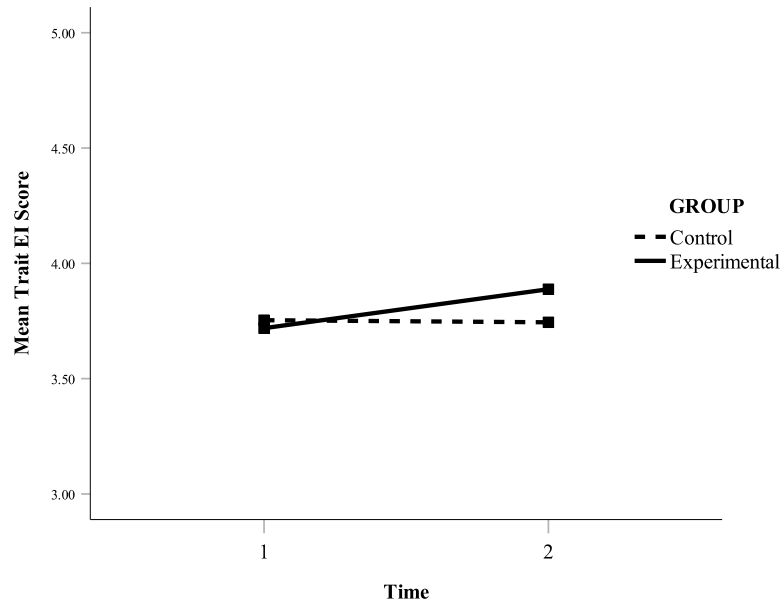
Results of the 2 x 2 mixed ANOVA^a

| | Effect | $F (1, 27)$ | p | η_p^2 |
|------------------|--------|-------------|------|------------|
| Trait EI | G | .184 | .671 | .007 |
| | T | 4.39* | .046 | .140 |
| | G x T | 5.48* | .027 | .169 |
| Intrapersonal EI | G | .808 | .377 | .029 |
| | T | 3.39 | .076 | .112 |
| | G x T | 5.34* | .029 | .165 |
| Interpersonal EI | G | .070 | .794 | .003 |
| | T | 3.60 | .068 | .118 |
| | G x T | 3.54 | .071 | .116 |

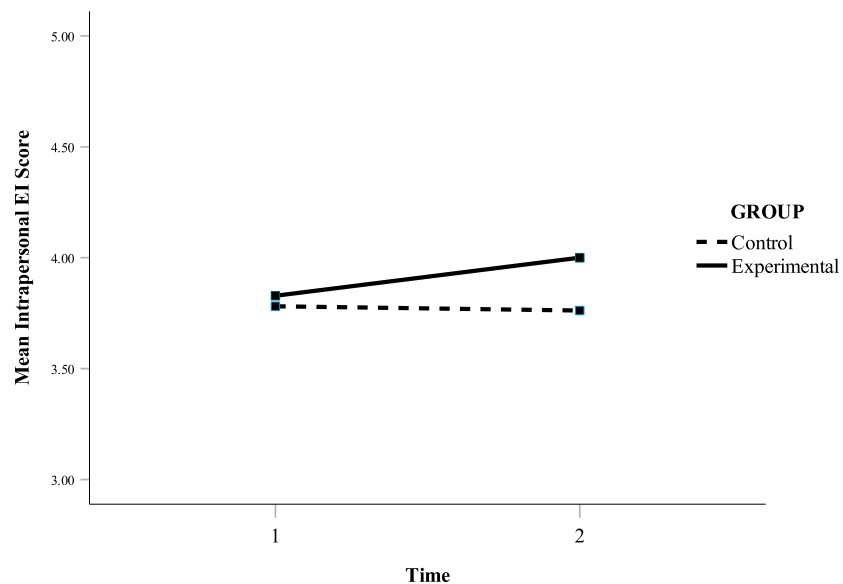
Note. $N = 29$. G = group; T = time.

^a Separate 2 (group) x 2 (time) mixed ANOVAs were performed on trait, intra-, and interpersonal EI.

* $p < .05$.

Figure 5.2*Group x Time Interaction for Trait EI*

For intrapersonal EI, the main effects for both time ($F [1, 27] = 3.39, p = .076, \eta_p^2 = .11$) and group ($F [1, 27] = .808, p = .377, \eta_p^2 = .03$) were not statistically significant. However, there was a significant group x time interaction ($F [1, 27] = 5.34, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .17$; Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3*Group x Time Interaction for Intrapersonal EI*

Furthermore, the simple effects analysis indicated that the experimental group's intrapersonal EI increased significantly from pre- to post-test ($p = .008$, $\eta_p^2 = .236$, $d_{RM} = .36$), whereas the control group reported no significant changes ($p = .739$, $\eta_p^2 = .004$, $d_{RM} = .03$).

For interpersonal EI, the main effects for both time ($F [1, 27] = 3.39$, $p = .076$, $\eta_p^2 = .12$) and group ($F [1, 27] = .808$, $p = .377$, $\eta_p^2 = .00$) were not statistically significant. The group x time interaction ($F [1, 27] = 3.54$, $p = .071$, $\eta_p^2 = .12$; Figure 5.4) was also not significant. Although the interaction was not statistically significant, we decided to probe the interaction due to its effect size being similar to the group x time interactions for trait and intrapersonal EI. Simple effects indicated a slight increase from pre- to post-test for the experimental group's interpersonal EI with small to medium effects ($d_{RM} = .43$). Means and standard deviations are presented in Table 5.4.

Figure 5.4

Group x Time Interaction for Interpersonal EI

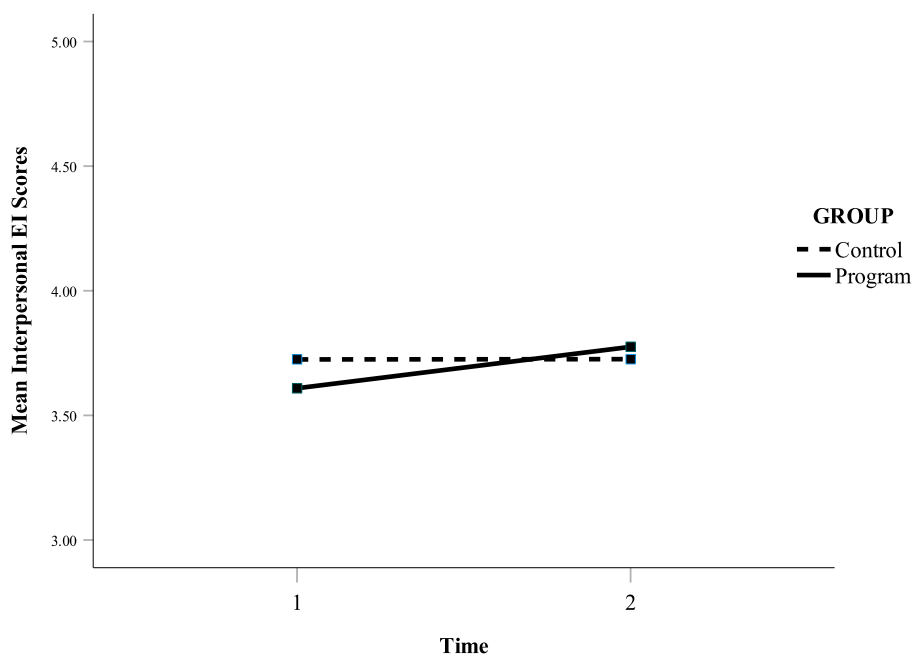


Table 5.4

Means and Standard Deviations for Parents' Trait EI, Intrapersonal EI, and Interpersonal EI

| Variable | Control | | SPECS | |
|------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
| Trait EI | | | | |
| Time 1 | 3.75 | 0.35 | 3.72 | 0.39 |
| Time 2 | 3.74 | 0.34 | 3.88 | 0.32 |
| Intrapersonal EI | | | | |
| Time 1 | 3.78 | 0.48 | 3.83 | 0.48 |
| Time 2 | 3.76 | 0.44 | 4.00 | 0.35 |
| Interpersonal EI | | | | |
| Time 1 | 3.72 | 0.35 | 3.61 | 0.35 |
| Time 2 | 3.73 | 0.34 | 3.78 | 0.36 |

Note. $N = 29$. Control = control group ($n = 15$); SPECS = experimental group ($n = 14$).

Qualitative Results

During interviews, parents shared their thoughts and feelings regarding the program's content, impactful "lightbulb moments" they experienced, and the program's delivery.

Program Content

Relevance. Parents found the content of the SPECS program relevant and timely given the emotional demands they were currently facing as ice hockey parents. In describing the relevance of the program, Parent 3 explained that, amid a stressful ice hockey season, SPECS "came to us at a really good time because of where we're at in our situation and what's happening to both of our kids right now." Parent 2's daughter was in the midst of tryouts when he was completing the SPECS program and described how making the team was "do or die" for his daughter's hockey career. The SPECS program helped him during that time: "I felt a little

more emotional, a little more supercharged. I thought that the program did a good job of touching on some very relevant and important aspects of that” (Parent 2).

