

**The Development of a Psychosocial Parent Education
Programme for British Tennis**

by

Sam Nicholas Thrower

A Doctoral Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of
Doctor of Philosophy of Loughborough University

April 2016

© By Sam Nicholas Thrower 2016

Abstract

Although there currently exists an in-depth empirical understanding of parents' experiences and involvement in youth sport, there is an absence of published field-based intervention research specifically with sport parents (Harwood & Knight, 2015). In order to address this gap in the literature, this thesis developed a psychosocial parent education programme for British Tennis. The first study identified the education and support needs of tennis parents operating within British high performance centres (study one). Adopting a grounded theory design, data were collected through informal chats, observations, and formal interviews with parents, coaches, and ex-youth players ($n=29$) during a six-month period of fieldwork. Findings revealed how parents' education and support needs occur across multiple levels of functioning (i.e., social, organisational, developmental, and intra-interpersonal) and are influenced by the developmental stage that parents operate in. This theoretical framework was then used as the basis for a group-based tennis parent education programme (study two). Using a qualitative organisational action research framework seven workshops were run over a 12-week period for parents with children between the ages of 5 and 10 years. Participant diaries, social validation feedback forms, and post programme focus groups ($n=19$) revealed perceived improvements in parents' knowledge, affect, and skills across a range of learning objectives. In an attempt to improve accessibility and extend participation, the final study utilised a convergent parallel mixed methods design to examine the effectiveness of an online education programme for British tennis parents ($n=38$) and their perceptions of engaging in the programme (study three). Quantitative findings revealed positive directional changes in tennis parent efficacy, general parent efficacy, emotional experiences, and achievement goal orientations after completing the programme. Qualitative data provided complementary and unique insights into what worked, how, and why. Taken together, the studies within this thesis are the first to demonstrate the effectiveness of face-to-face and online sport parent education programmes. Findings also extend and advance existing recommendations and guidelines in relation to the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of education programmes for sport parents. In particular, studies illustrate the importance and value of providing sport parents with accessible, proactive, structured, and developmentally appropriate education and support which addresses their stage-specific needs.

Publications Arising from this Thesis

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

Thrower, S.N., Harwood, C.G., & Spray, C.M. (2016). Educating and supporting tennis parents: A grounded theory of parents' needs during childhood and early adolescence. *Sport, Exercise, & Performance Psychology*, 5(2), 107-124.

International Conference Proceedings

Thrower, S.N., Harwood, C.G., & Spray, C.M. (2015, July). Educating and supporting tennis parents: An action research study. In O.N.Schmid (Chair), '*Parental influences in youth tennis players: Children and parents*'. Symposium conducted at the FEPSAC European Congress of Sport Psychology, Bern, Switzerland.

Thrower, S.N., Harwood, C.G., & Spray, C.M. (2014, October). *Educating and supporting tennis parents: A grounded theory of parents' needs during childhood*. Oral Presentation at the Association for Applied Sport Psychology (AASP) Annual Conference, Las Vegas, USA.

Thrower, S.N., Harwood, C.G., & Spray, C.M. (2014, September). *Educating and supporting tennis parents: A grounded theory of parents' needs during early adolescence*. Oral Presentation at the 4th International Qualitative Research in Sport & Exercise Conference, Loughborough, UK.

References to this Thesis within the Media:

Sanir, E. (2015, September 12). Are pushy parents putting children off sport? *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/sport/2015/sep/12/are-pushy-parents-putting-children-off-sport>.

Wing, J. (2015, July 9). Tennis parent education programme aims to help develop Britain's next Wimbledon star. *Loughborough University*. Retrieved from <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/news-events/news/2015/july/133-tennis-education.html>.

Acknowledgements

I also owe a great deal of gratitude to a number of people who have inspired and supported me during my PhD. However, I must firstly thank Lynne Evans, Ian Mitchell and Owen Thomas for your help and suggestions with my original application – you went beyond the call of duty and for that I am hugely grateful. Without you I may never have been offered this opportunity.

I would like to start by thanking the tennis directors who gave me access to their centres and the coaches, parents and players who gave up their time to participate in this research - without you none of this would have been possible. For all of you I will continue to make every effort to ensure this thesis has an impact in your world as well as mine.

To Chris Harwood, Chris Spray and Brett Smith, thank you for your guidance, feedback, friendship and for continuously challenging me to be better. All of you have shaped not only this thesis but also my thinking and development as an academic. I could not have asked for better mentors and role models!

I would also like to thank everyone in the sport psychology research office, and particularly Karen, Toni, Rob, Nicky, Anna, Mus, James, Nick, Ola, Emma, Ruth and Svenja for offering advice and sharing your experiences with me over the past three years. I feel very fortunate to have worked alongside such excellent scholars and more importantly to consider you all as friends.

To Paula, thank you for your love, patience, unwavering support and for always understanding how important this was to me.

Lastly to the teachers who never believed in me, and to my parents who always did.
Thank you.

Thesis Contents

Chapter One: Introduction

<i>Introduction</i>	10
<i>Purpose of the Thesis</i>	12
<i>Structure of the Thesis</i>	13

Chapter Two: Literature Review

<i>Introduction</i>	15
<i>Definitions</i>	15
<i>Participation in Youth Sport: Parental Influences</i>	16
<i>Parental Involvement in Youth Sport</i>	17
<i>Parental Styles in Youth Sport</i>	18
<i>Parenting Behaviours in Youth Sport</i>	21
<i>Parenting behaviours during competition</i>	21
<i>Perceptions of parental behaviour</i>	23
<i>Optimal Parental Involvement: Parenting Styles and Practices</i>	27
<i>Parents' Experiences of Youth Sport</i>	28
<i>Stressors and challenges associated with parenting in youth sport</i>	29
<i>Parents' experiences of youth sport and influencing factors</i>	30
<i>Improving Parents' Experiences and Involvement in Youth Sport</i>	31
<i>Sport Parent Interventions</i>	32
<i>Summary</i>	34

Chapter Three: Methodology

<i>Introduction</i>	36
<i>Paradigms</i>	36
<i>Pragmatism as a Philosophy</i>	38
<i>Pragmatism as a Paradigm</i>	40
<i>The Research Problem and Questions</i>	41
<i>Research Designs</i>	42
<i>Research Methods: Data Collection and Analysis</i>	42
<i>Research Context: British Tennis</i>	43
<i>Ethical Considerations</i>	44
<i>Research Quality Criteria</i>	44

Chapter Four: Educating and Supporting Tennis Parents: A Grounded Theory of Parents' Needs During Childhood and Early Adolescence (study one)

Introduction47
Methodology50
Results56
Discussion69

Chapter Five: Educating and Supporting Tennis Parents: An Action Research Study (study two)

Introduction74
Methodology76
Results83
Discussion96

Chapter Six: Educating and Supporting Tennis Parents: An Exploratory Online Education Programme (study three)

Introduction102
Methodology104
Results111
Discussion118

Chapter Seven: General Discussion and Conclusions

Introduction124
Methodological Contribution125
Contribution to Knowledge and Practice.....126
Knowledge Dissemination and Transfer131
Limitations and Future Directions.....132
Concluding Remarks133

References134

Appendices149

List of Figures

Figure 1. Dewey’s Model of Inquiry	39
Figure 2. Dewey’s Five-Step Model of Inquiry as Applied to Research.....	40
Figure 3. Conditional/Consequential Matrix of Tennis Parents’ Education and Support Needs.....	55
Figure 4. A Grounded Theory of Tennis Parents’ Education and Support Needs during Childhood/Mini-Tennis and Early Adolescence/Junior-Tennis.....	57

List of Tables

Table 1. Summary of Children’s Preferences for Parents’ Behaviour at Competitions.....	23
Table 2. Participant Demographics (study one)	52
Table 3. Participant Demographics (study two)	78
Table 4. An Overview of Each Workshop Title, Learning Objectives, Content and Tasks.....	80
Table 5. Participant Demographics (study three)	107
Table 6. Means, Standard Deviations, Cronbach Alpha Coefficients, and Effect Sizes for all variables.....	112

List of Appendices

Appendix 1. Information Sheet (study one).....	149
Appendix 2. Field Notes Example (study one).....	153
Appendix 3. Parent Interview Guide (study one)	159
Appendix 4. Parent Interview Transcript Example (study one)	169
Appendix 5. Information Sheet (study two)	183
Appendix 6. Social Validation Feedback Form Examples (study two)	188
Appendix 7. Participant Diary Examples (study two)	191
Appendix 8. Focus Group Guide (study two)	194
Appendix 9. Focus Group Transcript Example (study two)	202
Appendix 10. Club/Centre Invitation Letter (study three)	230
Appendix 11. Parent Invitation Email (study three)	232
Appendix 12. Promotional Poster (study three)	234
Appendix 13. Website and Twitter Examples (study three)	236
Appendix 14. Online Information Sheet and Informed Consent Form (study three)	239
Appendix 15. Pre-Workshop Questionnaire (study three)	242

Appendix 16. TPES Expert Panel Example (study three).....252
Appendix 17. Email Interview Guide (study three)268
Appendix 18. Email Interview Transcript Example (study three)270

Chapter One:
Introduction

Introduction

Articles about the destructive behaviour of tennis parents are a frequent occurrence in the popular press. In 2006 Christophe Fauvau, a French tennis father, was found guilty of manslaughter after drugging his child's tennis rival (Lichfield, 2006). Other high profile examples include Jelena Dokic, whose promising career was hindered by her father who she claimed physically and mentally abused her and who was repeatedly arrested and thrown out of tennis tournaments for his behaviour. More recently, Bernard Tomic's father John was banned from the ATP tour after head-butting his son's hitting partner. However, high profile instances of 'overinvolved', 'pushy', and 'overbearing' parents are relatively rare at a professional level. By this point promising players have usually either dropped out of the sport or distanced themselves from their parents as a result of their behaviour during their younger years. For instance, the behaviour of Jim Pierce finally caused his daughter Mary Pierce (a grand slam winner) to take out a restraining order on her father following years of emotional and physical abuse.

At a junior level, however, inappropriate parent behaviour appears to be not only commonplace but also most worryingly on the rise (Gould, Lauer, Rolo, Jannes, & Pennisi, 2008). Within Britain, numerous newspaper articles have highlighted the number of 'pushy' or 'overinvolved' parents who are living their failed dreams through their child (e.g., Sanir, 2015). In one particularly damning piece, Judy Murray (mother of British Grand Slam winner Andy Murray) explained how during her time as a parent on the British junior-tennis scene she has seen parents verbally and physically abuse their children and how it is not uncommon to see destructive and dysfunctional behaviour (Hodgkinson, 2008). Some of these dysfunctional parent behaviours included calling balls out, coaching their children, using coded signals, giving their child notes on water bottles, holding up instructional signs, clapping opponents' double faults, and generally trying to influence the outcomes of matches.

In fact, it was these high profile examples that sparked my own interest in parental involvement in youth sport contexts over 3 years ago. Soon after delving into the sport parent literature, I (the author) started to understand the wider implications that destructive parental behaviour can have on children's participation and development in youth sport. For example, research has highlighted how children who perceive their parents as pressurising have reported higher levels of pre-competitive anxiety (Bois, Lalanne, & Delforge, 2009), lower self-esteem, and reduced self-confidence (Leff & Hoyle, 1995; Nicholls & Polman, 2007). In addition to this, excessive parental pressure and expectations

have also led to children fearing failure (Sagar & Lavelle, 2010), cheating (Casper, 2006), burning out, and/or dropping out of sport (Gould, Tuffey, Udry, & Loehr, 1996). Unlike some of the aforementioned media accounts, research has also illustrated the vital role parents play in introducing children to sport and providing them with the financial and logistical support needed for participation. Beyond this, studies have pointed to the important role parents can play in creating a positive sporting experience for children (Fraser-Thomas & Côté, 2009), increasing their enjoyment (Leff & Hoyle, 1995), boosting their perceptions of competence, self-confidence, and intrinsic motivation (Babkes & Weiss, 1999; Ullrich-French & Smith, 2006; Wuerth, Lee, & Alfermann, 2004), and helping talented athletes achieve elite levels (Côté, 1999; Wolfenden & Holt, 2005). I soon came to realise that a paradox exists where parents are both essential for the development of young athletes and yet a major detriment for some children (Gould et al., 2008).

Over the last decade, researchers have explored this paradox in greater depth (see chapter two for an extensive literature review). Researchers have provided an understanding of the behavioural preferences of athletes regarding their parents at competitions (e.g., Knight, Boden, & Holt, 2010; Knight, Neely, & Holt, 2011; Omli & LaVoi, 2011), coaches perceptions of positive and negative parenting practices (e.g., Gould, Lauer, Rolo, Jannes, & Pennisi, 2006; Gould et al., 2008), and adaptive versus less adaptive parenting styles and practices (e.g., Holt, Tamminen, Black, Mandigo, & Fox, 2009; Lauer, Gould, Roman, & Pierce, 2010a, 2010b; Sapieja, Dunn, & Holt, 2011). Researchers have also established lines of research into parents' experiences and stressors, as well as the emotions associated with parenting in youth sport (e.g., Clarke & Harwood, 2014; Dorsch, Smith, & McDonough, 2009; Harwood & Knight, 2009a, 2009b; Omli & LaVoi, 2012; Wiersma & Fifer, 2008).

This body of research has begun to demonstrate the complexities and challenges of being a 'sport parent' (Harwood & Knight, 2015). These studies have also provided sports organisations, applied researchers, and practitioners with numerous recommendations on how to optimise parental involvement and how sport parents could benefit from psychosocial education and support. Despite this, there is an absence of published field-based intervention studies with sport parents in the literature (Harwood & Knight, 2015). This has resulted in a significant gap between academic research and applied practice within the area of sport parenting, a trend that is also indicative of the wider sport psychology literature (Giacobbi, Poczwardowski, & Hager, 2005). No more so is this evident than within junior-tennis where there exists an in-depth understanding of tennis

parents experiences and involvement, but no evidence-based psychosocial intervention research which has attempted to enhance and optimise parental involvement through providing education and support.

Despite this lack of intervention research with tennis parents, a small number of tennis organisations (e.g., Tennis Australia n.d.; United States Tennis Association, 2013) have created parent education programmes and online resources (e.g., parent information pages) for tennis parents in an attempt to reduce the negative influence that some parents have on their child's participation and development and improve parental involvement. However, Holt and Knight (2014) have questioned the extent to which these existing programmes are based upon or informed by contemporary research, as many of the suggestions simply advocate right from wrong behaviours (i.e., parent do's and don'ts). Furthermore, not all governing bodies provide parents with educational material or resources. For instance, British tennis parents still receive little or no education and support when they first come into tennis from the National Governing Body (i.e., The Lawn Tennis Association (LTA)). With these points in mind, researchers (i.e., Gould et al., 2008) have highlighted the need to conduct more large-scale tennis parent interventions and for these interventions to be evaluated to determine their effectiveness. Such research appears to be vital if resources are to be allocated to tennis parent education in the future. Gould and colleagues (2008) went on to suggest that future applied research must also explore the most effective ways to increase parental awareness and behaviour change and identify whether online programmes have the same learning efficacy as traditional face-to-face educational programmes.

Purpose of the Thesis

The purpose of this thesis, therefore, was to develop a psychosocial parent education programme for British tennis. The specific aims of this thesis were to:

- Identify the education and support needs of British tennis parents across contexts and developmental stages.
- Develop, implement, and evaluate the effectiveness of a stage specific psychosocial parent education programme for British tennis parents
- Explore the most effective way of delivering a parent education programme to British tennis parents.

Structure of the Thesis

In line with the purpose and aims of this thesis, chapter two will offer a critical review of the youth sport parenting literature with a particular emphasis on parenting in tennis. The third chapter briefly describes the philosophical assumptions, research designs, and methods used within this thesis. In the fourth chapter the first study is presented, which provides a grounded theory of British tennis parents' education and support needs across contexts and developmental stages. Chapter five and six use this theory as a framework for the development and implementation of a group-based face-to-face tennis parent education programme (study 2) and an exploratory online education programme respectively (study 3). Each of these chapters provides a review of relevant literature, methodology, results, and a discussion of the findings. The final chapter provides a general discussion of the key findings and the overall contribution of this thesis to the sport parent literature. The limitations and directions for future research are also discussed.

**Chapter Two:
Literature Review**

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter will provide an overview of research exploring parenting in youth sport. Emphasis will be placed on research conducted with or in relation to tennis parents. However, research from other sports, and domains, has been incorporated into the review where relevant. This chapter will begin by offering a number of definitions of key terminology used throughout the thesis. Attention will then focus on the literature that has demonstrated how parents influence children's initial interest and participation in youth sport. The early literature that explored the quantities and types of parental involvement will then be reviewed. Following this, an overview of research that has identified positive and negative parenting styles and behaviours is presented. Next, the literature that has provided an understanding of the stress and emotions parents experience during junior-tennis is described. The penultimate section will review research that has provided an understanding of how to improve parents' experiences and involvement in junior-tennis. Finally, the last section will then present studies that have intervened with sport parents in practice.

Definitions

Within this thesis, the term 'parent' denotes the (usually although not exclusively biological) relationship of a mother or father to a child (Hoghughi, 2004). Alternatively, 'parental' is a term meaning belonging to a parent (e.g., parental needs) and the term 'parenting' describes the caregiving processes, practices and behaviours that parents engage with in relation to their child (Ribbens-McCarthy & Edwards, 2011). Building on these straightforward definitions, parent education within the current thesis is considered as "systematic activities implemented by professionals to assist parents in accomplishing specific goals or outcomes with their children" (Mahoney et al., 1999, p.131). Parent education differs from support in that it refers to instructing the parent rather than encouraging or providing social support to the parent (Mahoney et al., 1999). Parents' education and support needs were defined as a learning or performance gap between the current condition and the desired condition (Gupta, Sleezer, & Rus-eft, 2007). Therefore, a needs assessment refers to a process of identifying how to close a learning or performance gap by determining what the important needs are and how to address them. Finally, the concept of parental learning is referred to as the act of gaining knowledge or skills (Gupta et al., 2007)

Participation in Youth Sport: Parental Influences

Turning attention towards the youth sport literature, it has been well established that parents (and the wider family unit) play a critical role in initiating their child's interest in sport and are often the first point of socialisation into sport for young children. For instance, if parents themselves engage in exercise and sport and communicate to their children the value and enjoyment of doing so, children are more likely to replicate these behaviours (Bandura, 1977; Fredricks & Eccles, 2004). Taking this into consideration, it is perhaps not surprising that those who have family members involved in sport have a higher chance of being involved themselves (Bailey, Collins, Ford, MacNamara, Toms, & Pearce, 2009; Kirk & MacPhail, 2003).

Beyond igniting children's initial interest in sport, parents also have a direct influence on children's initial and on-going participation in organised youth sport. As Green and Chalip (1998) suggested, parents are the purchasers of the youth sport experiences for their children. Research has shown that sport parents increasingly have to commit huge amounts of time and money organising, transporting, and attending their children's training sessions and competitions. The growing financial and time commitment required to participate in youth sport seems to be a direct consequence of the increasing privatisation of sport (particularly in Britain) and a desire for organised training and competitive experiences at a young age. Unfortunately, such trends mean that organised youth sport in Britain is rapidly becoming a domain of the privileged few who are willing and able to pay for it (Holt & Knight, 2014). As a result, a situation currently exists where children from higher-income families are more likely to play sport than children from low-income families (Clark, 2008). The influence of family income is clearly evident within the context of British junior-tennis where the time commitment and finances needed for individual coaching, indoor court hire, equipment, tournament travel, and competition entry fees represent a significant barrier for low-income families. Harwood and Knight (2009b) highlighted how parents of children aged 9-11 estimated they spent between £2,000 and £3,500 per year on tennis with these cost rising to £15,000-20,000 per year between the ages of 12 -16 years (Holt & Knight, 2014). However, even for parents who are willing and able to provide the finances for their child to participate in junior-tennis, the time commitment required to compete in junior-tennis can impact negatively on their own social, professional, and family lives (Harwood & Knight, 2009b; Wolfenden & Holt, 2005).

From these studies, it is clear that family background and socioeconomic status are a direct link to sport, socialisation, opportunity, and participant development (Bailey et al., 2009). It is also clear that many sport parents unselfishly sacrifice their own careers, social lives, and financial security to provide opportunities for their children to engage in organised youth sport and particularly junior-tennis. However, parents not only provide the chance for their child to participate in sport, they also play a key role in the way in which their child makes sense of and interpret their early sporting experiences (Fredricks & Eccles, 2004). As a result, the majority of research within this field has focused on parental involvement in youth sport.

Parental Involvement in Youth Sport

Early work exploring the notion of parental involvement in youth sport focused predominantly on the quantity of parental involvement. Through his research with junior skiers and their parents, Hellstedt (1987) proposed that parents' involvement ranged on a continuum from over to under-involved. On this continuum, over-involved parents were characterised as attending too many practices, criticising their child (and coaches), and also trying to coach their child themselves. Such behaviours were viewed as disruptive in relation to the coach-athlete relationship (Holt & Knight, 2014). Hellstedt (1987) suggested that this excessive interest in their children's sport involvement was often driven by an underlying motive for their children to be successful and maintain a career in sport. At the other end of the continuum, under-involved parents showed little interest in their child's sport involvement, and provided limited emotional, financial, and tangible support meaning that children were unlikely to receive the support required for long-term participation and success in sport. In the middle of these two extremes were moderately (or optimally) involved parents. These parents involved children in decision-making about their sport involvement and were characterised as being firm but flexible (Hellstedt, 1987).

Although useful parallels can be drawn here between parental involvement in skiing and tennis given that both sports require individual coaching, expensive equipment, and considerable time and travel commitments, researchers soon recognised that it was not simply the quantity of parental involvement which had most influence on children's participation and development in sport but the quality or type of that involvement. Of more importance, and thus interest to researchers going forward was whether parents' involvement, and specifically their type of behaviour, was perceived to be supportive or pressurising by the child. This followed the realisation that there was no reason why a child could not perceive highly involved or visible parents as supportive. This basic distinction

between the types of behaviours parents display (e.g., supportive vs. pressurising) has received significant attention within the sport parent literature. Parental support has been defined as: “Athletes perceptions of his or her parents’ behaviour aimed at facilitating his or her involvement and participation” (Leff & Hoyle, 1995, p.190). Within the sport parent literature, supportive behaviours have been broadly categorised as: tangible support (e.g., transport, finances, and time commitment), informational support (e.g., advice about training and competitions), and emotional support (e.g., showing care and understanding) (Gould et al., 2006; Gould et al., 2008; Wolfenden & Holt, 2005). Research has consistently identified these aspects of parental support as critical to children’s long-term enjoyment, performance, and talent development (e.g., Côté, 1999; Gould et al., 2008; Wolfenden & Holt, 2005). On the other hand, Leff and Hoyle (1995) defined parental pressure as: “Behaviour exhibited by parents that is perceived by their child as indicating high, unlikely, or possibly unattainable expectations (p.190). Behaviours that are reportedly associated with this include excessive criticism or the withdrawal of love when competitive performances do not meet parents’ expectations (Gould et al., 2006; Gould et al., 2008). Studies have shown that children who perceive their parents as pressurising are more likely to fear failure, experience pre-competitive anxiety, burnout, or dropout of the sport (Bois et al., 2009; Gould et al., 1996; Sagar & Lavalley, 2010).

However, although intuitively appealing, focusing on continuums (e.g., under-involved, moderately-involved, or over-involved) or broad distinctions (e.g., parental support vs. parental pressure) has provided a limited understanding of how parents influence their children’s participation, progress, and development within sport. Therefore, in the last decade researchers have started to explore the parental styles and behaviours which parents display in youth sport settings and the influence they have on child outcomes. It is these more contemporary research topics to which I now turn.

Parental Styles in Youth Sport

One global approach to sport parenting that has received considerable academic attention within recent years is the concept of parental styles. Parental styles categorise parents into broad types depending on their overall parenting approach. Darling and Steinberg (1993) defined parental styles as: “A constellation of attitudes toward the child that are communicated to the child and that, taken together, create an emotional climate in which the parent’s behaviours are expressed” (p.448). In other words, parenting styles are the general emotional climate parents create for their child, and this influences how a child perceives specific parenting behaviours and moderates the effectiveness of those

behaviours in facilitating desirable child outcomes (Holt & Knight, 2014).

Although a number of global parenting style typologies have been used within developmental research, most of the research within the youth sport literature has focused on Baumrind's (1971) three global parenting styles (i.e., authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive). Following extensive observations of 146 children and their parents, Baumrind (1971) suggested that parents vary in the extent to which they apply authority and control. Authoritarian parents try to shape and control their child's behaviour, place high expectations on their children, do not tolerate inappropriate behaviour, and use disciplinary behaviours when they deem necessary (Baumrind, 1971). Parents adopting this style expect children to follow rules and rarely explain the reasons or rationale for these rules (Holt & Knight, 2014). On the other hand, permissive parents exhibit very little control over their children and rarely use punishments. Instead they accept their children's desires, make few maturity demands, openly allow independence, and tolerate inappropriate behaviour. In-between these two parenting styles lies authoritative parents who also have high maturity demands and set clear boundaries but they guide their children's behaviour through communication and reasoning (i.e., discussing and explaining the reasoning for their demands). Parents adopting this style also encourage and facilitate child independence within these boundaries.

Within the unique context of youth sport, researchers have explored how these parenting styles influenced child outcomes (Juntumaa, Keskivaara & Punamäki, 2005; Sapieja et al., 2011). Juntumaa and colleagues (2005) explored the influence of parenting styles on achievement strategies, norm breaking behaviours, and satisfaction among 1018 adolescent ice hockey players and 979 of their parents. Findings revealed that authoritative parenting was associated with high levels of task-orientated behaviour and low levels of norm-breaking behaviour. Importantly, players whose parents adopted an authoritative parenting style reported higher satisfaction and continued engagement in hockey. More recently, Sapieja et al. (2011) concluded that soccer players who perceived their parents as demanding but responsive and supportive of their needs were more likely to be healthy perfectionists or non-perfectionists in a sample of 194 junior players. Similar positive child outcomes associated with authoritative parenting styles have been reported within the health related and physical domains (see Holt & Knight, 2014 for an overview).

Despite its widespread use, Baumrind's typology has received criticism within the literature for not being consistent across families from diverse ethnic or socioeconomic backgrounds, and for relying too heavily on a narrow configuration of parental

characteristics (Holt & Knight, 2014). As a result, Grolnick and Ryan (1989) proposed a framework of parenting styles, underpinned by self-determination theory, which differentiated between parents on the extent to which they employ control and support. The authors suggested that there are three aspects of parental style: involvement, autonomy support vs. control, and structure. Firstly, involvement refers to “the extent to which parents are interested in, knowledgeable about, and take an active role in their child’s life” (Grolnick & Ryan, 1989, p.144). Secondly, autonomy support is the “degree to which parents value and use techniques which encourage independent problem-solving, choice, and participation in decisions”, in comparison to using controlling, pressuring, or disciplinary techniques (Grolnick & Ryan, 1989, p.144). Therefore, the distinction between autonomy support and control refers to the degree to which the environment allows children to feel that they initiate their own actions (i.e., they are provided with options, solve problems on their own, and are involved in decision making) rather than feeling forced to act in a certain way by their parents (Grolnick, 2003). Finally, structure refers to the extent to which parents provide clear and consistent guidelines, expectations, boundaries, and rules for their children’s behaviour so they can act in self-determined ways (Grolnick & Ryan, 1989).

Holt and colleagues (2009) used this framework to examine the parenting styles used by parents of under-12 and under-14 female football players. Using a qualitative design, the authors conducted extensive observations and interviews with 34 players and 56 parents. Findings revealed how autonomy supportive parents provided appropriate structure by setting boundaries and let their daughters make decisions within these boundaries. Autonomy supportive parents reported being able to read their child’s mood, were more willing to engage in open communication, and knew when to provide post-match feedback. In contrast, controlling parents did not support their child’s autonomy, were not sensitive to their child’s mood, and engaged in one-way communication. An interesting finding to emerge from this study was that some parents reported using an autonomy supportive style in some situations and a controlling style in others. Parents adopting this mixed style appeared to change their style depending on their partner’s parenting style or the socialisation goals they had for their child in specific contexts (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). As a final point, findings also revealed how children have a reciprocal influence on parenting styles and practices, supporting the notion that the parent-child relationship is bi-directional.

Despite authoritative (Baumrind, 1971) and autonomy supportive (Grolnick &

Ryan, 1989) typologies being recognised as the optimal parenting styles for enhancing child outcomes in sport, studies exploring the impact of parenting styles have generally failed to account for variations in cultural, social, or situational contexts. Furthermore, much of this research has overlooked the bi-directional nature of parent-child relationships and assumes that all children and young athletes respond in the same way to an authoritative or autonomy supportive parenting style and the emotional climates that they create. As a result, parenting styles research has, to date, offered a useful but limited understanding of parenting in youth sport settings.

Parenting Behaviours in Youth Sport

Alongside general parenting styles, significant attention has been paid to understanding the specific behaviours of parents within the youth sport literature. This research has focused on the behaviours parents display in the competition context, junior players' perceptions of positive and negative behaviours during competition, and coaches', parents', and players' perceptions of the behaviours influencing junior athletes' long-term development in sport.

Parenting behaviours during competition. The way in which a parent communicates his or her beliefs and values about competition, offers attributions for sporting success and failure, and provides feedback to their child, will determine how their child evaluates their own performance and level of competence in sport (Holt & Knight, 2014). Therefore, it is perhaps not surprising that understanding the behaviours parents display and the way they communicate within the competition context has received substantial attention within the literature. The range of behaviours parents display during competition was first illustrated by De Francesco and Johnson (1997) in a sample of 101 youth tennis players and their parents. Findings revealed that 60% of children indicated that one of their parents had embarrassed them by walking away from a match, 30% reported that one of their parents had yelled or screamed at them, and most worryingly 13% of children admitted that one of their parents had hit them after a match.

Support for these findings has been found in more recent observational studies of parents' behaviours at competitions (e.g., Bowker, Boekhoven, Nolan, Bauhaus, Glover, & Powell, 2009; Holt, Tamminen, Black, Sehn, & Wall, 2008; Kidman, McKenzie, & McKenzie, 1999). Collectively, these studies have reported that between 10 and 35% of the comments parents made during matches were negative or controlling, around 47 to 66% were positive or supportive comments (e.g., praise and encouragement) and the rest were classified as neutral. Interestingly, parents appear to engage in more negative comments

during competitive games than recreational games, suggesting that the nature of parents' comments appear to vary depending on the level of the competition (Bowker et al., 2009). Although these studies demonstrate that the majority of comments parents make at competitions are mostly supportive (Holt & Knight, 2014), there was a general consensus amongst the authors that parents should be educated to reduce the overall number of negative comments, which can damage young athletes' long term motivation and development within sport (Bowker et al., 2009; Kidman et al., 1999).

In addition to coding parents' comments, Holt and colleagues (2008) also examined the factors that influence the verbal responses of soccer parents during matches through the use of audio diaries and interviews. Findings revealed that parents' comments appeared to vary from more supportive to more controlling depending upon personal factors (i.e., parents' perceived level of expertise and parents' empathy with their child) and contextual factors (i.e., stage of the game, the score, and importance of the match). In particular, parents who were emotionally involved in the match and felt empathetic towards their child were more likely to communicate in a controlling or negative manner, whilst parents with more perceived knowledge about soccer felt able to provide more supportive and performance related feedback during matches.

Dorsch, Smith, Wilson, and McDonough (2015) recently added to these findings by providing an in-depth understanding of the factors that underpinned four parents' interpersonal communication and behaviours during competition. A longitudinal case study design was employed to investigate the potential link between parent goals and verbal side-line behaviours over the initial 15 months of organised youth sport participation. Data from parent observations, journals, and interviews with four parents revealed how their behaviours and comments were typically engaged in to achieve a personal goal. However, findings also suggested that parents adjust their goals and resulting behaviour based on their child's early successes or failures. In addition to their goals, parents side-line behaviours were also influenced by the youth sport context with parents engaging in more side-line behaviours during individual sports than team sports. These results add to Holt et al.'s (2008) findings and suggest that parents' comments and behaviours during competition are influenced by the goals they have for their child, their perceived sport knowledge and experience, their emotional reaction to their child's experiences, the emotional intensity of the match, policy issues (i.e., rules and regulations), and the nature of the sport (i.e., individual vs. team sport).

Overall the aforementioned studies have provided an in-depth understanding of the comments and behaviours that parents engage in during youth sport competitions and have started to shed light on the reasons why parents engage in more supportive or controlling behaviours. However, one limitation of these observational studies is that it is unclear if children actually hear their parents' comments (Holt & Knight, 2014) and if they do hear them how do they interpret or perceive them. As Bowker et al. (2009) suggested there might be a fine line between comments perceived as supportive or negative/controlling depending on the volume or tone of a parents' voice.

Perceptions of parental behaviour. In addition to the behaviours that parents display, research has explored children's preferences for parents' behaviours within the specific context of competition (Knight et al., 2010; Knight et al., 2011; Omli & Wiese-Bjonstal, 2011). Collectively, these studies have used focus groups and interviews with 135 junior athletes from individual and team sports. Findings revealed a number of desirable and undesirable behaviours before, during, and after competitions (see Table 1). Within the context of junior-tennis, players identified five preferences for parents' behaviour, these included: (a) not to provide technical or tactical advice (unless parents had appropriate knowledge); (b) ensure comments focused on players effort and attitude rather than performance or outcome; (c) provide practical advice to help players prepare for and recover from matches; (d) respect the etiquette of tennis by not becoming involved in matches; and (e) match non-verbal behaviours with supportive comments and keep them consistent throughout the match (Knight et al., 2010). Such insights into players preferences for parental behaviours are crucial, as it is through these behaviours and the feedback parents provide to their children that children are likely to evaluate their own performance, judge their own competency, and appraise whether they have fulfilled their parents expectations (Harwood & Knight, 2012).

Table 1. Summary of Children's Preferences for Parents' Behaviour at Competitions
(Taken from Holt & Knight, 2014)

	Desirable Behaviours	Undesirable Behaviours
Before Competitions	Providing practical information regarding nutrition and warming up	Making any comments that focus on the child's performance
	Ensuring athletes are physically prepared for competition (e.g., arriving on time, well fed, and with the right equipment)	Communicating any expectations about winning to the child (e.g., talking about who they will play in the next round)

	If parents have appropriate knowledge, providing some technical or tactical advice	Providing technical and tactical advice (if they do not have appropriate knowledge)
	Catering to a child's needs for mental preparation (e.g., identify if children like talking or quiet before competitions)	
During Competition	Behaving in accordance with the rules and etiquette of the sport	Intimidating opponents (e.g., criticising or threatening children)
	Supporting (through clapping) both teams/players	Displaying any over interest in the game outcome
	Matching all non-verbal behaviours (e.g., gestures, facial expressions) with verbal support	Drawing attention to self through over involvement, over excitement, or criticisms
	Maintaining a positive tone and body language	Becoming involved in the match
	Attending matches and paying attention to games	Singling out own child for support or encouragement
	Keeping support focused on effort rather than performances/outcomes	Criticising own child or team
	Maintain control over positive and negative emotions	Displaying negative responses during games (e.g., using a negative tone to give feedback)
	Helping make the whole team feel comfortable by supporting all players	Coaching in any form, including 'coaching like' comments from the bench or during breaks in play
	Talking to officials only if children are in danger. Praising officials for good calls	Arguing with officials, coaches, or other parents. Contradicting coach instructions
	Praising good performances and providing encouragement after poor skill execution	Repeating instructions that have been provided during the game
	Being empathetic and considering the feelings of all children before providing encouragement	Engaging in derogatory behaviour such as booing opponents
	If advice is requested, giving it when children are not on the field/court	Disrupting children so that they lose concentration during games (e.g., waving when children are competing)
		Invading players' spaces or attempting to make physical contact with coaches, referees, or children.
After Competition	Providing feedback regarding effort and attitude	Criticising players for performance-related issues.

	Keeping feedback positive but realistic. That is, identifying the good parts of the performance but not exaggerating or being overly positive when the performance was not good.	Blaming outcomes on others (e.g., if a child had a bad game, blaming it on the referee or other external factors)
	Waiting until children are ready to receive feedback.	Focusing on the negative aspects of a performance. Providing criticism when teammates or opponents are present.

There is also a significant body of research which has explored coaches', parents', and players' perceptions of the behaviours which positively or negatively influence young athletes long-term participation and development in sport (e.g. Bloom, 1985; Côté, 1999; Gould et al., 2006, 2008; Lauer et al., 2010a, 2010b). Initiating this body of work, Bloom (1985) explored the mechanisms of talent development through interviews with 120 American world-class performers in a variety of activities and sports (e.g., artists, musicians, mathematicians, tennis players, and swimmers). Bloom's (1985) findings within the sporting domain highlighted the influential and changing roles that parents played across three key stages of talent development. During the early years (or initiation stage), parents introduced their child to a variety of sports, provided an opportunity for them to participate, and emphasised fun and enjoyment. Parents also ensured their child received high quality coaching and supported the coach in creating a task-orientated learning environment with an absence of competitive pressure (Harwood, Douglas, & Minniti, 2014). During the middle years (or development stage), as the emphasis shifted to higher levels of training and competition, parents made a number of sacrifices to ensure that they could provide their child with the emotional and tangible support they required (e.g., financial support and transportation). In the later years (or mastery stage), when athletes were progressing towards elite status, parents were less visibly involved although they provided unconditional social support when necessary for their increasingly independent child-athlete.

Building on Bloom's (1985) initial work, Côté and colleagues (Côté, 1999; Côté and Fraser-Thomas, 2007) developed a sport specific framework, called the 'Developmental Model of Sports Participation' (DMSP), with more of an emphasis on the role of the family. Retrospective qualitative interviews with elite Canadian and Australian athletes from a range of sports (i.e., gymnastics, rowing, basketball, netball, hockey, and

tennis), their parents, and siblings revealed that athletic talent development occurred through three chronological stages of participation which were referred to as the sampling (6-13 years), specialising (13-15 years), and investment years (15+ years). During the sampling years, parents provided opportunities for their children to participate in a range of sports and activities for fun and enjoyment and recognised that their child had a gift or special talent for certain sports. Within the specialising years, as the young athletes started to focus their attention on one or two sports, parents increased their involvement, made financial and time commitments, and emphasised achievement in both school and sport. Finally, during the investment years, young athletes became committed to achieving high levels of performance (i.e., elite status) in a single sport and engaged in high levels of purposeful practice. At this point, parents continued to provide emotional and tangible support and helped their children with setbacks, injuries, fatigue, and increased levels of pressure.

Moving beyond basic descriptions of parent-related involvement at each stage, Wolfenden and Holt (2005) examined players', coaches', and parents' perceptions of talent development within the specific context of junior-tennis during the specialising stage. Interviews with three players in the specialising years (13-15 years), four parents, and two coaches reinforced the importance of emotional, tangible/financial, and informational support for talent development within tennis during this period. Parents also had high expectations (i.e., commitment) for their children and maintained healthy functioning relationships with coaches. However, parents were at times perceived as a source of pressure if they became over-involved in competitive settings, for instance, providing advice when they have little knowledge or experience of the sport themselves. This study further reiterates the vital role that parents play (alongside coaches) in creating a support team in which young players can progress and develop.

Remaining within the context of junior-tennis, Gould and colleagues (Gould et al., 2006; Gould et al., 2008; Lauer et al., 2010a, 2010b) conducted a series of in-depth studies with American coaches, elite players, and their parents exploring the role that parents play in tennis players' development. The first two studies used surveys ($n=132$) and a focus group ($n=24$) to explore high performance tennis coaches' perceptions of positive and negative parent behaviours. Findings revealed a wide range of positive parental behaviours that influence young players' development. These included: adopting an appropriate perspective (e.g., keeping tennis in perspective and focusing on processes not outcomes), emphasising children's total development (e.g., encouraging other activities and

emphasising moral and value development), and providing social support (e.g., logistical, financial, and emotional support). In contrast, negative behaviours included overemphasising winning, acting in a controlling manner, pushing their child, and behaving poorly during matches (Gould et al., 2006; Gould et al., 2008).

Building on these initial findings, Lauer et al. (2010a, 2010b) conducted retrospective interviews with American tennis players (aged 16-24 years), their coaches, and parents to explore how parental behaviours change at different stages of players' development (Bloom, 1985). Findings illustrated how parents display different behaviours at different stages of children's development. For instance, during the first two stages, participants indicated that positive parental behaviours included parental support, effective communication, help with making decisions, keeping players motivated, developing players' tennis talent, developing players' psychological and social skills, and keeping tennis in perspective (Harwood & Knight, 2012). The range of positive parental behaviours decreased during the final stages of development, particularly regarding developing tennis talent and effectively communicating with their child (Lauer et al., 2010a, 2010b). Furthermore, the negative behaviours parents displayed appeared to be greatest during the middle stages, with examples of over-pressurising or excessive involvement, poor emotional match reactions, embarrassing behaviour, too much tennis talk, a restricted social life, and parental approval tied to results (Harwood & Knight, 2012).

Collectively, these studies have provided a detailed understanding of coaches', parents', and players' perceptions of positive and negative behaviours (e.g. Gould et al., 2008; Knight et al., 2011; Lauer et al., 2010b). Based on these findings, the authors have offered a number of guidelines and recommendations for practitioners on how to enhance parents' awareness of their behaviours and the impact they have on their children's development in sport. However, these studies have largely overlooked the range of contextual, intrapersonal, and interpersonal factors that appear to influence the way in which parents behave at different points during a child's development. As a result, it seems unlikely if simply educating all parents about 'positive' and 'negative' behaviours at different stages of their child's development will have a positive influence on parents' behaviour in youth sport.

