



SPEED PROJECT

Sport & Prevention of Emerging Eating Disorders

What Should the Coach Do When Warning Signs Are Observed

Dr. Giulia Guardavilla



Funded by
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



SPEED PROJECT

Sport & Prevention of Emerging Eating Disorders

If warning signs that may indicate eating problems are noticed, before addressing the issue it is important to:

- note behaviors, episodes, and indicators identified as warning signs, and when and where they were observed;
- consult with other coaches who work with the athlete;
- be familiar with how the sports club handles issues of this kind;
- if available, contact the team psychologist.



Funded by
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



SPEED PROJECT

Sport & Prevention of Emerging Eating Disorders

The coach should behave differently depending on the age of the athlete:

- if the athlete is **a minor** it is necessary to speak with the **family** first, preferably with both parents, and not directly with the athlete;
- if the athlete is **an adult** it is possible to speak directly with the athlete.



Funded by
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



SPEED PROJECT

Sport & Prevention of Emerging Eating Disorders

In any case, before intervening, it is important for the coach to assess:

- whether they are the best person to speak with the athlete or parents about the problem, or whether there is someone else with a better relationship with the athlete or family;
- whether it is better to address the conversation alone or with other staff members;
- what moment and place may be appropriate;
- what the goal of the conversation is.



Funded by
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



SPEED PROJECT

Sport & Prevention of Emerging Eating Disorders

How to choose the right moment for the conversation:

- identify a moment when enough time is available to address the topic;
- where possible, choose a dedicated time that is not, for example, a break between training sessions;
- it is important to be able to focus fully on the conversation without other distractions;
- ensure that the other party — whether parents or the athlete — also has enough time available to listen and talk.



Funded by
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



SPEED PROJECT

Sport & Prevention of Emerging Eating Disorders

How to choose the right setting for the conversation:

- it should be a place where the privacy of the conversation is guaranteed;
- it should not be a place where people pass through or where others might enter during the conversation;
- if speaking with the athlete, it should be a place where they cannot be seen by other athletes or teammates;
- ideally, it should be a quiet place that feels safe.



Funded by
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.