Parents were able to apply the program content to emotional situations they were experiencing during the season. For instance, Parent 11 recalled using information she learned in the modules during a negative encounter at her son’s hockey game:

This was a very timely thing because I was taking these modules when I was dealing with a really busy weekend for hockey. I don’t think that this guy knew that I was [my son]’s mom because he was yelling swear words at him. So there was a light bulb moment when I thought, you know, “take a pause, maybe don’t react just yet. Just think about what you’re feeling and why.”

Parents found the program more personally relevant compared to other existing sport parent education programs, particularly due to the focus on their own emotions. As one parent explained,

I’m just trying to think of some of the videos that Respect in Sport had, and I’m just picturing the parent banging on the glass or like yelling at the ref or those types of things. I don’t think that the information was useful to me because I’m not aggressive ... But this, like all of us, our emotions will get to us at times. (Parent 10)

Parents could relate to SPECS because it helped them “understand why you’re feeling the way you are” whereas other programs were more focused on “telling [parents] what they should do” (Parent 4). SPECS’ emphasis on emotions allowed parents to delve deeper into their behaviour by learning about “the root of the problem” (Parent 4) as opposed to learning about more generic rules for how to behave.

The specific ice hockey focus of SPECS was positively appraised by parents. One parent said:

I like that it's hockey focused. I thought that was great. Because, for example, if they're talking about track, you know, maybe I don't identify with it. It might have a bit more impact in the long run. I can see myself in this position. I can't see myself at a track meet, but I can see myself in a hockey arena. (Parent 13)

Interestingly, in addition to positively appraising the ice hockey focus, some parents also suggested that some aspects of the program transcended sport parenting. Parent 3 expressed that the SPECS program content could be used more globally: "It's almost like some of the stuff that you're relaying in [SPECS] could be applied to being a hockey parent, but could also be applied to a variety of other contexts." Similarly, Parent 7 felt that SPECS helped them be a better parent overall: "I'm all about how I can be better as a parent in general. Not just a sport parent, but how does my like, emotional state affect my child?"

Tools versus Rules. According to participants, a highlight of the SPECS program was the emphasis on providing tools that could be used to deal with the emotional demands of being an ice hockey parent. As mentioned above, the programs that parents completed in the past tended to focus more on providing rules for how to behave. Parent 3, for example, felt that other existing programs merely "do what every poster in an arena already does" whereas SPECS provided strategies (or tools) to deal with their own and others' emotions.

The program gives you more tools to understand how your own brain is dealing with stuff, you know. I think it was in the fourth module where there was some tools, like take a pause or try to see it from someone else's perspective, that really were kind of enlightening to me. (Parent 11)

Throughout the interviews, parents shared the different strategies they found most useful. The emotion regulation strategies were helpful for coping with stressful situations during competitions. Parent 5, for instance, tended to yell at coaches and referees but started using breathing techniques outlined in the ‘Managing Emotions’ module to calm himself down:

I just remember the ones that resonated. We were in a tournament and the reffing was just atrocious and I just absolutely walked away from it. I walked about and did some breathing. It was a tool I used to control my behaviour.

Alternatively, Parent 7 recalled the “traffic light” and “take a pause” activities that encouraged parents to identify their emotions in stressful situations and engage in mindfulness before reacting.

The traffic light system and ‘take a pause’. I wrote it all down. So the things you could do to ground yourself. Like, “What can I see? What can I hear?” To me, it doesn’t have to just be at the game, which is what I loved about this. These are things that you can use everywhere in life, right? (Parent 7)

In addition to providing useful tools within the modules, the SPECS program included resources that parents could print out or save on their devices for later use. Parent 11 highlighted how she intended to use some of those resources with her children:

There was a page that had steps about how to cope. I even printed it off, like how to do box breathing. There was like four different things that were coping mechanisms for if you’re in a stressful moment. Printable things, teachable things that I can share with my kids too.

Lightbulb Moments

“Lightbulb moments” was a term used by a participant (Parent 11) to describe a significant learning moment while taking part in the SPECS program. We adopted this term to capture an array of such moments reported by parents, specifically when it came to learning about ice hockey, learning about themselves, and learning about their children.

Learning About Ice Hockey. Throughout the program, parents learned that their knowledge and understanding of ice hockey could influence their emotional reactions.

I always plead ignorance when I go to the games, I’m always like, “Well, I don’t know if that was good or not”. Or even saying, “Why didn’t you go get the puck?” But after doing [the modules], I realized maybe that’s not what the coach told them to do and there was a reason for it. So I think that part about learning more about the game really helps a lot (Parent 11).

Learning about the sport taught parents to be more understanding and empathetic toward their children. By understanding the intricacies of the game, parents developed a better sense of what their children were going through, especially in an emotional, and sometimes violent sport like ice hockey. Parent 2 explained:

We are dealing with the emotion and the stress and the anxiety and the worry and the adrenaline of full contact sports. My wife, she didn’t have that experience to know like how hard it is for [my son] at the end of a game. Especially against a stronger team like that. She’s never played a contact sport. She didn’t understand what it’s like so when we were doing the modules we talked about it.

Learning About Themselves. The SPECS program offered parents opportunities to engage in self-reflection. Parents self-reflected on a variety of topics, which appeared to be linked with specific program modules. For example, the first module focused on identifying and expressing

one's own and others' emotions. For some parents, this was an opportunity for them to "look in the mirror" (Parent 3) when it came to their sport parenting behaviours. Parent 7 described: "I felt like it was a good self-check. Like, am I doing all the right things? Or, what could I be doing better?" A common thread among parents was reflecting on how they expressed their emotions at their children's ice hockey games.

I won't lie, I do get emotional when there's a bad call or, you know, things aren't going well. And those are the games where I kind of get a little bit more crazy. I tried to reflect on that. The refs are human. Now I know I can use strategies to help me reflect and try to maybe take a deep breath or something in those situations. I did also learn that I can empathize more with some people and situations. (Parent 12)

Throughout the SPECS modules, parents were shown examples of different emotional situations in ice hockey. An example of a challenging conversation during a car ride home, along with strategies to navigate it, resonated with some parents, including Parent 1: "The vignettes where they talked about the car ride home and the example where the parent in the vignette put the kid down quite a bit, I could feel parts of it in my behaviour. It sounded very familiar."

The section on parenting styles in the second module (Understanding Emotions) stood out to some parents because it gave them the opportunity to learn about their own parenting style. For example, one parent said:

I liked how it had like the types of parent styles where you like, figured out what type of parent you were. Like, you might think "Oh, I'm this type of parent." And then you take the quiz and you're like, "Oh, crap. I'm authoritarian." It was a bit of a humbling experience for me. (Parent 10)

Learning About Their Child. Within the modules, parents were asked to consider their children's perspectives and tailor their provision of emotional support to their children's unique wants and needs. For some parents, this was a new realization:

I think the biggest one was the talking to them after a game. They lost and they were like, super frustrated. He'd got in the car and I wanted to pump him up and be like, 'Oh buddy, you played such a great game!' But it was a good reminder in the program, I think as parents, we just assume that because we want to talk about it that they want to too, or we think that it's making us a better parent, right? (Parent 7)

Some parents realized that what they wanted was not necessarily what their children wanted, and that they should ask their children and "engage them in the conversation" rather than parents "thinking [they] always have the right answer" (Parent 9). Parents' participation in the SPECS program also sparked conversations between parents and their children about how they wanted them to behave during competitions.

I liked the concept of asking your kid what they want you to do at a game. How do they want you to react? How do they want me to cheer for them? Because I do own a cowbell. I asked my son, "Do you want me to bring that?" And he was like, "No." So I'm not going to bring that anymore. (Parent 9)

Beyond how they act during competitions, parents also learned the importance of sharing and communicating about their children's goals for sport. Parent 11 learned that "focusing on what your child's goals are for their hockey is important from both sides" especially because she had two children with different perspectives, and they each required different feedback from her. She said:

For [my daughter], she is quite competitive. It's useless to tell her to not worry about losing a game because she tried hard to win the game. And my son, he's like, 'I was just trying to have fun', you know. So it's completely different from both of them. So I thought that part was useful as well to consider their perspective. (Parent 11)

A popular activity in the SPECS program was a reflection activity in which parents were prompted to ask their children what their goals were for ice hockey. This activity encouraged parents to have conversations they never had before. For Parent 1, "the kids really kind of spoke to me about what they wanted, what they needed, what they hope to see, what they hope to hear" (Parent 1). Similarly, Parent 9 explained:

It was interesting to think about questions that I never asked of my kids. Just things about like what do you enjoy most about hockey? Like, why do you want to play? It was a good reminder of making sure you're continuing to ask those questions, right? Especially as your kids get older and they have their own personalities and it might not be the same as yours.

Program Delivery

Parents revealed that the convenient and interactive design of SPECS, as well as the way the information was presented, facilitated their participation in the program.