Optimal Parental Involvement: Parenting Styles and Practices

In order to create a more complete understanding of parental involvement in youth sport, current research has started to identify how parenting practices and broader parenting styles come together to optimise parental involvement in sport. Knight and Holt (2014)

conducted interviews and focus groups with 90 youth tennis players, ex-youth players, parents, and coaches from the United Kingdom to develop a grounded theory of optimal parental involvement in junior-tennis. The resulting grounded theory was built around the core category of ‘understanding and enhancing your child’s tennis journey’. The core category was underpinned by three categories: (a) shared and communicated goals, which referred to the need for parents and children to have the same aims for the child’s tennis involvement; (b) develop an understanding emotional climate, which accounted for the need for parents to continually seek to foster an environment in which children perceived that their parents understand their experience, and; (c) engage in enhancing parenting practices at competitions, which denoted the specific behaviours parents should display in relation to competitive tennis. Findings also suggest that the goals parents have for their children are influenced by demographic factors (e.g., children’s playing standard, years of tennis experience, age, and parents’ sport experience), tennis experiences, and sport specific transitions (e.g., changing age groups, team selections, winning tournaments, and performance slumps). Overall, the grounded theory illustrates how parenting practices, goals, and the overall emotional climate they create are related and influence each other to optimise parental involvement in tennis.

By identifying these categories and the relationships between them Knight and Holt (2014) have provided an understanding of why some types of involvement are perceived as positive or negative and have started to address the disparate nature of the literature on parental involvement in sport (Holt et al., 2009). In doing so, this study has reinforced the importance of studying these aspects together when assessing parental involvement. However, Knight and Holt (2014) failed to explore what optimal involvement looks like at different stages of a child’s involvement. Research that explores parental involvement across different developmental stages is clearly needed within the literature, as ‘optimal’ parental involvement at each stage is likely to be conceptualised differently.

Parents’ Experiences of Youth Sport

An alternative approach to studying parenting has focused on the ‘voice’ of the parent in order to understand their individual experiences. A growing body of research has provided detailed insight into what being a ‘sport parent’ is like for parents (Clarke & Harwood, 2014; Dorsch et al., 2009; Harwood, Drewe, & Knight, 2010; Harwood & Knight, 2009a, 2009b; Wiersma & Fifer, 2008) with the view to understanding why parents may adopt certain behaviours and how their experiences can be enhanced (Knight & Holt, 2013b). This research has centred upon the specific stressors and challenges that parents

face in youth sport settings and parents' wider experiences of being socialised into the youth sport environment.

Stressors and challenges associated with parenting in youth sport. The majority of the early work exploring parents' experience of youth sport has focused on the specific stressors and challenges that football and tennis parents experience across the sampling, specialising, and investment stages of sport (Harwood et al., 2010; Harwood & Knight, 2009a, 2009b). Within the specific context of junior-tennis, Harwood and Knight (2009a) examined the range of stressors experienced by 123 parents with British national level players between eight and 18 years of age. Parents in the study revealed a diverse range of seven different core-themes of tennis parent stressors. These categories included: competition, finance, time, sibling, organisational, and development related stressors. In other words, parents experienced a wide range of competitive stressors before, during, and after matches involving their child, opponents, other parents, and officials. Interestingly, parents also reported a wide range of organisational stressors associated with their roles (e.g., financial, social, and personal investments), and in doing so illustrated the importance of parents possessing the necessary skills to cope with the psychological, developmental, and logistical demands of being a tennis parent (Harwood & Knight, 2009a).

Harwood and Knight (2009b) then extended this study and investigated the stressors experienced by British tennis parents across three developmental stages (e.g., sampling, specialising, and investment years) (Côté, 1999). Adopting a qualitative approach, semi structured interviews with 22 British parents revealed support for their original study with parents reporting organisational (e.g., finances and time, governing bodies systems, training, and coaching), developmental (e.g., educational issues, uncertainty of tennis transitions, and future decision making), and competition stressors (e.g., behaviour, morality related issues, and performance). However, parents reported experiencing more stressors during the specialising and investment stages. Although similar stressors (e.g., lack of communication, educational issues, and sport-family role conflicts) have also been reported by parents of children in youth baseball, soccer, softball, and basketball (Harwood et al., 2010; Weirisma & Fifers, 2008), some of the stressors parents experienced in these studies (i.e., player deselection) were not encountered by tennis parents. This highlights the need to study parents' experiences within the specific sports and organisational systems in which they operate.

Taken together, these studies illustrate the complexity and challenging nature of parenting in youth sport. Although some parents reported over time learning to cope with

these stressors through experience, others felt they had been unable to develop sufficient resources to deal with role-related stress (Harwood et al., 2010; Harwood & Knight, 2009a). In light of this, scholars have emphasised the need to support parents by providing them with an advanced warning about the sport-specific stressors they may experience at each developmental stage and help parents to develop a range of coping strategies to manage some of the demands they face (e.g., charting matches, teaching their children how to cope with on-court demands, social interaction with other parents, and sharing tennis responsibilities with spouse) (Harwood & Knight, 2009a; Knight & Holt, 2013a, 2013b). Despite this, it is not clear what education and support parents want or need to cope with or manage the demands they face in youth sport.

Parents' experiences of youth sport and influencing factors. Beyond the specific stressors and demands parents' experience, there is a small body of research that has concentrated on parents' experiences of being socialised into youth sport environments. Dorsch, Smith, and McDonough (2015) examined parents' experiences of sport socialisation during the initial period of a child's involvement in youth sport. Using a longitudinal 15-month case study design with four families (8 parents, 4 children) and coaches, findings revealed how youth sport provides new opportunities for family interaction and communication. Through these interactions parents engaged in new roles and started to reflect on their own development as sport parents. These changes in turn led to parents making sense of their new roles and becoming behaviourally and emotionally involved in youth sport. Parents also reported that they started to use sport as a way of teaching their child life lessons. Overall, this study highlighted how the continuously changing nature of the youth sport environment makes sport parenting extremely complex during the initial 15 months of participation. Furthermore, this work further illustrated the importance of considering environmental influences to enhance the specificity with which parent education is delivered at different developmental stages.

In addition to this, Dorsch and colleagues (2009) provided an understanding of how parents are socialised by their children's participation between the ages of 6 and 15 years. Focus groups with 26 parents of team sport athletes revealed that their behaviour (i.e., participation, support, and sacrifice), cognition (i.e., awareness, goals, and knowledge), affect (i.e., emotional connection to sport, emotional management, and emotional experiences) and relationships (i.e., communication, parent-child relationship, and relationships with peers) changed as a result of their child's on-going participation in youth sport. Specifically, parents described how they had adapted their own goals to their child's,

experienced pride, anger, and embarrassment as a result of their child's performances, and had learnt to adjust their reactions to match their child's emotions (Dorsch et al., 2009). Parents' sport socialisation was also linked to characteristics of the parent (e.g., past sport experience and gender), the child (e.g., age, temperament, and gender), and the sport context (Dorsch et al., 2009). These findings, combined with those discussed above, reinforce how the wider social setting and organisational structure of youth sport can have a significant influence on the parents' experiences and behaviours. Dorsch and colleagues (2009) suggested that for this reason, future efforts to understand sport parenting must be attuned to all of these aspects in order to move the knowledge base forward and consider the youth sport context at the forefront of its investigation.

Improving Parents Experiences and Involvement in Youth Sport

Given the complex and challenging nature of parenting in youth sport, research has started to explore parents' experiences with the view to improving their enjoyment and involvement in youth sport. Within the specific context of junior-tennis, Knight and Holt (2013a) interviewed 40 Australian tennis parents in order to understand the factors that influenced their tournament experiences and to identify the ways in which their experience could be enhanced. Findings revealed how parents' experiences were influenced by their child's performance and behaviour, sportspersonship, parent-parent interactions, and the tournament context. Perhaps more importantly, parents offered a number of suggestions of how to improve their tournament experiences. These included educating parents about tournament involvement, psychological support to help them cope at tournaments, and more social opportunities to engage and interact with other parents.

Building their initial findings, Knight and Holt (2013b) conducted a follow up study which examined the strategies American parents use and the assistance they required to facilitate their child's involvement in tennis. Interviews with 41 parents of junior players revealed that parents supported their children by working together with their spouse, interacting with other parents, selecting an appropriate coach, and researching information. These strategies appeared to enable parents to provide tangible, informational, and emotional support to their child. However, parents also identified the need for additional assistance from the governing body in relation to understanding and negotiating player progression, education on behaving and encouraging players at tournaments, evaluating and selecting coaches, identifying and accessing financial support, and managing and maintaining schooling. Knight and Holt (2013b) concluded that the support parents are able to provide to their children is influenced by the knowledge and general support parents

themselves receive from those around them.

Together these findings demonstrate how parents ‘surrounded themselves with support’ to facilitate their children’s involvement in tennis, but still required additional information regarding specific aspects of tennis parenting (Knight & Holt, 2013b). As Knight and Holt (2013b) suggested: “Working to identify the information parents need and providing this information in easily accessible forms appears crucial to ensure parents can best help their children participate and progress in sport” (p. 288). However, it is unclear if other tennis parents operating within different cultures and organisational systems share the needs and wants of the parents in these studies. Furthermore, these studies did not explore if or how the information parents need or want changes or evolves as their child progresses through sport.

Sport Parent Interventions

With a significant body of research highlighting the challenging nature of sport parenting and the need to educate and support sport parents through this process, it is somewhat surprising that there is an absence of published field-based intervention research with sport parents (Harwood & Knight, 2015). Despite this, there are a small number of studies that have, in part, intervened with sport parents (Harwood & Swain, 2002; Smoll, Smith, & Cumming, 2007). For instance, Harwood and Swain (2002) investigated the effects of a season long player, parent, and coach intervention on self-regulation, competition cognitions, and achievement goals of four national level tennis players between the ages of 15 and 16 years. Using a single-case design, educational sessions were provided to parents on motivation, communication strategies, and behavioural guidelines. Positive post intervention directional changes were reported in players’ achievement goals, self-regulation, self-efficacy, and perceptions of threat and challenge following the intervention.

Similarly, Smoll and colleagues (2007) delivered a one-off 60-minute workshop, based on achievement goal theory, to 100 parents of nine to 15 year olds participating in community-based basketball programmes. The intervention, which also included a workshop for coaches, aimed to address the causes of performance anxiety by promoting positive and supportive behaviours and a mastery involving motivational climate. Findings revealed that the parent and coach workshops were successful in reducing the anxiety symptoms reported by child-athletes in comparison to a matched control group where anxiety increased significantly throughout the season. Although these two studies have highlighted the effectiveness of interventions on athletes’ anxiety (Smoll et al., 2007) and

achievement goals (Harwood & Swain, 2002) it is not clear if or how the parent intervention contributed to the overall intervention outcomes.

Alongside these empirical studies, a number of practitioners have recently offered their reflections of working with sport parents (Lafferty & Triggs, 2014) and delivering parent education programmes in gymnastics (Richards & Winter, 2013) and soccer (Vincent & Christensen, 2015). Taken together these reflective articles recommend the need to provide parents with detailed information about the sport, make parents aware of their roles and responsibilities, and improve parents' knowledge and awareness of verbal and non-verbal communication. These studies have also highlighted the need to educate parents about different goal orientations, how to create task orientated motivational climates, and help parents develop strategies to manage the demands and emotions they experience (Lafferty & Triggs, 2014; Richards & Winter, 2013; Vincent & Christensen, 2015). Perhaps more importantly, given the lack of research in this area, these articles also offer insights into the design and delivery of future sport parent education programmes. Recommendations for practitioners (i.e., sport psychologists and coaches) and applied researchers working with parents included: (a) keeping sessions short to maintain concentration; (b) using coaches and management to drive participation and gain buy-in; (c) using week-long breaks to allow for reflection and implementation; (d) possessing knowledge, familiarity, and expertise in the sport; (e) demonstrating high level interpersonal skills; (f) designing sessions with specific parents in mind; and (g) conducting sessions whilst children are training to reduce logistical barriers to participation (Richards & Winter, 2013; Vincent & Christensen, 2015).

In summary, the aforementioned studies and articles offer useful and practical insights into the development and implementation of educational programmes for parents of child-athletes. However, these studies and articles are limited in that none have formally evaluated the effectiveness of the education on parent outcomes. Consequently, it is not clear if these programmes positively influence parents' involvement or what parents' experiences are of engaging in educational programmes. In addition to this, the specific topics and content covered in these programmes seem to have been entirely dictated by the service providers with little consideration given to ensuring programmes meet the education and support needs of the parents themselves. As a final point, all of the aforementioned sport parent programmes have been delivered using traditional face-to-face methods. Given that national governing bodies seem to favour online resources and programmes due to their ability to provide accessible, repeatable, and consistent

information in a cost effective manner, it is somewhat surprising that online delivery methods have, to date, been overlooked in sport parent research.

Summary

Research within the area of youth sport parenting has grown considerably within the last decade. This research has generated an in-depth understanding of the types of parental styles and behaviours that facilitate children's participation and development in sport. In addition to this, research has also provided a detailed understanding of parents' experiences of being a 'sport parent' at different stages of their child's development. This research has highlighted the difficult and challenging nature of parenting in youth sport, which has led to numerous calls in the literature to educate and support sport parents. Despite this, it is clear from this review that there is currently a lack of published, field-based intervention research specifically with sport parents (Harwood & Knight, 2015). Although a small number of empirical studies have provided educational sessions to parents as part of athlete focused interventions, these studies have not formally evaluated the effectiveness of this education on parent outcomes or explored what parents' experiences were of engaging in these educational sessions. As such it is unclear if sport parent education positively influences parents' experiences and involvement in youth sport contexts. In order to address this gap within the literature, the purpose of this thesis was to develop, implement, and evaluate a psychosocial parent education programme for British tennis. Based on the limitations of the research reviewed in this chapter, the first study (chapter four) provides an in-depth understanding of British tennis parents' education and support needs across contexts and developmental stages. Study two (chapters five) used this theoretical framework to design, develop, and evaluate the effectiveness of a face-to-face tennis parent education programmes. The final study addresses the over-reliance on face-to-face delivery methods in sport parent programmes and explores the effectiveness of an online sport parent education programme (chapter six). Although each of the studies within this thesis has been written separately, appropriate connections have been made between these chapters.

Chapter Three:
Methodology

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter will detail the methodological positioning of the research within this thesis. In doing so, this chapter will firstly provide an insight into the philosophical assumptions (i.e., paradigm worldview or beliefs) underpinning this thesis. Following this, the research problem and questions which guided the decision making process throughout this thesis are presented. Next, the research approaches and designs used to address the research questions are briefly discussed. The final section presents an overview of the data collection and analysis techniques used, the ethical procedures followed, the research context, and the quality criteria for judging the studies within this thesis.

Paradigms

Paradigms refer to a “basic set of beliefs that guides action” (Guba, 1990, p17) and represent the general philosophical orientation about the world and the nature of research (Creswell, 2014). They influence the questions that researchers study, the kind of knowledge they seek, and how they interpret the evidence they collect (Morgan, 2007). Morgan (2007) suggested that there are many different ways to draw boundaries within the field of philosophy as a whole, as well as within the philosophy of knowledge as a subfield. Those most commonly cited within the social sciences include paradigms as worldviews, epistemological stances (i.e., metaphysical paradigm), shared beliefs, and models within a research field (Morgan, 2007).

The most dominant of these versions within the social sciences has historically been the metaphysical paradigm, which is concerned with ontological assumptions about the nature of reality, which in turn impose constraints on any subsequent epistemological assumptions about the nature of knowledge (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011). In this version, paradigms are generated and characterised by how researchers respond to questions concerned with ontology (i.e., what is the nature of reality?), epistemology (i.e., what is the relationship between the researcher and that being researched?), and methodology (i.e., the process of how we seek out new knowledge?) (Lincoln et al., 2011). Researchers with different paradigmatic beliefs respond to these questions in different ways in terms of their position with regards to the nature of knowledge, the goal of inquiry, the role of values, the role of theory, the way in which voice is represented, the researchers role, and the criteria used to judge the research (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). Although a number of nuanced positions exist (e.g., critical theory), I will now briefly discuss the

approaches that have been most commonly utilised within the fields of sport psychology and education (i.e., positivism and constructivism).

Positivists adhere to a realist or external view of reality in that they assume that there is an external identifiable reality 'out there' and that there is a single truth, which can be measured and studied (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). From an epistemological standpoint, positivists adopt an objective position, which assumes that the research and the researched are independent and that the researcher can study the object without influencing or being influenced by it (i.e., looking at the world through a one way mirror) (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). Thus, positivists believe in total objectivity and believe that there is no reason to interact with who or what is being studied (Lincoln et al., 2011). Given that positivists view knowledge as observable, empirical, quantifiable, and verifiable, positivism has prediction, control, and explanation as its goal of inquiry with the role of the researcher being that of a detached scientist (Sparkes, 2015).

In direct contrast, constructivists (sometimes referred to as interpretivists) adopt a relativist or internal ontology. This is the belief that social reality is humanly constructed and that subjective realities exist in the form of multiple mental constructions (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). Whilst this position accepts that physical things exist independent of humans, it is based on the notion that interpretations of objects and the meaning assigned to events are mentally constructed. Therefore, humans construct knowledge through lived experience and through our interaction with other members of society (Lincoln et al., 2011). The role of the researcher is to acknowledge and report these different realities by relying on the voices and interpretations of the participants. In line with this, findings are due to the interaction between the researcher and the subject, which means lived experiences will always come out in the knowledge researchers generate (Lincoln et al., 2011). Therefore, the goal of inquiry is to understand the way people construct their meaning and in doing so expand the understanding of a phenomena, the role of the researcher is to be a 'passionate participant' and interpret the world from the participants' point of view (Sparkes, 2015).

These paradigmatic assumptions along with their methodological commitments directly influence the choice of method at the practical level (Sparkes & Smith, 2014), with positivists tending to use quantitative methods and constructivists tending to use qualitative methods (Sparkes, 2015). Over the years social science researchers from each of these two approaches have argued the case that their particular philosophies and methods are most appropriate for generating knowledge. These debates, often termed 'the paradigm wars' (Gage, 1989) have led to researchers operating within clearly defined boundaries, specific

sets of assumptions, and rejecting the principles that guide researchers who operate within other paradigms (Morgan, 2007). Operating within these extreme dichotomous paradigmatic positions and focusing on paradigmatic assumptions over and above the research question has led critics to suggest that scientific research has become detached from the real world. Within the field of sport psychology, such concerns were first raised over 35 years ago by Martens (1979) who suggested that the reliance on orthodox scientific methods and the failure to pay attention to the unique sport context has led to two divergent aspects of sport psychology - academic and applied. Gould (2016) more recently explained how the longstanding failure to conduct research that is relevant to practitioners' needs, characteristics, and the contexts in which they work, combined with the increasing popularity and accessibility of information on the Internet (and popular books) is bringing the credibility of sport psychology research into question. Unfortunately, there still appears to be a general consensus amongst practitioners that experiential knowledge and common sense are usually more beneficial than knowledge from sport psychology research (Martens, 1979). Taking these points into consideration, it is perhaps not surprising that researchers have started to advocate the need to accept alternative ways of examining human behaviour within the field of sport psychology. One alternative approach that is increasingly being used within sport psychology research to create closer links between theory and practice, and is guided by the practical concerns of applied sport psychologists and their clients (i.e., national governing bodies, coaches, parents, and athletes) within specific contexts, is pragmatism (Giacobbi et al., 2005).

Pragmatism as a Philosophy

Pragmatism can be broadly defined as a philosophy of knowledge construction that emphasises practical solutions to applied research questions and the real-world consequences of enquiry (Giacobbi et al., 2005). Beyond its evident and intuitive appeal for applied researchers, it is important to consider pragmatism as a philosophical system rather than a narrow practical "what works" approach (Morgan, 2014). Whilst many variations of pragmatism exist, my focus here will be on those, which have had most influence on the social sciences and particularly the field of education (i.e., John Dewey). Pragmatism is rooted in the belief that there requires a reconsideration of the philosophy of knowledge, by replacing the emphasis on abstract concerns like reality and truth (i.e., ontology and epistemology) with inquiry about human experience (Dewey, 1920/2008). From a pragmatic perspective, human experience refers to an on-going cycle in which beliefs (from prior actions) are interpreted to select actions based on their likely consequences (Morgan,

2014). The actual consequences of these actions are then interpreted to generate new or altered beliefs. It is these beliefs that are the outcomes of this process and for pragmatists represent meaningful knowledge (Dewey, 1925/2008). Although many experiences occur through habit (i.e., when prior beliefs can handle the demand for action), problematic situations require more careful decision-making and reflection. Pragmatists refer to this decision making process as inquiry (see Figure 1) (Dewey, 1922/2008).

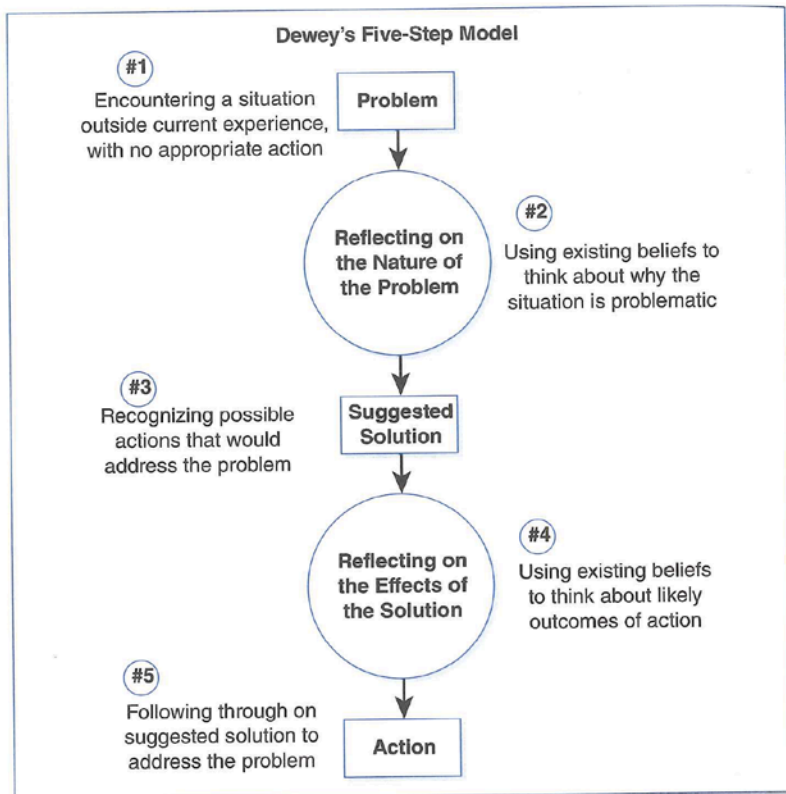


Figure 1. Dewey's Model of Inquiry (Morgan, 2013)

For pragmatists, research is simply a form of inquiry that is performed more carefully and more self-consciously than everyday responses to problematic situations (Dewey, 1910b/2008). As a result, pragmatists do not believe that there is a clear distinction between everyday life and research (Morgan, 2014). Research is therefore an explicit attempt to produce new knowledge in situations where it is not clear what way someone should act. In this situation, the only way to answer this question is considering the likely consequences of different actions (i.e., research approaches and designs) and deciding on an action that is likely to resolve the uncertainty of the situation (see Figure 2) (Morgan, 2013). Thus, structured inquiry occurs when researchers confront situations that fall outside of existing knowledge (i.e., a research problem) and take action to extend

knowledge. The outcome of this process is termed ‘warranted assertions’ (Dewey, 1941/2008) which refers to beliefs about future actions and their likely consequences should a similar situation arise again (Morgan, 2013). It is this pragmatic philosophical position and approach to research that aligns closely with my own beliefs and was used as a guiding philosophy within this thesis. As pragmatism is a relatively new philosophical approach in sport psychology research, I will now discuss in more detail the paradigmatic assumptions underpinning my position.

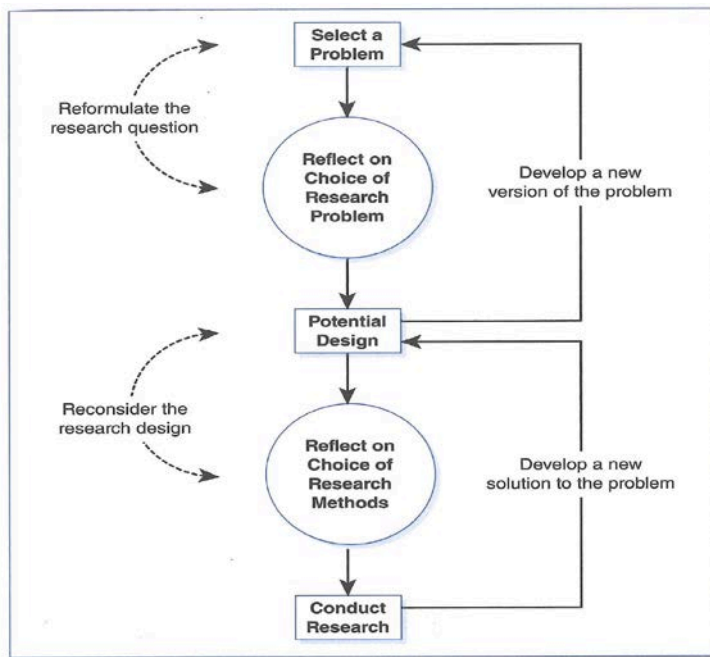


Figure 2. Dewey’s Five-Step Model of Inquiry as Applied to Research (Morgan, 2013)

Pragmatism as a Paradigm

A logical starting point for these discussions concerns what counts as knowledge, how knowledge claims are justified, and the nature of reality. As alluded to above, pragmatists do not believe that abstract concepts like ‘truth’ in relation to a single reality (e.g., positivistic stance) or multiple realities (e.g., constructivist stance) can be determined. Pragmatists believe that individual knowledge is socially constructed and made meaningful through experience (i.e., action and interaction of self-reflexive beings) (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) and is not generated through attempting to understand an external world that exists ‘out there’ (Dewey, 1925/2008). As knowledge is socially constructed, it is influenced by the cultural, social, and historical conditions of the day and cannot be separated from the situations and contexts in which it occurs. However, pragmatists believe that some versions

of that construction are more likely to match other individual's experience (i.e., shared belief) and that some shared beliefs are more likely than others to meet a person's goals and needs (Morgan, 2013). Therefore, pragmatists consider shared beliefs within a scientific community as a way to approach objectivity and for a practical level of truth to exist (i.e., agreement within a community that an intervention is effective). However, this practical level of truth is what is known at a specific time, but it may be over time judged partially or wholly wrong because meaning and consequences of acts can vary between situations and change over time (Morgan, 2013).

The Research Problem and Questions

Although it is important to acknowledge the underlying philosophical assumptions of this thesis, of greater importance for pragmatists are the topic, research problem, and purpose statement (see chapter one). Indeed, the first step of pragmatic inquiry concerns selecting a research problem (see Figure 2), and pragmatists decide what to study based on what is important in their value system and focus on research that has important social consequences (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). As Cherryholmes (1992) explained:

For pragmatists, the values and visions of human action and interaction precede a search for description, theories, explanations, and narratives. Pragmatic research is driven by anticipated consequences... a pragmatist's focus is on the kind of community he or she wishes to promote... beginning with what he or she thinks is known and looking to the consequences he or she desires our pragmatist would pick and choose how and what to research and what to do (pp. 13-14).

However, the choices of social science research questions are sometimes dictated by those funding the research (Feilzer, 2010). It is important to note that the topic, research problem, and purpose statement of this thesis were set in place by the research funding organisation (i.e., Loughborough University) and the National Governing Body (i.e., the Lawn Tennis Association). Therefore, this thesis is a response to a void in the literature (see chapter two) but also a 'real-life' problem in occurring in British tennis (see chapter one). It was the practical nature of the problem, and the potential important social consequences of the research that were congruent with my own individual interests and personal values as an applied researcher operating within the field of youth sport. Details on the specific research questions used to address the overall purpose (and aims) of this thesis and the desired consequences (i.e., a psychosocial parent education programme for British Tennis) can be found in chapters four (pp. 50), five (pp. 76) and six (pp. 103).

Research Designs

Following the selection of a research question, the next step in pragmatic inquiry concerns the suggested solution to address the research question (i.e., the research design) (see Figure 2). Research designs are specific research procedures involved in the last three steps of research: collecting, analysing, and interpreting quantitative, qualitative, or mixed method data (Creswell, 2014). Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) suggest a needs-based approach to research design which “accepts that quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods research are all superior under different circumstances and it is the researcher’s task to examine the specific contingencies and make the decisions about which research approach, or combination of approaches, should be used in a specific study” (pp. 22-23). Consequently, a decision regarding the use of either (or both) approaches in a study depends on the research question(s) and where it falls in the inductive-deductive research cycle (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). This pragmatic approach to research is informed by the belief that research cannot be exclusively theory driven (i.e., quantitative) or data driven (i.e., qualitative) and therefore moves back and forth between induction and deduction through a process of inquiry (Morgan, 2007). This version of abductive reasoning is clearly evident throughout the studies within this thesis. For instance, study one converted data into a theory, and then studies two and three evaluated this theory in terms of its ability to predict the workability of future lines of behaviour/action (Morgan, 2007).

Beyond the choice of research approaches, researchers must also select the specific type of research design to use (Creswell, 2014). As pragmatists claim that knowing occurs out of the relationships between actions and consequences, pragmatism aligns closely with explanatory (i.e., grounded theory) and intervention research designs. Such designs seek to explain, identify causes, and find relationships between events (Biesta, 2010). Taking this into consideration, both qualitative designs (i.e., grounded theory and action research) and mixed method designs (i.e., convergent parallel mixed methods research) were employed within the current thesis. Detailed explanations and justifications of why each research approach and design were chosen for each study can be found in chapter four (pp. 50), five (pp. 76), and six (pp. 103).

Research Methods: Data Collection and Analysis

In the same way that pragmatic researchers are free to choose a research approach (i.e., qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods) and design (e.g., grounded theory, action research, or convergent parallel mixed methods), they are also able to choose the techniques and procedures of research that best meet their needs and purposes (Creswell,

2014). Consequently, pragmatism opens the door to different forms of data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Throughout this thesis, multiple forms of quantitative and qualitative data collection procedures were used. These include: observations, informal chats, formal interviews, focus groups, email interviews, and questionnaires. The resulting data was subsequently analysed using a number of qualitative and quantitative analytical techniques and procedures (e.g., preparing data, reading through data, coding the data, interrelating themes/categories, descriptive statistics, and inferential statistics). The rationale for selecting each data collection and analysis technique and how they were used to address the research questions in each study is described in more detail in chapters five (pp. 51), six (pp. 79), and seven (pp. 105).

Research Context: British Tennis

Given the importance of context and the past and current social, historical, and political conditions in pragmatic research (Giacobbi et al., 2005), I will provide a brief overview of the research context for the current thesis. In Great Britain, tennis is run and governed by the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA). In their role as the sport's governing body, the LTA runs a comprehensive junior competition structure in which players compete to improve their ranking starting from as young as 5 years of age. During their initial involvement (5-10 years) children compete in 'mini-tennis', which is played on smaller courts, with lower bouncing balls, and smaller rackets. From 10 years of age onwards children play on full size courts with standard tennis balls. The LTA's junior competition structure is based on age groups and includes seven phases: under-8 (called 'mini red'), under-9 (called 'mini orange'), under-10 (called 'mini green'), under-12, under-14, under-16, and under-18.

Alongside this competition structure, the LTA also run a comprehensive talent identification and development programme that identifies and selects young players from the age of six who are showing potential (Pankhurst, Collins, & MacNamara, 2012). The system offers support, advice, and feedback to players entering the game and wishing to pursue the sport at a performance level. This programme creates an underlying emphasis on player testing and selection, sport specialisation, funding, training, player development, competition, and rankings from a young age (Pankhurst et al., 2012). To provide the foundations for their talent identification programme, the LTA supports a tiered network of independently run performance centres. This network currently consists of three international high performance centres, 16 high performance centres, and 60 performance centres ("Support for the Performance Network," n.d.). These performance centres provide

top facilities, high level coaching, and strength and conditioning programmes designed to meet the needs of performance players. To achieve this, the performance centre network receives funding from the LTA, which amounts to approximately £2 million per year (“Support for the Performance Network”, n.d.). In order to address the purpose of this thesis, the research sites and participants for each study were purposefully sampled from within the LTA’s performance centre network. Details of the selection criteria, sampling techniques, and the participants used within each study can be found within chapter four (pp. 51), five (pp. 76), and six (pp. 104).

Ethical Considerations

In line with Loughborough University’s ethical procedures, each study within this thesis achieved separate ethical approval. It is important to note, given that some aspects of data collection took part within performance centres, that as part of this process I obtained a Criminal Records Bureau check through Loughborough University and submitted a detailed research proposal to the universities ethics committee when appropriate (i.e., study one). Prior to data collection within each study, all participants were provided with an information sheet which explained the purpose of the study and why it was being conducted, what participation would involve, how data was collected, how confidentiality and anonymity would be maintained, withdrawal procedures, and how the findings would be used afterwards (see Appendix 1, 5, and 14). In line with the UK Data Protection Act 1998, participants were informed that data would be owned by Loughborough University, only used for the purpose of this research, and held for ten years before it would be destroyed. Audio recordings and transcripts were stored safely and securely on a password protected computer. As a final point, when presenting the findings in the current thesis (e.g., research papers or presentations) participant codes (e.g., Parent 1) and research site codes (e.g., centre 1) were used to maintain confidentiality and any specific details which could lead to an identification of any person or centre were removed from the data. Specific details on how ethical procedures were carried out, recorded, and maintained can be found within each study (see chapters four, five, and six).

Research Quality Criteria

Pragmatic research should be judged on whether the findings are ‘useful’ (i.e., whether it can be used to guide behaviour that produces anticipated outcomes) within specific contexts (Morgan, 2013). Pragmatic conceptions of ‘validity’ or ‘credibility’ call for extended discussions about the practical utility, role, and impact of research within specific contexts (Giacobbi et al., 2005). In particular, pragmatic researchers (Giacobbi et

al., 2005; Patton, 2002) have suggested that judging the usefulness of research findings requires on-going dialog and discussion between those involved with, or impacted by, the research process. Whilst the quality of the studies within this thesis should be judged on the criteria of the specific approach, design, and methods chosen (see chapters four, five, and six), I encourage the reader to judge the overall contribution of the thesis and by the principles illustrated above.

The pragmatic judgment criteria of ‘utility’ leads to questions regarding what can be done with the outcome of research. Given the importance of the context in knowledge creation, pragmatists do not believe in time and context free universal generalisations like positivists. However, they do believe that research findings can be applicable and useful beyond the context in which the research takes place. In other words, pragmatists are concerned not only with time and context bound generalisations but also the extent to which the results of a study can be ‘transferrable’ to other situations and to other people (Morgan, 2007). Morgan (2007) suggested that: “An important question is the extent to which we can take things that we learn with one type of method in one specific setting and make the most appropriate use of that knowledge in other circumstances” (pp. 72). Therefore, it is important to reflect upon and engage in on-going deliberations about the use and benefits of knowledge at different times or in different contexts (Giacobbi et al., 2005).

Chapter Four:
Educating and Supporting Tennis Parents: A Grounded Theory of Parents' Needs
During Childhood and Early Adolescence (study one)

Introduction

Within the context of youth sport, there has been increasing academic interest in the development of young athletes and those responsible for their participation and progress. Parents are widely considered to have the most influence during a child's early psychosocial development throughout their initiation into sport (6-13 years) (Bloom, 1985; Côté, 1999; Wylleman & Lavallee, 2004). Although parents are seen as essential for athletic development, they are at the same time potentially a major detriment for some young athletes (Gould et al., 2006). Taking this into consideration, it is perhaps not surprising that within the last decade there has been growing academic interest in parents' involvement in youth sport settings (see chapter two for a comprehensive literature review). This academic interest has provided an understanding of coaches' and players' perceptions of positive and negative parenting practices (e.g., Gould et al., 2006; Gould et al., 2008; Knight et al., 2010; Knight et al., 2011; Lauer et al., 2010a, 2010b), the stressors, emotions, and experiences associated with parenting in youth sport (e.g., Clarke & Harwood, 2014; Dorsch et al., 2009; Harwood & Knight, 2009a, 2009b; Omli & LaVoi, 2012; Wiersma & Fifer, 2008), and the positive and negative styles and behaviours parents display (e.g., Holt et al., 2009; Knight & Holt, 2014).

This body of research has consistently highlighted the challenging and complex nature of parenting in youth sport and the need to educate and support parents through this process. No more so is this evident than within junior-tennis, a context that has received significant attention in the literature. Much of the research within junior-tennis has advocated the need to educate tennis parents about appropriate and inappropriate behaviours (e.g., Gould et al., 2008; Knight et al., 2010; Knight & Holt, 2014). Initiating this line of enquiry, Gould and colleagues (Gould et al., 2006, 2008; Lauer et al., 2010a, 2010b) conducted a series of studies examining the role of parents in the development of junior-tennis players. Through interviews, focus groups, and surveys with coaches, elite players, and parents they highlighted a range of positive and negative parenting practices that influence players' development. During the early years, participants indicated that positive parental behaviours included parental support, effective communication, keeping players motivated, developing players' talent, developing players' psychological and social skills, and keeping tennis in perspective (Harwood & Knight, 2012). In the later years, parents also helped with decision-making, although the range of positive behaviours parents showed decreased, specifically regarding developing tennis talent and effective communication. The range of negative parental behaviours appeared to be greatest during

the middle stage with evidence of over pressuring and excessive involvement, poor emotional match reactions and embarrassing behaviour, too much tennis talk, a restricted social life, and parental approval tied to results (Harwood & Knight, 2012).

Junior-tennis players have also reported preferences regarding parent behaviour within the context of competitions. Knight and colleagues' (2010) findings revealed that junior-tennis players' preferences for their parents' behaviour appeared to vary depending on the situation. Prior to competitions, children preferred parental behaviours to be related to game-based preparation. During competition, players preferred their parents not to coach, to ensure that their comments focused on effort and attitude, respect the etiquette of tennis by not becoming involved in matches, and match nonverbal behaviours (such as facial expressions and body position) with supportive comments. Following competitions, children indicated that they preferred parents to provide positive and realistic feedback about their performance (Knight et al., 2010). Players concluded that supportive parental behaviours were behaviours that allowed parents to display support for and belief in their children without placing pressure upon them to win (Harwood & Knight, 2012). However, these studies did not explore the individual factors that determine why parents engage in certain behaviours. As a result, it remains unclear if simply educating parents about appropriate and inappropriate behaviours, or creating general guidelines for parental behaviour during competitions, can positively influence parents' practices.

In an attempt to address this limitation and gain a more complete understanding of how parental involvement can be optimised, researchers have started to explore parental behaviours within the broader parenting context (i.e., the overall environment parents create) (Knight & Holt, 2014). Knight and Holt (2014) used interviews and focus groups with 90 youth tennis players, ex-youth players, parents, and coaches to generate a grounded theory of optimal parental involvement. Findings revealed that optimal involvement requires parents to understand and enhance their child's individual tennis journey by having shared and communicated goals, create an understanding emotional climate, and engage in individual and flexible parenting practices (Knight & Holt, 2014). Although this study provided an understanding of how parents' behaviours, goals, and emotional climate influence each other to optimise parental involvement, Knight and Holt (2014) acknowledged the need for future research to explore if or how parental involvement is influenced by developmental factors. It is likely that only through understanding the wide range of factors that influence parents' involvement at different stages of their child's development, that a clearer picture of parental involvement will emerge and inform the

development of stage specific educational provisions for tennis parents.

Researchers have also adopted a more parent-centred approach and explored the experiences of tennis parents from their perspective. For instance, Harwood and Knight (2009a, 2009b) explored the stressors British tennis parents experience at different stages of their child's development. Data were collected through 123 open-ended surveys and 22 interviews with tennis parents. Parental stressors in both studies centred on the organisational aspects of their child's tennis (e.g., injuries, finances, and time), competition demands (e.g., watching matches, players/opponents cheating, and a lack of effort), and developmental concerns (e.g., players' future in tennis and transitional decisions regarding schooling). These findings illustrate how parents' experiences are influenced by the nature of the sport (e.g., tennis), organisational system (e.g., the Lawn Tennis Association) and developmental stage within which they were operating. More importantly, some parents reported being unable to develop sufficient resources to deal with the stressors they experienced, particularly during the specialising (12-16 years) and investment stages (16+ years) where these stressors were most prevalent (Harwood & Knight, 2009b). However, it was beyond the scope of these studies to identify the education and support parents specifically wanted or needed to prevent, cope with or manage these complex and challenging demands. Consequently, further research exploring parents' education and support needs within specific junior-tennis settings is clearly required.

To date, only two studies have provided an initial understanding of the education and support tennis parents require. Knight and Holt (2013a) highlighted how Western Australian parents wanted education regarding tournament involvement, psychological support to help them cope at tournaments, and more social opportunities to improve their tournament experiences. Similarly, Knight and Holt (2013b) identified the additional assistance American parents require to better facilitate their children's involvement in tennis. This included understanding and negotiating player progression, behaving and encouraging players at tournaments, evaluating and selecting coaches, identifying and accessing financial support, and managing and maintaining schooling. Although these studies revealed that parents want education and support regarding specific aspects of tennis parenting to enhance their own involvement and experiences, neither study specifically set out to identify the needs of parents. More importantly, the extent to which these findings represent the education and support needs of parents operating in other cultures, contexts, and organisational systems (e.g., British tennis) remains unclear. Furthermore, these studies are limited in that they did not explore how parents' education

and support needs change or evolve across different developmental stages. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to address these gaps in the literature by developing a grounded theory of British tennis parents' education and support needs across contexts and developmental stages. Based on the lack of research, or a framework, to coherently guide practice within this area, a grounded theory approach (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) was used to answer the following research questions: 'What are British tennis parents' education and support needs?', 'how are these needs influenced by the culture, organisational system, and developmental stages within which parents operate?', and 'how can parents' education and support needs be fulfilled?'