Convenient. Certain aspects of the delivery of SPECS made it easier for parents to fit the program into their busy lifestyles. The web-based nature of the program allowed parents to complete the modules at a time that was most convenient for them. As Parent 12 described: "It makes it easier on me, when you work 50 hours a week and then kids' sports on the weekends and during the week, you've got to get stuff done. So I do appreciate the convenience of it being online."

Interactive. Parents also provided positive feedback about the interactive design of the program: “I liked how interactive it was. It wasn’t just videos, it wasn’t just reading. It was more interactive. I like that.” (Parent 13) The interactivity of the program kept participants interested to the extent that they did not just “click through” the content without paying attention (Parent 10, Parent 13). “It had the mix of like the videos and then like the true and false and matching and a variety of different stuff to keep me interested and not bored” (Parent 10). Being able to replay, pause, and alter the speed of the videos also allowed parents to engage with the content at their own pace. One parent remarked:

The videos were good because then you could watch it more than once. Like that one about the parenting styles, because I was totally like, ‘Oh, I’m writing all this down’. So I watched the whole thing once. I went back and watched it again, and then I kept pausing it to take notes. (Parent 7)

Presentation. Parents also expressed that they bought into the program because of the way the information was being presented to them, both in terms of content and aesthetics. The content of the modules was delivered in a language that was understandable, but not patronizing. Parent 9 explains:

I thought it was like, simplified without feeling like information was dumbed down. It didn’t feel like you were being talked down to, like you were stupid or anything like that. It was making the information digestible to someone who doesn’t necessarily have the background in, like, some of those psychological theories.

In addition to the way the content was presented, parents enjoyed the overall aesthetics of the program. As Parent 10 said, “the font and the images and the format of the little quizzes. They just seemed more kind of more worth your time.”

Discussion

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to deliver and evaluate a web-based education and support program to a group of youth ice hockey parents. The quantitative results revealed significant interaction effects for parents' trait EI and intrapersonal EI following their participation in the SPECS program. Further, the qualitative findings demonstrated that the program was relevant, inspired profound learning moments, and was delivered in a way that facilitated parents' participation. In mixed methods research studies, it is necessary to integrate quantitative and qualitative findings to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018) and, in the context of the current study, to address the third research question (i.e., *how* parents' experiences and perceptions of the program may have contributed to an increase in their trait EI). Therefore, in the following section, the integrated findings are presented and discussed in light of previous research.

Program Delivery and Trait EI. A systematic review of EI training interventions highlighted that participants' EI tends to improve more when the training is delivered in an *active* and *personal* way (Mattingly & Kraiger, 2019). EI training is more effective when there are opportunities to interact, discuss, and reflect and less effective when participants only attend lectures or watch videos (Crombie et al., 2011; Davis, 2013). In our qualitative findings, parents described how the interactive components kept them interested in learning and allowed them to engage actively with the content at their own pace. This finding also supports suggestions that interactive resources and the 'gamification' of sport parent education and support could help parents become more active in their learning (Kwon et al., 2020).

Participants also tend to learn more from EI training programs when they have opportunities to discuss the meaning of EI and how it applies to them (Mattingly & Kraiger, 2019). For instance, Crombie et al. (2011) used experiential case studies to teach athletes about

EI, which allowed the athletes to see connections between EI and their sport performance. The SPECS program allowed parents to apply the program content to their own lives through self-reflection and discussion, thus enhancing the program's personal relevance. For instance, parents shared personal experiences related to EI in the anonymous discussion forum. LMS statistics showed that seven parents from the experimental group posted reflections in the forum, discussing situations that make them emotional while watching their children play, how they identify their children's emotions, and their strategies for providing emotional support. The lack of individualisation in existing sport parent education programs has previously been reported as a barrier to parents' participation (Thrower et al., 2019). As such, the current study provides further evidence for sport parent education and support initiatives to implement strategies that allow parents to tailor the educational content to be more personally relevant.

Although personality traits and dispositions are typically viewed as being resistant to change (Hodzic et al., 2018), more dynamic perspectives of personality development take into account how interactions with our environment can influence more stable tendencies (e.g., Endler & Parker, 1992; Nowak et al., 2005). That is, individuals may be able to develop personality traits, such as trait EI, through social learning, self-reflection, and various cognitive, motivational, and emotional factors (Endler, 1983; Nowak, 2005). It is possible that parents' propensity to behave in certain ways in emotional situations changed as they participated in SPECS and learned new information about their children's preferences, what is acceptable in the ice hockey environment, and themselves. Specifically, parents had the opportunity to reflect on how they should and *wanted* to behave in emotional situations and were provided with tools and strategies to do so. The emphasis on providing tools and strategies may be particularly important for improving trait EI. For instance, participants in Levillain and colleagues' (2023) study

reported a significant increase in trait EI after being given “intensive” practical exercises geared toward developing their emotion abilities.

Other studies have also cited “intensive” training as an important factor for improving trait EI. Nelis et al.’s (2009) EI training program, for example, consisted of a similar structure as the SPECS program (i.e., sessions based on the dimensions of EI, time between sessions for participants to apply the content to their daily lives). Nelis et al. (2009) reported significant increases in participants’ trait EI and suggested that relatively stable traits can be modified through short, yet intensive training. In the current study, trait EI was improved after a short amount of time (three weeks). It is possible that certain aspects of the program delivery (e.g., relevant, and interactive content) and the provision of tools and strategies that could be used outside of the program may have contributed to the program’s intensity. On the other hand, some research suggests that improving individuals’ EI at the trait level involves a high level of emotional understanding that can only be accumulated through repetitive and longer bouts of training (Hodzic et al., 2018). As such, it may be beneficial to explore the effects of the SPECS program based on the amount of time parents spent engaging with the program and with more longitudinal methods.

Intrapersonal EI and Self-Reflection. The effects of participation in the SPECS program were measured using the PEC (Brasseur et al., 2013) which is one of the few EI measures that assesses both intra- and interpersonal understanding of emotions (Laborde et al., 2022). The emphasis on both intra- and interpersonal EI was particularly valuable in this research given the importance of parents being able to understand emotions not only in themselves, but also with their children and others in the sport environment (Pynn et al., 2019). In the current study, a significant interaction effect was found for intrapersonal EI. Specifically, parents in the

experimental group experienced a significant increase in their intrapersonal EI compared to the control group. This suggests that significant changes occurred in parents' perceptions of their EI when it comes to their *own* emotions, which was reflected qualitatively through the 'Learning About Themselves' sub-theme. Previous research has shown that reflective practice can be useful in increasing parents' emotional self-awareness and encouraging parents to engage in critical self-evaluation (Azimi & Tamminen, 2022). This notion was mirrored in our findings as parents emphasized how they engaged in self-reflection activities and became more critically aware of their own emotional reactions and behaviours while watching their children compete.

Our findings did not demonstrate any significant main effects or a significant group x time interaction for parents' interpersonal EI (i.e., their perceptions of their EI toward others' emotions). However, the qualitative findings indicated that parents learned to consider and communicate about their children's perspectives (i.e., Learning About Their Child sub-theme), which may have contributed to the small to moderate effects on parents' interpersonal EI.

The lack of significant interaction for interpersonal EI is consistent with other recent studies that have used the PEC to evaluate EI training programs in sport (Cece et al., 2023; Schütz et al., 2021). Both these previous studies highlighted that the practical components and activities of their programs largely focused on individuals' own emotions. It is possible that the SPECS program's emphasis on self-reflection activities may have skewed parents' focus toward more intrapersonal aspects of EI, resulting in higher intrapersonal EI scores. Parents completed the SPECS modules and activities by themselves without any in-person interactions (although the discussion forum allowed for some anonymous online interactions). Previous evaluations of web-based sport parent education programs have highlighted that online delivery could limit parents' ability to build relationships with others compared to in-person initiatives (Thrower et

al., 2019). Thus, for future iterations it may be beneficial to incorporate more social interactions into some aspects of the program (e.g., have parents complete the program *with* their children) to improve interpersonal EI. Indeed, previous sport parent education initiatives involving parent-child dyads have had a positive impact on parent-child relationships, and as such may be a valuable direction moving forward (Lisinskiene & Lochbaum, 2021).

Furthermore, some researchers have suggested that, given the relatively stable nature of traits, that trait-related outcomes may take more time to change (Hodzic et al., 2018; Kotsou et al., 2019). It is possible that the full extent of improvements in parents' EI were not fully captured after only one week following their program participation. For instance, parents' interpersonal EI may experience more improvements as they have more opportunities to practice their newly acquired emotion knowledge and abilities through interactions with their children and others in the sport environment.

Conclusion

The current study was the first to implement EI training with parents in the context of youth sport. Targeting EI was a novel approach, compared to other existing initiatives that tend to focus on educating parents on positive parental involvement, athletes' preferred parenting behaviours, and athlete development (Burke et al., 2021). This more "holistic" emphasis on emotions was viewed favorably among the parents in the experimental group. As researchers have previously pointed out, sport parenting is not limited to the immediate sport context and it is important to consider parents' influence across various domains (Holt & Knight, 2014; Harwood & Knight, 2015). The current EI training program was designed with the ice hockey context in mind, but it may be useful for future research to explore how enhancing ice hockey parents' EI influences their parenting behaviours across domains.

Certain limitations of this study must be acknowledged. The PEC is a self-report measure of trait EI, and therefore does not measure the other three levels of EI (knowledge and ability). Although an assumption of the tripartite model is that knowledge and skill underlie an individual's trait EI (Mikolajczak, 2009), it may be beneficial to examine if and how the different levels were influenced by parents' participation in the program. For instance, it is possible that parents increased their knowledge on how to manage their emotions but did not acquire the abilities to use that knowledge, or vice versa. Future evaluations might look to include a measure of EI abilities (such as the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test; Mayer et al., 2002) and other measures of relevant constructs (e.g., emotion regulation, coping) alongside the PEC to provide a more nuanced understanding of the different levels of EI and its dimensions.

We did not conduct follow-up procedures after the program to assess if the changes in parents' EI remained consistent. Given that traits are relatively stable over time, it is possible that parents could revert back to their pre-program levels of trait EI over time. Previous studies have conducted follow-up assessments and have found improvements in trait EI to be consistent after 6-months and one year (Kotsou et al., 2011; Nelis et al., 2009). However, an investigation of the long-term effects of the SPECS program is warranted. Furthermore, the extent to which an increase in parents' trait EI translates to emotionally intelligent parenting *behaviours* in the context of ice hockey was not addressed. Examining children's perceptions of their parents' EI following participation in the SPECS program would advance research in this area and would allow practitioners to assess the impact of training parents' EI on their children (Burke et al., 2021). Finally, during the interviews we found that some parents appeared to compare SPECS to the mandatory RiSPP program that had previously completed. An interesting future direction

would be to compare the effects of SPECS versus RiSPP on EI and other related aspects of sport parenting, such as parenting styles and practices, sideline behaviours during competitions, and coping (Holt et al., 2009; Teques et al., 2018).

Our sample size was relatively small resulting in a slightly underpowered analysis. This may have contributed to the small to medium effect sizes and the lack of significant main effects, particularly for interpersonal EI. Furthermore, the sample was dominated by Caucasian parents in two-parent, moderate-to-high earning households. Although this may reflect parent demographics in Canadian youth ice hockey (Kabetu et al., 2021), our results were unable to capture cultural and economic factors that might influence parents' experiences and thoughts toward the SPECS program. Future research should examine the impact of the program with larger sample sizes and individuals from different cultural and economic backgrounds to evaluate the program and tailor it to diverse audiences.

These limitations notwithstanding, the current research offers some applied insights for sport organizations and sport psychology practitioners. Given the promising results of the mixed methods program evaluation, members of sport organizations may wish to consider SPECS as an alternative or complement to current (mandatory) parent education and support programs. Sport psychology practitioners may consider adopting and implementing EI training in their own direct delivery work with sport parents (either in group or individual settings). Additionally, sport psychology practitioners who are working with youth athletes and their parents can direct their clients to the SPECS program website, as parents may find the program helpful for dealing with the emotional demands of sport. For instance, some parents found the program particularly helpful during their children's ice hockey tryouts. Perhaps the most important practical implication is that sport parent education and support programs should include specific tools and

strategies that parents can use beyond the program. Parents reported that a unique aspect of the SPECS program, compared to other programs, was the emphasis on providing tools to use in emotional situations. This contrasts with initiatives that emphasize *what* parents should do, rather than providing them with ideas for *how* to do it.

From a research perspective, some findings of this study highlighted the value of ‘knowledge tailoring’ – that is, tailoring to a particular setting or situation, which is a critical step for audiences to view information as valuable, useful, and appropriate (Graham et al., 2006). The importance of tailoring evidence and resources for specific parenting audiences has been reported in previous sport parenting research (e.g., Dorsch et al., 2019; Kwon et al., 2020). In developing future programs, it may be useful for program developers to partner with sport organizations to ensure that the educational materials align with the unique needs of the sport.

In conclusion, the current study was the first to deliver and evaluate an education and support program that was specifically designed for youth ice hockey parents, and the first to use EI as a theoretical framework. The SPECS program was successful in enhancing parents’ EI over a three-week period compared to a control group, and parents described how the program's relevant content and convenient, interactive delivery contributed to significant learning moments. The results from this study reinforce existing literature concerning sport parent education and support and provide a foundation for future EI training programs.

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CHAPTER 6: GENERAL DISCUSSION

General Discussion

The purpose of this dissertation was to develop and evaluate a web-based education and support program to enhance parents' emotional intelligence (EI) in youth sport. Three projects focusing on different aspects of the program development and evaluation were presented. Chapter 3 was a scoping review which explored the dimensions of EI in relation to sport parents' behaviour. Chapter 4 described the development of the SPECS program and provided recommendations for future parent education and support initiatives. Chapter 5 was a mixed methods evaluation of the SPECS program.

The scoping review (Chapter 3) revealed how parents identify, express, use, understand, and manage their own and others' emotions in the context of youth sport. These findings furthered our understanding of EI among sport parents by contextualizing existing research within the tripartite model of EI (Mikolajczak, 2009). More specifically, the scoping review revealed findings that possibly indicate ways in which EI may be a valuable framework for enhancing parents' involvement in youth sport. For example, self-awareness and empathy were identified as areas that influenced parents' emotionally supportive behaviours in a positive way. Having knowledge about their children's goals and the potential outcomes of sport participation positively influenced parents' emotional reactions. Self-reflection and social support were effective ways for parents to manage their own emotions in sport. Thus, the results from the scoping review provided a foundation for the educational content of the web-based education and support program.

The second project (Chapter 4) took an applied focus, describing how the tripartite model of EI and a logic model were used in the planning and development of the Sport Parent Emotions and Coping Support (SPECS) program. The SPECS program logic model was based on the

logical framework approach (Musoke et al., 2022; Sartorius, 1991). That is, the program objectives, target population (ice hockey parents), and desired outcomes were identified prior to outlining the theoretical assumptions, program outputs, and resources required for the development of the program (inputs). This paper offered practical recommendations for stakeholders interested in developing sport parent education and support initiatives, highlighting the importance of using partnerships and knowledge tailoring. This builds upon previous research that suggests that tailoring knowledge to specific sports and parenting audiences is essential for creating educational content that meets the individual needs of parents (Thrower et al., 2016; Kwon et al., 2020).

The first two projects culminated in the delivery and evaluation of the SPECS program with a group of ice hockey parents using a sequential explanatory mixed methods program evaluation approach (Chapter 5). Completion of the SPECS program resulted in significant increases in parents' trait EI over a three-week period. Parents perceived the program favourably, highlighting the relevant, convenient, and interactive nature of the educational content. Parents' participation in SPECS also contributed to significant learning moments regarding themselves, their children, and their knowledge and understanding of ice hockey. This extends previous work that emphasises how fostering an understanding emotional climate can contribute to high quality sport parenting (Harwood & Knight, 2015; Knight & Holt, 2014; Pynn et al., 2019), as parents were provided with strategies on *how* to create an understanding emotional climate. An area that parents found particularly helpful was the emphasis on providing specific tools and strategies to use outside of the program. In the past, researchers have pointed out that rather than being supported or guided to develop strategies to cope with the demands of sport, parents are often forced to discover their own strategies through trial and error (Knight et al., 2017). As such,

parents benefitted from the provision of strategies that could be used to successfully navigate the demands of sport.

Strengths and Limitations

The strengths and limitations of the individual studies are discussed in each chapter. In this section I focus on the strengths and limitations of this research program more generally. An overall strength is the consistent use of theory, whereby the tripartite model of EI (Mikolajczak, 2009) informed all three projects. For example, the tripartite model of EI guided the decision to measure parents' trait EI using the Profile of Emotional Competences (PEC; Brasseur et al., 2013) before and after SPECS participation. Other strengths of this dissertation include the use of a mixed methods approach and the inclusion of both parents' and former youth athletes' perspectives in the focus group consultations.

However, there are some overall limitations that should be considered when looking at the dissertation as a whole. The principal limitation is that children's perspectives and outcomes were not included in this research or in the evaluation of the SPECS program (although it should be noted that studies that included samples of children were included in the scoping review). The extent to which parents' participation in SPECS influenced their children's sport experiences is not known. Furthermore, this research did not examine how enhancing parents' EI would result in actual changes in parents' behaviour in the youth sport context. The use of qualitative focus groups, interviews, and quantitative self-report questionnaires has limitations because individuals' reporting on their own cognitive processes can often be inaccurate (Haefffel & Howard, 2010). It is also important to note that the findings of this dissertation are limited by the possibility of self-selection or volunteer bias (Hegedus & Moody, 2010). That is, the behaviours, attitudes, and beliefs of the parents that agree to participate in this type of research may differ from those parents who choose not to. Lastly, this dissertation focused on developing and

evaluating a program for Canadian ice hockey parents. Canadian ice hockey is a team sport that is traditionally dominated by white, moderate-to-high earning families. As such, it is unclear how the findings of this dissertation can be applied to other sport populations or parents in other geographical or cultural contexts.