Methodology

Methodological Overview

A qualitative approach was used to capture the multiple social interactions and complexities that characterise parental involvement within junior-tennis (Horn & Horn, 2007). Specifically, the current study used a 'total' grounded theory methodology (Weed, 2009). Corbin and Strauss' (2008) variant of grounded theory was considered as a particularly salient methodology for understanding tennis parents' education and support needs as it offers insight, enhanced understanding, and importantly within the context of the current study, provides a meaningful guide for action aimed at practitioners. Consistent with this variant of grounded theory, the present study was conducted from a pragmatic philosophical perspective.

Research Setting: British High Performance Tennis Centres

Following institutional ethical approval, purposeful sampling was used to select two high performance tennis centres (one with international status) in Great Britain that were geographically suitable and would provide access to the range of parents (i.e., parents of players across all levels and ages) needed to address the research questions. Following an initial visit, directors at both centres agreed to allow me access to all areas of their centres. Prior to the study commencing, parents, coaches and support staff at each tennis centre were emailed an information sheet (see Appendix 1). Although the current study focused on parents and coaches, support staff were also informed about the research to allow for a flexible data collection plan (Holt & Tamminen, 2010). Due to the number of individuals regularly attending each centre, it was not considered practical to seek written consent from everyone entering the research setting. Therefore, parents, coaches, and support staff were informed that they had to withdraw by 'opting out' should they not wish to be observed.

Participants and Sampling

Consistent with the core elements of a grounded theory methodology (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), purposeful sampling was used to recruit tennis parents, with players aged between five and 18 years, for informal conversations. During fieldwork, I continuously moved between centres and tennis parents identifying important concepts through these informal conversations. It is important to note that during initial interactions, individuals were provided with a verbal explanation of the research, data collection methods, and withdrawal procedures. Following initial analysis, there were then several phases of data collection that were directed by these emerging concepts. This process of theoretical sampling (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) began by selecting parents with children at different levels and developmental stages for informal conversations to identify general patterns and variations in parents' education and support needs. As data collection and analysis progressed, parents from each stage who were considered to be 'information rich' were recruited in person and asked to participate in a formal interview to expand and refine these emerging concepts. As the theory began to take shape, the need to sample experienced coaches and ex-players (18+ years) working in the centres were identified, as they could (due to their experience) provide a broader understanding of parents' education and support needs, the relationships between them, and how they can be fulfilled. The final interview sample consisted of 29 participants, including five parents of mini-tennis players (5-10 years), eight parents of junior-tennis players (11-14 years), 12 coaches, and four ex-youth national and international level players (see Table 2).

Data Collection

Phase 1: Fieldwork. A prolonged period of fieldwork (6 months) was used to explore how parents' education and support needs are related to the culture, organisational system, and developmental stages of British tennis. This was deemed necessary to share participants' experiences and ascertain tacit knowledge by delving beneath the surface to explore issues that are assumed, implicit, and have become part of participants' common sense (Tracey, 2010). I entered the research sites with the purpose of understanding tennis parents' education and support needs and adopted the role of an 'overt researcher' (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). However, I did not enter with any pre-conceived notions about what may emerge. Theoretical sensitivity was further enhanced by being a relative outsider within high performance tennis centres which enabled me to minimise the danger of taking in any negative or misleading preconceptions (Weed, 2009).

Table 2

Participant Demographics

Population	Player Age (Years)			Gender		Player Standard					Years of Experience			
	n	M	SD	Range	Male	Female	Club	County	Regional	National	International	M	SD	Range
Mini-Tennis Parents														
(Parents 1-5)	5	9.4	0.89	8-10	1	4	2	0	1	2	0	3.8	2.17	1-6
Junior-Tennis Parents														
(Parents 6-13)	8	12.5	1.31	11-14	3	5	0	0	2	5	1	10.63	4.66	6-20
Coaches	12	All Ages			10	2	All Standards					18.33	11.23	5-37
Ex-Youth Players	4	20.5	0.58	20-21	2	2	0	0	0	2	2	13.5	1.91	12-16

Initial involvement was characterised by complete immersion that involved ‘living alongside’ the participants in each performance setting for a period of 4 weeks, with visits to each centre changing on a weekly rotation. Fieldwork subsequently involved living the ‘tennis parent lifestyle’ by aligning myself with the hours in which parents attended the centres for training (usually from 4-7pm Monday-Friday) and travelling to tournaments at weekends. During this period, data were collected by watching what happened (observation), listening to what was said, and asking questions through informal conversations (Holt et al., 2008). Participant observations and informal conversations were conducted in various settings including offices, cafés, classrooms, meeting rooms, gyms, restaurants, and tennis courts, although the majority of data were collected on the balcony during evening training sessions. Informal conversations were used as a way for participants to express their own or others’ education and support needs but also their perceptions, views, and opinions. Jotted notes (on a mobile phone) were used to capture and record key observations, verbatim quotes, and informal communications whilst immersed in the field. Following each day in the field, jotted notes were used to reconstruct precise and detailed written descriptive accounts of the scene, settings, and events observed each day (see Appendix 2). This six-month period of fieldwork took place from December 2012 to May 2013 and included approximately 490 hours of involvement.

Phase 2: Interview phase. Phase two involved interviews with participants to narrow the broad range of topics discussed during informal conversations and gather specific data in relation to concepts and categories. A semi-structured interview guide was developed (see Appendix 3) and constantly refined during fieldwork to focus on these emerging concepts and categories (Tamminen & Holt, 2012). In preparation for the interview, participants were asked to reflect on their current and past experiences and plot the challenges/demands they had faced as a tennis parent (or in relation to tennis parents) at each developmental stage along a timeline (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). Interview questions were open-ended to allow new themes to emerge, and focused on exploring the broad challenges/demands tennis parents face at each developmental stage (e.g., ‘what did you find difficult or challenging about being a tennis parent during [developmental stage]?’) and the education and support tennis parents need during each stage (e.g., ‘based on your experience, what education do you think parents need during [development stage]?’) (Examples taken from parent interview guide). All participants were provided with their transcript (see Appendix 4) and confirmed that it represented an accurate reflection of their views.

Data Analysis

Data analysis began after the first data were collected and continued in an iterative manner to ensure interplay between data collection and analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Tamminen & Holt, 2012). Informal data analysis started by reading the field notes or transcripts closely to become personally immersed in the data. Formal data analysis included three levels of coding: open coding, axial coding, and theoretical integration (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Open coding was used to fracture the field notes and transcripts into concepts. For example, raw data extracts that related to parents' education or support needs were identified and distinguished based on their properties (i.e., characteristics that defined a need) and dimensions (i.e., the specific developmental stage when the need occurred) (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). As analysis continued, concepts referring to similar education and support needs were then gathered together and reassembled to create higher-order categories (e.g., competition needs) and subcategories (e.g., pre-match roles). To ensure that these higher-order categories 'fitted' with the incidents and phenomena they represented, constant comparative methods were used to compare and examine concepts, subcategories, and categories. As additional data were gathered, coded concepts were also compared to existing data, modified to incorporate new data and subsequently (re) categorised.

Axial coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) was used to develop and describe the links and relationships between parents' education and support needs both within and across developmental stages. Specifically, a conditional/consequential matrix (see Figure 3) was used to analyse the data for context and create structural links between social (macro level), organisational, developmental (meso level), and inter-intrapersonal (micro level) conditions. These contextual conditions were then used to understand parents' actions/interactions/emotions and consequences (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). This matrix helped locate parents' education and support needs and understand how they fitted together to create an overall educational process. The final stage of coding, theoretical integration was used to link categories around the core category (i.e., supportive learning environment), add density to poorly developed categories, and refine the theoretical framework (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). A 'supportive learning environment' was considered to be the core category as it related to and underpinned all of parents' specific educational needs, had the greatest explanatory value, and accounted for the variation in tennis parent behaviour.

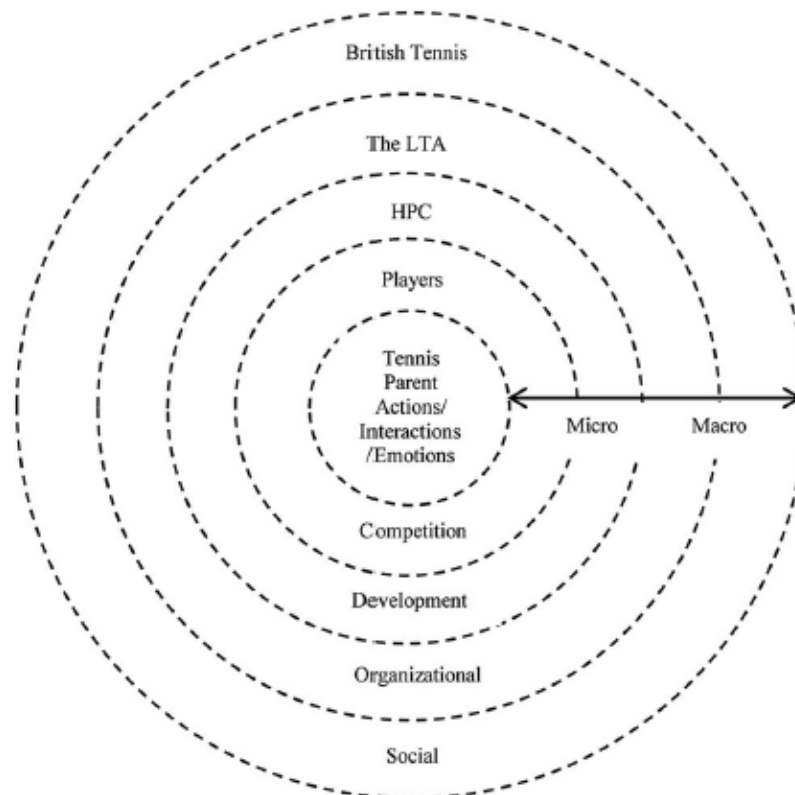


Figure 3. Conditional/Consequential Matrix of Tennis Parents' Education and Support Needs. LTA = Lawn Tennis Association; HPC = High performance centre.

A number of techniques were used to facilitate coding throughout data collection and analysis. Analytical memos and diagrams were used to clarify, elaborate, extend, and integrate relationships between concepts, subcategories, and categories. This involved questioning the data (e.g., “what is happening here?”) and writing ‘relational statements’ about nature of the relationship between parents’ education and support needs (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Put simply, these tools were used to think conceptually in order to develop theoretical connections and comparisons as they evolved. Although I was familiar with the sport parenting literature, a delayed literature review was conducted in order to maintain theoretical sensitivity and examine the coherence of the theory within the tennis parenting literature. Previous research was used to compare, contrast, and integrate findings and terminology from the current study and highlight connections to relevant theories and constructs (Tamminen & Holt, 2012). Following these coding phases, all participants were provided with the grounded theory model as well as a descriptive summary of the findings and asked to comment on how well the results ‘fitted’ their own experiences or views. The

subsequent feedback was used to refine, develop, and further ‘ground’ the theory in the participants’ experiences (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Five sport psychology practitioners and seven sport psychology researchers also provided feedback on the general coherence of the model and its practicality as a guide for action when working with tennis parents.

Results

The process of data collection and analysis led to the development of a substantive grounded theory of British tennis parents’ education and support needs across contexts and developmental stages (see Figure 4). This section begins by providing an overview of the stages of parent education upon which the theory is based. The core category (i.e., supportive learning environment) is then explained. Next, parents’ introductory needs are described. Following this, two educational sub-processes are explained which incorporate parents’ education and support needs during childhood/mini-tennis and early adolescence/junior-tennis respectively. It is these sections that form the basis for the theoretical claims made in the final section.

Parent Education Stages

The current grounded theory focuses on tennis parents’ education and support needs during two sport specific developmental stages: childhood/mini-tennis (5-10 years) and early adolescence/junior-tennis (11-14 years). The parents of players in mid-to-late adolescence (15+ years) rarely attended high performance centres, and therefore, this stage was not included in the current grounded theory. The parent education stages were based upon two factors: (a) the stages of talent development that coaches and directors believed were important for junior British tennis players, and (b) the national governing body’s (i.e., LTA) age group competition structure. For instance, from 5-10 years of age, children in Britain play mini-tennis on smaller courts, using shorter rackets, and lower bouncing balls, before progressing to play full size tennis from between the ages of 10 and 11 years. Therefore, these developmental considerations and competition age groups were matched as closely as possible based upon players’ chronological age to produce two key stages for British tennis parent education.

Core Category: Supportive Learning Environment (a)

During fieldwork, it became clear that the extent to which parents’ education and support needs were fulfilled was dependent on both their willingness to learn and the level of education and on-going support they received in high performance centres. As one ex-player explained: “I think the biggest area would be willing to learn...willing to take thing

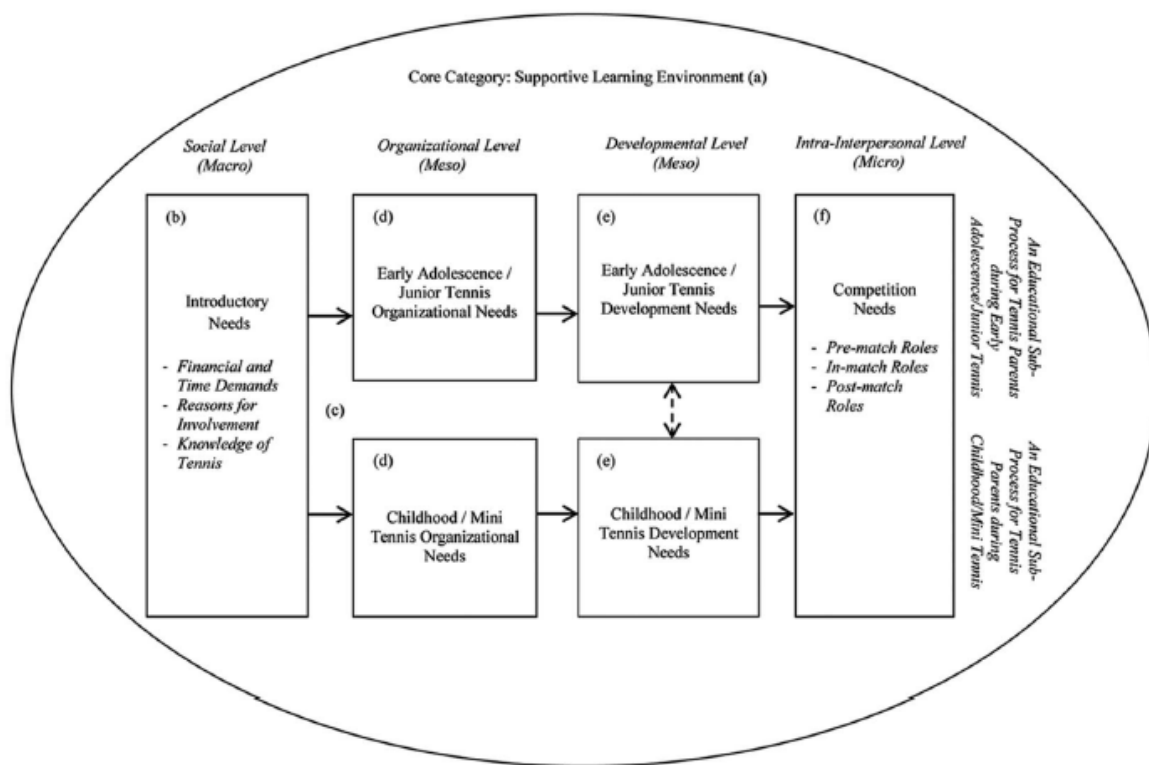


Figure 4. A Grounded Theory of Tennis Parents' Education and Support Needs During Childhood/Mini-tennis and Early Adolescence/Junior-Tennis

on board and admit that they [parents] don't know everything" (Ex-player 2). Despite this, financial implications and on-court commitments meant that coaches did not have time to provide education and on-going support to all tennis parents. One coach explained the current scenario:

The current scenario is that it is left to the coaches of the players and, therefore, you are leaving parent education to chance. You get some coaches who are very good at developing relationships with parents, who are very keen to work with parents, and are happy to pick up the phone at 8pm at night and discuss this and that. But on the other hand, you'll have other coaches who have less interest in that and don't want to be involved (Coach 6).

Observations revealed that although the amount of education and support that parents received was influenced by the parent-coach relationship, it was mostly dependent on the standard of their child. For instance, the only parents who received structured education and on-going support in the form of regular coach meetings were parents of full time players (i.e., players who trained and were educated at the centre). In a small number of cases psychologists were used to provide additional support to these parents when

individual needs went beyond coaches' competencies (e.g., children with mental health problems or developmental disorders).

In contrast, the majority of tennis parents received very little education or support and were reliant upon self-education (i.e., researching information) or brief informal interactions with coaches and other parents on the courtside. As one parent explained: "Through talking to other people, you learn bits of information, and you build up your own knowledge which will always happen" (Parent 3). Although participants felt that parents would benefit from education on how to develop and maintain relationships with other parents and coaches, they recognised that relying solely on informal learning meant that parents often struggled to develop the knowledge needed to fulfil their roles. The following quote illustrates this point: "As a mum, the lack of knowledge is challenging...I find it difficult to get information, specific to the stage and level that [child's name] is at and how it all works" (Parent 2).

Therefore, the grounded theory is based on the notion that parents' education and support needs will only be fulfilled when parents are placed in a supportive learning environment that provides them with structured education, and that the effectiveness of that education is determined by their willingness to learn and the on-going support they receive from key stakeholders (e.g., coaches, psychologists, mentor parents). The following quote from an experienced coach supports these points:

I think the key thing with this is that the model works when parents are educated and they are working on self-development, that model works. They [parents] also need support in terms of keeping them on track with things, because they will often come off the rails a little bit...in those meetings a lot of it is reviewing the parents' performance through self-reflection, that's where they learn and develop (Coach 3).

Introductory Needs (b)

To create a supportive learning environment, participants felt that tennis parents need to be educated, when they first enter high performance centres, about the social factors that will influence their overall type of involvement. Coaches felt that tennis parents' type of involvement (i.e., non-supportive, supportive, or pressurising) will be influenced by the financial and time demands of tennis, their own reasons for involvement, and their knowledge of the sport.

Financial and time demands. Participants believed that the financial and time demands of tennis had a significant influence on whether parents' could support their child's participation in tennis. Informal conversations revealed that for the majority of

parents, the time (e.g., travelling and watching) and financial commitment (e.g., individual coaching, indoor court bookings, and equipment) of tennis participation negatively impacted upon their personal, social, work, and family lives and could be a significant cause of financial strain. As a result, participants felt that parents need educating from the start “about cost and how cost can be mitigated because it doesn’t get cheaper. Give them [new tennis parents] an idea of cost because you don’t want to put people off but you don’t want people to start and find out they can’t afford it” (Parent 8).

In addition to this, coaches and players felt that providing the aforementioned financial and time commitment can cause some parents to place more pressure on their children to be successful as they “feel like they need to get a return on their investment” (Ex-player 4). The following quote from a coach captures the education that parents need in relation to this point:

The biggest challenge for parents to understand is that it’s an unconditional journey you are going on where you can put all this money and time in, but there are no guarantees. So then it has to come back to ‘why are we doing it?’ Well, you are going to develop so many life skills for these kids, and the parents have to buy into that (Coach 3).

Reasons for involvement. Another social factor influencing parents’ type of involvement was the goals they had for their child’s tennis participation. Participants felt that some parents encouraged their children to play tennis “because they wish they had achieved, or they want to see their child in a certain limelight” (Parent 9). One coach explained how detrimental this type of involvement can be: “You see quite a lot of parents living what their life could have been if they’ve not quite made it, what their life could have been through their kid, and that puts serious amounts of pressure on that player; they are playing for themselves and their parents which can be quite destructive. I’ve seen it quite a few times” (Coach 12). Coaches felt that parents should be educated about the multiple benefits of tennis participation (e.g., physical, psychological, social, and academic) and encouraged to identify other goals for their child’s participation in the sport in order to manage their expectations and keep tennis in perspective. Coaches believed this would also prevent parents placing pressure on their child if they believed they were off track, not instantly successful, or went through a bad spell of form.

Knowledge of tennis. A final social factor influencing parents’ type of involvement was their knowledge and understanding of tennis. Coaches felt that parents who lack an understanding of tennis were not always able to provide the support their child needed to

develop and progress within tennis. That is, parents were less able to show an interest in their child's tennis performance, relate to their on-court experiences, or help them understand the sport (e.g., rules, stages, and demands). The following quote illustrates how difficult providing emotional support can be for parents who have not played individual sports:

Understanding what your child is going through out there is difficult particularly if parents don't either play tennis or often not played any individual sport at all...Just put yourself in their shoes a little bit and try to understand what it's like to play tennis and what it's like to compete at tennis. If they were able to understand that they would empathise more with what it is like to play the sport (Coach 6).

Specifically, coaches and players felt that all parents must be educated about the courts, rules, scoring systems and physical, technical, tactical, and psychological demands of tennis in order to relate to what their child is going through on court and be able to provide both emotional and informational support. One mother, who played tennis, explained during an informal chat how she believed that all "parents should have a go at it [tennis] and feel how lonely and frustrating it is when it's going wrong" (Field notes, May 5, 2013). This knowledge of the sport was also considered to be vital for parents' own appreciation, enjoyment, and long-term engagement in their child's tennis journey.

An Educational Sub-Process for Tennis Parents during Childhood/Mini-Tennis (c)

Once involved, parents' educational needs were determined by their child's developmental stage. The following section represents an educational sub-process for parents during childhood/mini-tennis, and consists of the following categories: childhood/mini-tennis organisational needs, childhood/mini-tennis development needs, and competition needs (see Figure 2).

Childhood/Mini-tennis organisational needs (d). When parents were regularly attending high performance centres, participants felt that they need to be educated about the LTA's mini-tennis organisational system. Participants described how new tennis parents are often left on their own "trying to understand and make sense of what is quite a complicated system" (Coach 6) and because it is a "learn as you go through process not many parents get it right" (Ex-player 1). Specifically, participants felt that mini-tennis parents need educating about the age-related stages (i.e., mini red, mini orange, and mini green), court sizes, equipment, and scoring systems. The following quote highlights the uninformed starting point for many mini-tennis parents: "I know it sounds silly but it didn't click with the colour of the ball until a few months in. I thought it was more for

convenience at first, I thought the orange group meant it was a fun session; it wasn't until several months later I realised it was technical" (Parent 2). During informal chats, it was clear that some parents did not understand what age groups their child could compete in, what grade of tournaments to enter, how to enter them, or what to expect when attending mini-tennis tournaments. The following quote highlights the need for education to cover these topics:

One of the most important things to be covered in education is competition. Explain to parents what competition is because they don't invariably understand, and I think it takes such a long time to understand, so one of the things you could do simply is to make it understandable. It isn't straightforward and coaches don't necessarily help the parents, so often it's parents having to find out for themselves (Coach 6).

Additionally, parents consistently referred to a lack of understanding around the mini-tennis talent identification (ID) and development system that starts during this stage. The following quote from a coach captures the education parents need: "The education is very much understand the way that the performance set up works, the systems, how talent ID works, what does it mean, what does it lead to, and what are the implications for their child...so they are well equipped because everybody comes from different starting points" (Coach 6).

Childhood/Mini-tennis development needs (e). Participants recognised that the short term nature of the LTA's mini-tennis organisational system (i.e., mini-tennis ratings and talent ID) often causes parents to become "obsessed with results" (Coach 1) during this stage. Informal chats revealed that this short-term focus caused some parents to adopt a 'more is better' viewpoint and encourage their child to train multiple times a week (including school holidays) and all year round (e.g., winter and summer seasons). In some cases, parents' short-term focus was reinforced by reading popular books that advocate early specialisation (e.g., Syed, 2010). One coach explained this situation: "For a new parent it is difficult because the messages conveyed by the talent ID process, the tournament schedule, ratings, and rankings run contradictory to the research and evidence that suggests that this is a long-term exercise" (Coach 6).

As a result, participants felt that parents need to be educated about child and talent development to make informed decisions about their child's tennis development. As one parent explained: "Children are not just small adults, physiologically, and psychologically, everything about them is different...I think that a real understanding of child development is needed" (Parent 1). Specifically, participants believed that during mini-tennis, parents

need to be educated how to create an environment that fosters learning and intrinsic motivation to “make sure they [players] are willing to go back every week and want to get better and really enjoy the experience” (Ex-player 2). To achieve this, coaches felt parents need to understand how to manage their child’s training schedule. The following analogy illustrates this point:

Please don’t over train your kids overtraining will only cause damage. My favourite meal is salmon, I love it, now if my wife gives me raw salmon every day for the next month I’ll bet you anything I’m going to hate it, give me the right portions that keeps me enjoying it, keeps me wanting it more. If you believe what you are doing is slightly going to disrupt their love for it [tennis], ease off and wait until they are ready (Coach 7).

In addition to this, participants felt that parents need to understand that: “It [tennis] is lonely in comparison to other sports, so to keep your child engaged, you have to pick and choose your tournaments where you see people that he [or she] knows have entered. It’s also important not to travel too far when they are little because they don’t like spending time in the car” (Parent 13). Furthermore, coaches believed that entering appropriate level tournaments is vital for children’s feelings of competence because “if your child doesn’t win at least a reasonable proportion of the time they give up, so it’s a very fine balance (Parent 13). Finally, coaches suggested that the best way to keep their child motivated during this stage is by participating in multiple sports and activities. The following example highlights this point:

Don’t censor your child going out and having fun with his friends and playing football, just because he’s going to have an extra hour of tennis [training], because what that hour of football is going to teach him, tennis is not. For example, with [child’s name], I said ‘forget about [tennis] lessons, play football!’ and his father was saying ‘how do I know that’s going to help his tennis?’ Well he is having fun, he is running, he is being kicked and he is being pushed, so it is helping his balance, his anger control, he is fighting and he is working hard; that’s all you need in tennis. He is only six. When he is 14 and I tell you ‘okay now your son is good enough to become a full-time player, now is the time to make the sacrifice’, that is the time to put it all in. Don’t put it all in when he is five so when he’s seven he is worn out. The balance needs to be good (Coach 2).

Competition needs (f). Within the competition context, observations revealed that parents often have to fulfil multiple roles. As one parent explained: “At the tournaments,

it's just me and him, so you have to be the coach and you have to be the parent" (Parent 6). Specifically, participants felt that parents need educating how to fulfil pre-match, in-match, and post-match roles.

Pre-match roles. During informal chats, parents consistently admitted to not knowing what to say to their child prior to a match often causing them to unwittingly communicate in a manner that placed pressure on the child to win. Coaches felt that parents need education to understand that their pre-match role is to reinforce process goals that are related to the skills their child is learning in training. The following example from a coach describes this process:

We were practicing, and somehow he thinks that we want him to win really badly. So I talked to him and said 'all we want you to do is to do what you do in practice and play like you do in practice and forget about the winning, because the winning is pointless if you are doing it wrong'. So I had to sit him down and decide what sort of process he was going to follow in the match and what goals, so he stays in training mode and is able to perform (Coach 2).

Participants also felt that, given the prevalence of cheating in junior-tennis, parents should be educated how to set behavioural expectations that reflect good morals (e.g., sportspersonship). One coach explained how important this is:

Parents need to teach players from a very young age that you have to be fair even if it hurts, you have to be honest, and you have to respect your opponent regardless of how good or bad he is. I believe that respect, integrity, being honest, being fair, and accepting the outcome has to be taught in the beginning (Coach 7).

As a final point, participants believed parents should also be educated how to take more of an active role in backing up and helping their child develop values (e.g., hard work, commitment, and discipline), a positive attitude, and basic coping skills or strategies as these were believed to serve as foundations for the child's success later in their career. One parent explained this role: "You can't change the world around you, what you have to do is help your son to build coping mechanisms to help your child through events" (Parent 1).

In-match roles. During matches, parents consistently mentioned the need for education to help them control the emotions of watching their child play. One parent explained how she feels when watching her son play tennis: "My stomach would be churning, I would feel sick, it's that fight or flight feeling, and it's innate those powerful emotions for your child" (Parent 1). Observations revealed that these emotions were often amplified if parents or their child placed a high value on the outcome of the match or

tournament (e.g., ranking, rating points, or selection) and their child was losing, performing badly, or had been cheated. The following quote highlights the impact this can have on parents' behaviour:

The worst example we had was when my youngest daughter played and this father was calling my daughter blind for not calling balls [out]. He was making lots of comments and he was swearing, and very shortly after he got in a physical fight and the police had to be called. His daughter was on court calling up and saying 'daddy what are you doing?' In fact she doesn't play tennis anymore. It's so stressful and he couldn't control his emotions but I feel the signs quite often are there before. More proactive help could stop it (Parent 12).

Participants felt that parents would benefit from learning strategies to cope with their emotions whilst watching. One parent suggested that parents need to be taught "relaxation methods like breathing techniques to control their own emotions at a tournament, and give them techniques that they could try and they'll find their own one that works best for them" (Parent 3). Coaches and players also felt that tennis parents' in-match roles included ensuring that their body language was consistent with the goals set pre-match and that they role modelled appropriate values, morals, and attitudes. As one coach explained: "Acting how they want their child to act is so important. They [children] tend to pick things up and if they think things are acceptable then they'll try and do it as well. I think being a role model is massive for the parents" (Coach 10).

Post-match roles. During fieldwork, it became clear that after matches, parents were often the main source of feedback yet lacked confidence in their ability to provide it. Parents frequently said that they felt "embarrassed if things go wrong" (Parent 6) and "it turns into an argument and they start shouting, screaming, and crying" (Parent 11). The following quote from a coach emphasises this point: "I've had parents saying to me 'I don't know what to say' after the child has lost a match, hasn't played well or has behaved badly on court" (Coach 9). Participants felt that in order to fulfil this post-match role, parents need to understand how to communicate after a match and when to provide feedback. Specifically, coaches highlighted the need to educate parents to let the child speak first, ask open questions, and facilitate reflection in order to encourage players to learn, improve, and problem solve in the future. The following quote illustrates these points:

This [providing feedback] is no different to coaching, because I guess in that capacity you are coaching as a parent. Little things like letting them speak first, it's a golden rule I have for myself. When I speak to players after matches, no matter

how wound up I might be, like ‘this kid is getting such a rollicking when they come off the court!’, I’ve got my whole script ready to go, I force myself always to say ‘how was it out there, how did it go for you?’ and that invariably takes things in very different directions. Just little tricks of the trade that we might pick up as coaches which parents could really benefit from (Coach 6).

Coaches also felt that parents need educating to ensure that their own feedback is positive and reflects the process goals and behavioural expectations, which were set pre-match, rather than the outcome. As one coach concluded:

There is one magical thing that they [parents] can do and that is helping their youngster grow from the things that they see happening positively on the court. The job of parents is to ‘catch the kids being good’, even if that good is in a sea of mediocrity. Build on that, get attracted by that, not by the millions of other things they can’t do (Coach 5).

An Educational Sub-Process for Tennis Parents during Early Adolescence/Junior-Tennis

As players transitioned from childhood/mini-tennis to early adolescence/junior-tennis, parents also experienced a transition and required additional education at an organisational and developmental level (see Figure 4). Therefore, an additional educational sub-process consisted of the following sub-categories: early adolescence/junior-tennis organisational needs and early adolescence/junior-tennis development needs.

Early adolescence/Junior-tennis organisational needs (d). At an organisational level, participants identified the need to educate parents to understand the transition period from mini-tennis to junior-tennis and the differences in the LTA’s system at this stage. As one parent explained: “I don’t think there’s enough on the transition period for parents, I could really do with some parent education from mini-tennis into yellow [full] ball” (Parent 5). Parents consistently referred to the differences in the rating, ranking, and funding systems during this stage as sources of stress. As a result, participants felt that education is needed to ensure parents know what grade tournaments to enter depending on the level of their child, how rankings and ratings work, and how funding is distributed during these stages. The following quote captures these points:

The parents understand the mini-tennis system, but they don’t know the rating systems for the 10’s and above. We’ve recently gone through that with a couple of parents on an individual basis so they understand how that new system works in terms of ranking points, how to get into events, and what happens if they can’t get

into the level of events they need to. It's a different world again (Coach 9).

Beyond the British system, some children competing at a national level often started to compete against international opposition during this stage. Consequently, participants felt that educating parents about Tennis Europe and International Tennis Federation (ITF) tournaments and how to enter them was important. One parent of a national player explained: "There is not enough information for parents to understand the route to get from mini-tennis through to senior tennis; I don't really know anything about 'Tennis Europe' [competitions]. They need to start showing where you can branch off into 'Tennis Europe' and then how you can get to 'ITF' [competitions]" (Parent 10).

Early adolescence/Junior-tennis development needs (e). Informal chats and observations revealed how the transition from mini-tennis to full ball tennis was accompanied by a gradual increase in pressure to achieve results. As one coach explained: "As they get older the competitive pressure gets greater because the results are needed, you have to get results as you start getting into U14's otherwise you fall by the wayside" (Coach 1). Observations also revealed how biological changes during this transition can make achieving results more difficult for players who develop later. The following quote from a father supports this point: "It's a big, big, big step up, the girls are a lot bigger, stronger and are making a lot more balls so we found that a challenge. You can get a bit lost and start to lose interest" (Parent 10). Consequently, the pressure of "trying to keep at the top of the tree" (Parent 8) combined with the realisation that "a lot of kids that are moving towards the top are full-time and doing a lot more hours than you are" (Parent 10) caused some parents to make the decision to take their child out of school for lessons, increase the number of evening training sessions, or in some cases leave school and train full time in the academy from the age of 11. The following quote captures the current situation:

There is always this looking over your shoulder trying to make sure that someone else isn't doing more than you are. Most parents are not experts in the game of tennis, and therefore, their default will be to fall back to more is better. That perception isn't helped by what are sometimes myths of tennis on the continent that they just play more and spend six hours a day on court. At an international U14 to U16 level, volume undoubtedly plays a big part but at U12 and U14 you have to be very conscious of the long-term aspect of making sure that players are not burning themselves out, getting injured, or falling out of love with the game. I've had instances of that even this year where, by jumping through hoops and getting caught

up in feeling like you need to be in the top three in the country at a young age, behind the scenes that the poor little girl involved was gradually losing her passion and love for the game unnoticed by anybody. Then, suddenly she turns around at 12 years old and says ‘do you know what, I don’t want to do this anymore’ (Coach 6).

Coaches and ex-players felt that parents need to understand their child’s goals at this stage and what they were looking to achieve long-term in tennis. As one ex-player explained: “I don’t think enough parents sit down with their kids like once a month, or once a term to identify goals...and then sit down with the coach and say this is what we want to do...more goal setting and seeing where they want to go during the middle stage” (Ex-player 1). Coaches felt that parents then need to be educated about the pathways that are available to their child and the impact that following each pathway may have on their child’s tennis, education, and social life. As one coach suggested: “At U14’s it is helping parents understand where we go from here, what are the different routes, what are the different pathways” (Coach 6).

For early adolescents with ambitions of pursuing tennis at a national or international level, there was a general consensus that players had to start specialising by training and competing in tennis more during this stage. However, participants felt that parents need to be made aware that increased tennis involvement at this stage can potentially have a negative impact on early adolescents’ education and social development. As one father explained: “Whilst she was at school, tennis impacted on it [education] greatly, because she would go off to talent ID days, 3-day camps, tournaments that would actually go into the school week, national camp days, training days and she would be out a day and a half, every week. It did impact on her core subjects, like reading and math, they are the ones you notice” (Parent 10). Another mother admitted the impact this can have socially: “[Child’s name] doesn’t have that many friends because all his other normal friends at school do after school clubs or stuff like that, or see each other at weekends. But obviously our weekends are taken up by tournaments, or he has rest...He does find it hard to mix with other children in bigger groups” (Parent 6). These educational and social issues were often magnified if children trained full-time and were educated in high performance centres. The following quote highlights the need to make parents aware of the impact that following this pathway can have on early adolescents’ mental health:

Before I came into tennis I wasn’t aware of depression but three of the [full-time] players at the academy are suffering from aspects of frustration, anger, and are a bit depressed sometimes. It’s tough to be friends with people you are competing

against. Tennis is so life consuming; you don't have time outside of it to get the tennis/social life balance so you struggle to develop social skills. It's a brutal world for the top national and international juniors, what they have to go through, it's not a stable existence" (Coach 3).

Participants felt that understanding the potential impact of following these pathways was important to ensure that parents were able to make informed decisions, with their child, about the best pathway to follow during early adolescence. The following quote captures the importance of involving players in this decision: "Once the kid is past ten, past the mini-tennis stage, you are trying to encourage them to be more independent, but you need to nurture them through the decision-making process because life is about making good decisions on court and off court, so I think that's the bit that evolves" (Coach 8). As a final point, participants felt that parents also need to continually monitor their child's goals and the pathway they are on. One mother explained the reasons for this during an informal chat: "The goalposts move all the time depending on how old they are and where they are within their game of tennis. You have to keep reviewing it the whole time, constant reviews. It's not rigidly concrete, it's never static either" (Field notes, May 9, 2013).

A Grounded Theory of Tennis Parents' Education and Support Needs

This substantive theory offers an explanation of the education and support needs of British tennis parents across contexts and developmental stages (see Figure 4). In doing so, the theory can be used as the basis for a structured and proactive approach to tennis parent education and support, which addresses parents' needs at a social, organisational, developmental, and intra-interpersonal level. The grounded theory is based on the notion that tennis parents require additional information as they go through each transition, which adds to their existing knowledge base rather than replaces it. Despite this structured approach, the model allows flexibility within individual cases (based on parents existing knowledge and experience) and should not be seen as a rigid educational process, rather as a tool to guide education at each stage. The bi-directional arrow also allows an educator to tailor the education they provide to parents based on their child's development age (e.g., level of maturation) and/or their level of involvement in tennis.

The theory is based on the notion that parents' education and support needs can only be fulfilled when parents are willing to learn and enter into a supportive learning environment which provides them with formal education and on-going support (i.e., regular meetings) (a). Tennis parents' first educational needs (i.e., introductory needs) refer to understanding how social factors (e.g., financial and time demands, reasons for

involvement, and knowledge of tennis) underpin their participation and type of involvement in junior performance tennis (b). Once involved, the theory suggests that parents then enter into an educational sub-process based on their child's age within the British tennis system (c). Within each educational sub-process, education is needed to address tennis parents' organisational needs (d). At this point, the theory demonstrates the relationship between organisational and development-based needs, with the short-term nature of the British tennis system influencing the need to educate parents about child and talent development. This understanding is essential for parents to make informed decisions about their child's tennis involvement and create an environment that facilitates participation and development at each stage (e). The theory suggests that this understanding also acts as the foundation for parents' to understand and fulfil their roles within the competition context (f).

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to develop a grounded theory of tennis parents' education and support needs across contexts and developmental stages within British high performance centres. When comparing the grounded theory to existing tennis parent research and theories, many of the education and support needs identified encouragingly reinforce current recommendations and guidelines for working with sport parents within the literature (see Holt & Knight, 2014). For instance, the need to educate parents about who or where they can turn to for support, how this support can be helpful, and ways to develop and maintain relationships with significant others, have been well documented in the youth sport literature (Knight & Holt, 2013a, 2013b; Smoll, Cumming, & Smith, 2011). Findings also support research which has suggested that sport parents need to understand how their own reasons for involvement (i.e., the goals they have for their child) (Knight & Holt, 2014), their financial and time commitments (Harwood & Knight 2009a, 2009b), and their understanding of tennis (Knight & Holt, 2014) can influence their type of involvement (i.e., un-supportive, supportive, or pressurising). In addition to this, the need to work with parents to help them manage the organisational, developmental, and competitive stressors they experience has been widely recommended (Harwood & Knight, 2015). Finally, the tennis parent literature has consistently highlighted the need to educate parents in relation to appropriate and inappropriate behaviours and how to communicate effectively with their child in the competitive environment (Gould et al., 2006, 2008; Lauer et al., 2010a, 2010b). However, the current study also offers a number of contributions that extend and advance the tennis parent literature, particularly in relation to applied practice.

The proposed theory moves beyond a decontextualised view of parent education by illustrating the range of contextual factors that influence parents' education and support needs. Although tennis parent research has provided an understanding of how the tournament context influences parents' experiences (e.g., Knight & Holt, 2013a), the current study illustrates how parents' involvement is also influenced by overarching social characteristics (e.g., financial and time demands), indirect organisational factors (e.g., LTA's rating system), and the high performance centre setting. Although the current study was not guided by Bronfenbrenner's (2005) ecological systems theory, findings here support the notion that in order to understand and enhance development, the entire environment in which development occurs must be considered. Furthermore, by revealing the interactions between parents and their environment, the grounded theory highlights the need to create structured educational programmes that address tennis parents' needs across multiple levels of functioning (i.e., social, organisational, developmental, and intra/interpersonal levels). However, it is important to note that education at a development level is likely to prove problematic for practitioners given that there appears to be substantial differences of perception between the research data and the current Lawn Tennis Associations practice in talent development (see Pankhurst et al., 2012). There is clearly a need for policy level changes to reduce some of the social (i.e., the cost of participation) and organisational factors (i.e., emphasis on results from an early age) which are negatively influencing tennis parents' (and players') experience and involvement but are difficult to address through education alone.