Future Research

This dissertation may provide a foundation for future research. As noted above, future research that examines children's perspectives and outcomes following their parents' completion of the SPECS program would make valuable additions to the literature. Research on parent training programs in the general psychology literature indicates that targeting parents' emotional communication skills and emotion management may result in positive outcomes for both parents and children (Kaminski et al., 2008). In sport, Dorsch et al. (2017) reported that children experienced more enjoyment, higher perceptions of competence, and lower levels of stress following their parents' participation in a sport parent program. Hence, it is plausible that children would experience positive psychosocial outcomes as a result of their parents' participation in the SPECS program, but research is required to address this assertion.

Second, there is a need for research that examines the effects of SPECS on parents' actual behaviours in sport. A core assumption underpinning this dissertation was that enhancing parents' EI would promote positive parenting behaviours in the sport context. However, parents' behaviours were not assessed. Researchers have argued that sport psychology research needs to include the triangulation of questionnaire data with behavioural data (e.g., observations) to connect more internal processes with behavioural outcomes (Holt & Knight, 2014; Meredith et al., 2018). For example, Teques and colleagues (2018) used an observational system developed by Holt et al. (2008) to assess parents' sideline behaviours in relation to their trait EI and coping

strategies. As such, future research examining how the SPECS program influences changes in parents' EI and their behaviours in the sport context over time would be fruitful.

Third, SPECS was geared towards Canadian ice hockey parents, who are predominantly white and come from moderate-to-high earning households. As such, researchers may consider adapting and evaluating SPECS with other sports, geographical locations, and parenting cultures to assess its influence on a larger scale. For instance, the stressors and challenges parents face in ice hockey, a team sport, might be different from those faced by parents in individual sports, particularly since parents in team sports often view other parents on their children's team as both a source of stress and a source of support (Lienhart et al., 2019). Furthermore, parenting is approached differently across cultures and certain parenting practices can result in different outcomes in different cultural contexts (Bornstein, 2012; Selin, 2013). For example, authoritative parenting styles tend to result in more positive outcomes in individualistic cultures, whereas authoritarian parenting styles yield more positive outcomes in collectivist cultures (Zervides & Knowles, 2007). However, certain aspects of parent-child relationships, such as emotional attunement, are widespread and similar among different cultural groups (Bornstein, 2012), and some researchers have called into question the extent that cultural values have on parenting styles (Smetana, 2017). As such, it would be beneficial to evaluate SPECS with diverse parent populations to further our understanding of the complex phenomenon that is youth sport parenting across different cultures.

Finally, it may also be beneficial to adapt the delivery of the SPECS program to include children. Research on parent training programs have indicated that having parents practice new skills with their children is associated with better parent and child outcomes (Kaminski et al., 2008). Allowing parents to practice using their emotion abilities *with* their children may serve to

improve parents' interpersonal EI and make the program more applicable in real-world settings by learning in context (Kaminski et al., 2008). Thus, researchers may seek to adapt the SPECS program to include children and evaluate relevant outcomes.

Practical Implications

Applied implications for sport psychology practitioners, youth sport coaches, and sport organizations arise from this dissertation work. Sport psychology practitioners might consider targeting EI as a way to help sport parents manage the emotional demands of youth sport. This research may provide a framework for training sport parents' EI. For instance, practitioners can direct their clients to the SPECS program website or use the SPECS program content to inform their own individualized EI training initiatives. For youth sport coaches, this dissertation may provide insight for working with the parents of children they coach. Given that dealing with parents is often a source of stress for coaches (Knight & Harwood, 2009), coaches might be interested in implementing EI training, such as the SPECS program, with the parents on their team as a way to encourage more emotionally intelligent parent-coach interactions. Coaches can also be a source of knowledge and support for parents (Smoll et al., 2011; Wall et al., 2019). By providing parents with information about what their children are learning in sport, coaches can help parents foster an understanding emotional climate. Lastly, sport organizations might consider using (or adapting) SPECS to replace or complement their existing mandatory parent education and support programs. Furthermore, it would be valuable to assess how they deliver current parent education and support initiatives in light of the results of the program evaluation in Chapter 5 (i.e., consider the aspects of the program content and delivery that facilitated parents' participation).

Conclusion

Parents have a profound influence on their children's sporting experiences and face a range of demands as they navigate a complex sport environment. This dissertation makes a novel contribution to sport parent education and support research by outlining the steps taken to develop, deliver, and evaluate a web-based education and support program to enhance sport parents' EI. The SPECS program was developed to enhance ice hockey parents' EI (i.e., the way they identify, express, use, understand, and manage their emotions) so that they can deal with those demands. Importantly, this dissertation highlighted a program that was successful in enhancing sport parents' EI and adds to the literature by being the first web-based sport parent education and support program that was developed specifically for ice hockey parents. As such, this work provides a solid foundation for future research concerning EI and sport parenting, as well as research and applied work aimed at delivering sport parent education and support.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Data Charting Form with Study Information

| Study | Purpose | Location | Sport | Methods | Participants |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Azimi & Tamminen (2022) | To examine whether increasing parents' awareness of their communication would influence parent-athlete communication behaviours. | Canada | Multiple sports | Mixed methods | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 10 athletes (7 males, 3 females) ○ 10 parents (6 males, 4 females) |
| 2 Battaglia et al. (2022) | To explore sport stakeholders' perspectives on the influences that affect youths' sport experiences and withdrawal patterns. | Canada | Multiple sports | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 15 athletes (8 males, 7 female) ○ 10 parents (5 males, 5 females) ○ 7 coaches (4 males, 4 females) |
| 3 Bois et al. (2009) | To examine parental influence on athletes' pre-competitive anxiety. | France | Multiple sports | Quantitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 201 basketball players (99 boys, 102 girls) ○ 140 tennis players (78 boys, 62 girls) |
| 4 Brown (2013) | To examine parental relationships in the context of a youth baseball league utilizing the framework of social capital. | United States | Baseball | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 21 parents ○ 12 league officials, coaches, city officials |
| 5 Burgess et al. (2016) | To understand how parents cope with the stressors they experience within elite youth gymnastics. | United Kingdom | Gymnastics | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 7 parents (5 mothers, 2 fathers) |

| Study | Purpose | Location | Sport | Methods | Participants |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 6 Burke et al. (2023) | To examine female youth golfers' views of unsupportive parental behaviours within the competitive youth golf environment. | Australia, Canada, England, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, Scotland | Golf | Qualitative | ○ 61 female youth golfers |
| 7 Camiré et al. (2009) | To examine parents' perspectives on the practice of high school sport in Canada. | Canada | Multiple sports | Qualitative | ○ Two parents (8 fathers, 12 mothers) |
| 8 Cavallerio et al. (2022) | To explore the experience of parents of gymnasts suffering from overuse injuries. | Italy | Gymnastics | Qualitative | ○ 22 parents (16 mothers, 6 fathers) |
| 9 Clarke et al. (2016) | To explore parents' and children's experience of their interaction and relationship in the context of elite youth football. | United Kingdom | Soccer | Qualitative | ○ 8 parent-player dyads |
| 10 DeFreese et al. (2018) | To examine associations among markers of the sport-based parent child-relationship and parent burnout and engagement in organized youth sport. | United States | Undisclosed | Quantitative | ○ 214 parents (65 fathers, 148 mothers) |
| 11 de Oliveira et al. (2022) | To understand the perceptions of mothers about the practice of figure skating by their daughters | Brazil | Figure Skating | Qualitative | ○ 8 mothers |

| Study | Purpose | Location | Sport | Methods | Participants |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12 Dorsch et al. (2009) | To understand parent socialization, the behavioural, cognitive, and affective changes in parents and the interconnection and social-environmental moderations of these changes | United States | Multiple sports | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 26 youth sport parents (16 mothers, 10 fathers) |
| 13 Dorsch et al. (2015) | To examine parent experiences of sport socialization over the initial period of a first child's involvement in sport. | United States | Multiple sports | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 8 parents and 4 children from four families ○ 8 coaches |
| 14 Dorsch et al. (2016) | To examine the process, person, and context factors associated with parents' support and pressure in sport | United States | Multiple sports | Quantitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 226 families (335 parents, 226 children) |
| 15 Dorsch et al. (2019) | To highlights parent, coach, and administrator perceptions of community-based parent education | United States | Multiple sports | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 12 parents ○ 13 coaches ○ 11 administrators |
| 16 Eckardt et al. (2022) | To identify parents' competitive stressors in German elite youth soccer academies as well as their stressor-specific appraisals and emotions | Germany | Soccer | Mixed methods | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 330 parents (246 responded to demographics, 140 mothers, 106 fathers) |