The grounded theory also extends previous research (e.g., Knight & Holt, 2013a, 2013b) by highlighting how parents' education and support needs are influenced by the developmental stage that they operate within. Specifically, the current study demonstrates how parents' needs change alongside their roles, experiences, and demands as their child progresses through tennis (Côté, 1999; Harwood & Knight, 2009b; Lauer et al., 2010a, 2010b). Importantly, the specific timing of these changes was determined by organisational and development-level transitions that were specific to the British tennis system. Understanding the needs of parents within each developmental stage and the timing of key transitions will enable practitioners (e.g., coaches and sport psychologists) to provide British tennis parents with education in advance of each transition, rather than learning as they go through the experience (Knight & Holt, 2013b). Proactive education will not only help parents to successfully navigate each transition, but also create a more developmentally appropriate youth sport environment at each stage. These findings also

emphasise the need to move beyond the use of generic models or stages of talent development (Bloom, 1985; Côté, 1999) to guide development-orientated research within the youth sport domain (e.g., Harwood & Knight, 2009b).

Results here also extend the tennis parent literature by providing an understanding of how parent education and support needs can be fulfilled. Traditionally, researchers have focused on producing broad one-size-fits-all guidelines and recommendations for sport parent education (see Holt & Knight, 2014). In contrast, the current study highlights the specific knowledge and skills (i.e., organisational, decision-making, interpersonal, and intrapersonal) tennis parents need to prevent, manage, or cope with the unique demands they experience in British tennis (Harwood & Knight, 2015). Such insights are essential for the development of educational materials that are tailored to meet the needs of tennis parents operating within the British tennis system. Doing so aligns with theories from the field of adult education, which suggest that the closer education is linked to the actual practice setting and the needs of the participants (rather than decontextualised topics), the more likely that parents will be motivated to learn and that learning will lead to a change in practice (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 1998; Merriam & Leahy, 2005).

Expanding this point, the current theory highlights how this learning process can be optimised or facilitated. In line with existing research (e.g., Dorsch et al., 2009; Knight & Holt, 2013b), the majority of tennis parents in the current study also appeared to learn through a combination of informal and self-directed learning. However, the theory suggests that these forms of practical learning can be facilitated when guided by more formalised educational provision (e.g., one-to-one tutoring or group-based workshops). This is consistent with the notion that education can ‘scaffold’ real world activities and problems, enabling learners to develop new forms of expertise (Vygotsky, 1978). The proposed theory also suggests that the effectiveness of this education is likely to be dependent upon individual parents’ willingness to learn and the on-going support they receive from key stakeholders (e.g., coaches and other parents). These findings align with studies that have shown one-to-one mentoring, feedback, and support from peers can reinforce key messages and facilitate learning transfer in adult education (Merriam & Leahy, 2005). As a final point, an interesting finding to emerge from the current study was how psychologists worked directly with a small number of parents and families to help them cope with and overcome individual challenges they were facing (e.g., children’s mental health problems or developmental disorders). This highlights the need to not only integrate educational provision that meet the needs of British tennis parents as a group, but also to ensure that

coaches and psychologists are available in a consultancy capacity to support parents with specific needs (see Holt & Knight, 2014 for a review of family system approaches).

Overall, the grounded theory provides an understanding of the wide range of factors that influence British tennis parents' current experiences and involvement. By identifying the gap between parents' current and desired experiences and involvement, the current study was able to determine what tennis parents' education and support needs are and how they can be fulfilled. Interestingly, these desired behavioural outcomes largely align with Harwood and Knight's (2015) postulates of expertise in sports parenting. Therefore, based on the proposed theory, it is likely that only through understanding and fulfilling parents' education and support needs within specific youth sport settings are practitioners going to assist in developing parents' levels of expertise.

The use of the proposed grounded theory should be considered against the limitations of this study. First, the current investigation did not explore the education and support needs of parents with players in mid-to-late adolescence. Identifying the needs of tennis parents during this stage when they are less visibly involved represents a logical avenue for future research. In addition, data were collected in two high performance centres, and therefore reflects the education and support needs of parents whose children are regularly training and competing at a county, regional, and national level. Consequently, these needs may not be representative of parents' needs in lower level performance centres or local clubs. Therefore, applied researchers are encouraged to explore tennis parents' education and support needs within these social settings. It would also be informative to consider how the education and support needs identified in this study compare and contrast with parents' needs in other cultures, organisational systems, or even sports (e.g., soccer).

In conclusion, the current study answers calls to provide a better understanding of how to structure and deliver parent education programmes and how to intervene with sport parents (Holt & Knight, 2014). This study offers a framework that has practical use for coaches, psychologists, high performance tennis centres, and the governing body, and therefore achieves the desired outcome of a grounded theory research design (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). It is, therefore, timely to reaffirm the need for interventions that address tennis parents' education and support needs. The lack of intervention studies, or even applied initiatives, within junior performance tennis is surprising given the depth of research which has explored parental involvement (Harwood & Knight, 2012). Despite almost a decade of research, tennis parents in Britain still receive little or no education about how to facilitate their child's tennis participation and development.

Chapter Five:
Educating and Supporting Tennis Parents: An Action Research Study (study two)

Introduction

The first study within this thesis (see chapter four) explored the education and support needs of British tennis parents across contexts and developmental stages. Following a 6-month period of fieldwork and interviews with 29 parents, coaches, and ex-players, findings highlighted the need to provide tennis parents with education that addressed their introductory, organisational, developmental, and competition needs during childhood/mini-tennis (5-10 years) and early adolescence/junior-tennis (11-14 years). The grounded theory was based on the notion that these needs can only be fulfilled if a supportive learning environment is created in which tennis parents are provided with formal education, and that the effectiveness of this education will be determined by parents' motivation to learn and the on-going support they receive from key stakeholders (e.g., coaches). This theory provided a structured, proactive, and tailored framework for practitioners to implement educational programmes with British tennis parents. In addition to this, it also illustrates the growing complexity and challenging nature of parenting in youth sport and further highlights how parents could benefit from education and support, particularly when they first come into sport.

Despite this, there are only a small number of studies which have intervened with sport parents in practice (Harwood & Swain, 2002; Richards & Winter, 2013; Smoll et al., 2007). Initiating this line of research, Harwood and Swain (2002) implemented a systematic motivational climate intervention which sought to optimise the attitudes, values, and practices of significant others (i.e., coaches and parents) within a tennis player's motivational climate. Using a single-case design methodology, Harwood and Swain (2002) provided educational sessions to parents of four national-level tennis players on motivation, communication strategies, and behavioural guidelines. In addition to this, season-long match tasks focused on helping their son/daughter to approach matches with higher task involvement, the use of process goals, and adaptive competition cognitions. Positive post intervention directional changes were reported in players' achievement goals, self-regulation, self-efficacy, and perceptions of threat and challenge. Findings suggested that the parent element of the programme contributed to the effectiveness of the initiative.

Similarly, Smoll and colleagues (2007) developed, implemented, and evaluated a systematic and empirically inspired intervention directed at coaches and parents. A single 60-minute workshop was presented to 100 parents of nine to 15 year-olds participating in community-based basketball programmes, and used theoretical principles from achievement goal theory to address the causes of performance anxiety. The workshop,

titled the ‘Mastery Approach to Sport Parenting’, promoted a mastery-involving motivational climate that de-emphasised winning and competency-based social comparison in favour of defining success in terms of giving maximum effort, individual improvement, supporting and encouraging teammates, and enjoyment of the activity and team experience. Results indicated that the intervention was successful in reducing the anxiety symptoms reported by child-athletes. In a matched control group, the participants increased significantly in performance anxiety from pre-season to late season. Despite this, neither of these studies evaluated the effectiveness of the interventions on parent outcomes and as a result the relative contribution of the parent (and coach) in relation to these results was unclear.

More recently, Richards and Winter (2013) offered their key reflections of delivering a formal field-based education programme to 21 parents (19 mothers, 2 fathers) of competitive gymnasts. Once again based on achievement goal theory, their programme design included six 20–30 minute educational sessions which focused on enhancing parents’ knowledge and awareness of their child’s goal orientation. The intervention also provided parents with effective strategies to create a motivational climate in order to foster a high task orientation. Parents suggested that the programme had helped them to see problems from their child’s perspective and appreciate how certain spontaneous reactions might impact on their child. Parents also noted that they would apply the strategies offered during the workshops in practice. Beyond the programme content per se, the authors believed that logistical considerations, expertise in the sporting domain, familiarity with the setting and parenting practices, coach buy-in, weeklong breaks for reflection, and the interpersonal and intrapersonal skills of the practitioner were critical in the overall effectiveness of the program. Although these reflections provide anecdotal evidence to suggest that group-based interventions can have a positive impact on sport parents, no attempt was made to formally explore parents’ experiences or evaluate the effectiveness this programme.

It is important to highlight that the recent shift away from longitudinal individual interventions (Harwood & Swain, 2002) towards shorter group-based workshop initiatives (Richards & Winter, 2013; Smoll et al., 2007) appears to reflect the current situation in youth sport where limited resources are being made available for parent education. Therefore, it is likely that group-based interventions are viewed as more practical, time-effective, and cost-efficient ways of educating and supporting parents in the current youth sport climate. Although the aforementioned studies have collectively provided some

evidence to suggest that group-based sport parent interventions can have a positive effect on parents (i.e., Smoll et al., 2007; Richards & Winter, 2013), if resources are to be allocated to group-based sport parent education in the future, there is clearly a need to establish if these programmes generate positive parent outcomes (i.e., knowledge, affect and skills). In addition to this, future interventions must start to explore what parents' experiences are of engaging in group-based education programmes. There is also a need to move beyond assumed needs and narrow individual topics (i.e., creating a task-orientated motivational climate) and develop interventions that meet the actual needs of parents in specific youth sport environments (see chapter four).

Taking these points into consideration, it is clear that our understanding of the parenting experience is currently some way ahead of published intervention research in the sport parent literature. This dichotomy is clearly evident in junior-tennis where there currently exists an in-depth understanding of tennis parents' experiences, involvement and educational needs (see chapter four), and yet published field-based intervention studies are conspicuous by their absence in the literature (Harwood & Knight, 2015). This realisation caused Harwood and Knight (2015) to encourage applied researchers, practitioners, and sports organisations to use this body of literature to provide proactive interventions, which meet parents' stage specific education and support needs, and thus enhance their expertise. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to build on study one (see chapter four) and evaluate the effectiveness of a field-based tennis parent education programme designed to meet the needs of British tennis parents. An organisational action research design was used to answer the following research questions: 'What effect does a tennis parent education programme have on parents' knowledge, affect and skills?' and 'what are parents experiences of participating in a tennis parent education programme?'

Methodology

Organisational Action Research

Action research has been defined as 'a participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes, grounded in a participatory worldview' (Reason & Bradbury, 2001, p1). Therefore, action research seeks to re-integrate theory and practice, researcher and participant, everyday experience, and academic knowledge (Reason & Bradbury, 2001). Action research studies are being increasingly used within sport (e.g., Hill, Hanton, Matthews, & Flemming, 2011) to provide long-term solutions to the real life needs of participants (Castle, 1994). The current study was grounded in the organisational action research tradition, which aims to solve a

particular problem, or directly improve an area of an organisation (in this case, tennis parenting within high performance centres) through ‘scholarly consultancy’ (Wagstaff, Hanton, & Fletcher, 2013). In this role, researchers act as ‘change agents’ in real life situations and empower those operating within the organisation by giving participants ownership of the change process. I was requested as a resource by directors within the high performance tennis centres, and worked collaboratively with participants by sharing decision making throughout the study. Therefore, the attitude was to work ‘with’ not ‘on’ participants by adopting the mind-set that ‘I know’ and ‘they know’ (Herr & Anderson, 2005). As a result, I adopted an ‘outsider’ (i.e., academic) in collaboration with insiders’ positionality (Herr & Anderson, 2005).

Organisation and Participants

Three high performance tennis centres in the United Kingdom (one with international status) were purposefully selected for four reasons: firstly, I already had an in-depth knowledge of the organisations and the parents within them (see chapter four). Secondly, I had already developed rapport, mutual respect, and credibility with the directors, coaches, and parents within each centre. Thirdly, the ‘areas for action’ (i.e., parents’ education and support needs) (Gilbourne & Richardson, 2005) had also been previously been identified (see chapter four). Finally, the directors in each centre were committed to educating and supporting tennis parents (Wagstaff et al., 2013).

Parents of mini-tennis players (children aged between 5-10 years) across all three high performance centres were invited by email to attend an introductory workshop. Of the parents invited, 17 attended an introductory workshop and 16 subsequently agreed to partake in the study by providing informed consent (see Appendix 5). Over the course of the study a total of 31 parents (See Table 3) attended at least one workshop, with the average workshop attendance across all three centres being 22. Two of the participants completed all seven workshops, with 22 parents completing four or more. Following the 12-week intervention, all participants were given the opportunity to participate in a focus group. A total of 19 parents (15 female, 4 male) participated across three focus groups.

Procedure

The ‘Loughborough Tennis Parent Education Programme’ (LTPEP) and its learning objectives (see Table 4) (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2000) were derived from the needs of British tennis parents (see chapter four) and informed by other relevant tennis parent literature (e.g., Harwood & Knight, 2009a, 2009b; Harwood & Knight, 2015; Knight & Holt, 2013a, 2013b; 2014). This qualitative scouting was a necessary preliminary step as

Table 3

Participant Demographics

Population	Player Age (Years)				Gender		Player Standard				Workshops attended	Years of Experience		
	n	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range	Male	Female	Club	County	Regional	National	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range
Centre 1 Parents	6	9	0	9-9	1	5	0	1	4	1	5.5	5	2.10	2-8
Centre 2 Parents	15	8.13	0.52	7-9	4	11	6	5	2	2	4.13	3.37	3.23	1-13
Centre 3 Parents	10	6.39	1.55	5-9	1	9	6	1	1	2	4	2.75	1.72	1-6
Focus Groups	19	7.91	1.20	5-9	4	15	8	3	5	3	N/A	3.63	3.08	0.5-8

programmes in unfamiliar settings/contexts can fail to connect with reality when implemented (Needleman & Needleman, 1996). Specifically, the intervention was systematic and engaged in an on-going cyclic process of planning, implementing, monitoring, reflecting, and evaluating (Evans, Fleming, & Hardy, 2000; Gilbourne & Richardson, 2005). This action research procedure was guided by Evans et al.'s (2000) criteria for action research in sport. This criteria included: (a) show commitment to improvement and/or solving practical problems; (b) include an intervention; (c) have a cycle of reflection and action; (d) offer praxis (informed committed action that gives rise to knowledge rather than successful action); (e) be systematic; (f) be strategic; (g) be collaborative; (h) be empowering for participants; (i) be conducted ethically; (j) employ recognisable research methods; (k) demonstrate reflexivity; and (l) communicate findings to practitioners/researchers. The uniqueness of this criteria lies in its collectivity, as Evans and colleagues (2000) suggest it is only when all of the characteristics are present that action research is being undertaken.

The Researchers

At the time of delivery, I was a 25 year old male PhD researcher who had recently conducted prolonged research within each high performance centre, and therefore, was familiar with the research environment, culture, and working practices (see chapter four). I was assisted in the design and content of the workshops by Chris Harwood who is a Health Care Professional Council (HCPC) registered sport and exercise psychologist, a British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES) accredited sport scientist, and a British Psychological Society (BPS) chartered psychologist. He has also consulted with the Lawn Tennis Association as well as individual tennis parents and players for over 20 years.

Data Collection

Considering the lack of tennis parent interventions within the literature, a qualitative approach was used to explore tennis parents shared experiences of the programme as well as its perceived effectiveness (Needleman & Needleman, 1996). Within the current study, qualitative data was collected through social validation feedback forms, reflective participant diaries, emails, reflective diary, and focus groups.

Social validation feedback form. Following each workshop, a social validation feedback form (see Appendix 6) was used to assess the perceived effectiveness of the workshop and establish how participants perceived, made sense of, and attached meaning to the workshop content (Wagstaff et al., 2013). Participants were also encouraged to identify topics they would like to receive more information on and to provide any

Table 4

An Overview of each Workshop Title, Learning Objectives, Content and Tasks

Workshop	Title	Workshop Learning Objectives	Workshop Content	Workshop/Take Home Tasks
1	Introduction to the Intervention	<p><i>Following this workshop parents should be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Appreciate</i> how important they are in their child's tennis development ▪ <i>Acknowledge</i> the value of tennis parent education programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The importance of parents in child-athletes development ▪ Overview of the tennis parent research ▪ Design, content, and delivery of the programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ordering task: Who is the most important person in your child's mini-tennis development? ▪ Small group discussion: Feedback on proposed workshop design and content ▪ Group discussion: Establishing a suitable day, time and location for the workshops
2	Supporting your child during mini-tennis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Adopt</i> multiple goals for their child's tennis involvement ▪ <i>Manage</i> their expectations ▪ <i>Explain</i> the rules, levels, and demands of tennis ▪ <i>Empathise</i> with their child's on court experiences ▪ <i>Prepare</i> for the financial and time commitment of mini-tennis participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Types of parental involvement (Un-supportive, supportive, pressurising) ▪ Providing informational, emotional, and tangible support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Multiple benefits of tennis participation - Knowledge of tennis - Financial and time commitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual task: What are your goals for your child's involvement in tennis? ▪ Take home reading: Newspaper article (Bland, 2014) ▪ Take home task: Play a game of tennis with your child
3	The LTA's mini-tennis organisational system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Explain</i> the stages of mini-tennis ▪ <i>Enter</i> their child into an appropriate level tournament based on their age and rating ▪ <i>Plan</i> their child's schedule to help them improve their rating and ranking ▪ <i>Explain</i> how the LTA's talent identification system works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The stages, equipment, court sizes, and scoring system of mini-tennis ▪ Mini-tennis tournament entry ▪ The LTA's mini-tennis ratings and ranking system ▪ The LTA's talent identification and development system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Take home task: Join British Tennis and familiarise yourself with each section of the LTA website ▪ Take home task: Walk around the centre and look out for differences in court sizes, equipment and scoring.
4 (Part 1)	Child development during mini-tennis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Identify</i> their child's psychosocial needs during childhood ▪ <i>Adopt</i> a task-orientated view of success in junior-tennis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Psychosocial needs during childhood ▪ Introduction to motivation in mini-tennis ▪ Developing and maintaining motivation: autonomy, competence, and relatedness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual task: What motivates your child to play tennis? ▪ Take home reading: Goal setting chapter (Harwood, 2004).

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Create</i> an intrinsically motivating mini-tennis environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Short term performance and process goal setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Take home task: Review your child's tennis environment (training groups and tournament schedule) to ensure it is conducive for maintaining intrinsic motivation
4 (Part 2)	Talent development during mini-tennis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Evaluate</i> the strengths and weaknesses of following different talent development pathways ▪ <i>Select</i> a talent development pathway to follow during mini-tennis based on their child's needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introduction to talent development ▪ Early specialisation vs. early diversification: strengths and weaknesses ▪ Selecting a pathway during mini-tennis: factors to consider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual task: Select a talent development pathway ▪ Take home reading: Review articles on early specialisation (Baker & Young, 2013) and early diversification (Pankhurst & Collins, 2013) ▪ Take home task: Discuss your talent development approach with your partner/coach
5	Competition Roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Engage</i> in task-orientated verbal interactions with their child in the competition context ▪ <i>Facilitate</i> short term pre match goal setting ▪ <i>Manage</i> the range emotional demands of they experience during competition ▪ <i>Demonstrate</i> task-orientated body language during matches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How to communicate before a match ▪ How to control emotions and body language during a match ▪ When and how to communicate post match 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual task: Plan pre-match dialog ▪ Group task: Progressive Muscular Relaxation ▪ Role play: Body language responses to match scenarios ▪ Role play: Post match feedback scenario ▪ Take home task: Implement pre, during and post-match communication in competition
6	Continual learning and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Identify</i> their social support network ▪ <i>Appreciate</i> the importance of social support ▪ <i>Develop</i> and <i>maintain</i> healthy relationships with coaches and other parents. ▪ Reflect on and learn from their experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who or where to turn to for education and support ▪ Informal learning: how each source of social support can be helpful ▪ How to develop and maintain relationships ▪ Self-directed learning: reflective practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual task: Write down who or where you can turn to for education and support and how this support can be helpful ▪ Take Home Task: Reflect on your next tournament experience

comments or suggestions relating to the workshop format and design. This feedback was part of the action research process of monitoring and evaluating (Evans et al., 2000).

Reflective participant diary. After each workshop, participants were encouraged to keep an on-going reflective diary (see Appendix 7) to record how the information they learned and skills they were taught during workshops impacted on their tennis parenting. Participants were encouraged to provide me with their written reflections in person or by email. To facilitate this process, I often discussed participants' experiences and provided feedback between workshops with individual parents to achieve a deeper level of reflection.

E-mail. As logistics and the number of participants limited the individual face-to-face support each participant received, participants were encouraged to contact me via email to discuss any issues or experiences the participant chose to raise (Hill et al., 2011). Weekly emails were also used to increase adherence to the intervention and to maximise its intended impact.

Reflexive diary. A reflexive diary was used to record field notes, which included observations and informal chats that related to the intervention and the progress being made (Evans et al., 2000; Hill et al., 2011; Wagstaff et al., 2013). Following each workshop, field notes were written which allowed me to systematically reflect on the programme, understand the emerging situation and modify the action if required.

Focus groups. Semi-structured focus groups were used to explore participants shared (but not always the same) perceptions and experiences of the workshops as well as the overall impact of the programme. During each focus group, introductory questions were used to facilitate interaction within the group (see Appendix 8). Subsequent questions focused on exploring parents' reasons for participation, general experiences of the workshops, and perceived outcomes. Finally, questions explored the delivery of information and future education and support. Focus groups were conducted at each centre and ranged in duration from 52 to 85 minutes ($M = 65.9$, $SD = 16.7$).

Data Analysis

The first phase of data analysis involved becoming immersed within the participants' experiences of the intervention by reading and re-reading social validation feedback forms, diary entries, and focus group transcripts (see Appendix 9). This was used to promote a high level of familiarity and understand participants' individual perceptions and the overall experiences of the intervention. Content analysis was then used to inductively analyse the data via line-by-line coding to allow themes and the narrative to emerge (Hill et al., 2011).

Finally, the recurring themes within these sources of data, along with my own reflections, were presented as a realist tale (Sparkes & Smith, 2014), which captured the systematic delivery process from my own perspective.

Results

The results have been subdivided into 8 phases: (a) pre-intervention meeting; (b) introduction to the intervention; (c) workshop two; (d) workshop three; (e) workshop four (part 1); (f) workshop four (part 2); (g) workshop five; and (h) workshop six.

Pre-Intervention Meeting

It has been almost six months since I had regularly attended each centre whilst conducting research (see chapter four), and therefore it was necessary to visit each centre to understand their current education and support provisions for tennis parents and establish whether they still needed and wanted external education and support provided. It was also important to collaborate with directors and coaches at each centre, to provisionally establish the workshop content, time frame, length, and venue. Soon after sitting down with Will (pseudonym), a director at Centres one and two, he admitted: “I’ll tell you where I am at with parent education...disillusioned!” He went on to explain how, back in September 2013, they organised a daylong workshop with external speakers on a Sunday for tennis parents to cover off everything they need to know at a cost of £25 per parent. “Despite contacting almost 200 parents, only 3 replied” he said and they had to cancel the event. An hour later, it was clear that his current disillusionment stemmed from being “confused” with the lack of interest from the parents themselves. He had not, however, lost his belief in the importance of, or the current need for, tennis parent education within the centres.

During the same period, centre three had been running weekly workshops for tennis parents, however, Harry (pseudonym) (head of mini-tennis) admitted that they had “no particular structure to them” and that “we don’t really get the buy in from the parents” even if they do attend. He went on to explain that their workshops were poorly attended by mini-tennis parents, although he attributed this to the fact that the time and days of the workshops did not coincide with the times that the mini-tennis parents attended the centre. He felt that easily accessible, structured, and proactive education specifically for mini-tennis parents would be “useful for parents and well aligned with what we want to offer in terms of parent support”. Beyond accessibility, Harry explained how he felt that attendance is often negatively influenced by parents’ anxiety or a fear of being told what they are doing as parents is wrong. He later added to this point in an email explaining that there seems to be a barrier with parents investing time or money on their own self-development:

There is a gateway challenge, by that I refer to parents' lack of appreciation that THEY are the key to their child's progress [during mini-tennis]. We need some powerful ways of showing and enforcing this to get the message underway. We have been telling parents this and presenting to them – the message is not being heard.

In terms of the content and delivery of the workshops, Harry explained that “a lot of the education [provided for parents] is just a one-off workshop and parents don't have follow up or clear instructions of what to work on...that's just not going to work”. He felt that: “There is a need for programmes (presentations, workshops, or even assessments) for parents to complete and experience first-hand”.

In summary, it was clear that existing parent education attempts at all three centres had been limited by their accessibility, cost, and/or a lack of parental buy in. As a consequence, the need to provide free, structured, and accessible education (i.e., whilst their children were training) for mini-tennis parents was established. A total of seven one-hour workshops across a three-month (12 week) period were provisionally agreed. These workshops would be provided every two weeks to allow participants time to reflect on and implement the knowledge and skills taught during workshops (Richards & Winter, 2013).

Workshop 1: Introduction to the Intervention

Parents at each centre were invited by email to attend an introductory session and coaches were also asked to recommend attending during interactions with parents in the lead up to the session (Axford, Lehtonen, Kaoukji, Tobin, & Berry, 2012). A total of 17 parents attended an introductory session across all three centres. Parents later reflected on this period during the focus group and their own reasons for attending: “It sounded like an interesting subject area, I felt there wasn't a lot out there for what we do as parents, and there is not a lot of back up for us...and the convenience obviously, we are here, we are hanging around and it seemed like an ideal opportunity” (Parent 3). Parents appeared to be more willing to attend given that I was delivering the programme. As one parent explained: “I think the difference is that you are not from here [the tennis centre] that you are from the university, that interested me more, it made it sound like you were the expert, the specialist, and that you are going to have all the answers for us” (Parent 2). However, parents also explained how they felt that: “Some parents are disinterested in it [parent education] because think they know everything already!” (Parent 3).

Based on the pre-intervention meetings, this workshop started by explaining to parents, through the use of a task, how important they are in their child's psychological,

social, and athletic development during mini-tennis (age 5-10 years) (Weiss, 2004). One mother explained the impact this realisation had on her: “I feel I am sometimes only there to transport him to lessons and hand over the money...I now realise there is greater emphasis on MY role which is more important than I thought at first” (Parent 2). Parents were then provided with an overview of the findings from chapter four which identified British tennis parent’s education and support needs. Given my age and status as a non-parent, I used this as an opportunity to establish credibility and parental buy in. Despite my initial concerns, parents appeared not to be influenced by my age or status as a non-parent. It was, however, my perceived experience and knowledge of the area that gained parents buy in. One parent highlighted how important this was during the focus group:

From the beginning you made it very clear that you had spent a lot of time in tennis centres, a lot of time with tennis parents and with coaches, so I think that information for me at the start made me appreciate that you do know what you are talking about, so we are not looking at you and thinking ‘oh you are not a parent so you don’t know’ (Parent 5).

This section also served a secondary purpose to address parents’ concerns and emphasise that the programme had broad relevance and was not for ‘pushy parents’ (Axford et al., 2012). Parents appeared to be able to relate to the quotes, examples, and findings taken from chapter four, with one parent explaining how this motivated her: “I can relate to all these issues, and look forward to finding out more” (Parent 8). Another mother expressed feelings of relief afterwards by writing: “I am not the only parent who feels they are lacking in knowledge/understanding of the tennis world!” (Parent 21).

This apparent relatedness between parents was further facilitated through group discussions in the second section of the workshop. Parents were provided with a provisional outline of the workshop content (see Table 4) and asked to provide feedback and identify any additional education and support needs in small groups. Parents’ feedback revealed that they believed the proposed workshop content “emphasises education needed in all areas” (Parent 8) and “touches on all the important points - the topics covered are very relevant to parents” (Parent 18). Providing parents with the opportunity to have an input into the design and content of the intervention and ensuring that the workshops were based on the actual needs of the participants was critical for engaging parents in the intervention (Axford et al., 2012) and the transfer of learning (Merriam & Leahy, 2005). Feedback suggested that parents felt that this part of the workshop had given them an “opportunity to meet other parents to discuss strategies, and also with you (the expert), in a

safe environment as opposed to snatched conversations on the courtside” (Parent 2). This was reassuring because creating a safe environment for learning is vital for engagement in adult education (Rogers & Freiberg, 1994).

The final part of the workshops provided parents with an opportunity to discuss the most suitable days, times, and locations for the workshops. During these discussions, parents highlighted a number of barriers to participation such as work commitments, looking after siblings, lift sharing, or wanting to watch their child train. As expected, parent’s individual availability for workshops was largely determined by the days and times their child trained at the centre. Therefore, these on-going discussions were used to establish and agree the days, times, and locations for the workshops that were most convenient in each centre. Given the time restrictions, it was also agreed that parents would be provided with information packs including the workshop slides and pocket guides with key information. Post workshop feedback suggested that the content, style, and level of the workshops were appropriate. As one parent concluded: “Excellent delivery, content definitely relevant to us, and length of workshop all appropriate” (Parent 8).

Workshop 2: Supporting Your Child During Mini-Tennis

Based on my reflections between workshops one and two all mini-tennis parents at each centre were re-emailed the finalised dates, times, and locations and encouraged to attend the workshops. Encouragingly, an additional nine parents attended the second workshop increasing numbers to 26 across the three centres and highlighting the value of several routes of referral (Axford et al., 2012). One parent later reflected on her reasons for attending workshop two: “I received the [original] email but I didn't think it was for me, I just asked and heard it was really good and that's why I came” (Parent 16).

Those that attended were introduced to the different types of parental involvement (i.e., un-supportive, supportive, and pressurising) (Leff & Hoyle, 1995) and the factors which influence parents involvement (i.e., financial and time commitment, reasons for involvement, and knowledge of tennis) (see chapter four). Through the use of an individual task, parents were encouraged to think about their own reasons for involvement (i.e., the goals they have for their children) (Knight & Holt, 2014). I went on to explain how only a small number of children make it to an elite level, and consequently, encouraged parents to identify additional goals for their child’s participation in tennis. To emphasise the multiple benefits of tennis participation I drew upon research which has highlighted the multiple potential psychological, physical, intellectual, and social benefits of participation in youth sport (see Holt, 2008). One mother explained how this changed her attitude towards tennis:

“Seeing how tennis can produce an all-round employable person made me realise that I may waver too much towards performance and that participation is as important as performance” (Parent 2). Similarly, another parent felt that these were: “Interesting points about the benefits of playing tennis which I didn’t think about before, tennis is great for character building and life skills” (Parent 18).

The second section of the workshop focused on helping parents to understand how their knowledge of tennis can influence their type of involvement and specifically the informational and emotional support they can provide their child (Knight & Holt, 2014). The workshop provided parents with an understanding of the demands, rules, and levels of tennis to ensure parents were able to relate to what their child is going through, adopt a realistic perspective, and be able to provide accurate feedback. One parent recalled during a focus group how understanding these levels helped her to manage her expectations: “I liked it when you did that pyramid and said ‘you are here and then you’ve got Andy Murray the one at the top’ and that was like the reality check wasn’t it. I didn’t realise how many levels there were to be honest so that was interesting” (Parent 1). Another parent added that understanding the different levels, and years of involvement to get to the top level, helped her “not to get too embroiled in the winning and losing of competition and make sure my child enjoys all aspects of her tennis involvement” (Parent 3). Building on this, we discussed the physical, technical, tactical, and psychological demands children face on court. This understanding enabled some parents to relate to what their child goes through during a match. For example one parent said: “It has given me more of an understanding of how my child is feeling when he is stood on the baseline in a competition, what is going through his head, and the worries that he has” (Parent 8).

The final section focused on the financial and time commitment involved in junior performance tennis and aimed to give parents an advanced warning of the demands they may face to provide tangible support in the future (Harwood & Knight, 2009b). Although most parents appeared to be already aware of both the financial and time commitment, I provided them with ways to plan and negotiate the cost and time commitment (e.g., lesson sharing). At this point, I was pleased that parents were asking questions and voicing concerns, which were prompting group discussions and the sharing of experiences. One parent reiterated how important these emerging relationships were starting to become: “I have really enjoyed learning together with other tennis parents as it is difficult to get support from friends/family who don’t ‘live’ the pressures of the tennis world” (Parent 11). These interactions were also helping me to develop relationships with the parents, which

were crucial for both participant retention (Axford et al., 2012) and successful learning transfer (Merriam & Leahy, 2005).

To reinforce the workshop content, parents were provided with a newspaper article to provide them with an insight into the professional tennis tour (Bland, 2014). One parent later wrote in her diary the impact this article had: “Very good article, my views are now more balanced, broader, and realistic” (Parent 7). In addition to this, parents were encouraged to play a game of tennis to understand how difficult the sport is and be able to relate to and empathise with what their child goes through on court. The following quote was taken from a parent’s diary:

Each match is so unpredictable, you can have a goal, you can have a game plan, but in the end you have to alter your perspective and goals as the game goes on. In the longer games there are peaks and troughs and players rarely stay in control for the whole match... The court looks so much bigger when you are down there about to serve! I have spent too many hours watching [Child’s name] play and not really appreciating how difficult it is for him – especially making the transition from orange ball to green ball. Sometimes I will say to him ‘why did you play that shot at that particular time?’ but from doing this I realise you only have a split second to decide which shot to play. It [understanding tennis] is critical to understand what children are going through and the pressures they face (Parent 2).

Although some parents liked the idea of keeping the diary as it “focuses you to think about what the sessions have been about and what you are supposed to be getting out of it” (Parent 2), other parents suggested that they struggled to find time to complete the tasks and their diary given their work and parenting commitments. Upon reflection, I concluded that although practical tasks remained a necessary part of the programme to reinforce learning, parents’ reflexive diaries could be filled out at the start of each session to minimise the workload for parents outside of the sessions.

Workshop 3: The Lawn Tennis Association’s (LTA) Mini-Tennis Organisational System.

At this point in the programme, focus shifted towards the stage-specific needs of parents during mini-tennis (see chapter four). Indeed, workshop three focused on educating parents about the governing body’s mini-tennis organisational system and aimed to reduce the organisational related stressors parents experience at this stage (Harwood & Knight, 2009b). Parents were provided with information about the stages of mini-tennis (e.g., age groups, court sizes, and scoring system), how to enter mini-tennis tournaments (using the

LTA's website), what grade of tournaments to enter, and how the mini-tennis ratings and rankings work (orange 1*, 1, 2 etc.) (see chapter four). One parent who was new to tennis wrote on her feedback form: "The workshop was very useful, because it gave me information about the rating and ranking and what needs to be done to improve them and also what to expect during tournaments in terms of umpiring and cheating" (Parent 30). Another parent in a similar position wrote in her diary: "It was very informative and useful. Understanding the different equipment, scoring systems, and some simple rules of tennis etc...I now feel I can relate to some of the things on court and also understand it all much better" (Parent 17). Following this, parents were explained how the mini-tennis talent identification (ID) system worked. Although more experienced parents noted how they had already learnt much of this information, there was a general consensus that "it was good to listen to; even being a tennis parent for at least 6 years, there was things I was learning" (Parent 18). These parents also believed that the workshop would be ideal for new mini-tennis parents: "It [the workshop] would be very beneficial if you are new to tennis; I wish there had been this sort of thing when we started with our boy" (Parent 28).

Encouragingly, feedback at this point in the intervention suggested that parents felt the workshops were "very well structured and informative, easy to follow, and relate to real life experiences" (Parent 19), and that they were "very comfortable with Sam now, delivery is always natural and not scripted" (Parent 8). However, some parents requested more examples and opportunities for interaction between the group. Although parents recognised the workshop length was dictated by the training sessions, more opportunities for discussions were added to future workshops. After the workshop, parents were encouraged to walk around the centre and watch children at each mini-tennis stage and look out for differences in courts, equipment, and scoring systems.

Workshop 4 (Part 1): Child Development During Mini-tennis.

At the midway point, numbers had stabilised with an average of 21 parents attending each week across the three centres. Workshop 4 was split into two parts and focused on educating parents about child and talent development during mini-tennis (see Chapter four). Part one of this workshop began by educating parents about their children's psychological and social needs, and how they change during mid to late childhood (see Weiss, 2004). One parent wrote on her feedback form: "I have understood where my son is and that's a great benefit to support him better...I feel I can piece things together a bit better. I enjoyed the workshops as it focused on child development in general not just tennis development" (Parent 11).

This understanding served as the basis for the second half of the workshop, which focused on providing parents with an understanding of how to create an environment that develops feelings of intrinsic motivation and competence during childhood (Weiss, 2004). This section started by providing parents with information about the different types of motivation (intrinsic vs. extrinsic), motivation during childhood, and motivation in sport. I then explained to parents how to help enhance their child's intrinsic motivation through understanding the basic human needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Emphasis was placed on how parents' verbal and non-verbal communication creates a motivational climate and influences their child's task or ego goal orientation. I explained to parents how to develop and maintain task-based competence through praising effort and progress and avoiding social comparisons of ability (see Keegan, Harwood, Spray, & Lavallee, 2009). This insight was effective in providing parents with a "clearer idea on how to support my child effectively and to focus on effort, progress, and improvement" (Parent 27). This understanding made parents realise that "success is about making progress not necessarily winning" (Parent 9) during mini-tennis, and that "praising effort rather than achievement can be a more effective way of improving performance" (Parent 9). In addition to developing competence, parents were provided with numerous guidelines and recommendations to help their child feel relatedness and autonomy. One parent later explained during a focus group how this impacted on her decision-making:

We've tried to make tournaments more of a social event for [name], we make sure we know who is going to be there, and he will either get there early and warm up with them or we make sure we stay behind at the end and he will have a play with them afterwards. We look to see who is in it, so I then know that I've got mums there that I can talk to, so then he sees it more as a social thing (Parent 2).

Similarly, another mother explained how she was more aware of ensuring her daughter developed feelings of autonomy by involving her in basic decision making: "My daughter [9 year old] has recently decided she wants to play in a netball squad which is at the same time as a tennis session. We have gone with this as it's important to support her choice (as per this session) and also play other sports (especially team sports)" (Parent 11).

Consistent with the workshop theme of developing intrinsic motivation and competence, the final stage of the workshop focused on educating parents about different types of goals and how to help their child set developmentally appropriate short term process goals at this stage (McCarthy, Jones, Harwood, & Olivier, 2010). One mother wrote on her feedback form: "Goal setting for a 7 year old is something that I hadn't even

considered and it's something I think my son would find motivating and exciting. It sounds a really good way to find out where he thinks he is rather than where we or his coach thinks he is or should be" (Parent 7). Another mother concluded: "I've learnt that I need to intrinsically motivate my son during tennis, make sure he is enjoying it, and set some short term goals so he feels like he has something to work towards – this will help me/us in the future" (Parent 10). Interestingly, one parent wrote on her feedback form: "I think the kids would benefit as well from it [education]...trying to get them to be a bit more task orientated than worried about the outcomes all of the time" (Parent 24). At the end of the workshop, parents were provided with a book chapter (i.e., Harwood, 2004) to further reinforce the key messages about goal setting from the workshop. Once again parents felt that the article was "very interesting and so simple when you think about it. It is an article that we will keep referring too for support" (Parent 24). Parents were encouraged to review their child's tennis environment (e.g., training groups and tournament schedule) to ensure it was conducive to developing intrinsic motivation. The following quote was taken from one parent's diary:

It was interesting to see how children are motivated and how this changes throughout their early development. It has made me take a step back and look at what motivates [Child's name] in his playing and also what influences we have in goal setting, tournament planning, lessons, and keeping a healthy home / tennis balance...I feel better armed with what to say / do, and that we need to talk with his coach more about where we are heading, short term mainly, about where he is playing in tournaments – when he needs a break – when he just needs to have fun with no pressure on results (Parent 2).

Workshop 4 (Part 2): Talent Developmental During Mini-tennis

Part two of this workshop focused on the role of parents in facilitating talent development during mini-tennis. Following a recap of children's psychosocial needs (see Part 1), parents were provided with an introduction to talent identification, its effectiveness, and its benefits and consequences (Vaeyens, Lenoir, Williams, & Philippaerts, 2008). Following this I explained the different talent development pathways and the strengths and weaknesses of following an early specialisation (Ericsson, Krampe, & Teschmer, 1993) or early diversification (Côté, 1999) pathways during childhood/mini-tennis. Rather than select a pathway per se, parents were encouraged during a task to identify an individual pathway based on their child's age, psychosocial needs, and stage of development on three continuums: (a) short vs. long term view; (b) involvement in one sport vs. multiple sports;

and (c) focus on deliberate practice vs. deliberate play. Parents felt that this section changed their beliefs about success in junior-tennis: “It has just made me think...I always thought that all your coaches wanted to see was win, win, win...but now I realise it’s more about development, and I don’t feel so much pressure from that and the pressure is not on my daughter” (Parent 1). Another parent explained how she incorporated the information from the first half of the workshop to make an informed decision about her child’s talent development pathway: “The workshop was really useful, it identified in more detail my son’s needs and helped to clarify talent ID pathways...we have decided to continue the multisport approach (tennis, football, cricket, and golf) as we feel it suits his needs/stage of learning” (Parent 29).

Consistent with an early diversification approach, another mother later explained how she had altered her daughters schedule to ensure she gets a broad range of social opportunities at this stage: “I’ve realised that it is a long pathway that we have started on and that tennis must be fun and I should make time for other activities like socialising with non-tennis friends. I have now cancelled some tournaments that we were due to enter to free up some time for her...and me!” (Parent 1). For most parents, the workshops seemed to confirm their own thoughts about their child’s tennis involvement and gave them confidence they were making the right decisions. For instance one parent wrote in her diary: “I thought this [workshop] was very useful, it has helped me to be clearer on our approach and I feel more confident in our approach, in the decisions/choices we are making for our son. It helped reinforce our feelings and gave us more information/detail” (Parent 29). Similarly, another parent explained how she feels more empowered and in control of her child’s tennis: “We can have a little bit more say with a little bit more ground knowledge and confidence, because it has always been their rules (the LTA and coaches), we are led by them, so I think it’s made us more empowered. It’s our child and we decide” (Parent 3).

At the end of the workshop, parents were provided with recent review articles on early specialisation and deliberate practice (Baker & Young, 2013) and early diversification (Pankhurst & Collins, 2013) to reinforce the key messages from the workshop and encouraged to discuss their approach with their partners and coaches. The following diary extract highlights how these tasks were effective in reinforcing and sharing knowledge: “The articles are really useful and informative, I enjoy reading them, again helped to reinforce our feelings but also gave us more information and detail...I share the articles with my partner so we can make educated choices” (Parent 29).

Workshop 5: Competition Roles

The penultimate workshop built upon the previous workshops and focused on educating parents about their roles within the specific context of competitions. The workshop began by educating parents when and how to engage in task-orientated communication with their child and how to set or reinforce short term process goals before a tennis match (McCarthy et al., 2010). Given the prevalence of cheating in British junior-tennis (see chapter four), parents were also introduced to Grolnick's (2003) notion of structure and encouraged to establish behavioural expectations (e.g., effort and sportspersonship) and consequences if they were not met. Parents were provided with examples and then encouraged to plan their next pre-match dialogue. One mother later wrote in her diary how this task influenced the way she communicates with her daughter:

I feel that it [workshop 5] has helped me to be more relaxed before tournaments. It has also helped me to know when and how to talk to my child at these times...I try not to give coaching tips myself, but I will back up coaching tips that they have been working on that week...I've become very aware of my body language and setting [short term process] goals before each match results in a happier parent and child (Parent 1)

Following this, parents were taught about the stress process (Fletcher, Hanton, & Mellalieu, 2006), how to re-appraise stressful situations (e.g., child being cheated or losing), and given strategies to control emotions during a match (i.e., relaxation techniques). Parents were also explained how to ensure their body language is congruent with their pre-match verbal messages through a role playing scenario exercise. One father explained how this has made him more aware of his body language and changed the way he behaves at tournaments during the focus group:

After every point she would look at me, so I used to tell her what she was doing wrong or right, but now I'm totally Ivan Lendl [body language example used in the workshop]...I'm able to control myself more...I sit still until the match finishes, less stress for me, less stress for her, it makes it more enjoyable (Parent 18).

Similarly, another parent explained during the focus group how much more relaxed she is in the competitive environment:

At the weekend I was with some parents with children a year younger and they actually commented how laid back I was, you could see that they were going through the same anguishes I had gone through a year or so back. It's been so useful for everybody this sort of thing [the programme], I think everybody is going

through the same thing. I just said a few things that we had discussed and what I had learnt (Parent 4).

Finally, parents were educated about the timing and content of feedback. This included teaching communication skills (e.g., asking open questions and active listening), addressing poor behaviour (i.e., providing consequences for behaviour), and how to facilitate reflection and develop an action plan to encourage learning and improvement. This was explained through the use of a structured feedback framework. As one mother explained: “Interesting to have a framework for giving feedback after a match. Always felt confident about pre-match chat but post match is always tricky – recognised the need to leave a gap in time between match and feedback. I will plan feedback in greater detail and ensure all areas are covered” (Parent 2). Parents were encouraged to implement the coping skills and strategies learnt during the workshop within the competitive environment. One parent explained how this workshop has changed the way she interacts with her daughter which in turn has improved both of their tournament experiences:

With the goal setting before they go on and play, I’m very much doing that, trying to make sure every match is positive, whatever the outcome is... I say to [child’s name] ‘have a great match, enjoy it’, I set her a goal like ‘let’s really try that serve you have been working on’, and I have just found that whether she has won or lost, she might be a bit sad if she has lost but I can say ‘oh those serves you were doing out wide were beautiful today [child’s name], really, really nice’...and then she will say ‘did you see that one?’ And then you think she’s okay, I’m okay. I’m not looking at it as a win or a loss, I’m looking at how she performs and where we are going to be in six months time, that’s what it’s made me think...you do want them to win but it’s not the absolute be all and end all (Parent 1).

Workshop 6: Continual Learning and Support

The final workshop was designed to ensure that parents would receive on-going support and continue to learn after the intervention. The workshop began by providing parents with a task to identify who or where they could turn to for education and support after the workshops had finished (Knight & Holt, 2013a). As a group we then progressed through each source of support identifying how it could help parents to support their child. Building a social support network prompted one mother to write in her diary: “It has helped me realise where, how, and when I can pick up information, help, and support i.e., parents supporting each other with their experiences and coaches with their expertise...I will more openly take advice from others” (Parent 3). Most importantly, this task also made parents

realise that: “Having a great, trusting relationship with your coach is important for you and your child” (Parent 4). Subsequently, parents were provided with examples taken from the literature of how to develop and maintain healthy relationships with coaches and other parents (e.g., Smoll et al., 2011). Interestingly, parents’ felt they had already developed strong relationships during the intervention by talking to other parents and sharing experiences, which led to them interacting and communicate more outside of the workshops. As one mother explained:

We have talked about the stuff that we have done in the workshops when we have been away from you, it has come up in conversations which means it’s being talked about and thought about...I don't worry about saying my opinions because I think everyone [who participated in the programme] is pretty well on the same level, so you are not afraid to say it. Before [the workshop] I would keep quiet because I wasn’t sure what they [other parents] were going to think. Now I will say it because they know where I am coming from. (Parent 1)

Another parent felt that these improved relationships also positively impacted on their children: “I also noticed when parents are talking to each other you see the children doing that, which is really nice” (Parent 1). Following this, the workshop focused on teaching parents how to reflect on and learn from their own experiences as a tennis parent (see chapter four). To do so, parents were provided with information on how and when to reflect (see Knowles, Gilbourne, Cropley, & Dugdill, 2014) as well as examples of tennis parent reflections. Following the workshop, parents were given a task of reflecting on their next training and tournament experience. Upon completion of the reflection task one parent wrote: “I learnt a lot, and will use this technique in tennis and everyday life. I hadn’t realised how much I could learn from each tournament/training session just by looking back later that day. We only learn from the experiences we have and whether we have reacted well or negatively on reflection” (Parent 3). Similarly, another parent explained how valuable this part of the programme was during the focus group:

I loved the reflection because it made me sit there and put it all into perspective. When you get it down on paper you think ‘oh ok that wasn’t as bad as I thought’ and you recognise that you say different things when they come off court to what you say half an hour later in the car or the next morning - it’s interesting to see how that conversation develops. Last time [child’s name] had a match that he wasn’t happy with, I said ‘well let’s not talk about it now, you go off and play and we will talk about it later’ and in the car he read a book and couple of hours later we were

virtually home and he started talking about it in a totally different way to how he would have done. He did say to me ‘is this what Sam told you to do?’ and I said ‘shut up!’ I did find that really useful because I think I was like a bull in a china shop at times with how I dealt with things (Parent 2)

During the final section of the workshop we discussed the future provision of education and support for tennis parents in British tennis. During these discussions, some parents felt that education should be made compulsory by the governing body. One mother explained why: “I think for more serious academy players, it [parent education] should be compulsory because if the LTA is looking for a talented kid, the way that the parents behave and interact with the kids would help them to get somewhere or even stop them from getting anywhere. So if the LTA wants more tennis players as they say, they need to help out a little bit” (Parent 16). However, despite enjoying the interaction and discussions associated with workshop style approaches, they believed education would have to be made more accessible. As one mother explained, “workshops should be put online as well so that those of us who aren’t able to come every week can still access it” (Parent 6). Another mother expanded on these points during a different focus group:

It would be a great thing to have a link on the LTA website for parents, I can never understand why the LTA haven’t done anything on their website to link to something like this [the programme], or information on ‘how to handle tournaments’, that kind of thing that we have discussed. If they did some kind of link like that or there are some groups you could go, I think that would be brilliant because nobody knows where to go and get anything (Parent 1).

Discussion

Using an organisational action research design, the current study qualitatively evaluated the effectiveness of a tennis parent education programme designed to meet the needs of British tennis parents. This study was a response to calls within the literature to provide proactive interventions, which meet parents’ stage specific education and support needs, and thus enhance their expertise (Harwood & Knight, 2015). Findings indicate that the programme was effective in changing parents’ knowledge (i.e., cognitions), attitudes (i.e., beliefs and values) and behaviours in relation to the wide range of learning objectives (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2000). Encouragingly, these perceived outcomes closely align with the competencies demonstrated by expert sport parents (see Harwood & Knight, 2015). Importantly, the workshop content was collectively responsible for these improvements; supporting the notion that tennis parents need holistic evidence-based

interventions designed to address their specific educational needs across multiple levels of functioning (Hill et al., 2011).

In terms of knowledge, findings suggest that parents gained an improved understanding of tennis (e.g., understand rules, levels, and demands), the youth sport environment (e.g., tournament entry and talent ID system), children's psychosocial needs, and talent development pathways. Applying this understanding enabled parents to organise their child's tennis schedule and make evidence-based decisions in relation to their child's tennis development (e.g., selecting a talent development pathway). However, the extent to which individual parent's knowledge changed appeared to be dependent upon their prior knowledge and experience as a tennis parent. This suggests that knowledge-based education would be most effective if provided to parents at the start of their involvement to negotiate the complex and challenging nature of initial sport socialisation (Dorsch, Smith, & McDonough, 2015). At a more abstract cognitive level, findings illustrated how parents engaged in reflective practice to problem solve and recognised the importance of accessing other support systems following the intervention. Taken together, these findings highlight the effectiveness of providing parents with an extensive knowledge of the sport, the importance of accessing other support systems, and emphasising the role of self-development during their initial involvement in order to help them to 'learn the trade' of sport parenting (Harwood & Knight, 2015).

Consistent with previous sport parent interventions (Harwood & Swain, 2002; Richards & Winter, 2013), the programme was also effective in altering beliefs, attitudes, and values in relation to their own reasons for involvement (i.e., holistic child development), the goal of junior-tennis (i.e., a task-orientated view of success in junior-tennis), and the causes of success in junior-tennis (i.e., learning, effort, and improvement/progress). Encouragingly, findings also highlight that the intervention was effective in changing parents' affect, with parents reporting feeling more confident and empowered in their tennis parenting roles. Brustad (2011) suggested that the increasingly complex and professional nature of youth sport programmes are causing problems because parents do not feel empowered to respond to concerns about the lack of a sufficiently healthy sport environment for their child. Findings here suggest that the current study has gone some way to addressing this in-balance by providing parents with 'a voice' and empowering them through giving them the reassurance and confidence needed to trust their parenting instincts. Interestingly, parents enhanced confidence in their ability to support their child also appeared to act as a buffer against the extensive range of stressors and

emotions British tennis parents experience (Harwood & Knight, 2009a, 2009b) leading to a more positive psychosocial experience. Overall, these outcomes align with research which has shown parental goals, the emotional intensity of the game, and perceived knowledge and experience of sport influence parents' behaviour and the nature of their communication (Knight & Holt, 2014; Holt et al., 2008).

Turning attention towards parents' skills and behaviour, results suggested that the intervention led to improved communication skills, which enabled parents to engage in more positive and effective interactions with their child within the context of competition. For instance, parents reported providing task-orientated pre-match communication (i.e., emphasising effort, enjoyment, and skill development), facilitating process goal setting, matching body language with pre-match messages, and providing positive and constructive feedback based on pre-match goals and behavioural expectations. These behaviours are largely consistent with the supportive parental behaviours and reactions preferred by child-athletes at competitions (Knight et al., 2010; Holt et al., 2008) and suggest that parents were able to create a task-involved motivational climate, which has been associated with a number of desirable developmental outcomes for child-athletes (e.g., perceived competence, self-esteem, intrinsic motivation, and moral attitude) (Keegan et al., 2009).

Beyond programme outcomes, the current study also extends previous research (e.g., Harwood & Swain, 2002; Smoll et al., 2007) by providing an insight into the underlying mechanisms that influence learning in sport parent education programmes. Findings here suggest that when tennis parents' basic learning needs are met (e.g., a safe and supportive learning environment) they construct knowledge through various different sources and situations (e.g., formal, self-directed, and informal learning) building on their existing knowledge and experience to alter or create more organised and interrelated cognitive structures that govern their organisational, decision making, intra-personal, and interpersonal skills. Therefore, the current study offers an insight into complex factors that play a part in the learning process of sport parents and that, like coaching, there is no one comprehensive theory of learning upon which to base sport parent research and practice (Cushion, Nelson, Armour, Lyle, Jones, Sandford, & O'Callaghan, 2010). As a result, practitioners are encouraged to integrate different ways of thinking and learning within sport parent education programmes. Similar to findings from research in coaching (e.g., Stoszkowski & Collins, 2015) peer discussion appears to play a particularly important role in this learning process. From an applied perspective, this illustrates the importance of informal learning and the role that parent education programmes can play in providing a

platform for such interaction and experience sharing. Overall, these findings extend our understanding of the potential benefits of encouraging interactions between parents (Knight & Holt, 2013b), and suggest that group-based parent workshops represents one way in which parents' (and their children) can be successfully integrated into youth sport settings.

From a practical point of view, the current study also provides a number of recommendations in relation to the design and content of tennis parent interventions. Focusing initially on factors associated with participants' engagement, there were a number of generic strategies that were effective in facilitating retention during the intervention. These included: creating a safe inclusive learning environment (Rogers & Freiberg, 1994), giving parents an input into the programme content, encouraging parents to interact and share experiences (Merriam & Leahy, 2005), ensuring education was linked to the actual practice setting and needs of participants, building relationships with parents, making workshops accessible (see Axford et al., 2012), and providing supplementary learning material (e.g., workshop slides). These strategies were also associated with successful learning transfer and the final outcomes of the intervention (Merriam & Leahy, 2005). Despite this, the long-term effectiveness of the intervention is likely to be dependent upon the messages being continually reinforced by key stakeholders (e.g., directors and coaches) who interact with parents on a regular basis. With this in mind, there clearly exists a need for practitioners (e.g., sport psychologists) or mentors (e.g., experienced parents) to be embedded within high performance centres alongside other support provisions (e.g., strength and conditioning coaches) to provide on-going support to parents (and young athletes) and to ensure educational outcomes are maintained long term.

As a final point, an interesting finding to emerge from the current study was the belief that group-based education was more appealing to parents when delivered by external university affiliated 'experts' rather than coaches. Taking this into consideration, it may be that delivering educational programmes to parents is an effective way for applied researchers (or sport psychology practitioners) to gain entry, acceptance, and credibility within notoriously hard to access youth sport environments (see Pain & Harwood, 2004). Demonstrating the value of sport psychology through group-based educational workshops also appeared to make parents in the current study more receptive to the idea of group-based and individual psychological support for their child-athletes.

The current study should also be considered against its limitations. Firstly, the current study was tailored for the needs of British tennis parents as a group, rather than the needs of individual parents per se. Researchers are encouraged to explore ways in which

group-based programmes can be individualised for parents based on their existing knowledge and experience (i.e., recommend workshops based on pre-programme evaluations). Secondly, the current study was limited by a reliance on parents' subjective perceptions of changes following the intervention. Although the findings reported here are promising, more sophisticated research designs (e.g., longitudinal research) and evaluation methods that reflect the domain of learning targeted (e.g., behavioural observation) should be used to evaluate the effectiveness of future sport parent interventions over time. Finally, the current study was to some extent limited by low participation and attendance. Unfortunately, such problems are common in face-to-face parent education programmes. There appears to be a need to develop alternative delivery methods to replace or supplement face-to-face programmes and reduce some of these participation barriers (Breitenstein, Gross, & Christopherson, 2014). Digital delivery methods are increasingly being used to save on cost and time by decreasing travel, planning, and implementation of traditional face-to-face delivery models, and eliminate some of the logistical barriers that parents themselves face by allowing them to access the intervention when it is convenient (Breitenstein et al., 2014). Exploring the effectiveness of using digital delivery methods (i.e., web-based delivery) with tennis parent education programmes would be an interesting avenue for future research to pursue.

In summary, the findings of this study advance the sport parent literature by demonstrating the effectiveness of a face-to-face tennis parent education programme. More specifically, the current study provides evidence to suggest that group-based parent education programmes can generate perceived improvements in tennis parents' knowledge, attitudes (i.e., beliefs and values), and skills in relation to a range of learning objectives. In addition to this, unique insights are provided in relation to how these objectives were achieved. In doing so, the current study answers calls to start educating and supporting tennis parents (Gould et al., 2006) and to create a better understanding of how to design and deliver programmes in real-world settings (Holt & Knight, 2014). It is hoped that this study can provide the foundations for more large-scale evidence-based tennis parent interventions.

Chapter Six:
Educating and Supporting Tennis Parents: An Exploratory Online Education
Programme (study three)

Introduction

The second study (see Chapter five) within this thesis evaluated the effectiveness of a tennis parent education programme which targeted the needs of British tennis parents and was specific to the culture, social setting, and developmental stage within which parents were operating. Using a qualitative organisational action research framework, a series of seven educational workshops were run for parents of mini-tennis players (five to 10 years) across three British high performance centres. Workshops focused on supporting children's tennis journey, understanding the LTA's organisational system, child and talent development during mini-tennis, competition roles, and continual parent learning and support (see Table 4 for a detailed breakdown). Following the programme, parents reported improved confidence in their ability to support their child and make developmental decisions, which appeared to serve as a buffer against the stressors tennis parents faced and improve their overall emotional experiences. Findings also revealed that parents perceived themselves to engage in more task-orientated behaviours and communication with their child in competitive situations. Perhaps more importantly, given the lack of published interventions within this area, this study offered a number of insights in relation to parents' experiences of engaging in a face-to-face parent education programme and offered recommendations for the design and content of future interventions. These guidelines included: creating a safe inclusive learning environment, giving parents an input into the programme content, encouraging parents to interact and share experiences, ensuring education was linked to the actual practice setting and needs of participants, building relationships with parents, making workshops accessible, and providing supplementary learning material (e.g., workshop slides).

Despite the effectiveness of this programme, research has highlighted the cost, time, and expertise needed to plan and deliver evidence-based face-to-face education programmes for service providers (i.e., sport psychologists and coaches) (Richards & Winter, 2013). Furthermore, even when programmes are provided, there appears to be a range of barriers to initiating and maintaining participation (e.g., work commitments, childcare responsibilities, or a lack of understanding of the important role parents play in sport) (Richards & Winter, 2013). As a result, there have been calls within the literature to develop alternative and more innovative delivery methods to replace or supplement face-to-face parent education programmes (Gould et al., 2008). Such advancements appear to be vital to help support service providers (e.g., sport psychologists, coaches/clubs, and governing bodies) to ensure that all parents have access to the evidence-based education

and support they need, especially when they first come in to sport.

One delivery method that is increasingly being used to make connections between research and practice within the field of parent training is digital or web-based delivery (Breitenstein et al., 2014). Digital delivery methods are increasingly being used to save money and time by decreasing the travel and planning associated with traditional face-to-face delivery models. These delivery methods also help to eliminate some of the logistical barriers that parents face by allowing them to access the intervention when it is convenient to them. In addition to this, there is growing evidence to suggest that digital methods can increase participation rates by reaching large numbers of people and yield comparable outcomes to face-to-face methods (See Breitenstein et al., 2014 for a review). Furthermore, Duijin, Swanick, and Donald (2014) suggested that the ability for adults to repeat online activity and review content at their own pace can actually lead to enhanced learning outcomes. Taking this into consideration, it would appear that online education represents a potentially fruitful approach that could be used to address some of the provider and parent-specific barriers of face-to-face parent education programmes and increase programme reach.

It is important to note that online approaches are already being used to disseminate information in an attempt to educate sport parents. There are currently a number of online educational resources being run by governing bodies (e.g., Tennis Australia n.d.; United States Tennis Association, 2013) (Holt & Knight, 2014). However, Gould and colleagues (2008) raised concerns about these resources by stating that: “Much of the parent education that is occurring is through popular books that might or might not be based on research” (p.34). They went on to suggest that these resources were not doing enough to help parents effectively interact with their children in specific contexts, help them address issues that are unique to different sports, or understand their child’s developmental needs. Similar concerns have been voiced by Holt and Knight (2014) who explained that it is not clear the extent to which these parent education initiatives are based upon or informed by research. With this in mind, Gould et al. (2008) concluded that more large-scale evidence-based face-to-face and online interventions must be conducted and evaluated to determine their effectiveness.

To date, there is an absence of empirical studies which have evaluated the effectiveness of evidence-based online sport parent education programmes. As a result, it remains unclear if online sport parent education yields comparable results to face-to-face programmes. It is also unclear if online delivery can increase programme reach and make

sport parent education more accessible for tennis parents. Given the lack of research in this area, it is also necessary to understand sport parents' experiences of engaging in an online education programme. Providing answers to these questions is vital if resources are to be allocated to parent education in the future (Gould et al., 2008). The purpose of the present study, therefore, was to build on study two (see chapter five) and evaluate the effectiveness of a large-scale online education programme for British tennis parents and to explore their experiences of engaging in this program.

Methodology

Methodological Overview

Based on the exploratory and confirmatory nature of the research questions, the current study adopted a fixed mixed methods research design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011), which included collecting, analysing, integrating, and drawing inferences using both quantitative and qualitative approaches or methods in a single study (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007, p.4). Mixed methods designs are deemed particularly appropriate for educational and evaluation research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) and were used in this study to answer different research questions. Specifically, this approach was used for complementarity (i.e., the enhancement or clarification of findings from one method by use of another), initiation (i.e., the capacity to access new insights into a particular phenomenon), and utility purposes (i.e., combining the two approaches will be more useful to practitioners) (Bryman, 2006; Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989). Consistent with the use of mixed methods, these procedures were underpinned by my own pragmatic philosophical orientation.

Mixed Methods

In terms of the research design, the current study utilised a convergent parallel mixed method approach (Creswell, 2014), in which qualitative and quantitative data collection is conducted at the same time and given equal emphasis or priority (i.e., QUAL+QUANT) (Morse, 1991). This design was upheld and facilitated by the mixed expertise of my supervisory team in both qualitative and quantitative methods. It is important to note that the current study should be considered as partially mixed method, as the data collected was only mixed during the interpretation phase known as side-by-side comparison (Creswell, 2014; Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2009). The key assumption underpinning this approach is that both qualitative and quantitative data provide different types of information (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, the quality criteria for each aspect of the study should be considered separately. Taken as a whole, this study can be judged or evaluated

on the capacity to which it is relevant for the research questions, transparent, adopts a rationale for using mixed methods, and the need for integrating mixed methods findings (Bryman, 2008).

Online Parent Education

Online parent education is an umbrella term referring to parent education that occurs exclusively via the Internet. Despite growing evidence to suggest that online parent education can increase reach, sustainability and yield comparable outcomes to face-to-face methods, relatively little is currently known about the practices associated with more effective online learning for parent specific populations (see Breitenstein et al., 2014 for a review). However, there is clear evidence to suggest that instructor-directed and collaborative approaches are associated with more positive online learning outcomes than independent self-directed learning in adult populations (Means, Toyama, Murphy, Bakia, & Jones, 2010). Consequently, the current study used a series of eight short online educational videos lasting between 6 and 30 minutes ($M = 22.2$, $SD = 8.1$). Short videos of PowerPoint presentations with ‘talking heads’ (i.e., I was recorded delivering the workshop content) were used to facilitate engagement as parents have greater control over the learning process and can face distractions or temptations to alter their learning environment in ways not possible in more traditional face-to-face models (Gilson & Jung, 2014; Guo, Kim, & Rubin, 2014; Moore & Kearsley, 2011). Based on best practice guidelines in online education, parents were given control over their learning (i.e., learn at their own pace), provided with multiple-choice quizzes to encourage self-reflection, given supplementary downloadable materials, set practical tasks to implement what they had learnt and encouraged to interact with myself and other parents in an online discussion forum as these features have been associated with more effective online learning (see Breitenstein et al., 2014; Means et al., 2010). The emphasis placed on collaborative discussions in the current study is consistent with Harasim’s (2012) online collaborative learning (OCL) theory.

Participants and Recruitment

Following institutional ethical approval, three International High Performance centres, 16 High Performance centres and 69 Performance centres were purposefully sampled based on their status within the LTA’s performance centre network and invited (via email and post) (see Appendix 10) to: (a) email all of their parents of mini-tennis players (5-10 years) offering them access to the online education programme (see Appendix 11), (b) display posters around their centre advertising the programme (see Appendix 12), and (c) verbally encourage mini-tennis parents to participate in the

programme. Social media (i.e., twitter) were also used as a way to recruit participants and provide on-going updates about the programme. A total of 38 parents from 30 different centres provided informed consent and completed the pre-workshop questionnaire (see Table 5). Of these initial 38 participants, 13 (38%) finished the programme by completing the post-workshop questionnaire (see Table 5). Following the programme, a sub-group of nine parents responded to a request to participate in an asynchronous email interview and provided their views and experiences of the programme.

Procedure

A website (www.ltpep.com) was developed which included educational videos, quizzes, an open discussion forum, and a library database (see Appendix 13). Parents were encouraged to visit the website, watch a 6-minute introductory video and sign up to become a pre-member. Once a pre-member, parents were provided with access to an online information sheet, informed consent form (see Appendix 14), and a pre-workshop online questionnaire (see Appendix 15). Following completion of the pre-workshop online questionnaire, parents' membership was upgraded to give them full access to the workshops and forum. Workshop topics included: supporting your child's tennis journey, understanding the LTA's organisational system, child and talent development during mini-tennis, competition roles, and continual parent learning and support (see Table 4 for a detailed overview of the workshop content). In-between the workshops, parents were sent reminders via email to facilitate engagement. Once parents had watched all seven videos, they were asked to fill in a post-workshop questionnaire and were subsequently given access to the library database of book chapters and journal articles.

Data Collection

Quantitative exploration. Quantitative measures were chosen based on the findings from chapters four and five. These questionnaires were used to measure changes in affect (e.g., emotional experiences), goal orientations, and predictors of behaviour (i.e., efficacy beliefs) following engagement in the programme. In line with the findings from study two (chapter five), a measure of parenting efficacy was also included to explore if the programme had any impact on parenting beyond the sporting context.

Sport emotion questionnaire (SEQ). An adapted version of the SEQ was used to measure parents' emotional experiences as a tennis parent within the last month (Jones, Lane, Bray, Uphill, & Catlin, 2005). The SEQ examines five emotions, which can be

Table 5

Participant Demographics

Population	Age (Years)				Gender		Years of Experience			Household Income (in pounds)**			Highest qualification**			Employment Status*		
	N	M	SD	Range	Male	Female	M	SD	Range	Less than 25,000	25,000 to 75,000	More than 75,000	GCSE or A-Levels	Undergraduate Degree	Post-graduate Degree	Home-maker	Part Time	Full Time
Completed (Participants 1-13)	13	43.78	5.95	37-57	8	5	4	2.18	1.5-8.5	0	4	7	2	5	4	1	2	9
Un-Completed (Participants 14-38)	25	43.96	8.46	31-59	9	16	3.42	2.35	0.5-10.5	1	13	11	5	8	12	4	8	13

* 1 parent who completed the programme chose not to answer this question

** 2 parents who completed the programme chose to not to answer these questions

grouped into two higher-order dimensions: (a) unpleasant emotions (anxiety, dejection, and anger), and (b) pleasant emotions (excitement and happiness). The SEQ contains 22 items that are scored on a 5-point Likert type scale ranging from 0 “Not at all” to 4 “Extremely”. Following consultation with the authors of the questionnaire, the question stem was changed to: “Reflecting on the most recent month where you were involved as a tennis parent, please indicate how much you have experienced these feelings”. Jones et al. (2005) reported excellent reliability for the SEQ scales (Cronbach’s alphas ranged between .81 and .90).

Achievement goal scale for youth sport (AGSYS). An adapted version of the AGSYS was used to measure the level of task and ego achievement goal orientations parents had for their child (Cumming, Smith, Smoll, Standage, & Grossbard, 2008). This 12-item measure was chosen as it is sensitive to interventions designed to enhance task goal orientation and reduce ego orientation (Smith, Smoll, & Cumming, 2007). Items were adapted for use with parents, for instance, “my goal is to learn new skills and get as good as possible” was changed to: “My goal is for my child is to learn new skills and get as good as possible”. Responses are measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Not at all true) to 5 (Very true). Cumming et al. (2008) provided initial evidence for the factorial validity and internal reliability of the measure. Cronbach’s alpha internal reliability coefficients were .78 for task orientation and .88 for ego orientation and test-retest reliabilities were .92 and .95 for task and ego scores respectively.

Tool to measure parenting self-efficacy (TOPSE). The TOPSE was used to measure tennis parents’ general parenting efficacy (Kendall & Bloomfield, 2005). The TOPSE is a parenting programme evaluation tool that is underpinned by self-efficacy theory, is specific to parenting in the United Kingdom, and takes into account the views and experiences of parents from a diverse range of cultural, educational, and social backgrounds (Bloomfield et al., 2005; Kendall & Bloomfield, 2005). The 48 item multi-dimensional measure has eight scales, each scale having six statements and representing a distinct dimension of parenting. These scales include: emotion and affection, play and enjoyment, empathy and understanding, control, discipline and boundaries, pressures, self-acceptance, and learning and knowledge. The items are rated on an 11-point Likert scale where 0 represents ‘completely disagree’ and 10 represents ‘completely agree’. The scale contains positive and negatively worded items and the responses are summed to create a total score, with a higher score indicating a higher level of parenting self-efficacy. Internal reliability coefficients for the subscales ranged from 0.80 to 0.89 and the overall scale

reliability was 0.94 (Kendall & Bloomfield, 2005).

Tennis parent efficacy scale (TPES). The TPES was an applied tool developed specifically for the current study to provide a non-hierarchical scale of parents' belief in their own ability to perform competently and effectively as a tennis parent. Drawing upon the findings from studies one and two (see chapter four and five) and relevant literature (i.e., Harwood & Knight, 2015), a conceptual analysis of the situational demands and sub-skills needed as a tennis parent in Britain were conducted to develop the scale. This multidimensional measure has 11 scales each representing a distinct dimension of tennis parent efficacy: parent-coach relationship efficacy, parent-parent relationship efficacy, learning efficacy, informational support efficacy, emotional support efficacy, tangible support efficacy, organisational efficacy, developmental efficacy, pre-match role efficacy, in-match role efficacy, and post-match role efficacy. These scales comprised of 51 items and each item used the stem: "Rate how confident you are right now that you can..." to measure what parents think they can do at a specific time point (i.e., a judgement of capability). For example: "Rate how confident you are right now that you can organise your child's tournament schedule" or "Rate how confident you are right now that you can provide feedback to your child after matches based on personal improvements and not overall outcomes". The TPES uses an 11-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (not at all confident) to 10 (extremely confident) to detect subtle differences before and after interventions (Bandura, 2006; Feltz, Short, & Sullivan, 2008). The TPES was checked for face and construct validity by a panel of seven experts. Items were only removed or changed if four or more (>57%) of the experts rated an item as 'no' or 'unsure' in terms of its relevance, clarity and/or specificity (see Appendix 16). One item was removed and the wordings of eight items were changed. Subsequently, the TPES was pilot tested with mini-tennis parents ($n=13$). Comments on the face validity of the tool were used to make minor changes to the wording of items and further refine the measure.

Qualitative exploration. Based on the range of qualitative data that the website provided, informal data were collected from comment boxes and the online forum. In addition to this, and driven by the limited interaction that occurred in the parent forum, all participants were invited to partake in a post-programme asynchronous online email interview (O'Conner, Madge, Shaw, & Wellens, 2008). This approach was selected for three reasons: firstly, participants were spread across Britain making face-to-face interviews logistically difficult; secondly, email was the primary way in which I had communicated with participants throughout the study; and finally, consistent with the

design of the programme, this approach allowed parents to work through the questions at their own pace and at a convenient time. Research has also highlighted the value of asynchronous online email interviewing in generating rich, open, honest, and detailed information because of the heightened levels of anonymity and privacy (Hewson & Laurent, 2008). Email interview questions focused on parents' reasons for registering, experiences of using an online resource, aspects of the workshop that could be improved, and their overall experiences of participating in the parent education programme (see Appendix 17).

Data Analysis

Quantitative analysis. Descriptive statistics were used as a way to summarise information clearly, accurately, and as effectively as possible. Paired sample t-tests were subsequently used to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between parents' mean scores before (pre) and after (post) the programme. It is important to highlight, given the small sample size, that the data met the assumptions of parametric statistics. Bonferroni corrections were used to determine the statistical significance for each measure in order to reduce the chances of making a type 1 error (i.e., differences are found that do not exist) when making multiple comparisons. The statistical significance for each measure was adjusted to: $p = .006$ (.05/8) for the TOPSE, $p = .005$ (.05/11) for the TPES, $p = .03$ (.05/2) for the AGSYS, and $p = .01$ (.05/5) for the SEQ. Effect sizes were also used to explore the practical significance of the results. Exploring the size of difference was considered particularly important in the current study, as effect sizes are independent of sample size. Based on its common use in practice, a pooled standard deviation effect size was calculated (Rosnow & Rosenthal, 1996). In line with Cohen's (1988) suggestions, 0.8 was considered as a large effect, 0.5 a moderate effect, and 0.2 a small effect.

Qualitative analysis. Qualitative analysis involved becoming immersed in the data by reading comments, forum posts, emails, and asynchronous online email interview transcripts (see Appendix 18) to become familiar with participants' experiences and understand their perceptions of the online intervention as a group. Data were inductively content analysed via line-by-line coding to allow themes to emerge (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). Recurring themes in the data were identified, labelled, and compared with similar data and clustered together to create higher-order categories. The raw data were then revisited to ensure that these categories were represented. These qualitative findings were presented as a realist tale (Sparkes & Smith, 2014), allowing the reader to gain an insight into participants' perceptions and experiences of the programme.

Results

Consistent with a convergent parallel mixed methods approach, the quantitative data is presented first followed by the qualitative findings, known as side by-side comparison (Creswell, 2014). Preliminary analyses of the measures are presented followed by the descriptive statistics and quantitative findings. The qualitative data is then presented and explained.

Preliminary Analysis

Based on the completed pre-workshop questionnaires ($n=38$), Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated for all measures (see Table 6). All alpha coefficients were deemed acceptable based on Nunnally's (1978) cut-off criterion of .70 with the exception of 'pressures' (.61) and 'affect & emotion' (.57) from the TOPSE, and 'learning efficacy' (.67) and 'tangible support efficacy' (.60) from the TPES. Although these items could have been removed from these variables to improve, or in some cases attain, the cut-off criterion, these subscales were retained due to the practical importance of these items in the current study.

Descriptive Statistics

Table six provides the means and standard deviations for the variables of interest before (pre) and after (post) the intervention ($n=13$). Focusing initially on the TPES, parents scored lowest in developmental efficacy ($M=6.43$, $SD=2.35$) and highest in tangible support efficacy ($M=8.69$, $SD=1.21$). The highest scores for the TOPSE were affect and emotion ($M=8.96$, $SD=.86$) with self-control ($M=6.90$, $SD=1.49$) the lowest. The highest emotion parents experienced was happiness ($M=2.58$, $SD=0.84$) with dejection being the lowest ($M=0.89$, $SD=.97$). Finally, prior to the intervention parents were more task ($M=4.78$, $SD=.45$) than ego ($M=2.77$, $SD=.87$) oriented in relation to goals for their child.

Following the intervention, developmental efficacy ($M=8.12$, $SD=1.07$) remained the lowest score on the TPES, with the highest score changing to learning efficacy ($M=8.90$, $SD=.85$). For the TOPSE, affect and emotion ($M=8.83$, $SD=1.00$) remained the highest score with self-control the lowest ($M=7.06$, $SD=1.34$). Similarly, task orientation ($M=4.79$, $SD=.39$) remained higher than ego orientation ($M=2.56$, $SD=1.03$) following the programme. Happiness ($M=2.62$, $SD=0.69$) remained the highest emotion parents experienced, with dejection ($M=0.74$, $SD=.91$) the lowest. It is important to note that desirable directional changes in mean values occurred for all variables following engagement in the programme with the exception of a decrease in 'tangible support

efficacy' from the TPES, 'affect & emotion' and 'play and enjoyment' from the TOPSE (see Table 6).

Table 6. Means, Standard Deviations, Cronbach Alpha Coefficients, and Effect Sizes for all Variables.

	Pre Workshop M (SD)	Post Workshop M (SD)	α	d
TPES				
Parent-Coach Relationship Efficacy	7.45 (2.55)	8.15 (2.62)	.79	0.27
Parent-Parent Relationship Efficacy	7.71 (1.33)	8.65* (1.18)	.94	0.75
Learning Efficacy	8.50 (1.11)	8.90 (.85)	.67	0.40
Emotional Support Efficacy	8.15 (1.01)	8.58 (1.05)	.82	0.42
Informational Support Efficacy	7.33 (1.00)	8.26 (.91)	.78	0.97
Tangible Support Efficacy	8.69 (1.21)	8.54 (1.35)	.60	-0.12
Organisational Efficacy	6.88 (2.38)	8.29 (1.59)	.73	0.70
Developmental Efficacy	6.43 (2.35)	8.12 (1.07)	.94	0.93
Pre-Match Role Efficacy	7.33 (1.57)	8.31 (1.06)	.83	0.73
In-Match Role Efficacy	7.65 (1.65)	8.49 (.92)	.78	0.63
Post-Match Role Efficacy	6.92 (1.47)	8.14 (.89)	.85	1.00
TOPSE				
Affect and Emotion	8.96 (.86)	8.83 (1.00)	.57	-0.14
Play and Enjoyment	8.79 (.83)	8.64 (1.00)	.79	-0.16
Empathy and Understanding	7.72 (1.02)	8.15 (.98)	.92	0.43
Self-Control	6.90 (1.49)	7.06 (1.34)	.83	0.11
Discipline and Boundaries	7.42 (1.49)	7.69 (1.39)	.91	0.19
Pressures	7.54 (.94)	7.91 (1.38)	.61	0.31
Self-Acceptance	7.86 (1.67)	8.29 (1.34)	.83	0.28
Learning and Knowledge	8.17 (1.01)	8.32 (1.04)	.86	0.15
PEQ				
Task Orientation	4.78 (.45)	4.79 (.39)	.82	0.023
Ego Orientation	2.77 (.87)	2.56 (1.03)	.89	-0.304
SEQ				
Anxiety	1.60 (.90)	1.32 (.80)	.87	-0.33
Dejection	0.89 (.97)	0.74 (.91)	.88	-0.15
Excitement	2.27 (1.08)	2.31 (.94)	.75	0.04
Anger	0.98 (1.02)	0.87 (.97)	.90	-0.11
Happiness	2.58 (.84)	2.62 (0.69)	.85	0.03

Note. * = Change is statistically significant, $p < .005$

Quantitative Results

Paired sample t-tests revealed a significant difference in the pre and post scores for parent-parent relationship efficacy $t(12)=-3.53$, $p=.004$, $d=0.75$ when adopting an adjusted p-value of .004. The other variables measured in the current study were not statistically significant when adopting Bonferroni adjusted p-values. However, because of the small sample size and the increased chance of failing to detect differences that do exist (i.e., type 2 errors) (Vincent, 2005), it is interesting to point out that when adopting a traditional statistical significance p-value of .05, there were a number of statistically significant pre-post changes and medium-to-large effect sizes from TPES variables. These included: emotional support efficacy $t(12)=-2.52$, $p=.027$, $d=0.42$; information support efficacy $t(12)=-2.77$, $p=.017$, $d=0.97$; organisational support efficacy $t(12)=-2.36$, $p=.036$, $d=0.70$; developmental efficacy $t(12)=-2.63$, $p=.022$, $d=0.93$, pre-match efficacy $t(12)=-2.53$, $p=.026$, $d=0.73$; and post-match efficacy $t(12)=-2.63$, $p=.022$, $d=1.00$. There were also significant change in the empathy and understanding variable $t(12)=-2.22$, $p=.047$, $d=0.43$ from the TOPSE.

Qualitative Results

Content analysis of the qualitative data revealed six higher order themes: (a) awareness of the programme; (b) initiating engagement in parent education programmes; (c) online education and programme accessibility; (d) workshop content and intervention effectiveness; (e) programme design and intervention effectiveness; and (f) factors influencing programme completion.

Theme 1: Awareness of the programme. The online education programme was promoted through social media (i.e., twitter) and by emailing and posting promotional packs to 88 of the LTA's performance centres. Despite this promotion, only 62 parents registered for the programme. Interestingly, participants felt that there was reluctance from some coaches and centres to promote or pass on information about the programme to their mini-tennis parents. One father explained how he believed that a lot of mini-tennis parents were not aware of the programme:

A lack of awareness [of the programme] is the biggest issue. I heard about it from one of my kid's coaches but not the others. There are some great opportunities which not all clubs are good at promoting. The more you can encourage coaches and clubs to promote the better (Parent 9).

Another parent offered a possible explanation for this: "I feel that perhaps these centres use their own methods and maybe don't want to encourage potential different ways

of thinking” (Parent 13). As a result, some participants believed that ensuring that all British mini-tennis parents were aware of the programme would require greater investment, backing, and promotion from the Lawn Tennis Association. As one father suggested: “The LTA should have this stuff [the programme] on their website. Tennis is so kids focused and it needs to focus on parents as well but it probably comes down to money” (Parent 7).