| Study | Purpose | Location | Sport | Methods | Participants |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 17 Elliott & Drummond (2017) | To generate a greater understanding of parental involvement in the junior Australian football experience. | Australia | Australian football | Qualitative | ○ 34 parents (27 male, 7 male), 52 youths (ages 12-13) |
| 18 Elliott et al. (2018) | To understand the experiences of being a talent-identified athlete and provide lessons for parents seeking to enhance their involvement. | Australia | Australian football | Qualitative | ○ 50 male youth athletes |
| 19 Felber Charbonneau & Camire (2020) | To examine parents' and children's perspectives on how parental involvement in sport influences basic psychological needs satisfaction. | Canada | Multiple sports | Qualitative | ○ 8 athletes (3 males, 5 females) ○ 8 parents (6 males, 2 females) |
| 20 Furusa et al. (2021) | To examine children's preferences for parental involvement and identify factors that facilitate or prevent parents from being involved in the way children prefer. | United Kingdom | Multiple sports | Qualitative | ○ 32 children (9 boys, 23 girls) |
| 21 Garst et al. (2020) | To better understand parent involvement in indoor competitive climbing. | United States | Indoor climbing | Qualitative | ○ 27 parents |
| 22 Goldstein & Iso-Ahola (2008) | To develop and test a model explaining sport parents' anger and aggression at their children's games. | United States | Soccer | Quantitative | ○ 340 parents (181 men, 159 women) |

| | Study | Purpose | Location | Sport | Methods | Participants |
|----|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| 23 | Goodman & James (2017) | To examine the opinions of both parents and children on parental involvement in sport. | United Kingdom | Soccer | Quantitative | ○ 34 father-son dyads |
| 24 | Gould et al. (2006) | To assess coaches' perceptions of parents' roles and their positive and negative behaviours in junior tennis. | United States | Tennis | Quantitative | ○ 132 junior tennis coaches (125 male, 7 female) |
| 25 | Gould et al. (2008) | To identify coaches' perceptions of the role of parents in junior tennis success. | United States | Tennis | Qualitative | ○ 24 junior tennis coaches (22 men, 2 women) |
| 26 | Harwood & Knight (2009a) | To investigate the scope of perceived stressors currently experienced by an active cross-section of tennis parents. | United Kingdom | Tennis | Qualitative | ○ 123 tennis-parents (78 mothers, 45 fathers) |
| 27 | Harwood & Knight (2009b) | To develop a clearer understanding of stage-specific parental stressors. | United Kingdom | Tennis | Qualitative | ○ 22 parents (13 mothers, 9 fathers) |
| 28 | Harwood et al. (2019) | To explore psychological stress among parents of competitive British tennis players. | United Kingdom | Tennis | Mixed methods | ○ 135 parents (41 men, 93 women, 1 undisclosed) |
| 29 | Hayward et al. (2017) | To explore the individual and shared stress experiences of adolescent swimmers, their parents, and their coach. | United Kingdom | Swimming | Qualitative | ○ 4 cases (one female swimmer, one mother) ○ 1 coach |

| | Study | Purpose | Location | Sport | Methods | Participants |
|----|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 30 | Holt et al. (2008) | To document parents' involvement in competitive youth sport settings. | Canada | Soccer | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 4 families (4 mothers; 4 fathers; 8 children, 3 girls, 5 boys) |
| 31 | Holt et al. (2009) | To examine parenting styles and associated parenting practices in youth sport. | Canada | Soccer | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 34 parents (17 mothers, 17 fathers) ○ 34 daughters |
| 32 | Johnston (2014) | To explore the opportunities for growth and psychosocial development that positive youth development can offer in a swimming context. | United Kingdom | Swimming | Quantitative | <p>Study 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 249 parents (80 males, 158 females, 11 undeclared) <p>Study 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 246 swimmers (94 males, 135 females, 17 undeclared) |
| 33 | Jowett & Timson-Katchis (2005) | To explore the nature of influences that parents exert on the quality of the dyadic coach-athlete relationship. | Republic of Cyprus | Swimming | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 5 triads (5 female athletes, ○ 5 male coaches, 5 parents; 3 mothers, 2 fathers) |
| 34 | Kanters et al. (2008) | To provide evidence that parental attitudes and behaviours influence children's affective reactions from sport participation and to examine the relative importance of parent-child agreement on both the quantity and quality of involvement. | United States | Ice hockey | Quantitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 108 children ○ 108 parents (64 fathers, 44 mothers) |

| Study | Purpose | Location | Sport | Methods | Participants |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 35 Keegan et al. (2009) | To identify the motivationally relevant behaviours of coaches, parents and peers that influence the motivation of athletes at the beginning of their sport careers. | United Kingdom | Multiple sports | Qualitative | ○ 40 sport participants (19 females, 21 males) |
| 36 Keegan et al. (2014) | To examine the motivational climate surrounding elite sports performers by investigating the behaviours of coaches, peers and parents that were perceived to be motivationally relevant by elite athletes. | United Kingdom | Multiple sports | Qualitative | ○ 28 sport participants (5 females, 23 males) |
| 37 Kerr & Stirling (2012) | To explore parents' reflections on their child's experiences of emotionally abusive coaching practices. | Canada | Gymnastics | Qualitative | ○ 16 parents (12 mothers, four fathers) |
| 38 Knight, Dorsch, et al. (2016) | To explore the influences on parental involvement in youth sport. | United States, United Kingdom | Multiple sports | Qualitative | ○ 70 parents (38 mothers, 32 fathers) |
| 39 Knight & Holt (2013) | To examine factors that influence parents' experiences of watching their children compete and identify suggestions for enhancing their experiences. | Australia | Tennis | Qualitative | ○ 40 parents (20 mothers, 20 fathers) |
| 40 Knight & Holt (2014) | To develop a grounded theory of optimal parental involvement in youth tennis. | United Kingdom | Tennis | Qualitative | ○ 43 athletes ○ 10 ex-tennis players, ○ 17 parents ○ 20 coaches |

| | Study | Purpose | Location | Sport | Methods | Participants |
|----|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 41 | Knight, Little, et al. (2016) | To examine elite youth athletes' views on parental involvement in training, competition, and at home. | United Kingdom | Slalom canoeing | Qualitative | ○ 8 junior canoeists (seven male, one female) |
| 42 | Knight et al. (2011) | To examine early adolescent female athletes' preferences for parental behaviours at team sport competitions. | Canada | Multiple sports | Qualitative | ○ 36 female athletes |
| 43 | Kramers et al. (2022) | To explore parents' interpretations of their roles and experiences of supporting young athletes' psychosocial development in sport. | United Kingdom | Soccer | Qualitative | ○ 30 parents (13 mothers, 17 fathers) |
| 44 | Lafferty & Dorrell (2006) | To explore coping strategies and perceptions of parental support of young swimmers and whether perceived parental support impacts behavioural and emotional strategies when dealing with poor performance. | United Kingdom | Swimming | Quantitative | ○ 104 youth swimmers (57 males, 47 females,) |
| 45 | Lally & Kerr (2008) | To explore the effects of athletes' disengagement from sport on parents. | Canada | Gymnastics | Qualitative | ○ 6 parents (four mothers and two fathers) |
| 46 | Lauer et al. (2010a) | To retrospectively understand what role the parent played and the full array of positive and negative attitudes and behaviours that influenced player development | United States | Tennis | Qualitative | ○ 9 athletes (5 females, 4 males) ○ 8 parents (four fathers, four mothers) ○ 7 male coaches |

| | Study | Purpose | Location | Sport | Methods | Participants |
|----|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 47 | Lauer et al. (2010b) | To examine parental influence on talent development and the parent-child relationship | United States | Tennis | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 9 athletes ○ 8parents ○ 8 coaches |
| 48 | Legg & Rose (2022) | To examine youth sport parent emotions through an expressive writing exercise. | United States | Multiple sports | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 12 parents (6 males, 6 females) |
| 49 | Lev et al. (2020) | To explore the nature of parental involvement in youth basketball in Israel with regard to parenting style and in the context of dilemmas and ethical issues. | Israel | Basketball | Quantitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 173 parents (51.4% males, 48.6% females) ○ 173 children (78% boys, 22% girls) |
| 50 | Lienhart et al. (2020) | To identify the stressors parents encounter when supporting their children involved in intensive training centers and understand how parents cope with the stressors they encounter. | France | Multiple sports | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 16 parents (9 mothers and 7 fathers) ○ 15 athletes (6 female) |
| 51 | Lisinskiene & Lochbaum (2018) | To examine teenage athletes' prosocial behaviour and their relationships with parents. | Lithuania | Multiple sports | Mixed methods | <p>Quantitative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 1348 youth athletes (716 girls, 632 boys) <p>Qualitative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 12 athletes ○ 12 parents |
| 52 | Lisinskiene & Lockbaum (2019) | To develop a one-year intervention program for parents in youth sport to strengthen parent-child interactions. | Lithuania | Martial arts | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 10 parents ○ 10 children |

| Study | Purpose | Location | Sport | Methods | Participants |
|-------|------------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 53 | Lobinger et al. (2021) | Germany | Soccer | Quantitative | <p>Study 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 111 male children ○ 260 parents (130 female, 130 male), 196 coaches (13 female, 184 male) <p>Study 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 145 children (4 female, 141 male) ○ 142 parents (76 mothers, 66 fathers) ○ 29 male coaches <p>Study 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 115 male children ○ 78 parents (39 female, 39 male) ○ 16 male coaches |
| 54 | McCann (2005) | United States | Multiple sports | Quantitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 5 father-daughter dyads ○ 5 father-son dyads ○ 1 mother-daughter dyad |
| 55 | Neely et al. (2017) | Canada | Multiple sports | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 14 female adolescent athletes ○ 14 parents (5 fathers, 9 mothers) |