Theme 2: Initiating engagement in parent education programmes. For parents who were aware of the programme, their motivation to engage in it appeared to be determined by their desire to improve their knowledge and skills as a tennis parent. For parents new to mini-tennis, the programme appeared to represent a way to gain an understanding of mini-tennis. As one mother explained: “My child is competing in something I know nothing about and I don’t know how to deal with certain situations...my initial thoughts were this is everything I need as a tennis parent!” (Parent 28). Other parents were already researching information and therefore saw the programme as an opportunity to further develop their existing knowledge and skills:

Since my son first started playing tennis I have always researched information in regards to being a tennis parent. I have read various documents from the ITF and LTA websites, which gave me a better understanding of mini-tennis and the path to elite level. Therefore, when I saw [on Twitter] you were running an education programme for parents it was only natural that I wanted to find out more. I hadn't seen any other websites on the Internet where you can find that amount of information dedicated to being a sports parent so I found it quite refreshing.

Similarly, some more experienced mini-tennis parents also recognised the need for parent education, although this appeared to be based on the mistakes they had made and a desire to improve their parenting skills. As one father honestly admitted:

I know I have not been good enough as a tennis parent. With my eldest boy I used to discuss results more than processes with him at mini red level! He now doesn't particularly enjoy tennis and I take some of the blame for this. Based around Twitter I learnt a great deal about how a tennis parent should behave but I feel that I still make mistakes so a course would help me say the correct things to my children. My youngest son still plays so tennis parent education is still important (Parent 2).

However, there was a general consensus that not all parents believed that they needed to engage in a tennis parent education programme. One father explained the current situation: “Parents are very busy but I do think some lack the humility to take such a course. Many parents seem to think that they know more than coaches about how their

children should be taught” (Parent 2). Other participants felt that most parents do not believe they need education until they experience problems. The following quote captures this point:

People may think that they don’t have the time [for parent education] when in fact the opposite is true with an online resource. I don’t think some people believe that they need it, most parents have a way of parenting and don’t necessarily believe they need to change their ways unless they are faced with problems (Parent 10).

Some participants felt that proactive parent education needs to be incentivised or made compulsory by the governing body. As one father suggested: “It would be good if there were incentives (e.g., 2 hours of free lessons) or requirements (e.g., to enter a grade 3 event a parent or guardian must have taken this course) that parents take such a course...but I also think all coaches should be encouraging this course to their parents” (Parent 2).

Theme 3: Online education and programme accessibility. For parents who participated in the programme, the ability for them to access the online workshops at any time enabled participants to fit the programme in around their busy schedules. The following quote demonstrates how crucial accessibility is for parent education programmes: “I liked the online resource because you could access it whenever you wanted and I found it easy to fit the parenting course around my schedule because the only time I am able to do this kind of thing is very late in the evenings” (Parent 5). Importantly, parents felt that the online education was more accessible than traditional face-to-face programmes. As one parent explained: “I liked the flexibility that online courses give because it can be carried out at home when convenient. I would be prepared to turn up to a scheduled course at a venue and time but life with two boys, playing two sports, and two working parents might make this difficult” (Parent 2).

Participants also believed that the length of the workshops (around 20 minutes) further enhanced this accessibility. One parent explained the reasons for this: “It [the online programme] worked very well. Time is precious when you have kids and to have something as accessible as this was great. I liked that it was in reasonably small chunks which made it easier to dip in to and absorb” (Parent 9). However, some participants believed that providing workshop content in other formats (e.g., books or paper copies) to supplement online education would help to further improve accessibility. The following quote explains how this could be achieved:

I think the Internet is a good platform for educating parents but it may be worth

considering providing workshops in a simplified readable format like an e-book or a PDF, it would allow parents to reflect on the main outcomes of each workshop at a later date. Something that can be read easily on a smart device, so parents can read them in their spare time without accessing the internet i.e., on trains, even at tennis coaching sessions/tournament. Providing hard copies of the workshops to tennis clubs may also help (Parent 3).

Theme 4: Workshop content and intervention effectiveness: Parents'

perceptions of the programme and its effectiveness appeared to be influenced by their existing knowledge and experience as a tennis parent. The first two workshops (i.e., supporting your child's tennis journey and understanding the LTA's organisational system) appeared to be most beneficial for parents new to the sport. As one inexperienced parent suggested: "I found it very useful, it helped me to understand the structure, how I can support my child in a positive way and break down some barriers in knowledge" (Parent 9). However, for more experienced parents, or parents who had done their own research, these workshops were not considered to be relevant. As one parent explained: "There is a lot of basic stuff at the start that will be useful for many [new mini-tennis parents] but I imagine many parents are also able to skip it" (Participant 8).

For more knowledgeable or experienced parents, the workshops that were perceived to be most beneficial were on child and talent development, competition roles, and continual learning and support because they were directly related to the practical challenges parents were facing and/or the skills that they wanted to develop. The following quote from an experienced parent illustrates these points:

The main impact that the course had on my parenting was to reinforce the growth mind-set view that I should be focusing on my children's tennis development and progression rather than the outcome of their matches. I am really trying now to make sure that they are thinking carefully after matches about how they played, what they could improve on rather than the result of the match. I am also trying to work well as a team with my partner to ensure we both do roles that we enjoy in order to make the journey more sustainable (Parent 5).

Taking this into consideration, there was a general consensus amongst the participants that parent education programmes would be most effective if delivered to parents at the start of their involvement. The following quote illustrates this point: "It [the programme] has been beneficial, although in the past 6 years I have educated myself about

good parenting in tennis. This would have been very beneficial when my children were starting out in tennis or for a parent who hasn't educated themselves on this" (Parent 2).

Theme 5: Programme design and intervention effectiveness. Participants felt that the design of the programme also influenced the overall effectiveness of the intervention. For instance parents felt that, compared to other online tennis parent resources, the lecture style video presentations helped them to take in and absorb the information. One parent explained the reasons for this:

The online resource was very useful and I thought it was a very good idea to have the mixture of slides and narrative. Sometimes online educational resource can be difficult to absorb as it is all written. Having the audio narrative made it a lot easier to take in (Parent 13).

However, one parent suggested ways in which the workshop design could be made more effective: "The video format worked well but got somewhat repetitive. If I was trying to improve it I would suggest different presenters/voices or perhaps some animations" (Parent 7). In addition, the ability to pause, rewind, or fast-forward these videos positively impacted on the effectiveness of the programme by enabling parents to learn at their own pace and effectively tailor their learning experience. One mother explained how beneficial this was: "It was a very good experience. I was able to work through the workshops at my own pace, it was easy to go back and start the workshop from the beginning" (Parent 12).

Parents felt that the post workshop quizzes and the parent forum also impacted on the effectiveness of the program. For instance, participants considered the quizzes as useful way of evaluating their own learning and monitoring their progress. One parent explained the impact this had: "I felt a lot more confident about my knowledge when I was able to answer the questions after watching the workshop" (Parent 12). However, some parents felt the effectiveness of the quizzes was limited by the lack of feedback, as one father suggested: "The questionnaires could be improved by providing feedback on the questions you answered incorrectly, it would be nice to know which questions we got wrong and why they were incorrect, rather than just a score" (Parent 3).

As a final point, parents felt that the lack of interaction that occurred in the parent forum limited the overall effectiveness of the program. One parent explained the reasons for this: "With more participants the forum might have been a livelier place. It might have been useful to discuss the workshops with fellow parents more" (Parent 2). Despite this, there appeared to be reluctance for participants to start or join in online discussions. The following quote captures this point: "I didn't use the forum, I would have liked to but there

never seemed to be any other users joining in any conversations” (Parent 13).

Theme 6: Factors influencing programme completion. Despite 62 parents registering for the programme, only 38 parents completed the pre-workshop questionnaire to become a member and gain access to the workshops. Some parents felt that having to complete the pre-workshop questionnaire before being able to access the workshops negatively influenced participation in the programme. The following quote offers a potential explanation for this: “The start-up process was inviting, captured my interest and worked well, but the initial questionnaire is tedious” (Parent 7).

Moreover, of the 38 participants who completed the pre-workshop questionnaire, only 13 (38%) of these participants went on to complete the programme. Some parents who did not complete the programme attributed this to the impersonal nature of online education. These parents felt that because the programme was designed to address the needs of mini-tennis parents as a group, some of the workshop content at the start was not relevant to their individual needs. One experienced parent cited this as the reason he failed to complete the programme: “The programme was not very useful [to me], but I didn’t finish it. Online education is very impersonal and not specific to you or your child so lots of information is not relevant...but the course was great for parents inexperienced in sport” (Parent 37).

However, the most commonly cited reason for not completing the programme was a lack of time. The following quote from one mother illustrates this point: “Time is a factor, especially if you work. I work and spend most of my "free time" taking my child to tennis, football, and cross-country. Had I not had a leave of absence from work, I would not have had the time to complete the programme” (Parent 12). Another parent in a similar position attributed a lack of time as the reason she was unable to complete the programme: “I wanted to do more but sadly work, moving home, and holiday got in the way. I would have loved to have got the most out of this – I would definitely do it again if the chance came up and I would highly recommend it” (Parent 28).

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of an online education programme for British tennis parents and to explore parents’ experiences of engaging in this program. Findings indicated positive directional changes (albeit not statistically significant) in participants’ tennis parent efficacy, general parenting efficacy, emotional experiences, and goal orientations following engagement in the intervention. Therefore, the findings offer ecologically valid evidence that online sport parent education programmes

can positively influence parents' experiences and involvement in youth sport settings. However, findings also offer unique insights into the range of challenges and barriers faced when delivering an online sport parent education programme. This discussion will integrate the mixed methods findings by linking and connecting the quantitative and qualitative strands to provide a fuller understanding of the effectiveness of this online education programme (Bryman, 2008).

In terms of practical significance, findings revealed large changes in parents' belief in their ability to provide their child with informational support, make appropriate tennis related decisions based on child and talent development, and fulfil their roles as a tennis parent after a match. It is perhaps not surprising that the strongest effect sizes were found in these variables given that the knowledge and skills required to fulfil these roles are more commonly associated with coaching rather than sport parents per se. Based on the qualitative data, it appears that even experienced tennis parents struggled to develop feelings of competence in these areas through self-education alone. Weaker effects were also found in relation to reducing tennis parents' anxiety and ego goal orientation. Overall, these findings closely relate to those reported in chapter five and previous face-to-face sport parent education programmes (i.e., Richards & Winter, 2013), suggesting that online education yields comparable results to face-to-face education. However, it is important to highlight that despite showing a range of positive effect sizes, only one of the variables, parent-parent role efficacy, was statistically significant. Although Neill (2008) suggested that when examining effects using small sample sizes significance testing can be misleading, these results and their transferability should nonetheless be interpreted with caution.

In addition to changes in tennis parenting, an interesting finding to emerge from the current study was the small changes in parents' general parenting efficacy. Although changes in general parenting efficacy were not a focus of the intervention per se, increases in parents' feelings of competence within the areas of empathy and understanding, pressures, and self-acceptance suggest that sport parent education programmes can positively influence parenting outside of the sporting context. It stands to reason that sport parent education programmes could be used as a way to prevent, or address, general parenting issues with fewer stigmas attached than parent training programmes (Breitenstein & Gross, 2013). Researchers are encouraged to build on these findings, and explore this notion in greater depth.

Beyond programme effectiveness, the current study also explored the extent to

which online delivery improves the accessibility of parent education programmes. Findings support the notion that online delivery can reduce logistical barriers by allowing parents to access the intervention at convenient times and enhance learning transfer by allowing parents to learn at their own pace (Breitenstein et al., 2014; Duijin et al., 2014). In addition to this, results suggested that parents watched the workshops multiple times and also paused, fast-forwarded, and re-wound workshops in order to tailor their own learning environment. Expanding this point, it is important to note that there were a high number of parents employed full time (58%), which may explain why in contrast to face-to-face sport parent interventions (e.g., Richards & Winter, 2013), there were a similar number of male ($n=19$) and female ($n=23$) participants in the current study. Overall, it is possible to conclude that while online education does improve the accessibility of parent education programmes, it does not eliminate all of the time related barriers associated with face-to-face programme delivery.

Despite improving accessibility, the current study was unable to reach large numbers of parents. Qualitative findings suggest that some performance centres and coaches were reluctant to promote educational material to parents without the LTA's approval or backing. Taking this into account, it is likely that only through national governing body backing, or promotion to parents directly, that service providers will achieve their objectives of large-scale dissemination of parent education programmes. Another factor which appeared to limit participation in the current study was that some parents' do not believe they need to engage in education programmes. This belief represents an interesting and challenging proposition for researchers and the LTA alike. Whilst more effective promotion and advertising (i.e., emphasising the vital role parents play in children's early participation and development in sport) may help, consistent with findings from chapter five, some parents in the current study suggested that parent education (like coach education) should be made compulsory or, at the very least, incentivised for parents. Given the increasingly complex, challenging, and professionalised nature of youth sport, this appears to represent an increasingly necessary proposition. Ensuring parents have to complete (and even pass) an online module before they can register their child as a British tennis player, or for a particular tournament level, would provide one way in which this could conceivably be achieved in practice.

Building on this point, the current study also provides an insight into parents' experiences of engaging in an online education programme. Qualitative findings suggested that the programme was most effective for parents who had limited knowledge and skills as

a tennis parent, with more experienced parents less likely to find certain aspects of the programme (i.e., the first two workshops) beneficial and hence complete the programme. These findings are consistent with adult learning theories, which suggest that parents will only be motivated to learn when educational content is directly relevant to their lives (Knowles et al., 1998). From a practical perspective, these findings suggest that educational initiatives should target parents at the start of their involvement, or tailor educational content to the individual needs of parents based on their existing knowledge and experience. One possible way to achieve this would be to use questionnaires (e.g., TPES) to identify parents' individual needs and prescribe them certain workshops, which in effect would tailor their educational experience. Support for this notion can be found in the coaching literature where coaching efficacy scales have effectively been used to diagnose coaches' needs in order to promote more effective educational content (Fung, 2003).

As a final point, it is important to note that despite creating an online forum for parents, the current study largely failed to facilitate interaction between participants and also between the participants and the research team. Difficulty in communicating and establishing rapport with participants has been cited as one of the most common disadvantages of online education (Hewson, 2014), and can limit the co-construction of learning. Given the importance and value of informal learning (e.g., group discussions and parent-parent interactions) in learning transfer and reinforcement (see Chapter five), there appears to be a need to supplement online education with face-to-face discussion groups, parent-coach meetings, or even peer mentoring programmes. This additional input would allow parent communities to be cultivated via face-to-face interaction, yet also provide learners with increased flexibility when interacting with content online (Gilson & Jung, 2014). However, more research is needed to explore the efficacy of blended learning within this area.

The current study and the aforementioned recommendations should be considered in light of several limitations. Firstly, the present study was limited by its reliance on self-efficacy as a core construct that mediates between tennis parents' knowledge and behaviour. Researchers have highlighted how self-reported measures do not always align with actual behaviour (e.g., Dorsch, Smith, Wilson, et al., 2015). As such, future research should explore if parent education programmes change parents' actual behaviour and communication within these contexts and if they remain consistent over time. Such understanding would require parent behaviour assessment systems, longitudinal research designs, and children's perceptions of parental involvement (see Holt et al., 2009).

Secondly, although the internal reliabilities provide some evidence for the factor structure of the TPES, they cannot be relied on as sole indicators of subscale homogeneity. Research is needed to explore the factorial and construct validity of the TPES. Finally, many of the parents were already experienced and/or knowledgeable when they signed up for the programme. Consequently, pre-workshop values may not be representative of the wider mini-tennis parent population, particularly when parents first come into the sport. This may also explain why pre-workshop questionnaire scores were high and large effects did not occur in all targeted variables following the intervention. Future research is needed to explore the impact of such interventions at the start of parental involvement in youth sport.

In conclusion, the current study has highlighted the impact of an exploratory online education programme for British tennis parents. It is possible to conclude that online education represents an effective and accessible way to educate and support tennis parents in practice. However, findings also illustrate a range of difficulties and challenges associated with initiating and maintaining participation in online sport parent education programmes. Although more research is clearly needed, the current work provides the empirical foundations for national governing bodies to build upon, design and implement evidence-based parent education programmes. The present study offers specific guidelines and recommendations on how this could be achieved. With this in mind, it is hoped that that large-scale evidence-based proactive online education programmes for tennis parents will soon be available.

Chapter Seven:
General Discussion and Conclusions

General Discussion and Conclusions

Introduction

The purpose of this thesis was to develop a psychosocial parent education programme for British tennis. In order to address the overall purpose and aims of this thesis, three linked studies were conducted. I will begin this chapter by briefly recapping each of these studies and their main findings before turning attention towards their collective contribution. The first study developed a grounded theory of tennis parents' education and support needs across contexts and developmental stages. Following a 6-month period of fieldwork and interviews with parents, coaches, and players ($n=29$), findings revealed the need to provide parents with education that covers their introductory, organisational, developmental, and competition needs during childhood/mini-tennis (5-10 years) and early adolescence/junior-tennis (11-14 years). The theory is based on the notion that parents' needs can only be fulfilled if they are placed in a supportive learning environment which provides them with structured education, the effectiveness of which is determined by parents' motivation to learn and the on-going support they receive from key stakeholders.

Building on study one, the second study used this grounded theory as the basis for a group-based face-to-face parent education programme titled the 'Loughborough Tennis Parent Education Programme' (LTPEP). Using an organisational action research framework, seven workshops were run over a 12-week period for tennis parents with children between the ages of 5 and 10 years. Workshops took place in three high performance centres and had an average attendance of 22 parents. Data were collected using participant diaries, emails, social validation feedback forms, reflective diary, and post-programme focus groups ($n=19$). The impact and effectiveness of the programme was evaluated qualitatively using a content analysis. Results indicated that the programme was effective in enhancing tennis parents' perceived knowledge, affect, and skills across a range of learning objectives. Results also provided an understanding of parents' experiences of participating in a tennis parent education programme and offered a number of insights for practitioners in relation to the design, content, and delivery of future sport parent education programmes.

The final study built upon the first and second studies and utilised a convergent parallel mixed methods design to examine the effectiveness of an exploratory online education programme for British tennis parents ($n=38$). Alongside this, the study also explored parents' experiences of engaging in the programme. A total of 13 (38%) parents

finished the programme by completing pre and post-workshop questionnaires, while a subset of nine participants also shared their experiences via an asynchronous email interview. Quantitative findings revealed positive directional changes (albeit not statistically significant) for almost all of the variables in relation to tennis parent efficacy, general parent efficacy, emotional experiences, and goal orientations. Furthermore, six qualitative themes emerged: (a) awareness of the programme; (b) initiating engagement in parent education programmes; (c) online education and programme accessibility; (d) workshop content and intervention effectiveness; (e) programme design and intervention effectiveness; and (f) factors influencing programme completion.

The remainder of this chapter will focus on how these three studies have collectively made a contribution to the area of sport parenting. Specific attention will be paid to the methodological contribution as well as the combined contribution to knowledge and applied practice. Following this, I will explain how the findings and recommendations from the studies within this thesis are currently being disseminated and transferred to the National Governing Body (i.e., the LTA). Finally, I will acknowledge the limitations of this thesis and offer a number of recommendations for future research within the area of sport parenting.

Methodological Contribution

The studies within this thesis offer a number of methodological contributions to the field of sport parenting, particularly in relation to the research approaches and designs used in field-based sport parent interventions. To date, a reliance on quantitative experimental designs (i.e., Harwood & Swain, 2002; Smoll et al., 2007) and reflexive accounts (Richards & Winter, 2013; Vincent & Christensen, 2014) has meant that existing published sport parent interventions have failed to capture the general learning mechanisms and explain the complex ways in which intervention outcomes have been achieved. Taking this into consideration, one of the main contributions of this thesis has been to illustrate the important role that qualitative approaches and designs can play in uncovering ‘how’ and ‘why’ sport parent intervention work or fail in real-world settings. Findings demonstrate how qualitative approaches are ideal when research questions focus on the process, implementation, and development of a new education programme. In particular, the collaborative and flexible nature of an action research design and its emphasis on on-going reflection appears to be particularly well suited to the initial implementation of sport parent education programmes in real world settings (see chapter five).

Building on this point, another methodological contribution of this thesis has been to illustrate the value of mixed methods approaches when evaluating existing sport parent education programmes in new settings. Although mixed method approaches are increasingly being used to evaluate interventions with athletes (e.g., Readdy, Raabe, & Harding, 2014), study three (see chapter six) was the first study to use a mixed methods approach to evaluate a sport parent intervention. This is somewhat surprising considering that, by drawing upon the strengths of qualitative and quantitative research, mixed methods approaches generate a more complete picture of how group-based sport parent interventions work in specific youth sport settings. For instance, the quantitative element of a mixed methods design enables applied researchers to quickly and accurately assess the direction and magnitude of changes in large numbers of sport parents. On the other hand, the qualitative element of mixed method designs provides complimentary insights into the experiences of parents engaging in a programme, starts to unpack the complex ways in which programmes work, and identifies the situational and contextual factors influencing intervention outcomes. It is these qualitative insights which are crucial to the on-going development and improvement of educational programmes.

Overall, the use of both qualitative and mixed method approaches within this thesis has broadened and deepened our understanding of the processes through which sport parent programme outcomes are achieved, and importantly provided an insight into the factors that influence these outcomes. It is hoped that by demonstrating the potential of these methodological approaches within this thesis, researchers will consider qualitative and mixed methods approaches alongside more traditional quantitative experimental approaches when designing, implementing, and evaluating field-based sport parent education programmes. Doing so will enable practitioners to continually improve and further develop educational programmes over time. As the studies within this thesis illustrate, when researchers place the research questions at the forefront of the investigation and select the most appropriate research approaches, designs, and methods to answer them, scholars can produce findings that make both a significant contribution to knowledge and applied practice.

Contribution to Knowledge and Practice

Although I have discussed how the findings of each of the studies within this thesis contribute to knowledge and practice within the area of tennis parenting individually, an overall discussion of the contribution of this body of work as a whole adds to knowledge within this area of sport parenting is important. With this in mind, one of the main

contributions of this thesis has been to address the disparate nature of the sport parenting literature, and provide a more complete understanding of parenting in youth sport. To date, existing sport parent research has focused predominantly on individual aspects of parents' involvement or experiences (e.g., roles, stressors, and behaviours) (e.g., Gould et al., 2008; Harwood & Knight, 2009a; Knight et al., 2010). In an attempt to address the narrow focus of these studies, researchers have recently started to explore parenting styles and practices together to more fully understand optimal parental involvement in sport (i.e., Knight & Holt, 2014). However, the studies in this thesis are the first to provide an understanding of how the wide-range of factors influencing sport parents are related and interact within a specific youth sport context. In doing so, these studies have provided a clearer picture of how parenting in youth sport is influenced by a range of social (macro), organisational, developmental, and intra-interpersonal (micro) factors and occurs across multiple levels of functioning. These studies also collectively illustrate how parents' involvement and experiences are influenced by the sport-specific developmental stage in which they operate. Therefore, in order to move the knowledge base forward future research must take into consideration the wide-range of environmental factors influencing sport parents in youth sport settings in order to fully understand and be able to enhance their experiences and involvement. Based on the studies within this thesis, it is plausible to suggest that this level of understanding is only likely to be achieved through prolonged immersion and engagement with key stakeholders (i.e., parents, coaches, players, and support staff) in specific youth sport settings (see chapter four).

Another key contribution of the studies within this thesis has been to highlight the importance and value of going beyond exploring parental involvement and experiences and taking into consideration the education and support needs of sport parents themselves. As highlighted in chapter two, one of the limitations of the sport parent research to date has been its failure to take into consideration what education or support parents' want or need to prevent, cope with, or manage the range of demands they face in youth sport (Harwood & Knight, 2009a, 2009b). Although a small body of research has started to explore the information that parents want to better facilitate their involvement and experiences (i.e., Knight & Holt, 2013a, 2013b), the studies within this thesis are the first to explore sport parents' education and support needs and how they can be fulfilled. As these studies have collectively illustrated, identifying the education and support that parents themselves want at different stages of their children's development is essential in both the initial and on-going development of educational programmes that are tailored to meet the needs of sport

parents. It is clear from these studies that there is a need to move beyond research that mirrors what is already happening in youth sport and start to focus on answering research questions which have the potential to change and improve parents experiences and involvement in the future. Placing sport parents' stage-specific education and support needs at the forefront of inquiry appears to be one way in which this can be achieved.

Considering that there have been very few attempts to evaluate the effectiveness of educational interventions within the sport parent literature (Harwood & Knight, 2015) and the extent to which sport parent interventions change parents' behaviour has not been established (Gould et al., 2008; Holt & Knight, 2014), another important contribution of this thesis has been to demonstrate that sport parent education programmes can generate positive directional changes in tennis parents' perceived knowledge, attitudes (i.e., beliefs and values), affect, and skills in relation to a range of learning outcomes (see chapters five and six for detailed discussions on these findings). Findings also provide some evidence to suggest that sport parent education programmes can positively influence parents' perceived competence outside of sporting contexts. Encouragingly, these findings align with the parents outcomes reported in well-established evidence-based preventative parent education programmes (e.g., Triple P - positive parenting programme) (Sanders, Turner, & Markie-Dadds, 2002). Although more research is clearly needed, initial evidence for the 'Loughborough Tennis Parent Education Programme' is promising and worthy of further exploration. It is hoped that these preliminary findings can be used to secure the resources and backing needed from the National Governing Body to further develop, refine, and evaluate the effectiveness of this programme (Gould et al., 2008). This is a point I will return to and address in more detail later in this chapter.

Whilst the different methodological approaches and designs used within this thesis make direct comparison between the different delivery methods used within this thesis difficult, at a generic level the programme outcomes remained relatively consistent across both face-to-face (see chapter five) and online delivery methods (see chapter six). These findings are consistent with recent large-scale reviews in the field of parent training which have suggested that evidence-based online (Breitenstein et al., 2014) and face-to-face interventions (Wyatt-Kaminski, Valle, Filene, & Boyle, 2008) generate similar educational outcomes. As such, it is possible to conclude that online sport parent programmes generate comparable outcomes to traditional face-to-face educational programmes (Gould et al., 2008). However, this raises questions concerning which delivery method is most appropriate for future sport parent education programmes. Based on the studies within this

thesis it is clear that each delivery method (i.e., face-to-face and online) has notable strengths and weaknesses. For instance, group-based face-to-face workshops create greater opportunities for interaction and relationship building which helps facilitate learning transfer and long term reinforcement of learning outcomes (Merriam & Leahy, 2005) (see chapter five), whilst online approaches offer greater potential for individualisation (i.e., learning at parents own pace), anonymity, flexibility, and sustainability which addresses some of the main barriers commonly associated with face-to-face parent education (i.e., work and childcare commitments) (see chapter six). As a result, drawing definitive conclusions as to which delivery method is most effective for sport parent education programmes is not easy. The answer to this question, therefore, may lie in combing the strengths of both approaches. Blended learning represents one way in which this could be achieved as it offers both accessible, convenient, and cost effective formal education (i.e., online delivery) and also enables informal learning and reinforcement through parent discussion groups, mentoring, or parent-coach meetings. Although limited, there is some evidence to suggest combining the benefits of online and face-to-face learning can significantly improve learning and skill acquisition compared with online learning alone (see Means et al., 2010 for an extensive review). Exploring the efficacy of blended learning in sport parent education programmes represents both an interesting and logical direction for future researchers to explore.

Taking into consideration the infancy of this area, a key contribution of this thesis has been to provide empirical support for a number of generic recommendations and guidelines in relation to the design and delivery of sport parent education programmes. Findings within this thesis support the notion that initial participation in parent education programmes is dependent upon the extent to which programmes are made flexible and accessible for parents (i.e., online or when parents attend their child's training), provided free of charge, and promoted and driven by coaches or key stakeholders (i.e., directors of centres or the National Governing Body) (Richards & Winter, 2013; Vincent & Christensen, 2015). Given the consistency of these suggestions within the literature, the future of sport parent education appears to be heavily dependent upon backing, promotion, and financial investment from clubs, centres, or National Governing Bodies. However, the findings of this thesis can be used by practitioners to help convince key stakeholders (i.e., National Governing Bodies) about the need for and value of investing in evidence-based sport parent education programmes.

Beyond initiating participation, the studies within this thesis also reiterate the need

for practitioners to establish credibility with parents (i.e., demonstrate a knowledge of the sport and expertise in the field of sport parenting), create a safe and inclusive learning environment, demonstrate a high level of interpersonal skills, and provide opportunities for parents to interact and share experiences (i.e., online forums or group-based discussions) in order to maintain on-going participation (Richards & Winter, 2013; Vincent & Christensen, 2015) and facilitate learning transfer (Merriam, & Leahy, 2005). Although university affiliated researchers or practitioners appear to be well placed to deliver parent education programmes in person or online, programme designers should consider recruiting experts in each topic area in order to ensure that the same level of expertise is maintained throughout the course of a programme. Consistent with previous research, another factor which appeared to influence parent participation and learning transfer appeared to be the length of the workshops. Based on the findings here it is plausible to suggest that face-to-face workshops should last no more than one hour (in order to align with children's training sessions), whilst online workshops should be shorter (i.e., less than 30 minutes) as parents face more distractions in their learning environment (Gilson & Jung, 2014). Although these guidelines offer a starting point for practitioners in relation to the length of workshops, ultimately a balance must be found between workshop accessibility, parental engagement, and delivering sufficient depth to achieve learning outcomes.

The last two studies (see chapters five and six) within this thesis also offer new recommendations and guidelines, particularly in relation to the content of group-based sport parent education programmes. To date, the content covered in existing sport parent programmes appears to have been dictated by the service providers and therefore these programmes have overlooked the actual needs of the parents participating (e.g., Harwood & Swain, 2002; Richards & Winter, 2013; Smoll et al., 2007). In contrast, the studies within this thesis provide evidence to suggest that if educational content is based on the actual stage-specific needs of parents in specific youth sport contexts then they will be more motivated to participate in sport parent programmes (see chapters five and six). However, as each individual parents' existing knowledge will vary depending on their experience, findings suggest that group-based education programmes are likely to be most effective when delivered at the start of each stage or be flexible based on individuals existing knowledge (e.g., prescribing workshops based on pre-workshop questionnaire data). Although thorough and comprehensive group-based needs assessments require considerable time and expertise, when the content of a programme is tailored to the needs of the participants then a programme is more likely to lead to changes in practice and

achieve its desired outcomes. These findings further reiterate the need to move beyond assumed needs and narrow individual topics (e.g., all parents could benefit from education about motivational climate) and conduct in-depth, thorough, and comprehensive needs assessments prior to developing and implementing sport parent education programmes.

Knowledge Dissemination and Transfer

The extent to which the aforementioned findings and outcomes of this thesis are disseminated is an important part of pragmatic research, and an area that has frequently been overlooked in sport psychology research. Gould (2016) recently suggested that researchers are paying too much attention to knowledge acquisition and not enough to knowledge transfer and dissemination. This focus on knowledge acquisition over and above dissemination is clearly evident within the sport parent literature where a significant research to practice gap exists (see chapter two). In an attempt to bridge this gap, a number of steps were taken to ensure the studies within this thesis make a practical difference to the lives of British tennis parents and the practitioners (i.e., coaches) working with them. This included involving stakeholders (i.e., The Lawn Tennis Association) in the selection of a research problem to ensure studies were focused on areas of practical significance, considering the practical outlets of the research when designing each study (i.e., developing a grounded theory to provide a framework/guide for practice), focusing on the unique context of British tennis within each study, and emphasising practical effectiveness when designing each study (Glasgow, Vogt, & Boyles, 1999). By focusing on knowledge translation and dissemination from the outset and considering the desired consequences when designing each study, the studies within this thesis are well placed to make a significant contribution to current practice.

Beyond considering knowledge dissemination and translation when designing research, Gould (2016) suggested that it is imperative that researchers spend as much time working to disseminate their results as they do to acquire them. With this in mind, I have taken a number of steps to disseminate the findings from this thesis to the Lawn Tennis Association. Following an initial meeting with an LTA representative, in which the findings from this thesis were discussed, I was invited to join the Lawn Tennis Association's 'Safe and Inclusive British Tennis Advisory Group'. One of the key priorities of this group in 2016 is to address parental behaviour and fair play. Based on previous meetings and on-going correspondence, it is anticipated that the research from this thesis will form the basis for the development and implementation of a large-scale online education programme for British tennis parents. Although details and finances are currently

in the process of being finalised, it appears that some workshops may be mandated in an attempt to address poor parental behaviour during competitions. Whilst these initial and on-going communications are encouraging, I am mindful of the fact that knowledge dissemination takes considerable time and repeated effort (Gould, 2016). However, considering that pragmatic research should be judged on the extent to which it promotes dialog and is considered practically 'useful' within specific contexts (Morgan, 2013), these on-going collaborations with the LTA are important and should be taken into consideration when judging the overall contribution of this thesis.

Limitations and Future Directions

The current thesis and its contribution within the sport parenting literature should be considered against its limitations. Firstly, the intervention studies within this thesis (see chapter five and six) were limited by a reliance on parents' own perceptions of change. While the findings from this thesis here are promising, there is clearly a need for future researchers to identify if group-based sport parent education programmes change parents' actual behaviour, and if so, are these changes maintained over time. In addition to this, future research should also explore if and how changes in parent behaviour influence child or even coach outcomes. Although such large-scale research would require significant time and resources, providing answers to these questions is critical for the advancement of the field.

Secondly, the interventions within this thesis are limited by a focus on the needs of British tennis parents as a group, rather than the needs of individual parents per se. Although group-based interventions offer a time and cost effective way of delivering parent education in real-world settings, researchers are encouraged to explore the effectiveness of interventions with families (i.e., family system approaches), couples, or individual parents. Although limited attention has been given to family system approaches in the sport parenting literature, these approaches are widely and successfully used in clinical and counselling domains (see Goldberg & Goldberg, 2008). Therefore, future applied research that provides a better understanding of how to intervene with families or individual parents in youth sport settings would be a welcome addition to the literature (Holt & Knight, 2014).

As a final point, the intervention studies (see chapters five and six) within this thesis are also limited by a focus on parents of players during the childhood/mini-tennis developmental stage. Future researchers are encouraged to design and deliver programmes that meet parents' needs during early adolescence/junior-tennis. Based on the range of needs British tennis parents have identified during players' early adolescence (see chapter

four), this represents another stage in which parents could benefit from education and support. It would also be interesting to see how parents' role-related needs change or evolve during mid-to-late adolescence (15-18 years) and early adulthood (18+ years) when they are less involved in their child's tennis and some national level players start to travel to and compete in International Tennis Federation (ITF) tournaments on their own. Exploring the needs of parents during these stages is vital to ensure that there is an evidence-based framework for practitioners working with tennis parents across all of the key stages of junior tennis players' development.

Concluding Remarks

In conclusion, the aim of this thesis was to develop a psychosocial parent education programme for British tennis parents. In doing so, this thesis has answered long-standing calls to develop and evaluate a sport parent education programme (Gould et al., 2008; Harwood & Knight, 2015). Specifically, the studies within this thesis have demonstrated the effectiveness of a tennis parent education programme using both face-to-face and online delivery methods. These studies have also provided unique insights into parents' experiences of engaging in parent education programmes and offered a number of evidence-based recommendations and guidelines for applied researchers, practitioners (i.e., coaches and sport psychologists), and the National Governing Body. It is hoped that the findings from this thesis will lead to the development and implementation of a large-scale evidence based parent education programme in Britain tennis. This would go some way to ensuring that British tennis parents, like coaches, receive the education and support they need to positively influence children's enjoyment, participation, and development in tennis.

References

References

- Anderson, L.W., & Krathwohl, D.R. (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives*. New York: Longman
- Axford, N., Lehtonen, M., Kaoukji, D., Tobin, K., & Berry, V. (2012). Engaging parents in parenting programs: Lessons from research and practice. *Children and Youth Services Review, 34*, 2061–2071. doi:10.1016/j.childyouth.2012.06.011.
- Babkes, M. L., & Weiss, M. R. (1999). Parental influence on cognitive and affective responses in children's competitive soccer participation. *Pediatric Exercise Science, 11*, 44-62.
- Bailey, R., Collins, D., Ford, P., MacNamara, A., Toms, M., & Pearce, G. (2010). *Participant development in sport*. Leeds: Sportscoach UK.
- Baker, J., & Young, B. (2014). 20 years later: deliberate practice and the development of expertise in sport. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 7(1)*, 135-157.
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behaviour change. *Psychological Review, 84*, 191–215.
- Bandura, A. (2006). Guide for constructing self-efficacy scales. In F. Pajares, & T. Urdan (Eds.), *Self-efficacy beliefs of adolescents*, (Vol. 5., pp. 307-337). Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.
- Baumrind, D. (1971). Current patterns of parental authority. *Developmental Psychology, 4(1)*, 1-103. doi:10.1037/h0030372
- Biesta, G. (2010). Pragmatism and the philosophical foundations of mixed methods research. In A. Tashakkori, & C. Teddlie (Eds.), *Handbook of mixed methods research for the social & behavioral sciences* (2nd ed., pp. 95-118). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Bland, A. (2014, January 11). Jamie Baker's break point: A tennis nomad exits the planet's cruellest sport. *The Independent*. Retrieved from <http://www.independent.co.uk/sport/tennis/jamie-bakers-break-point-a-tennis-nomad-exits-the-planet-s-cruellest-sport-9046491.html>
- Bloom, B. (1985). *Developing talent in young people*. New York: Ballantine Books.

- Bloomfield, L., Kendall, S., Applin, L., Attarzadeh, V., Dearnley, K., Edwards, L., Hinshelwood, L., Lloyd, P., & Newcombe, T. (2005). A qualitative study exploring the experiences and views of parents, health visitors and family support centre workers on the challenges and difficulties of parenting. *Health and Social Care in the Community, 13*, 46-55.
- Bois, J. E., Lalanne, J., & Delforge, C. (2009). The influence of parenting practices and parental presence on children's and adolescents' pre-competitive anxiety. *Journal of Sports Sciences, 27*, 995-1005. doi:10.1080/02640410903062001
- Bowker, A., Boekhoven, B., Nolan, A., Bauhaus, S., Glover, P., Powell, T., & Taylor, S. (2009). Naturalistic observations of spectator behavior at youth hockey games. *The Sport Psychologist, 23*(3), 301-316.
- Breitenstein, S.M., & Gross, D. (2013). Web-based delivery of a preventive parent training intervention: A feasibility study. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing, 26*, 149-157.
- Breitenstein, S.M., Gross, D., & Christophersen, R. (2014). Digital delivery methods of parenting training interventions: A systematic review. *Worldviews on Evidence-Based Nursing, 11* (3), 168-176.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (2005). *Making human beings human: Bioecological perspectives on human development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Brustad, R. J. (2011). Enhancing coach-parent relationships in youth sports: Increasing harmony and minimizing hassle. A commentary. *International Journal for Sports Science and Coaching, 6*(1), 33-36. doi:10.1260/1747-9541.6.1.33
- Bryman, A. (2006). Integrating quantitative and qualitative research: How is it done? *Qualitative Research, 6*, 97-113.
- Bryman, A. (2008). The end of the paradigm wars? In P. Alasuutari, L. Bickman, & J. Brannen (Eds), *The SAGE handbook of social research methods* (pp. 13-25). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Casper, J. (2006). You can't be serious, that ball was IN: An investigation of junior tennis cheating behaviour. *The Qualitative Report, 11*(1), 20-36.
- Castle, A. (1994). Action research for developing professional practice. *British Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation, 1*, 155-157.
- Cherryholmes, C.C. (1992). Notes on pragmatism and scientific realism. *Educational Researcher, 21*, 13-17.

- Clarke, N.J., & Harwood, C.G. (2014). Parenting experiences in elite youth football: A phenomenological study. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 15*(5), 528-537. doi:10.1016/j.psychsport.2014.05.004
- Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences*. Hillsdale, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Corbin, J. C., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Côté, J. (1999). The influence of the family in the development of talent in sport. *The Sport Psychologist, 13*, 395- 417.
- Côté, J., & Fraser-Thomas, J. (2007). Youth involvement in sport. In P.R.E. Crocker (Eds), *Introduction to Sport Psychology: A Canadian Perspective* (pp. 266–294). Toronto: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Creswell, J.W. (2014). *Research design, qualitative, quantitative & mixed methods approaches* (4th Ed.). Sage: London.
- Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cumming, S. P., Smith, R. E., Smoll, F. L., Standage, M., & Grossbard, J. R., (2008). Development and validation of the achievement goal scale for youth sports. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 9* (5), 686-703.
- Cushion, C.J., Nelson, L., Armour, K.M., Lyle, J., Jones, R.L., Sandford, R., & O’Callaghan, R. (2010). *Coach learning & development: A review of literature*. Leeds: Sports Coach UK.
- Darling, N., & Steinberg, L. (1993). Parenting style as context: An integrative model. *Psychological Bulletin, 113*(3), 487-496. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.113.3.487
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. New York: Plenum.
- DeFrancesco, C., & Johnson, P. (1997). Athlete and parent perceptions in junior-tennis. *Journal of Sport Behavior, 20*, 29–36.
- Dewey, J. (2008). The influence of Darwinism on philosophy. In J. Boydston & L. Hahn (Eds.), *The middle works of John Dewey, 1899-1924* (Vol. 4, pp. 1-215). Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press. (Original work published 1910).
- Dewey, J. (2008). Reconstruction in philosophy. In J. Boydston & R. Ross (Eds.), *The middle works of John Dewey, 1899-1924* (Vol. 12, pp. 77-202). Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press. (Original work published 1920).

- Dewey, J. (2008). Human nature and conduct. In J. Boydston & G. Murphy (Eds.), *The middle works of John Dewey, 1899-1924* (Vol. 14, pp. 1-227). Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press. (Original work published 1922).
- Dewey, J. (2008). Experience and nature. In J. Boydston & S. Hook (Eds.), *The later works of John Dewey, 1925-1953* (Vol. 1, pp. 1-437). Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press. (Original work published 1925).
- Dewey, J. (2008). Propositions, warranted assertibility and truth. In J. Boydston (Ed.), *The later works of John Dewey, 1925- 1953* (Vol. 14, pp. 168-188). Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press. (Original work published 1941).
- Dorsch, T. E., Smith, A. L., & McDonough, M. H. (2009). Parents' perceptions of child-to-parent socialization in organized youth sport. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 31*, 444-468.
- Dorsch, T.E., Smith, A.L., & McDonough, M.H. (2015). Early socialization of parents through organized youth sport. *Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology, 4* (1), 3-18.
- Dorsch, T. E., Smith, A. L., Wilson, S.R., & McDonough, M. H. (2015). Parent goals and verbal sideline behaviour in organised youth sport. *Sport, Exercise & Performance Psychology, 4*, 19-35.
- Duijin, A., Swanick, K., & Donald, E. (2014). Student learning of cervical psychomotor skills via online video instruction versus traditional face-to-face instruction. *Journal of Physical Therapy Education, 28*(1), 94-102.
- Ericsson, K.A., Krampe, R.T., & Teschroer, C. (1993). The role of deliberate practice in the acquisition of expert performance. *Psychological Review, 100*, 363-406.
- Evans, L., Fleming, S., & Hardy, L. (2000). Situating action research: a response to Gilbourne. *The Sport Psychologist, 14*, 296-303.
- Feilzer, M.Y. (2010). Doing mixed methods research pragmatically: Implications for the rediscovery of pragmatism as a research paradigm. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 4* (1), 6-16.
- Feltz, D. L., Short, S. E., & Sullivan, P. J. (2008). Self-efficacy in sport. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics
- Fletcher, D., Hanton, S., & Mellalieu, S. D. (2006). An organizational stress review: Conceptual and theoretical issues in competitive sport. In S. Hanton & S. D. Mellalieu (Eds.), *Literature reviews in sport psychology* (pp. 321-373). Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science.

- Fraser-Thomas, J., & Côté, J. (2009). Understanding adolescents' positive and negative developmental experiences in sport. *The Sport Psychologist, 23*, 3-23.
- Fredricks, J. A., & Eccles, J. S. (2004). Parental influences on youth involvement in sports. In M. R. Weiss (Ed.), *Developmental sport and exercise psychology: A lifespan perspective* (pp. 145-164). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Fung, L. (2003). Assessment: Coaching efficacy as indicators of coach education program needs. *Athletic Insight, 5*, 12-18.
- Gage, N.L. (1989). The paradigm wars and their aftermath: A "historical" sketch of research on teaching since 1989. *Educational Researcher, 18*, 4-10.
- Giacobbi, P.R., Poczwadowski, A., & Hager, P. (2005). A pragmatic research philosophy for applied sport psychology. *The Sport Psychologist, 19*, 18-31.
- Gilbourne, D., & Richardson, D. (2005). A practitioner-focused approach to the provision of psychological support in soccer: Adopting action research themes and processes. *Journal of Sports Sciences, 23(6)*, 651-658.
- Gilson, T.A., & Jung, J. (2014). Delivering engaging content for online education: Key principles and solutions. *Kinesiology Review, 3*, 235-240-240.
- Glasgow, R. E., Vogt, T. M., & Boles, S. M. (1999). Evaluating the public health impact of health promotion interventions: The Re-AIM framework. *American Journal of Public Health, 89(9)*, 1322-1327.
- Goldberg, H., & Goldberg, I. (2008). *Family therapy: An overview* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thompson.
- Gould, D. (2016). Conducting sport and exercise science research that counts: The forgotten role of knowledge integration and dissemination. Manuscript submitted for publication.
- Gould, D., Lauer, L., Rolo, C., Jannes, C., & Pennisi, N. (2006). Understanding the role parents play in tennis success: A national survey of junior tennis coaches. *British Journal of Sports Medicine, 40*, 632-636. doi:10.1136/bjism.2005.024927.
- Gould, D., Lauer, L., Rolo, C., Jannes, C., & Pennisi, N. (2008). The role of parents in tennis success: Focus group interviews with junior coaches. *The Sport Psychologist, 22*, 18-37.
- Gould, D., Tuffey, S., Udry, E., & Loehr, J. (1996). Burnout in competitive junior tennis players. II: Qualitative analysis. *The Sport Psychologist, 10*, 341-366.
- Green, B. C., & Chalip, L. (1997). Enduring involvement in youth soccer: The socialization of parent and child. *Journal of Leisure Research, 29(1)*, 61-77.

- Greene, J.C., Caracelli, V.J., & Graham, W.F. (1989). Toward a conceptual framework for mixed method evaluation designs. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 11*, 255–274.
- Grolnick, W.S. (2003). *Psychology of Parenting Control: How Well-Meant Parenting Backfires*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum
- Grolnick, W.S., & Ryan, R.N. (1989). Parent styles associated with children's self-regulation and competence in school. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 81*, 143–154.
- Guba, E.G., (1990). *The paradigm dialog*. Sage: London
- Guo, P., Kim, J., & Rubin, R. (2014). How video production affects student engagement: An empirical study of MOOC videos. Retrieved from <http://juhokim.com/files/LAS2014-Engagement.pdf>
- Gupta, K., Sleezer, C.M., & Rus-eft, D.F. (2007). *A Practical Guide to Needs Assessment* (2nd ed). San Fransisco: John Wiley & Son.
- Harasim, L. (2012). *Learning theory and online technologies*. London: Routledge
- Harwood, C.G. (2004). Goals: More than just the score. In S. Murphy (Ed), *The Sport Psych Handbook* (pp.19-36). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Harwood, C.G., Douglas, J., Minniti, A. (2012). Talent development: The role of the family. In S. Murphy (Eds), *The Oxford handbook of sport and performance psychology* (pp.476-492). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Harwood, C.G., Drew, A., & Knight, C.J. (2010). Parental stressors in professional youth football academies: A qualitative investigation of specializing stage parents. *Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise, 2(1)*, 39-55.
doi:10.1080/19398440903510152
- Harwood, C.G., & Knight, C.J. (2009a). Understanding parental stressors: An investigation of British tennis parents. *Journal of Sports Sciences, 27*, 339-351. doi:10.1080/02640410802603871
- Harwood, C.G., & Knight, C.J. (2009b). Stress in youth sport: A developmental investigation of tennis parents. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 10*, 447-456. doi:10.1016/j.psychsport.2009.01.005
- Harwood, C.G., & Knight, C.J. (2012). The role of parents in the development of tennis players: The past, the present and the future. *Journal of Medicine and Science in Tennis, 17(1)*, 9-15.

- Harwood, C.G., & Knight, C. J., (2015). Parenting in youth sport: A position paper on parenting expertise. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 16*, 24-35.
doi:10.1016/j.psychsport.2014.03.001
- Harwood, C.G., & Swain, A.B. (2002). The development and activation of achievement goals within tennis II: a player, parent, and coach intervention. *The Sport Psychologist, 16*, 111-137.
- Hellstedt, J. C. (1987). The coach/parent/athlete relationship. *The Sport Psychologist, 1*, 151-160.
- Herr, K., & Anderson, G.L. (2005). *The action research dissertation: A guide for students & Faculty*. Sage: London.
- Hewson, C. (2014). Qualitative Approaches in Internet-mediated research: Opportunities, issues, possibilities. In P. Leavy (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of qualitative research methods*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hewson, C., & Laurent, D. (2008). Research design and tools for internet research. In N. Fielding, R. Lee, & G. Blank (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of online research methods*. Sage: London.
- Hill, D.M., Hanton, S., Matthews, N., & Flemming, S. (2011). Alleviation of choking under pressure in elite golf: An action research study. *The Sport Psychologist, 25*, 465-488.
- Hodgkinson, M. (2008, June 21). Nightmare tennis parents who don't play ball. *The Telegraph*. Retrieved from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/3356561/Nightmare-tennis-parents-who-dont-play-ball.html>
- Hoghugh, M.S. (2004). Parenting - An introduction. In M.S. Hoghugh, & Long, N. (Eds.), *The Handbook of Parenting: Theory & Research for Practice (pp. 1-18)*. London: Sage.
- Holt, N. L. (2008). *Positive youth development through sport*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge.
- Holt, N.L., & Knight, C.J. (2014). *Parenting in youth sport: from research to practice*. London: Routledge.
- Holt, N. L., & Tamminen, K. A. (2010). Moving forward with grounded theory in sport and exercise psychology. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 11*, 419-422.
doi:10.1016/j.psychsport.2010.07.009.

- Holt, N. L., Tamminen, K. A., Black, D. E., Mandigo, J. L., & Fox, K. R. (2009). Youth sport parenting styles and practices. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 31*, 37-59.
- Holt, N. L., Tamminen, K. A., Black, D. E., Sehn, Z. L., & Wall, M. P. (2008). Parental involvement in competitive youth sport settings. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 9*(5), 663-685. doi:10.1016/j.psychsport.2007.08.001
- Horn, T. S., & Horn, J. L. (2007). Family influences on children's sport and physical activity participation, behavior, and psychosocial responses. In G. Tenenbaum, & R. C. Eklund (Eds.), *Handbook of sport psychology* (3rd ed., pp. 685-711). New York: Wiley.
- Johnson, R.B., & Onwuegbuzie, A.J. (2004). Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researchers, 33*, 14-26.
- Jones, M. V., Lane, A. M., Bray, S. R., Uphill, M., & Catlin, J. (2005). Development and validation of the sport emotion questionnaire. *Journal of Sports and Exercise Psychology, 27*, 407-431.
- Juntumaa, B., Keskiivaara, P., & Punamäki, R.L. (2005). Parenting, achievement practices and satisfaction in ice hockey. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology, 46*, 411-420.
- Keegan, R.J., Harwood, C.G., Spray, C.M., & Lavalley, D.E. (2009). A qualitative investigation exploring the motivational climate in early career sports participants: Coach, parent and peer influences on sport motivation. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 10*, 361-372.
- Kendall S., & Bloomfield, L. (2005). TOPSE: Developing and validating a tool to measure parenting self-efficacy. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 51*(2), 174-181.
- Kidman, L., McKenzie, A., & McKenzie, B. (1999). The nature and target of parents' comments during youth sport competitions. *Journal of Sport Behavior, 22*(1), 54-68.
- Kirk, D., & MacPhail, A. (2003). Social positioning and the construction of a youth sports club. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport, 38*(1), 23-44.
- Knight, C. J., Boden, C. M., & Holt, N. L. (2010). Junior tennis players' preferences for parental behaviors at tournaments. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 22*, 377-391. doi:10.1080 /10413200.2010.495324
- Knight, C. J., & Holt, N. L. (2013a). Parents' experiences at junior tennis tournaments in Western Australia. *Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology, 2*, 173-189. doi:10.1037/a0031203

- Knight, C. J., & Holt, N. L. (2013b). Strategies used and assistance required to facilitate children's involvement in competitive tennis: Parents' perspectives. *The Sport Psychologist*, 27, 281-291.
- Knight, C.J., & Holt, N.L. (2014). Parenting in youth tennis: Understanding and enhancing children's experiences. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 15, 155-164.
- Knight, C. J., Neely, K. C., & Holt, N. L. (2011). Parental behaviors in team sports: How do female athletes want parents to behave? *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 23, 76-92. doi:10.1080 /10413200.2010.525589
- Knowles, M., Holton, E.F., & Swanson, R.A. (1998). *The adult learner: The definitive classic in adult education and human resource development* (5th Ed.). Houston, TX: Gulf Publishing Company.
- Knowles, Z., Gilbourne, D., Cropley, B., Dugdill, L. (2014). *Reflective practice in the sport and exercise sciences, contemporary Issues*. Routledge: New York.
- Lafferty, M.E., & Triggs, C. (2014). The working with parents in sport model (WWPS-model): A practical guide for practitioners working with parents of elite young performers. *Journal of Sport Psychology in Action*, 5, 117-128.
- Lauer, L., Gould, D., Roman, N., & Pierce, M. (2010a). Parental behaviors that affect junior tennis player development. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 11, 487-496. doi:10.1016/j.psychsport.2010.06.008
- Lauer, L., Gould, D., Roman, N., & Pierce, M. (2010b). How parents influence junior tennis players' development: Qualitative narratives. *Journal of Clinical Sport Psychology*, 4, 69-92.
- Leech, N. L., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2009). A typology of mixed methods research designs. *Quality & Quantity*, 43, 265-275.
- Leff, S. S., & Hoyle, R. H. (1995). Young athlete's perceptions of parental support and pressure. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 24, 187-203. doi:10.1007/BF01537149
- Lichfield, J. (2006, March 10). Obsessive father jailed for tennis player's death. *The Independent*. Retrieved from <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/obsessive-father-jailed-for-tennis-players-death-6107058.html>.
- Lincoln, Y. S., Lynham, S. A., & Guba, E. G. (2011). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences, revisited. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research*, (4th ed., pp. 97-128). London: Sage Publications Ltd.

- Mahoney, G., Kaiser, A., Girolametto, L., MacDonald, J., Robinson, C., Safford, P., & Spiker, D. (1999). Parent education in early intervention: A call for a renewed focus. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 19*, 131-140.
doi:10.1177/027112149901900301
- Martens, R. (1979). About smocks and jocks. *Journal of Sport Psychology, 1*, 94-99.
- McCarthy, P. J., Jones, M. V., Harwood, C. G., & Olivier, S. (2010). What do young athletes implicitly understand about psychological skills? *Journal of Clinical Sport Psychology, 4*, 158-172.
- Means, B., Toyama, Y., Murphy, R., Bakia, M., & Jones, K. (2010). Evaluation of evidence based practices in online learning. A meta-analysis and review of online learning studies. U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC.
- Merriam, S.B., & Leahy, B. (2005). Learning transfer: A review of the research in adult education and training. *Journal of Lifelong Learning, 14*, 1-24.
- Moore, M.G., & Kearsley, G. (2011). *Distance education: A systems view of online learning*. Belmont, CA: Cengage Learning.
- Morgan, D.L (2007). Paradigms lost and pragmatism regained: methodological implications of combining qualitative and quantitative methods. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 1(1)*, 48-76.
- Morgan, D. L. (2013). *Integrating qualitative and quantitative methods: A pragmatic approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA:SAGE.
- Morgan, D.L (2014). Pragmatism as a paradigm for social research. *Qualitative Inquiry, 20*, 1045-1053
- Morgan, T.K., & Giacobbi Jr, P.R. (2006). Towards two grounded theories of the talent development and social support process of highly successful collegiate athletes. *The Sport Psychologist, 20*, 295-313.
- Morse, J.M. (1991). Approaches to qualitative-quantitative methodological triangulation. *Nursing research, 40*, 120-123.
- Needleman, C., & Needleman, M. (1996). Qualitative methods for intervention research. *American Journal of Industrial Medicine, 29*, 329-337.
- Nicholls, A. R., & Polman, R.C. J. (2007). Coping in sport: A systematic review. *Journal of Sports Sciences, 25*, 11-31. doi:10.1080/02640410600630654
- O'Connor, H., Madge, C., Shaw, R., & Wellens, J. (2008). Internet-based interviewing. In N. Fielding, R. Lee, & G. Blank (Eds), *The Sage handbook of online research methods* (pp. 271-289). London: Sage.

- Omlil, J., & LaVoi, N.M. (2009). Background anger in youth sport: A perfect storm? *Journal of Sport Behavior*, 32, 242-260.
- Omlil, J., & LaVoi, N.M. (2012). Emotional experiences of youth sport parents: Anger. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 24, 10-25.
doi:10.1080/10413200.2011.578102
- Omlil, J., & Wiese-Bjornstal, D. (2011). Kids speak: Preferred parental behavior at youth sport events. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 82(4), 702-711.
- Pain, M.A., & Harwood, C.G., (2004). Knowledge and perceptions of sport psychology within English soccer. *Journal of Sport Sciences*, 22, 813-826. ISSN: 0264-0414.
- Pankhurst, A., Collins, D., & Macnamara, A. (2013). Talent development: linking the stakeholders to the process, *Journal of Sports Sciences*, 31(4), 370-380.
doi:10.1080/02640414.2012.733821
- Petlichkoff, L.M. (1996). The drop-out dilemma in youth sports. In O. Bar-Or (Ed.), *The child and adolescent athlete: Encyclopedia of sports medicine* (Vol. 6, pp. 418–432). Oxford: Blackwell Science.
- Readdy, T., Raabe, J., & Harding, J.S. (2014). Student-athletes' perceptions of an extrinsic reward program: A mixed-methods exploration of self-determination theory in the context of college football. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 26, 157-171.
- Reason, P., & Bradbury, H. (2001). *Handbook of action research: Participative inquiry and practice*. London: Sage Publications.
- Ribbens-McCarthy, J., & Edwards, R. (2011). *Key concepts in family studies*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Richards, K., & Winter, S. (2013). Key Reflections from “On the Ground”: Working with Parents to Create a Task Climate. *Journal of Sport Psychology in Action*, 4 (1), 34-44. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/21520704.2012.733909>
- Rogers, C., & Freiberg, H.J. (1994). *Freedom to Learn (3rd ed)*. New York: Prentice Hall.
- Rosnow, R. L., & Rosenthal, R. (1996). Computing contrasts, effect sizes, and counternulls on other people's published data: General procedures for research consumers. *Psychological Methods*, 1, 331-340.
- Sagar, S.S., & Lavalley, D. (2010). The developmental origins of fear of failure in adolescent athletes: Examining parental practices. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 11, 117-187.

- Sanders, M. R., Turner, K.M.T., & Markie-Dadds, C. (2002). The development and dissemination of the Triple P-Positive Parenting Program: A multilevel evidence-based system of parenting and family support. *Prevention Science, 3*, 173-198.
- Sanir, E. (2015, September 12). Are pushy parents putting children off sport? *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/sport/2015/sep/12/are-pushy-parents-putting-children-off-sport>
- Sapieja, K. M., Dunn, J.G.H., & Holt, N.L. (2011). Perfectionism and perceptions of parenting styles in male youth soccer. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 33*, 20-39.
- Smith, R.E., Smoll, F.L., & Cumming, S.P. (2007). Effects of a motivational climate intervention for coaches on young athletes sport performance anxiety. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 29*, 39-59.
- Smoll, F. L., Cumming, S. P., & Smith, R. E. (2011). Enhancing coach-parent relationships in youth sports: increasing harmony and minimizing hassle. *International Journal of Sports Science and Coaching, 6*, 13-26. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1260/1747-9541.6.1.13>.
- Smoll, F. L., Smith, R. E., & Cumming, S. P. (2007). Effects of coach and parent training on performance anxiety in young athletes: A systemic approach. *Journal of Youth Development, 2* (1), 1-17.
- Sparkes, A.C. (2015). Developing mixed methods research in sport and exercise psychology: Critical reflections on five points of controversy. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 16*, 49-59.
- Sparkes, A. C., & Smith, B. (2014). *Qualitative research methods in sport, exercise and health: From product to process*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Stoszkowski, J., & Collins, D. (2015). Sources, topics and use of knowledge by coaches. *Journal of Sports Sciences, 1-9*. DOI: 10.1080/02640414.2015.1072279
- Support for the Performance Network. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www3.lta.org.uk/players-parents/Performance-players/Performance-Centre-Landscape/Support-for-the-Performance-Network/>
- Syed, M. (2010). *Bounce*. London: Fourth Estate.
- Tamminen, K.A., & Holt, N.L. (2012). Adolescent athletes' learning about coping and the roles of parents and coaches. *Psychology of Sport & Exercise, 13*, 69-79. doi:10.1016/j.psychsport.2011.07.006

- Tashakkori, A., & Creswell, J. (2007). Exploring the nature of research questions in mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 1* (3), 207-211.
- Teddlie, C., & Tashakkori, A. (2009). *Foundations of Mixed Methods Research: Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches in the Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Tennis Australia. (n.d.). Parents Programme. Retrieved from www.tennis.com.au/players/parents/parents-program
- Tracey, S.J. (2010). Qualitative quality: Eight "Big-Tent" criteria for excellent qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry, 16*, 837-851. doi:10.1177/1077800410383121
- Ullrich-French, S., & Smith, A. L. (2006). Perceptions of relationships with parents and peers in sport: Independent and combined prediction of motivational outcomes. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 7*, 193-214.
- United States Tennis Association. (2013). Coaching education: The role of parents in junior tennis. Retrieved from www.usta.com/about-usta/player-development/coaching-education/role_of_parent.
- Vaeyens, R., Lenoir, M., Williams, A.M., & Philippaerts, R.M. (2008). Talent identification and development programmers in sport. *Sports Medicine, 38*, 703-714.
- Vincent, A.P., & Christensen, D.A. (2015). Conversations with parents: A collaborative sport psychology program for parents in youth sport. *Journal of Sport Psychology In Action, 6*, 73-85.
- Vincent, W. J. (2005). *Statistics in kinesiology* (3rd ed.). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wagstaff, C.R.D., Hanton, S., & Fletcher, D. (2013). Developing emotion abilities and regulation strategies in a sport organization: An action research intervention. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 14*, 476-487.
- Weed, M. E. (2009). Research quality considerations for grounded theory research in sport & exercise psychology. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 10*, 502-510. doi:10.1016/j.psychsport.2009.02.007.
- Weiss, M.R. (2004). *Developmental sport and exercise psychology: A lifespan perspective* (pp. 503-524). Morgantown, WV: Fitness Information Technology.
- Wiersma, L. D., & Fifer, A. M. (2008). "The schedule has been tough but we think it's worth it": The joys, challenges, and recommendations of youth sport parents. *Journal of Leisure Research, 40*, 505-530.

- Wolfenden, L.E., & Holt, N. L. (2005). Talent development in elite junior tennis: Perceptions of players, parents, and coaches. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 17*, 108-126. doi:10.1080/10413200590932416
- Wuerth, S., Lee, M. J., & Alfermann, D. (2004). Parental involvement and athletes' career in youth sport. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 5*, 21-33. doi:10.1016/S1469-0292(02)00047-X
- Wyatt-Kaminski, J., Valle, L.A., Filene, J.H., & Boyle, C. L. (2008). A meta-analytic review of components associated with parent training program effectiveness. *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology, 36*(4), 567–589.
- Wylleman, P., & Lavallee, D. (2004). A developmental perspective on transitions faced by athletes. In M. Weiss (Ed.), *Developmental sport and exercise psychology: A lifespan perspective* (pp. 507-527). Morgantown, WV: Fitness Information Technology.

Appendix 1:
Information Sheet (study one)



Information Sheet

The Development of a Psychosocial Parent Education Programme within British Youth Tennis: Understanding Tennis Parents Educational and Support Needs



Lead Researcher:
Sam Thrower
PhD Researcher
School of Sport, Exercise
& Health Sciences
Loughborough University
Loughborough
Leicestershire, LE11 3TU
s.thrower@lboro.ac.uk
07716065298

Additional Researchers:
Dr Chris Harwood:
Senior Lecturer
School of Sport, Exercise
& Health Sciences
Loughborough University
Loughborough
Leicestershire, LE11 3TU
c.g.harwood@lboro.ac.uk
+44 (0)1509 226342

Additional Researchers:
Dr Chris Spray:
Senior Lecturer
School of Sport, Exercise
& Health Sciences
Loughborough University
Loughborough
Leicestershire, LE11 3TU
c.m.spray@lboro.ac.uk
+44 (0)1509 226339

What is the purpose of the study?

- *The aim of this study is to establish tennis parents' education and support needs across key junior developmental stages.*

Who is doing the research?

- *Sam Thrower will conduct this research study.*
- *Dr Chris Harwood and Dr Chris Spray will be assisting the project.*

Why are you doing this research?

- *This study is part of a research project that is supported by the LTA, which aims to develop a stage and age appropriate education programme for British tennis parents. This programme will enable British tennis parents to contribute to the psychosocial development of their child-athlete as well as optimising their own tennis experience in a key support role.*

How will data be collected?

- *Fieldwork will be used to collect data, which will require Sam to spend a prolonged period of time (6 months) at [centre name] to gain an in-depth understanding this social setting.*
- *Sam will be at [centre name] (Monday –Friday) every other week*
- *Data will be collected through observation, listening to your experiences and understanding your views through informal chats. Observations and informal conversations will be recorded by writing field notes*
- *There will also be an opportunity for you to share your views in a formal interview if you so wish. Formal interviews will be recorded using a Dictaphone.*

How can I assist the research?

- *Participants are encouraged to engage with Sam, share their views and discuss the education and support they think parents need within British youth tennis to be able to contribute to the psychological and social development of their child.*

Has this study gained ethical clearance?

- *The current study has been cleared by Loughborough University ethics committee to proceed.*
- *The lead researcher (Sam Thrower) has passed an enhanced CRB check.*

How will you ensure that my identity is kept confidential?

- *Any data collected (e.g. field notes, audio files) will remain strictly confidential. When writing up or presenting the findings quotes will be used to illustrate important findings, however, these quotes will remain strictly anonymous through the use of code names*
- *Data will be stored safely and securely and held for ten years, after which it will be destroyed, in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. The data will be owned by Loughborough University and will only be used for the purpose of this study. Only the research team will have access to the data.*
- *The only exception to our confidentiality policy is if a disclosure is made that indicates a child may be at risk of harm or is being harmed. In this instance the tennis clubs welfare officer will be contacted.*

What will happen to the results of the study?

- *The findings of this research will be written up for publication in an academic journal. In addition to this, the findings will be used to design and implement a stage and age appropriate educational support programme for tennis parents. It is envisaged that this will assist the role of the tennis parent in psychologically nurturing their child to achieve their optimal potential whilst also facilitating their overall tennis experience.*

What if I am not happy with how the research is conducted?

- *The University has a policy relating to Research Misconduct and Whistle Blowing which is available online at [http://www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/committees/ethical/Whistleblowing\(2\).htm](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/committees/ethical/Whistleblowing(2).htm).*

Do I have to provide informed consent to participate?

- *Due to the large number of people attending the high performance centre, it is not practical to seek written consent from everyone involved. Therefore, you will be considered as a participant unless you withdraw from the study (see below).*

How can I withdraw myself from the study?

- *If you do not wish to be a participant in the research then please fill out the slip below. You can withdraw from the research at any stage and do not have to provide a reason for*

withdrawal. Withdrawal will mean that any observations or informal interviews with you will not be written up as part of data collection. Should you wish to withdraw this will not affect your relationship with the researchers, [centre name], the LTA or Loughborough University.

I have some questions who should I contact?

- If you have questions please contact the lead researcher (Sam Thrower)



Withdrawal Form

** If you wish to withdraw yourself from the study please fill out this form and return it to Sam Thrower.*

Name: _____ Please circle your role: Parent Coach Support Staff

Please Tick Box:

I would like to withdraw as a participant from the research project titled:
'Understanding British Tennis Parents' Education and Support Needs'.

Appendix 2:
Field Notes Example (study one)

Data Collection & Analysis Template

Date: Saturday 2nd March 2013

Location: [Location Removed]

Type of Event: [Event Name Removed]

Start Time: 9am Finish Time: 3pm Time Spent in Field: 4hours

Central Participants in these Notes:

Jotted iPhone Notes (Used to capture and record key observations, verbatim quotes and informal communications whilst immersed in the field)

Sat

Tears, stamping on racket, questioning line calls, oh my god shouts, line call override by ref [Child's name] feels pressure of [Coach's name] being here grade 2 and at home, tears if she loses, [Child's name] dad can't watch, [Child's name] mum go away my fault if loses, done well to come back from 1 down, growing tired. 1st set nervous, do they grow out of that? Learn to cope. Coach do u get nervous I don't like butterflies, oh excited. Oblivion. [Child's name] its like I'm back at the beginning again if it was [Coach's name] i would go 4 a walk and a chat now with [Child's name] i pass her on. [Coach's name] fuck off through fence bounced racket into tree. [Parent's name] support both clap said nothing. Stand up. When ahead focus on moving. [Child's name] blood out of stone. Express self-more. [Child's name] shocked didn't watch same feedback. [Child's name] has icing on cake but don't know if she had cake. [Child's name] circus ntc training just for [Child's name], handling it well. I'm emotional she's emotional that was the [Country name] oh my gosh missed smash. Feedback in that situation just smile. U should have played the drop shot. [Parent's name] [Coach's name] so calm no! Development years tournaments diff. Red morning orange day green weekend. Changes teenage years emotional [Child's name] dad jumpy. Balance it out. Self-conscious. Winning!! [Child's name]. Can't not value it. She deserved to lose after that behaviour

Field Notes (Descriptive accounts of observations)	Initial Codes (Break down field notes into concepts)	Focused Codes (Frequent or significant codes to develop into categories)
<p>I arrived shortly after 9 for what was my first tournament, an [Tournament name]. I walked up onto the balcony. The balcony was busy with around 30 parents, coaches and siblings. Whilst children ran around to relieve the boredom, coaches sat on their iPads charting matches and parents sat tensely. The draw included 16 players, 8 of which were on the 4 courts below me. The tournament was run from a single table in the middle of the balcony that had a number of A4 sheets stuck to it with cellotape. These included the main draw and court code of conduct. A man who [Coach's name] described as a stalwart of [County name] tennis was running the event. [Coach's name] explained to me as I sat down with him that the LTA will organise the tournament but they will get someone local to run it. I then asked [Coach's name] about the draw, he said that the initial draw is important</p>		

<p>because you will either go into the winner’s side of the draw or the cancellation side of the draw. Each player will end the tournament with a position from 1-16 and points will be awarded on that basis. [Coach’s name] told me that the mini red tournaments normally last a morning, the orange tournaments last a day but by the time you get to green and yellow ball the tournaments are split over two days. [Coach’s name] explained that it’s a massive commitment and expense, it ends up taking up the whole weekend for starters but by the time you have paid for two nights’ accommodation, food, petrol its expensive...and that’s before you have paid for 3 individual lessons each week, new trainers and strings every month etc. [Child’s name] was on court playing against [Child’s name]. Both players were of similar build, height, playing style and skill level. The game was close, the first set [Coach’s name] described as nervy and that would be an accurate reflection, both players were routinely broken and second serves were tentatively lofted in. [Child’s name] took the first set, [Child’s name] the second and [Child’s name] won it on a tie break. She hadn’t played well both players played very conservatively favouring the middle of the court, perhaps a reflection of the importance of the match and both players knowing how vital it is to get onto the right side of the draw. Interesting was the impact that the children playing had on the balcony. [Child’s name] mum and dad started by watching the game directly above [Child’s name] court but then [Child’s name] told her mum to “go away” and she watched from two courts away. “It’s always my fault when she starts playing badly” her mum later explained to me. On the other hand her dad stood further back from the balcony and was fidgety, moving from side to side, changing his balance and moving him arms into various poses. [Coach’s name] later explained to me that he tries to balance out what the parent is doing, If they are right up close to the balcony he will withdraw slightly and watch from a distance, If the parents don’t watch or in this case get asked to go away then he will go and stand next to the court for support. On the court next to [Child’s name] and [Child’s name] two girls who looked about 14/15 were playing. Firstly the difference in size and physique shows the difficulties that young players have when moving up into a new age group e.g. being 10 and playing in under 12’s (e.g. playing girls who can be two years older than them). The dynamic of this game was totally different with both players very vocal and emotional, I lost count of the amount of times that their rackets ended up on the floor, in one instance the girl threw her racket on the floor and stamped on it twice. These acts were regularly accompanied by shouts of “oh my god”. In addition to this there was questioning of line calls and general tension and so much emotion that it all reverted to tears for one of the girls. At one point the referee who was standing next to me was watching and had to override a call because it was out. After both games were over I was talking to [Child’s name] mum and</p>	<p>Structure of tournaments</p> <p>Cost of competitive tennis involvement</p> <p>Parents role in helping children cope with pressure/emotions</p> <p>Appropriate body language when watching</p> <p>Stages of biological maturity and its impact on performance during U12’s</p> <p>Establishing expectations and consequences for behaviour at tournaments</p>	
---	---	--

<p>she was explaining how she thinks that [Child's name] was feeling a lot of pressure because of being at "home" in [Location], having [Coach's name] and everyone else like yourself here, and because it's a grade 2 its important. She also explained "oh there would be tears if she loses". At one point [Child's name] dad walked past us and she said oh he makes me laugh because he can't watch when his girls play! She also said that she thinks [Child's name] is a bit under the weather. Later I was talking to [Coach's name] with [Child's name] mum just before her second game and she was again saying that she just seemed nervous "do they just grow out of that" she asked [Coach's name]. Well they just learn to cope he said, he turned to me and said that the best one I heard was a coach who said to his player are you nervous, to which he replied no, he then went on to say well you know everyone gets nervous its natural, its ok to admit it etc, his player then replied saying no I really don't feel nervous. The coach then said, oh so you don't feel butterflies in your stomach before a game? "oh you mean being excited?" It's how you perceive it isn't it [Coach's name] said. [Coach's name] said that he normally tells his players it's like the feeling you get on oblivion (a rollercoaster at Alton Towers). I then spoke to [Coach's name] who was sitting with [Coach's name] and [Child's name] parents. [Coach's name] told me that he had one of the most challenging weeks of his career last week and had just sat down on Friday night then he had to spend 30 minutes on the phone to [Child's name] then 1hour and a half on the phone to [Father's name] afterwards. [Coach's name] explained how he had got an email with a report from the coach that had taken [Child's name] to ITF's in [Location] and he had described talking to [Child's name] as "trying to get blood out of a stone" and that he needs to express himself more. [Coach's name] explained how at first he was frustrated because it seems like all the stuff had been a waste of time and that he hadn't made any improvement. Then as he read more he was confused why there had been so little about [Child's name] performances and more about his personality then he was concerns that the coach had just replicated previous reports and was getting involved in stuff that he didn't really know anything about. When [Coach's name] spoke to [Child's name] he said that [Child's name] was shocked. And he had said that the coach hadn't even watched his match. "in the end I just told him to express himself how he wants on court and that my best memories of you are when you grunt with intensity not just because you are told to express yourself more and run out of your chair after every change of end. [Coach's name] then told me how he used to be fiery as a competitor when he used to play in the London leagues and he once told a lady to fuck off through a fence and once smashed a racket into the floor which bounced out the court and into a tree and he never got it back! This disclosure was funny because [Coach's name] then spoke to [Parent's name] and [Child's name] as she came off court and [Parent's name]</p>	<p>Parent's anxiety of watching children compete</p>	<p>Importance of social development – balanced development</p>
--	--	--

<p>said that he is emotional and [Child's name] is emotional like him but that [Coach's name] is one of the calmest people he has ever met! I said to [Coach's name] "It just shows that its controllable doesn't it!" [Coach's name] said after that its interesting from a developmental point of view coming to tournaments is like going back to get beginning because when he goes with [Child's name] after a match they will go for a walk and talk about the performances but with [Child's name] I give her some feedback and hand her over to her mum and dad! The feedback that [Coach's name] gave [Child's name] was positive and he also said that when he gets ahead to keep moving well rather than relying on her skill and flicking it off the hips. [Coach's name] also laughed with her about a simple smash that she had totally missed and her "posh response" of oh my gosh! [Coach's name] told her that the best advice I can give you in that situation is just to smile, and just explained to her that she should have just softly dropped it into the court! I then stood chatting to [Coach's name], I told him how impressed I had been with [Child's name] and her skill level. [Coach's name] said that "she has the icing on the cake, its weather she has the cake!" [Child's name] then told me about the circus surrounding [Child's name] at the moment and how the [Centre name] had put on a whole session for him and said to [Coach's name] that they didn't want the other boys hitting with him!</p>	<p>Providing post match feedback – especially during younger ages</p>	
<p>Later watching [Child's name] again [Coach's name] was talking to her mum about another player and he said that once they get into the teenage years they change and get very emotional. During the matches [Child's name] and his wife were very supportive, they stood up leaning against the balcony the whole time but simply clapped when she played a good shot, but most encouragingly for me they also clapped when her opponent hit an awesome shot. [Parent's name] also gave lots of thumbs up and smiles to encourage [Child's name]. [Child's name] mum was the same in the second game. [Child's name] won her final game despite playing badly and having a strop. I always know when [Child's name] is having a strop because she starts throwing her racket up and catching it. She said mouthed to her mum viciously "go away" again. At the end her mum said "well she deserved to lose that for her behaviour".</p>	<p>Understanding bio-psychosocial developmental stage & its impact on tennis</p> <p>Appropriate behavioural responses when watching their child play</p> <p>Establishing morals / expectations for behaviour</p>	

Integrative Memos (What I think about the data)

The transition from winning at one age group to the next is a critical one, parents must be able to change their expectations and values when this happens to ensure the player doesn't have a big fall when they don't win everything anymore!

The displays of emotion surprised me; almost every girl that lost was in tears at one point and displayed frustration on court. Not being able control these emotions is a worry not only for performance but also in terms of enjoyment & long term participation. Bio-psycho-social factors clearly evident – understanding these must be crucial for maintaining enjoyment & participation during this stage. It looked like a pretty traumatic experience for the girls!

Reflexive Fieldwork Journal (My Own Feelings and Involvement)

Watching [Child's name], I became a sports fan, I disregarded what I believe in, I was rooting for her to win, at the end of the second set it was a close, tense affair, but she eventually ground out the victory. I was relieved. I spoke her mum a few moments after, "what did you think?" she asked me "well she ground it out didn't she, and that's a good thing". It wasn't until I sat down that I realised that I just become an outcome oriented parent, her performance wasn't good, her behaviour wasn't good, in fact there were few positives from the performance yet I had let the result cloud my judgement. Sure the way she stuck in there was a positive but ultimately she had been rewarded for her bad behaviour and performance. Fortunately, [Coach's name] was thinking more rationally than me and said to me just before she won that I hope she wins because she's not going to like what I'm going to say. None the less I understood how hard it is to give this type of feedback and not blinded by the victory, we are socialised in sport to be happy after victories but parents must be able to disregard these feelings of relief and happiness when victory occurs through a poor performance to ensure the continual long term progression of the child.

• **Visual Diagrams**

• **Paradigm** (circumstances of a category e.g. is it a condition, action/interaction, emotional response or consequence)

• **Conditional Matrix** (structure of studied phenomena)

Appendix 3:
Parent Interview Guide (study one)



Parent Interview Guide

The Development of a Psychosocial Parent Education Programme within British Youth Tennis: Understanding Tennis Parents' Education and Support Needs

Name:

Email Address:

Childs Name:

Childs Age:

Childs LTA Rating:

Childs LTA Ranking (If applicable):

Interview Information

Why did you select me for an interview?

- *You have been asked to participate in a formal interview because the lead researcher (Sam Thrower) feels that you have offered some particularly interesting insights in relation to tennis parents' education and support needs during informal conversations.*
- *Some of these insights are important regarding the main findings of this study and therefore warrant further exploration.*

Why are you formally interviewing participants?

- *In contrast to informal conversations, formal interviews allow you time to prepare and think about your answers.*
- *Formal interviews provide the lead researcher (Sam Thrower) with the opportunity to ask you structured questions about the research topic.*
- *Formal interviews also provide you with an opportunity to express your in-depth views and opinions*

What is the aim of the interview?

- *The purpose of the interview is to gain an understanding of your experiences as a tennis parent, the broad range of challenges you face and your educational and support needs. The aim is to explore what your needs as a parent were at different stages in your child's development and across a variety of contexts.*

Who is conducting the interviews?

- *Sam Thrower will be conducting the interviews.*

Have these interviews been ethically approved?

- *Loughborough University ethics committee has approved these formal interviews.*
- *Sam Thrower has passed an enhanced CRB check.*

Is there anything I need to do before the interview?

- *If you are happy to be interviewed then please read and complete the tasks in this interview guide in preparation for the interview.*

Where and when will the interviews take place?

- *All interviews will take place at a suitable time for you when you are at the tennis centre.*
- *All interviews will take place in a semi-public area*

How long will the interview take?

- *Interviews will last around 1 hour*

How will the interviews be recorded?

- *A digital Dictaphone will be used to record the interviews*

Will the interviews be confidential?

- *Yes! Audio files will remain strictly confidential. When writing up or presenting the findings quotes from the interviews will be used to illustrate important findings, however, these quotes will remain strictly anonymous through the use of code names*
- *Audio files and transcripts will be stored safely and securely and held for ten years, after which it will be destroyed, in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. The data will be owned by Loughborough University and will only be used for the purpose of this study.*
- *The only exception to our confidentiality policy is if a disclosure is made that indicates a child may be at risk of harm or is being harmed. In this instance the tennis clubs welfare officers will be contacted.*

What if I am not happy with how the interviews are conducted?

- *The University has a policy relating to Research Misconduct and Whistle Blowing which is available online at [http://www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/committees/ethical/Whistleblowing\(2\).htm](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/committees/ethical/Whistleblowing(2).htm).*

How can I withdraw myself from the interviews?

- *You can withdraw from the interviews at any stage and do not have to provide a reason for withdrawal. Withdrawal will mean that your audio recording will not be transcribed and included as part of the data. Should you wish to withdraw this will not affect your relationship with the researchers, [centre name], the LTA or Loughborough University.*

I have some more questions who should I contact?

- *If you have any questions about your participation please contact the Sam Thrower at s.thrower@lboro.ac.uk*

Will I receive a copy of the interview?

- *Yes! You will be sent a copy of the interview and asked if you would like to add or withdraw anything you said.*

Do I have to provide informed consent to be interviewed?