| Study | Purpose | Location | Sport | Methods | Participants |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 56 Newport et al. (2021) | To understand parents' experiences and offer recommendations for supporting parents within youth academy football. | United Kingdom | Soccer | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 26 parents (10 males, 16 females) ○ 10 coaches and support staff (9 males, 1 female) |
| 57 Nunomura & Oliveira (2013) | To better understand how artistic gymnasts perceived parental support and how their attitudes and behaviours can influence, positively or negatively, the process of training athletes. | Brazil | Gymnastics | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 163 gymnasts (40 boys and 123 girls) |
| 58 Omli & LaVoi (2012) | To identify sources of anger from the perspective of parents. | United States | Multiple sports | Mixed methods | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 773 parents (59% females) |
| 59 Palmer (2011) | To examine how varying levels of parental pressure and support in sports are associated with the emotion regulation of their children. | United States | Soccer | Quantitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 91 children (42 females, 49 males), ○ 90 parents (67 mothers, 23 fathers) |
| 60 Partridge & Wann (2015) | To explore reflected trait shame coping styles in a sample of youth sport parents and examine which maladaptive shame coping styles would be endorsed most frequently by youth sport parents. | United States | Multiple sports | Quantitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 218 parents (49 males, 167 females) |

| Study | Purpose | Location | Sport | Methods | Participants |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 61 Peter (2011) | To explore parents' emotional investment in and behaviours in response to youth sports. | United States | Baseball | Mixed methods | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Survey: ○ 122 parents ○ Interviews: ○ 10 parents (2 women, 8 men) |
| 62 Power & Woolger (1994) | To examine the parenting correlates of children's experiences in age-group swimming. | United States | Swimming | Quantitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 44 swimmers (20 boys, 24 girls) and their parents |
| 63 Pynn et al. (2019) | To develop a conceptualization of exemplary parenting in female team sport. | Canada | Multiple sports | Qualitative, interpretive description | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 8 coaches (3 women, 5 men) ○ 10 parents (7 mothers, 3 fathers) |
| 64 Ross et al. (2015) | To advance the literature regarding the impact of parent sport behaviour on children's development. | Australia | Multiple sports | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 12 coaches and administrators (8 males, 4 females) |
| 65 Rouquette et al. (2021a) | To examine the influence of parental responsive support and perceived parental responsive support on athletes' self-perceptions and thriving. | Belgium | Multiple sports | Quantitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 41 athletes ○ 41 parents (24 mothers, 17 fathers) |
| 66 Rouquette et al. (2021b) | To examine the association between young players' perception of mother's and father's responsiveness with their self-esteem, anxiety, and thriving. | United Kingdom | Rugby | Quantitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 314 male rugby players |

| | Study | Purpose | Location | Sport | Methods | Participants |
|----|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 67 | Rynne et al. (2022) | To consider the key factors impacting the behaviours and emotional reactions of parents. | Australia | Rugby | Quantitative | ○ 1417 parents (401 males, 1016 females) |
| 68 | Sanchez (2017) | To explore parents' perceptions of risk and their risk management strategies as their daughters engage in horse sports and recreation. | United States | Equestrian | Qualitative | ○ 34 girl athletes ○ 24 mothers ○ 4 fathers ○ 1 grandmother |
| 69 | Stefansen et al. (2018) | To understand why parents increasingly engage with organised youth sport and stay engaged way past the age where children can be expected to manage the practicalities of participation themselves. | Norway | Multiple sports | Qualitative | ○ 61 parents (24 fathers, 37 mothers) |
| 70 | Strandbu et al. (2019) | To explore young people's views of ideal parental roles and their own negotiation of autonomy related to different aspects of sport participation. | Norway | Multiple sports | Qualitative | ○ 47 girls ○ 45 boys |
| 71 | Tamminen et al. (2017) | To explore conversations between adolescent athletes and parents during the car ride home after sport practices and competitions. | Canada | Multiple sports | Qualitative | ○ 27 athletes (18 female, 9 male) ○ 26 parents (15 mothers, 11 fathers) |

| Study | Purpose | Location | Sport | Methods | Participants |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 72 Teques et al. (2018) | To examine the mediating effects of coping strategies between EI and parents' sideline verbal behaviours during their child's soccer games. | Portugal | Soccer | Quantitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 232 parents (120 mothers, 110 fathers, 2 undisclosed) |
| 73 Thrower et al. (2016) | To identify British tennis parents' education and support needs across contexts and developmental stages. | United Kingdom | Tennis | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 13 tennis parents (4 male, 9 female) ○ 12 coaches (10 male, 2 female) ○ 4 ex-youth players (2 male, 2 female) |
| 74 Trussell (2009) | To explore the dynamics of family life in connection with organized youth sport programs. | Canada | Multiple sports | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 14 parents (7 mothers, 7 fathers) ○ 18 children (10 sons, 8 daughters) |
| 75 Trussell & Shaw (2012) | To understand the connection of youth sport to cultural beliefs, values, and practices of contemporary parenting ideologies. | Canada | Multiple sports | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 13 parents (7mothers, 6 fathers) |
| 76 Wall et al. (2020) | To understand the relational processes that exist between parents and athletes when engaged in early specialization sport. | Canada | Figure skating | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 5 parents (4 mothers, 1 father) ○ 5 daughters |
| 77 Weiss & Fretwell (2005) | To gain knowledge about the parent-coach phenomenon in competitive youth sport. | United States | Soccer | Qualitative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 18 male athletes ○ 6 father-coaches |

| Study | Purpose | Location | Sport | Methods | Participants |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 78 Wiersma & Fifer (2008) | To understand the positive and negative aspects of parental involvement in youth sports. | United States | Multiple sports | Qualitative | ○ 55 parents (16 fathers, 39 mothers) |
| 79 Winges (2012) | To assess the perceptions and consequences of parental background anger in youth ice hockey from the players' perspective. | United States | Ice hockey | Mixed methods | ○ 194 hockey players (95 male, 99 female) |
| 80 Wolfenden & Holt (2005) | To identify and examine players', coaches', and parents' perceptions of talent development in elite junior tennis during the specializing years | United Kingdom | Tennis | Qualitative | ○ 3 athletes (2 males, 1 female) ○ 4 parents (3 mothers, 1 father) ○ 2 coaches (1 male, 1 female) |

Appendix B

Focus Group Questioning Routes

Parent Questioning Route

Hi everybody, I want to thank you all for joining us today in the Zoom meeting. I really appreciate you taking the time to help me with my research. For my PhD research, I am interested in learning more about parents' emotions in youth sport. I have asked you here today to share your experiences as parents with children who play sport.

I want to remind you that your participation here is voluntary and you may choose not to answer a question if you are uncomfortable. You can leave the Zoom call at any time if you need to. It's also really important to note that there are no right or wrong answers to my questions; I am interested in your thoughts and experiences. You are not being evaluated in any way and everything will remain confidential. Only myself and Caitlyn will have access to the data and your names, faces, and any identifying information will be removed so no one can trace the info back to you. This is not meant to be a strict, formal, question & answer type of interview. I am hoping we can just have a simple conversation, and I invite you to share as much as you can or want.

Opening

To get us started, I'd like to get to know each of you a bit better. So I'll just go around and everyone can introduce themselves, and maybe tell us how many kids you have, how old they are, and what sports they play.

Parents' Involvement in Sport

I'd like to get a sense of how involved you are in your child's sport.

1. How often do you attend games or practices?
2. How often do you talk about sport at home?

Identifying and Expressing Emotions

1. What kinds of emotions do you feel when you watch your child play?
Probe: Can you tell me about any specific situations where you became angry? Happy? [Probe with other emotions]
2. How do you tend to express your emotions?
Probe: How do you react after a win or a loss?
3. Why do you think your child's sport participation is important to you?

Managing Emotions

1. When you're feeling emotional about your child's sport, how do you manage those emotions?
 - o Do you try to control your emotions. If so, why?
 - o What strategies do you use to control your emotions? What works best for you?
2. How do you think parents are supposed to behave when they are watching their child play sport?

Using and Understanding Emotions

1. How do you feel when your child is upset after a loss or a bad game?
Probe: How does your children's emotions affect your own emotions?
2. How can you tell when your child is upset? How do you know what kind of support they need?
Probe: What kinds of situations in sport make your child emotional?
3. How do you react when your child is upset?
Probe: What do you say to them?
Probe: Where and when did you have these types of conversations?

Understanding Parents' Needs

1. When it comes to your child's sport, what are some of the biggest challenges you face as a parent?
2. If you were to receive parent support or education from sport organizations, what type of things would you like to learn about?

Ending

Based on the questions I've asked you in this focus group, I think you understand the type of information I am trying to get at. Is there anything else you would like to add that we may have missed or that you think is important for us to know?

Athlete Questioning Route

Hi everybody, I want to thank you all for joining us today in the Zoom meeting. I really appreciate you taking the time to help me with my research. For my PhD research, I am interested in learning more about parents' emotions in youth sport. I have asked you here today to hear about your experiences as a youth athlete, especially when it comes to your parents and the types of things that they did when you were a kid.

Opening

To get us started, I'd like to go around the chat and you can each introduce yourself and tell us a bit about your sport history.. What sport did you play, for how long, etc.

Parents' Involvement in Sport

I'd like to get a sense of how involved your parents were in your sport. For this discussion, I'd love for you to reflect on your youth sport days at the times when your parents were the most involved, and think back to the types of things they did.

1. How often did they attend your games or practices?
2. How often did you talk about your sport at home?

Identifying and Expressing Emotions

1. How emotionally invested were your parents in your sport?
 - How would they react after a win or a loss?
 - Why do you think your sport participation was important to them?
2. Can you tell us about any specific situations in sport that made your parents emotional?
3. What type of emotions do you think they experienced most frequently?
4. How would your parents express their emotions?
 - What types of things would they do if they felt angry? Excited?

Using and Understanding Emotions

1. When you were emotional, perhaps upset after a loss or a bad game, were your parents able to notice?

Probe: Could your parents tell when you were upset, or sad, or didn't want to talk?
2. How did your parents react when you were upset?
 - What did they do after a loss?
 - What kinds of conversations did you have with them?
 - Where and when did you have these types of conversations?
 - In a perfect world, how would you have liked your parents to react when you were upset?

Understanding Parents' Needs

1. Looking back, is there anything your parents did in supporting your sport participation that you really liked?

2. Is there anything you wish your parents knew, or wish they did differently, when you were participating in sport?
3. If you could go back and change something about how your parents supported you in sport, what would it be?

Ending

Based on the questions I've asked you in this focus group, I think you understand the type of information I am trying to get at. Is there anything else you would like to add that we may have missed or that you think is important for us to know?

Appendix C

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Appendix D

SPECS Recruitment Poster



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
FACULTY OF KINESIOLOGY,
SPORT, AND RECREATION

HOCKEY PARENTS WANTED!!

We are conducting a study to develop an online program designed to help hockey parents deal with the emotional demands of youth sport.

Participation may involve:

- Trying out our online program made for hockey parents
- Two 15-min online questionnaires
- One 30-min audio-recorded Zoom interview

WE'RE LOOKING FOR:

- Parents with at least one child (age 13-18) on a competitive hockey team

**Interested?
For more details:**

Contact Shannon at spynn@ualberta.ca
or scan the QR Code



PRO00123752

Appendix E

Profile of Emotional Competences (Adapted from Brasseur et al., 2013)

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire.

The questions below are designed to provide a better understanding of how you deal with emotions when it comes to your child's sport participation. Please answer each question, taking into account the way you would normally respond. Try to think specifically about your experiences and interactions with your child and others in the sport environment. There are no right or wrong answers as we are all different when it comes to things like this. For each question, you will be asked to give a score on a scale from 1-5. 1= The statement does not describe you at all 5= The statement describes you very well

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. As my emotions arise, I don't understand where they come from. | | | | | |
| 2. I don't always understand why I respond in the way I do. | | | | | |
| 3. If I wanted, I could easily influence other people's emotions to achieve what I want. | | | | | |
| 4. I know what to do to win people over to my cause. | | | | | |
| 5. I am often a loss to understand other people's emotional responses. | | | | | |
| 6. When I feel good, I can easily tell whether it is due to being proud of myself, happy or relaxed. | | | | | |
| 7. I can tell whether a person is angry, sad, or happy even if they don't talk to me. | | | | | |
| 8. I am good at describing my feelings. | | | | | |
| 9. I never base my personal life choices on my emotions. | | | | | |
| 10. When I am feeling low, I easily make a link between my feelings and a situation that affected me. | | | | | |
| 11. I can easily get what I want from others. | | | | | |
| 12. I easily manage to calm myself down after a difficult experience. | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| 13. I can easily explain the emotional responses of the people around me. | | | | | |
| 14. Most of the time I understand why people feel the way they do. | | | | | |
| 15. When I am sad, I find it easy to cheer myself up. | | | | | |
| 16. When I am touched by something, I immediately know what I feel. | | | | | |
| 17. If I dislike something, I manage to say so in a calm manner. | | | | | |
| 18. I do not understand why the people around me respond the way they do. | | | | | |
| 19. When I see someone who is stressed or anxious, I can easily calm them down. | | | | | |
| 20. During an argument I do not know whether I am angry or sad. | | | | | |
| 21. I use my feelings to improve my choices in life. | | | | | |
| 22. I try to learn from difficult situations or emotions. | | | | | |
| 23. Other people tend to confide in me about personal issues. | | | | | |
| 24. My emotions inform me about changes I should make in my life. | | | | | |
| 25. I find it difficult to explain my feelings to others even if I want to. | | | | | |
| 26. I don't always understand why I am stressed. | | | | | |
| 27. If someone came to me in tears, I would not know what to do. | | | | | |
| 28. I find it difficult to listen to people who are complaining. | | | | | |
| 29. I often take the wrong attitude to people because I was not aware of their emotional state. | | | | | |
| 30. I am good at sensing what others are feeling. | | | | | |
| 31. I feel uncomfortable if people tell me about their problems, so I try to avoid it. | | | | | |
| 32. I know what to do to motivate people. | | | | | |
| 33. I am good at lifting other people's spirits. | | | | | |
| 34. I find it difficult to establish a link between a person's response and their personal circumstances. | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| 35. I am usually able to influence the way other people feel. | | | | | |
| 36. If I wanted, I could easily make someone feel uneasy. | | | | | |
| 37. I find it difficult to handle my emotions. | | | | | |
| 38. The people around me tell me I don't express my feelings openly. | | | | | |
| 39. When I am angry, I find it easy to calm myself down. | | | | | |
| 40. I am often surprised by people's responses because I was not aware they were in a bad mood. | | | | | |
| 41. My feelings help me to focus on what is important to me. | | | | | |
| 42. Others don't accept the way I express my emotions. | | | | | |
| 43. When I am sad, I often don't know why. | | | | | |
| 44. Quite often I am not aware of people's emotional state. | | | | | |
| 45. Other people tell me I make a good confidant. | | | | | |
| 46. I feel uneasy when other people tell me about something that is difficult for them. | | | | | |
| 47. When I am confronted with an angry person, I can easily calm them down. | | | | | |
| 48. I am aware of my emotions as soon as they arise. | | | | | |
| 49. When I am feeling low, I find it difficult to know exactly what kind of emotion it is I am feeling. | | | | | |
| 50. In a stressful situation I usually think in a way that helps me stay calm. | | | | | |

Appendix F

SPECS Evaluation Interview Guide

Preamble

You were asked to participate in this study because you recently completed an online education program for minor hockey parents. I've asked you here today to talk about your overall experience with the program, as well as some general questions about your sport parenting. I would like to remind you that there are no right or wrong answers here. I am interested in your opinions and experiences. This interview is meant to be a conversation rather than a strict 'question and answer' format. So, don't worry about going 'off topic' or talking about things I did not specifically ask about. I want to know everything about your experience with the program.

[START RECORDING]

Introductory Questions ('Icebreakers')

- Have you ever completed any sport parent education programs prior to completing this one?
- If so, how was your experience with this program different/similar than previous education initiatives?
- Why were you interested in participating in a sport parent education program?

Main Questions

Program Content

- How was your overall experience of the program?
- What did you like about it?
 - What didn't you like about it?
 - Probe for details [focus on specifics and how you could improve the program]
- How helpful did you think the program was?
 - What do you think of the program content?
 - Which module stood out the most to you?
 - Did you learn anything new about yourself?
 - Is there anything that you didn't learn that you wish was included in the program?
 - Do you think you the strategies you learned will be helpful in the future?

Program Delivery

- What was your experience with the website?
 - What did/didn't you like about how the program was delivered (i.e. via website)?
 - How easy/difficult was it to use the online platform?
- How much did your opinion of the website effect your desire to learn the program content?
 - Probe for details about the website features
 - Probe for details on the design and esthetics of the website

- What are some things that made it easy to complete the program?
- What are some things that made it difficult to complete the program?

Emotional Intelligence & Sport Parenting

- Do you think your ability to read and react to your child's emotions has changed since completing the program?
- How do you think your participation in this program will influence the way you manage your emotions when it comes to your child's sport?
- Can you think of a specific moment where you used information that you learned in the program? If so, can you describe the situation in detail? Please tell me everything you remember.
 - Probe for details [focus on behaviours, ask for specific examples]

Summary Questions

- What do you think is the biggest/most important thing you learned from the program?
- Do you think you will continue to use the information you learned during the program in your everyday parenting practices?
- Overall, how do you think the program helped you become a better sport parent?
- Finally, do you have anything else to add about your experience with the program that I didn't ask about?