- *Yes, although you are already considered as a participant within this study you will need to provide signed informed consent before any interviews can take place. If you are happy to be interviewed then please fill in the 'Interview Informed Consent' below:*

Interview Informed Consent

The purpose and details of the interviews have been explained to me. I understand that this study is designed to further scientific knowledge and that the Loughborough University Ethical Advisory Committee has approved all procedures.

- I have read and understood the interview information section above and this consent form.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions about my participation.
- I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in the interviews.
- I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the interviews at any stage for any reason, and that I will not be required to explain my reasons for withdrawing.

I understand that all the information I provide will be treated in strict confidence and will be kept anonymous and confidential to the researchers unless (under the statutory obligations of the agencies which the researchers are working with), it is judged that confidentiality will have to be breached for the safety of the participant or others.

I agree to participate in this study.

Your name _____

Your signature _____

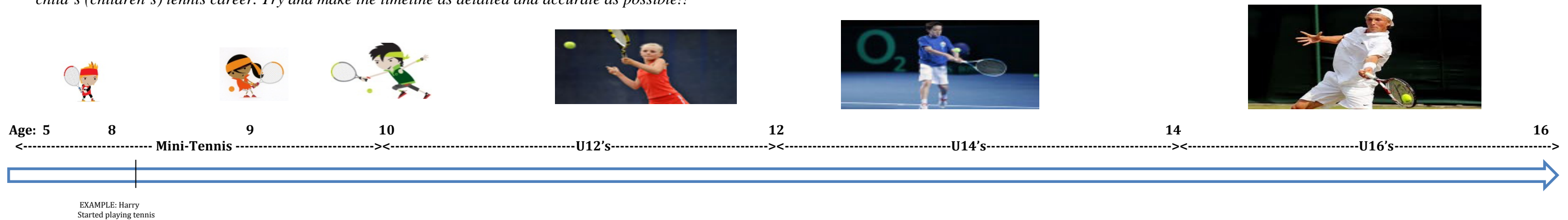
Signature of investigator _____

Date _____

Pre Interview Tasks- Tennis Parent Timeline

Please complete Tasks 1 & 2 and bring this 'tennis parent timeline' with you to the interview

Task 1: On the timeline below please locate: 1) the current age of your child (children); 2) The age your child (children) started playing tennis; 3) the highlights of your child's (children's) tennis career; 4) the low points of your child's (children's) tennis career. Try and make the timeline as detailed and accurate as possible!!



Task 2: Please reflect upon and write down your thoughts on each of the relevant questions below as it will help you answer these questions during the actual interview (Only answer questions from developmental stages that you have experienced!)

Mini-Tennis

1: What challenges have you faced as a parent during mini-tennis? Please consider challenges associated with training, tournaments, and the British tennis system.

2: What demands have you have faced as a parent outside of mini-tennis? Please consider challenges associated with education, child development, social life and family life.

3: Based on your experience, what education and support do you think parents need during this mini-tennis?

4: Based on your experience as a tennis parent, can you write down the advice you would give to mini-tennis parents?

U12's

6: What challenges have you faced as a parent during U12's? Please consider challenges associated with training, tournaments, and the British tennis system.

7: What demands have you have faced as a parent outside of U12's tennis? Please consider challenges associated with education, child development, social life and family life.

8: Based on your experience, what education and support do you think parents need during U12's?

9: Based on your experience as a tennis parent, can you write down the advice you would give to U12's tennis parents?

U14's

11: What challenges have you faced as a parent during U14's tennis? Please consider challenges associated with training, tournaments, and the British tennis system.

12: What demands have you have faced as a parent outside of U14's tennis? Please consider challenges associated with education, child development, social life and family life.

13: Based on your experience, what education and support do you think parents need during U14's

14: Based on your experience as a tennis parent, can you write down the advice you would give to U14's tennis parents?

U16's

16: What challenges have you faced as a parent during U16's tennis? Please consider challenges associated with training, tournaments, and the British tennis system.

17: What demands have you have faced as a parent outside of U16's tennis? Please consider challenges associated with education, child development, social life and family life.

18: Based on your experience, what education and support do you think parents need during U16's

19: Based on your experience as a tennis parent, can you write down the advice you would give to U16's tennis parents?

Interview Guide

Introduction & Participant Rights

- Firstly, thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. I am interviewing participants as it gives me the opportunity to ask you structured questions about my research topic but also because it gives you an opportunity to express your in-depth views and opinions.
- The purpose of the interview is to gain an understanding of your experiences as a tennis parent, the broad range of challenges you face, and the educational and support you need at different stages in your child's development (e.g. mini-tennis, U12's etc) and across a variety of contexts (e.g. training, tournaments, education, and home life).
- We will start with your current challenges then work backwards to the start of your journey
- The interview will be recorded using a Dictaphone, as this is the best way to gather and collect accurate information and allows me to concentrate on asking questions and listening to responses.
- Anything you say is entirely confidential which means that anything you say will not in any way be used in combination with your name. I may use quotes when writing up the findings, however, these will remain strictly anonymous and your identity will be protected.
- There are no right or wrong answers to the questions you will be asked. Your answers should be based entirely on your own opinion rather than answers you think sound right or that I would like to hear. If at any point you don't understand a question or you need clarification please do not hesitate to ask
- There is no time limit on the interview so please do not feel pressured by time. If at any point during the interview you would like a break just ask.
- And finally, please use your timeline to help you to answer all of the questions you will be asked

Do you have any questions before we start?

Interview Questions

Introductory Questions: ‘I would like to start by exploring your history as a tennis parent so we can place the interview in some context...’

Demographics	Be able to place their story in context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How long have you been involved in tennis as a parent? - How many children do you have that play tennis? - What age are your children? - What standard are your children? - How frequently are your children competing? 	
---------------------	---	---	--

Section 1: ‘Ok, the first section is looking at the current challenges you face in relation to tennis...’

Current tennis challenges	Current generic tennis challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can you describe some of the challenges you currently face as a tennis parent? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What do you find currently find difficult about being a tennis parent?
	Current tournament challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tell me about some of the demands that you as a parent have recently experienced in relation to tennis tournaments? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the challenges for you when you are at a tournament? - Are there any challenges your child (children) face at tournaments that you find difficult to be able to help them with?
	Current developmental challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What sort of challenges do you face in relation to your child’s tennis development? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What sort of challenges do you face in relation to your child’s overall development e.g., social & academic

	Current organisation- al challenges	- Can you explain some of the demands you face in relation to the British tennis system	- Are there any challenges your child (children) currently face as a result of the British tennis system?
	Education and support needs	- What sort of education and support would you want during this stage?	

Section 2: ‘Ok, the second section will look at some of the challenges you have experience in the past as a tennis parent...’

Tennis Parent History (Note: if parent is still in mini-tennis use questions to explore mini red, orange & green)	Past challenges	- Looking back, how would you describe your experiences of (mini-tennis/U12’s/ U14’s/U16’s) and what were the challenges you faced at this stage.	- In addition to those you have mentioned, were there any challenges inside/outside of tennis you faced at this stage
	Advice for tennis parents	- Based on your experience what advice would you give to (mini-tennis/U12’s/ U14’s/U16’s) tennis parents?	
	Education and Support Needs	- Based on your experiences, what education and support do you think parents need during (mini-tennis/U12’s/ U14’s/U16’s)	

Section 3: ‘Ok, the final section will look at summarising your overall experiences as a tennis parent...’

Overall Experience as a Tennis Parent	Overall experience	- How would you describe your overall experience of being a tennis parent?	- Positive/negative experience?
	Changes as a parent	- How have you changed as a parent since you started your tennis journey?	- What caused these changes?

	Lessons learnt	- Could you describe some of the most important lessons you have learnt from being a tennis parent	
--	----------------	--	--

'Ok, that covers everything I wanted to ask you, I do, however some concluding questions about the interview itself...

Conclusion		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are there any areas that you think we failed to cover relating to your education and support needs as a tennis parent? - Do you think this process improved your understanding or awareness of your parenting? - Do you think I led, or influenced your answers away from the things you wanted to say? - How did you find the interview process? 	
-------------------	--	--	--

Thank you for participating you will be sent a copy of the transcript and an audio file by email. Please let me know if you would like to add or withdraw anything you said.

Appendix 4:
Parent Interview Transcript Example (study one)

I = Interviewer

P = Participant

***Introduction not transcribed**

I: What do you consider your main roles to be as a tennis parent?

P: well that's interesting

I: I'll throw you a curve ball to start with!

P: I'm not sure being a tennis parent is any different to being a parent to be honest, I think it's something that you encompass within your parenting role, of course you want to make sure that your child is well fed, has exercise, feels good about themselves, has high esteem and finding an avenue in which that happens, you know some kids do it through school don't they, some kids do it through music and [child's name] does it through tennis and school, so I don't really see it as being a separate role

I: ok, so you just think it's a support role?

P: a parenting role yeah that you know, it's like any parent you have to help children make decisions you have to help them grow into independence you have to make sure that they are safeguarded and actually being a parent that, I don't think I'm a tennis parent, I think I'm a parent who has a son who is good a tennis, which is different

I: yeah ok, so what are your goals for [child's name] in the future?

P: goals erm, just want [child's name] to be a well-adjusted child and young adults and an adult who feels confident good self-esteem, sees that he's got a place in the world and if tennis is a part of that then that's fine as well

I: ok perfect, so the first section is looking at the current challenges you are facing as a tennis parent, so if we start with tournaments what are the challenges you face in relation to tournaments as a parent.

P: as a parent I think the challenges are well I mean there is just huge...well its other parents to be quite honest and you see some parents that honestly and truly believe that their children or their child are going to be the next ATP tour leader and are very focused on that and nothing else and at tournaments you see a lot of, sometimes it verges on safeguarding issues it's so pressurised you know I've seen parents almost have fights on this very balcony actually over line calls I've seen children being chastised and I've nearly seen one child being hit at the end of tennis matches so for me the challenges at tennis tournaments is parental behaviour that's the first thing and keeping your child safe in all of that and sometimes we've just had to take us away from the environment and we would have no qualms about just ending his tournament experience on that day rather than seeing

him subject to anything like that...erm I think the other thing is sometimes around the officials who are on the whole normally quite good and child friendly, very occasionally you get officials that are a bit Genghis Kahn about things and are treating children like adults which they are clearly not and that can sometimes prove to be a bit difficult so tournaments aren't often a very positive experience because you know it's all about the child competing and having to get points and having to get a ranking rather than truly enjoying the game

I: you mentioned challenges in relation to other parents and referees is there any challenges you face as a parent or an individual before, during or after competitions?

P: I used to find it very difficult to watch matches, my stomach would be churning, I would feel sick, it's that fight or flight feeling, and it's innate those powerful emotions for your child although I have learnt to be pretty poker faced, it's quite hard as a parent to actually be totally helpless and that's what you are in tennis because you can't cheer, you can't give advice, in rugby and football you can be on the touchline you can shout advice out you can be very vocal but tennis is such a controlled sport both in terms of what you can do and what you can't and I did find it very hard to begin with but I find it easier now because I've defined what my role is just to support however you can just by having a presence there rather than influencing them...all you can be is be there for them

I: how did you learn that?

P: erm just by controlling the adrenaline, I mean watching [child's name] play I just get palpitations because you are just totally can't do anything to help and particularly if it starts going wrong for them you can't, you just can't do anything so you more or less have to have this agreement off court before that you know, what I will do is stand and that's all I can do but I'm there for you [child's name] and if you know I'm there as your rock then I think that helps him but that's with him being 11 and being able to understand that, I mean when they are younger they can't understand that, they really can't and you know this whole thing around being positive when you can't actually, there is no other role as a parent when you can't actually affectively communicate with your child, when the child's on court from the age of 3 sometimes you can't actually communicate so it's a very false situation to be in as a parent not to be able to communicate with your child

I: okay, is there anything that [child's name] faces in terms of match play that you find difficult to be able to help him with...any challenges that he is presented with psychologically during matchplay that you find difficult to be able to give him advice for?

P: I think the cheating thing is hard I think the cheating concept is really hard particularly if you've got a child who has got a very clear idea about what is right and what is wrong and what is cheating and what isn't and [child's name] does have that so the old adage cheats never prosper but actually that does happen on the court and that makes it very difficult for the child, for our child to cope with, the cheating is a very difficult concept for him to understand

I: yeah ok, so if we shift the context to the training environment are there any challenges you face in relation to training, the amount of training or being here that kind of thing?

P: well I mean it's, I mean the whole thing is centred around certain centres so you have to be in a financial and a geographic and an employment situation to adhere to the system so there isn't any child focused options at all its totally around the system and if you can't fit with the system, even if you've got the most talented child in the world they won't be able to fulfil their true potential, so since we have, since [child's name] has been doing his tennis [Husband's name] hasn't been able to dedicate his time to his business, he is having to change his career he is having to make the decision to in the mean time I will support everything to do with our financial responsibilities so we can fit around [child's name] training schedule

I: So it's more of organisational challenges in terms of making it all work for him, the time and the money?

P: yeah we have had to completely change our family lifestyle because of that

I: do you find it difficult to do that to shape everything around tennis?

P: well I think actually we've stopped doing it to some extent erm because recently there has been a decision made by the LTA which is basically close down the centre where [child's name] should go to resulting in an additional 30mile extension to where he has got to go and it's just physically not possible to do, what everyone is forgetting is these children are children and are subject to by educational law and are at school so actually, again I come back to the whole thing around the child not really being at the centre and the system dictates what the child should do and because tennis is such a technical sport and it's such a physical sport it requires 4 nights a week training and there is no municipality around it it's all about the LTA and everything else that goes with it

I: I guess that links on nicely to the next question in terms of are there any other issues other than the one you have just mentioned in relation to the LTA that you face?

P: well the LTA is a membership organisation and yet it does not consult with its members I can't think of any other sector that would not actually consult with, or wasn't legally

required to consult with its membership, but clearly it feels it doesn't have to which is quite arrogant and I don't see that that will change, but I think the other thing is around how it doesn't actually consult with children, it doesn't consult with at all, if you think about the national camps that happen they are not child friendly, they again are just centred around a formula, I don't know if there is any basis for it, but I'm not surprised that children stop playing it actually because the formula is so rigid and no child centred

I: rigid in terms of the amount of training they have to do the hoops they have to jump through?

P: I think the children enjoy that but I'm not sure how much real understanding there is, I think there is a great understanding in the LTA around tennis but I'm not sure there is a great understanding of children and children are not just small adults, physiologically, psychologically, everything about them is different that's why you paediatricians because they operate in a completely different way and I think that a real understanding of child development is needed, I mean it's interesting the other day, I heard someone say oh I took so and so to a tournament the other day, this was a coach that had taken one of the children and the father gave me the booster seat to put in the back of the car and then I thought yeah she's just a child, these guys are all on booster seats, they don't eat the food that a top athlete would eat at the moment and they're not, they are just developing, the kids that we have got on the tennis court at [child's name] age, most of them have only been walking for about 8 years you know they are children, so yeah I think coaches and everyone do their best they know about tennis, they've been on courses and I remember one thing, we had in a report when [child's name] was little it said that basically, [child's name] is flat footed and it's like from my background all children are born flat footed they all are they don't have an arch in their foot properly formed until they are about 14, so why wouldn't they understand the child development and the development of feet will affect the way that child runs and acts and everything else that goes with it

I: do you think that lack of child development extends to the parents as well

P: yeah it probably does actually, it probably does and the expectations of parents about what children can cope with and what they can't cope with is massive I think a lot of the parents think that their child is going to be, I mean why do we do this, we do this because [child's name] enjoys it we don't do it for any other reason he could say tomorrow that I don't want to do this anymore and in which case that would be fine but I think there is a lot of pressure on children from parents that is a completely different way of looking at it that they are probably living their own fantasies through their children and that's scary

I: yeah that is but I think it's very common

P: I think it is yeah

I: If we move the context slightly in terms away from the direct tennis environment but looking at how tennis influences other environments, so how does tennis currently impact on your home life or does it impact on your home life?

P: oh yeah it does in terms of organisation, I've already talked about [Husband's name] having to change his work commitments, I've had to completely ramp my work commitments up because of that we have, because [Child's name] does so much tennis training and then has to do his homework then we have to make sure that is properly scheduled, when he has exams we have to work twice as hard, and he stops playing tennis and takes his exams because that's the priority for him at that point, we just have to be really really organised and we haven't got any other relatives around us to help so it all falls down to [Husband's name] and I and in that respect there is a lot of, I mean if we didn't have tennis our lives would be a lot easier

I: you mentioned how it impacts on the education, does it also impact on your social life and [Child's name] social life?

P: erm it impacts on, we have to work really really hard on [Child's name] social life so we have to make sure that he still has sleep overs he still has proper friends he still goes out on his bike, he still goes to school discos and things like that and we limit the number of tournaments and weekends that he does tennis, so he will not do more than he normally has one weekend when he might play tennis and one weekend when he doesn't and he never does more than two tournaments in a month

I: do you think it's important to get that balance

P: yeah so we walk the dog, we go for picnics, we go for family things and we, he can just hang around with his mates in his bedroom playing on the Xbox so we compensate hugely to make sure that he is getting a normal childhood as well which of course adds pressure to us as parents because you need to make sure that that happens so [Husband's name] and I probably don't have the same relationship that we used to have before tennis was here, so going out is a real treat and you know our social life is really zero, apart from today because we are going out for a curry because it's [Husband's name] birthday!

I: That's good! Are there any mental or social qualities that you are trying to develop in [child's name] at his age?

P: erm I think again coming back to this whole point about trying to make this as a part of his whole life, so he is 11 now, so you can see that he is developing really good decision

making skills around characters so what's a good person to hang around with and what isn't a good person to hang around with and you see him doing that in his sporting world as well so he will chose very wisely who he hangs around with and who he doesn't want to hand around with and that's on and off court and his mental resilience both at school and with the family and on court you can see that developing as a whole person so I don't think he differentiates between something that happens on court and something that happens at school or at home I think we have managed to keep that intact and socially its interesting he doesn't really see and this is probably because of the competitive process, he doesn't really see tennis as a social activity he sees it as quite a combat quite a competitive process erm so squads he sees as more social and of court the home tennis club which is like the basis of everything erm he sees that as social he has a completely different relationship with players in the tennis club at home than he would have here or in a tournament so he is a competitor here and sort of like socially he is a very talkative, communicative boy with lots of friends, he knows how to hold a conversation, he is polite, I wouldn't say that you know he is withdrawn or any different to any 11 year old but that again is because he doesn't just have tennis in his life he has friends you know he has his wacky granddad with Alzheimer to contend with, family barbeques and all that but you have to make sure they get all that and that they don't just do tennis, or I think they would just become programmed to be a bit autistic about it and not have the social skills

I: is that something you see in the tennis environment

P: oh god yeah yeah, as they get older they seem to go in on themselves and lose confidence and don't manage to cope as well and I'm just absolutely adamant that won't happen to [child's name] and if it means that we have to slow down on the tennis and if we see that happening or he has to have a life, it has to be balanced, it's a very difficult down side of all sport I suppose really is that you can't hand your child over to the LTA and say do with this child with this child what you have to you know the role is the parents, that's the role it's a parenting role in conjunction with the coaches and everyone else that can help but at the end of the day it's the parents, you have to stay in the parenting role for the child and not think that somebody else knows more about your child than you do!

I: yeah no it's a good point, looking back were there any challenges you faced when you first came into tennis if you can remember that far back...anything you found difficult when you first came into these environments?

P: well I think to begin with at a local level there were a lot of parents who wanted their child to be like [child's name], that's at a local level and very quickly become isolated, so

if you've got a talented child at anything I suppose, I suppose it the same at school, you know other parents want their child to be as talented as them and therefore there is that jealousy so he became isolated very quickly in our own tennis club so that took a while to get used to and kind of ignore and then I suppose coming here first of all you get a bit caught up in the headiness of it all and you start getting pulled into this parallel universe that is not a reality at all and you have to then dig yourself out of the parallel universe into reality and just do your job and incorporate tennis into your life as if it's just a normal part of your routine and inevitably you become sort of, I think where we are now sort of 4 and a 1/2, 5 years down the line is that you just standing by the side of your child knowing when to leave them or when to lead them go and support them from behind, but you are constantly by their side figuratively speaking as a guardian shadow and that's 5 years down the line on that now

I: so almost your role has changed, as he has got older as he has progressed through the journey...

P: yeah I mean it's very difficult when you've got, I mean parents would come up when he was little and you would see them going up to your child if he pops to the loo and he would come over and say what's happened, and he would say this that or the other and you would think god they are infiltrating my child stay away so, and that used to happen, that used to happen right at the beginning, parents would take the role over because it's just so intense about their child having to win and that used to feel quite, and that used to make me feel that I would have to stand by [child's name] the whole time and kind of protect him, so really have no relationships with anyone other than [child's name] and his tennis and his coach

I: yeah is a shame it's like that

P: but that's how it is

I: yeah yeah I know, I can see that for sure...were there any challenges [child's name] faced when he was younger that again you found difficult to be able to help him with?

P: erm

I: all be it on court, off court?

P: off court I mean he is at school, he is at a school that doesn't recognised tennis as a sport, his P.E teacher said that it's a girls sport and he is a woss, that's been quite difficult to handle for [child's name] and you know because that's not going to change and [child's name] has got to be, he's got to put up with that, he's been subject to bullying at school because he has been picked out as being good at something, he went through a really bad

time where he was being bullied quite badly and we had to go into the school and they then had to sort it out, and we told them about what the sports master had said and they were appalled and whether they do anything about it I don't know, our line has been that you can't actually change the world around you, the perceptions around what happening around [child's name], what you have to do is help your son to build coping mechanisms to help your child through events, you know children get bullied he just happens to get bullied because of his tennis and that was really hard, he could have been bullied because he's got goofy teeth but for [child's name] it was his tennis, so again I come back to this whole thing that that is your parenting role is to help your child through events, you know would you stop tennis because of that would you know have teeth extracted because of that, you know what would you do, you'd just help them cope with it so I think that's the whole thing about using sport as a bigger tool to help them cope with life which I think is quite an interesting phenomena so you don't just look at it as tennis you say sport is about building confidence, it's about building self-esteem about feeling good about yourself even if people are telling you that you are a woss, yeah you know this is life so that even if tennis isn't what he ends up doing actually it will have equipped him with life skills and if that's all it does then that's good enough

I: do you think that's important for parents to understand in terms of perhaps their expectations?

P: yeah you've got to accept that out of 2,000 children playing tennis there may be one that actually makes it to a professional level...there might be 20 that make it to a coaching level but actually along the way if you've actually learnt how to focus, how to be polite on court, how to know what it feels like to be cheated and handle it in a way that doesn't put yourself in a vulnerable position and not cheat, how to be resolute, how to make good decisions, how to look after your body, if I can get [child's name] to 21 with those values I will have felt that I have been a good parent

I: no again that's well put, based on your experiences albeit not too long in tennis and I guess drawing upon your professional experiences as well what advice would you give to tennis parents coming into the sport?

P: it's a long haul it's a really long haul and you see, I think everyone goes through different stages and I think it's about having the right equipment and then it's about having the right gear and it takes a while to get to a point, or perhaps some people never do get to a point where, I can remember when [child's name] first started tennis and [child's name] went to a local tennis club and because [child's name] was a single child and I'm quite an

elderly mother it was a real relief that actually he was good at something and actually he enjoyed it, because I thought wherever he goes in the world and whatever happens to me or to [husband's name] his parents, he is going to be independent one day, he can go anywhere in the world, he can walk into a club he can instantly make friends he can instantly have a game of tennis and for me as a parent that was really really reassuring and I thought that and I remember thinking if that's all it is then that's great and do you know what I still think that and I still think that you know he could walk into anywhere and have the confidence, racket a can of balls and he would be off, so I think as a parent who has got a child who is good at tennis or enjoys tennis or whatever, you've got to be very clear about having goals that reflect really good values about what parenting and childhood and growing up is all about...don't think about the ATP tour and who is going to win Wimbledon and all that because it's a long, long journey and as a parent you find out an awful lot about yourself and its very much your journey as much as it is your child's, and if you are not learning about yourself then you are probably just being a pratt, you are probably not reflection on what is happening to yourself around it, because recently we have had to just say no we are not doing that we will not do that, that is pushing us as a family unit too far

I: do you find it useful to reflect, do you think it's a valuable sort of tool that parents use in terms of continual progression as a parent and as a person?

P: well the thing is in all of this you've got the child haven't you so you are constantly checking with the child that the path that they are on is the path that they are choosing because [child's name] is at the point now where over the next 3 or 4 years he may think I don't want to commit to this like this or I don't want to let my parents down you know so we have that open conversation all the time [child's name] you will never ever let us down ever, if you chose not to do it, and we probably talk to him like that on easily a 6monthly basis, and that's are you still enjoying it, do you still want to be doing this [child's name] and the main comments are when he says actually I don't want to do this anymore, he is an athlete it just so happens we found out that he is quite good at tennis but he is equally good at cricket, he doesn't like rugby but he can play it, erm you know he is the fastest runner in the school so you know this may not be his destiny

I: but it's all part of the journey

P: and what his destiny could be

I: yeah erm the final section is kind of summarising your experience, your overall experience as a tennis player, how would you describe it do you think it's been positive, negative, somewhere in the middle

P: I think when I look at [child's name] playing tennis I just think it's unbelievable, I think it's remarkable that he does what he does I don't know how he does it, it's just fantastic to see from a parents point of view you know yeah it's all been worthwhile for him because he enjoys it...from an adult point of view its quite a grizzly environment, it's a very grizzling environment and I think [child's name] Is pretty cocooned in terms of how we go about things, it does shock me the way some of the way some of the children are spoken too, I'll never forget when I saw that child being hit that was atrocious but maybe those parents hit their child anyway so that's parenting

I: its broader issues isn't it stemming into tennis

P: yes, erm would we do it again yes I think we would, would be carry on doing it yes we will carry on doing it until [child's name] doesn't need us to do it anymore and that will be either because he wants us to carry on we are out of our league but to be quite honest, I don't think he, I would be highly surprised if he chose to do this without us being there, because I think he sees us of a part of the reason he enjoys it

I: yeah I guess it's that approval off his parents isn't it and seeing them enjoying it as well, how do you think you've changed as a parent since you started your journey

P: erm, I'm probably more fundamentally aware of the needs of, probably more critical of myself and [husband's name] parenting wise and making sure that actually we are not, that [child's name] stays in the centre of all this and he doesn't get lost as an individual we are probably more structured and we make more effort in the time we've got together and have fun weather its tennis or not because it's just part of our lives now, what would happen if this wasn't a part of our lives, well I can think of a million things we would do if it wasn't part of our lives! So I'm not really bothered about that

I: I can totally understand that, what do you think caused them changes?

P: erm well I think what cause them changes is that you are kind of told that if you've got a talented child in tennis and you don't go along with this system then there is no hope for them and of course you know that on one level that is an irrational argument erm but it is psychological quite enticing because you inevitably think if I don't do that am I going to think what if and as a parent you will do whatever you have to do to help your child fulfil your potential so you know if it was music and I said you needed to have this fantastic flute or whatever and it was a thousand pounds somehow he would scape together 1000 pounds

I: it's providing them with that opportunity isn't it, can you describe some of the most important lessons you've learnt since you started your journey?

P: erm I think important lessons, well that actually that there are some really good people in the system around help that is there and that has been fundamentally the individual 1 to 1 coaches they have been absolutely brilliant around explaining what's going on, I think the bureaucracy around, I think out of all of this once you've found a good coach you stick with a good coach, you kind of then make arrangements to build a system around your child rather than allowing the LTA system to take over, that's an important point, you keep charge of your own child that's the main thing but you know the good people to help you with that, I think the other lesson is that you see tennis as just anything that your child just happens to be good at, and you incorporate that into your lifestyle another lesson is that having taken your child out of school and that sort of thing, you don't do that because actually that would be really really wrong, there are no promises at the end of this particularly if you've got a bright child, well if you've got any child, that's got to be important, what are the other lessons I've learnt, well you're never going to be rich, the lesson is you are always going to be paying for the privilege of all of this, and that in itself is an interesting lesson because you could actually argue that this is actually all set up so it just maintains the momentum of income for people, in fact that was interesting the first time we were ever involved was in Nottingham that time, I remember it was the regional coach saying as a joke to [child's name] club coach, he said oh this is great we like to get them when they are young because we make more money out of them and he said it as a joke and I thought oh yeah irony or what and see I know you are looking into what education do parents need and I'm not sure its education around tennis and there might be some stuff around that but I think it's just about good parenting, parenting skills and how do you incorporate tennis into that, anything into that

I: what sort of parenting skills do you think are important for parents to understand or perhaps you don't see being demonstrated enough

P: I think its supporting, its safeguarding at times, its thinking about the child development process and what children can cope with and what they can't cope with

I: is that emotionally physically

P: the whole lot it's like you know your child is flat footed, he won't have a proper arch formation until he is 14, it's like when they do all these measurements like your child has grown 3cm, he will do he is a child he grows, it's like now he can throw a ball 10m further,

he will do his arm is longer it's a better leaver he can throw it's not rocket science is it...but you see the parents going ahh great he's done that he's done this he's done the other it's just about positive reinforcement and praising, and just praising your child on every single achievement, but the competitiveness of sport doesn't really help that its quite vile

I: do you think there is a lack of understanding across parenting in terms of those child development elements, perhaps in broader society

P: yeah definitely, yeah I think how children, what they need and how they have that environment properly created for them and of course what sport does sport just kind of weather its consciously or unconsciously strips that away, because it just wants to have the best the elite in there

I: yeah the nurture element of the person is lost a little but

P: mmm

I: obviously I'm aware of your background but is there any support that you would like to be able to optimise your role as a parent and as a tennis parent that can be tennis specific that can be tennis specific or general

P: education I would like

I: that can in relation to tennis which is perhaps less comfortable for you your obviously quite clued up on the child development side of things

P: erm what to understand tennis more and become an expert on what's going on

I: anything within tennis or the journey that [child's name] is on?

P: erm well I think it's like the emperor's new clothes isn't it is that actually there isn't really, who knows what this journey is, we don't know what this journey is, we don't know where it will go and that's the whole about being in uncharted waters, what do you do as an explorer in uncharted waters you just make sure you've got enough food, you've got enough shelter, you've got enough money in your war chest and you've got a really good compass I know that sounds like not a very good answer but you know for [child's name] this is uncharted water because we simply do not know where this journey will end up and if anybody was to say when he is 12 he should be this high and this weight or he should he this strong or when he is 14 he should be able to do that erm life is more complex than that and so it's so ambiguous

I: do you think it is therefore important to evolve as a parent continually in order to meet the changes in demands of the environment

P: yeah I think you have to do that and I often think should I pull together parents and should we call talk together but I don't really know if that would help because the parents are so competitive I don't think that would help because the parents are so competitive I don't think there is that level of camaraderie there and you just have to be at the front of them so you know I come back to this whole opening gambit and as a parent you just have to incorporate this within their whole life

I: yeah that's a good point I mean I think that's pretty much everything I wanted to ask you, there is only a couple of concluding questions in terms of is there any areas we failed to cover in relation to parents education or support needs

P: I think it's an interesting topic you have chosen, it kind of infers a proposition that if parents got their act together this would all be a lot more enjoyable for everybody

I: I guess there is always a hope that through education and perhaps through awareness and support things could be improved

P: yeah I think what you would be doing would be ameliorating and damaged limitation and I think that is a very honourable thing to do, I think it's just a bit of education around you don't shout at your children you don't make them feel rubbish if they lose, it's all that stuff around building children up not using this as a weapon to make them feel inadequate because they burn out and they just feel inadequate

I: no I agree it's often the simple things that get overlooked and they get taken for granted they treat them like adults the things they say to them, sometimes the best answers are the simple ones aren't they...okay so just finally do you think I led or influenced you answers away from anything you wanted to say?

P: no I thought you were very good; your questions were very open and not leading at all

I: oh good!

P: and they were my words not yours

I: great – thank you!

Appendix 5:
Information Sheet (study two)

Participant Information Sheet

*The Development of a Psychosocial Parent Education Programme within British Youth Tennis
(Optimising the Role of the Tennis Parent: An Action Research Study)*

- **Lead Researcher:** *Sam Thrower, PhD Researcher, School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences, Loughborough University, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 3TU, s.thrower@lboro.ac.uk, 07716065298.*
- **Additional Researcher:** *Dr Chris Harwood, Reader, School of Sport, Exercise & Health Sciences, Loughborough University, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 3TU, c.g.harwood@lboro.ac.uk, +44 (0)1509 22634.*
- **Additional Researcher:** *Dr Chris Spray, Senior Lecturer, School of Sport, Exercise & Health Sciences, Loughborough University, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 3TU, c.m.spray@lboro.ac.uk, +44 (0)1509 226339.*

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this study is to optimise the role of mini-tennis parents in high performance tennis centres by providing an intervention to meet their education and support needs. It is envisaged that this intervention will assist tennis parents in psychologically nurturing their child to achieve their optimal potential whilst also facilitating their own overall experience in junior performance tennis.

Who is doing this research and why?

The lead researcher on this project is Sam Thrower. Sam is joined on this project by Dr Chris Harwood and Dr Chris Spray. This study is part of a wider project aiming to develop a psychosocial parent education programme for British Tennis. This project is funded by Loughborough University and supported by the Lawn Tennis Association.

Has this study gained ethical clearance?

The current study has been cleared by Loughborough University ethics committee to proceed. In addition to this, the lead researcher (Sam Thrower) has passed an enhanced CRB check.

Are there any inclusion/exclusion criteria?

Participants are required to be a parent of a child who participates in tennis in a high performance centre.

What will be required from me as a participant?

Participants will be encouraged to attend all of the seven workshops at the tennis centre. However, if you are unable to attend a session please inform the lead researcher (Sam Thrower). Participants will also be asked to complete tasks in-between the workshops. After the workshops are completed, participants will be invited to take part in a 1 hour focus group to discuss their thoughts of the series of workshops.

How long will it study take?

In total there will be seven workshops spanning a 3-month period (March- May 2014).

Is there anything I need to between each of the workshops?

Yes. Participants will be encouraged to complete a short participant diary about your experiences of applying what you learnt in each workshop into practice.

Is there anything I need to bring with me?

Please bring your participant diary to each workshop.

What will I be asked to do in each workshop?

Participants are encouraged to actively participate in each workshop and take part in group discussions, debates and tasks. At the end of each workshop participants will be asked to complete a one-page social validation form (i.e., write down their thoughts on the workshop).

Once I take part, can I change my mind?

Yes! After you have read this information, and asked any questions you may have please complete the Informed Consent Form (on the next page). However, if at any time, before, during or after the workshop period you wish to withdraw from the study please just contact the main investigator. You can withdraw at any time, for any reason and you will not be asked to explain your reasons for withdrawing.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

Any data collected (e.g., field notes, audio files) will remain strictly confidential. When writing up or presenting the findings quotes will be used to illustrate important findings, however, these quotes will remain strictly anonymous through the use of code names

The only exception to our confidentiality policy is if a disclosure is made that indicates a child may be at risk of harm or is being harmed. In this instance the tennis clubs welfare officer will be contacted.

How will data be stored?

Data will be stored safely and securely and held for ten years, after which it will be destroyed, in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. The data will be owned by Loughborough University and will only be used for the purpose of this study. Only the research team will have access to the data.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The findings of this research will be written up for publication in an academic journal. In addition to this, the findings will be used as part of a wider project which is developing a psychosocial parent education programme for British tennis.

What do I get for participating?

Participants will receive free education and support that is underpinned by academic research.

I have some more questions who should I contact?

Please contact the lead researcher (Sam Thrower) should you have any further questions, his details can be found at the top of this information sheet.

What if I am not happy with how the research was conducted?

The University has a policy relating to Research Misconduct and Whistle Blowing which is available online at [http://www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/committees/ethical/Whistleblowing\(2\).htm](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/committees/ethical/Whistleblowing(2).htm).

Participant Informed Consent Form

*The Development of a Psychosocial Parent Education Programme within British Youth Tennis
(Optimising the Role of the Tennis Parent: An Action Research Study)*

The purpose and details of the study have been explained to me. I understand that this study is designed to further scientific knowledge and that all procedures have been approved by the Loughborough University Ethical Advisory Committee.

- I have read and understood the information sheet and this consent form.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions about my participation.
- I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in the study.
- I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the interviews at any stage for any reason, and that I will not be required to explain my reasons for withdrawing.

I understand that all the information I provide will be treated in strict confidence and will be kept anonymous and confidential to the researchers unless (under the statutory obligations of the agencies which the researchers are working with), it is judged that confidentiality will have to be breached for the safety of the participant or others.

I agree to participate in this study.

Your name: _____
Your signature: _____
Email Address: _____
Mobile Number: _____

Signature of investigator _____
Date _____

Additional Participant Information

Please tick the appropriate box below

I would prefer to be contacted by: Text: Email: Either:

I would like to record my diary on: Paper: Laptop:

Voice Recorder (not supplied):

Appendix 6:
Social Validation Feedback Form Examples (study two)



Workshop 6 Feedback Form

*Please take 10 minutes to fill out the form below and provide as much detail as you can!

Centre:	
Date:	
Workshop Title:	

What are your general thoughts on this workshop?

Excellent workshop, presentation extremely natural. The content of this workshop was very beneficial as it enabled me to see stuff that I knew in black and white and I feel I could piece things together a bit better.

Do you think this workshop will affect your parenting?

Yes, I will continue to parent as I do but I will apply more time and explanation.

What did you learn from today's workshop?

I have understood a bit better where my son is psychologically. A great benefit, to support him better.

**Workshop 7 Feedback Form**

***Please take 10 minutes to fill out the form below and provide as much detail as you can!**

Centre:	
Date:	
Workshop Title:	

What are your general thoughts on this workshop?

Another great workshop, the content is excellent and it just enables me to see the wood from the trees.

Do you think this workshop will affect your parenting? If so how?

Yes definitely, especially in helping my son develop in all areas in fairness, not just tennis.

What did you learn from today's workshop?

Having a clearer idea on what to say pre match.

Appendix 7:
Participant Diary Examples (study two)



Workshop 3: Tennis Parent Diary

*Please fill out the diary below and provide as much detail as you can!

Name	
Week	<i>Workshop 3</i>
Workshop Title	<i>Social Factors Underpinning Parental Involvement</i>
Homework Tasks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Read the 'Understanding Tennis' hand-out that was included in your pack and watch a match of tennis</i> 2. <i>Spend one afternoon/evening in the garden (or ideally at a local tennis club) playing tennis with your child. You can only truly understand something by trying it!</i> 3. <i>Answer the questions below</i>

What were your general thoughts about this task?

Reluctant as got a bad back at the moment!!!!

I loved playing tennis before having the children but now having a 9 ½ year old who is a better player than me kind of puts me off playing. My saving grace was having a 7 year old who I can feel comfortable playing with!!

What did you learn from watching a tennis match and playing tennis with your child?

Each match is so unpredictable – you can have a goal – you can have a game plan – but in the end you have to alter your perspective and goals as the game ensues. In the longer games there are peaks and troughs and players rarely stay in control for the whole match – you read your opponent's game and have to make changes.

I much prefer to watch a game of tennis than play one! (though I love playing tennis – I just realise now how rubbish I am!!!!)

Has watching tennis or playing the game impacted on your parenting in any way? If so how?

The court looks so much bigger when you are down there about to serve! I have spent too many hours watching [redacted] play and not really appreciating how difficult it is for him – especially making the transition from orange ball to green ball. Sometimes I will say to him – why did you play that shot at that particular time – but from doing this I realise you only have a split second to decide which shot to play and not really knowing exactly what your opponent will reply with!

Extra Diary

*Please fill out the diary below and provide as much detail as you can!

Week	Workshop 5
Workshop Title	<i>Mini Tennis Development Based Needs</i>
Homework Tasks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the articles on talent development 2. Discuss your talent development approach with your partner and coach. Adjust it if necessary! 3. Download the set4sport app (by visiting www.set4sport.com) and try some of the games with your child.

Looking back, how beneficial do you think the workshop was for you as a tennis parent, and why?

The workshop was really useful. It identified in more detail [redacted] needs and helped to clarify talent id / pathways etc.

Looking back, has the workshop had any effect on you as a tennis parent? If so how?

We have decided to continue with the multi sport approach (tennis, football, cricket + golf) as we feel it suits his needs / stage of learning and our motivation is not necessarily elite level.

Did you read the articles? If so what were your general thoughts? Has it had any impact on the way you view talent development?

Very useful + informative. Again helped to reinforce our feelings, but also gave us more information / detail.

I share the articles with my other half so we can make 'educated choices'. My opinions on talent devel. has not really changed.

Appendix 8:
Focus Group Guide (study two)

Focus Group Guide

*The Development of a Psychosocial Parent Education Programme within British Youth Tennis:
Optimising the Role of the Tennis Parent: An Action Research Study*

Name:	
Email Address:	
Age:	
Age of Child:	
Standard of Child: (e.g., local, county, regional, national)	
Years' experience as a tennis parent:	

Focus Group Information Sheet

Why did you select me for a focus group?

- *All parents who attended a workshop have been invited to the focus groups*

What is the aim of the focus group?

- *The purpose of the focus group is to gain an understanding of your experiences of these workshops and the effect they have had on you as a tennis parent.*

Who is conducting the focus groups?

- *Sam Thrower will be conducting the focus groups.*

Have these interviews been ethically approved?

- *Loughborough University ethics committee has approved these focus groups.*
- *Sam Thrower has passed an enhanced CRB check.*

Is there anything I need to do before the focus group?

- *If you are happy to be in the focus group then please read the questions on pages 5&6 and think about the answers you may give before the focus group.*

Where and when will the focus group take place?

- *All focus groups will take place at the same time and date as your usual workshop*

How long will the focus group take?

- *The focus group will last between 30mins and 1 hour*

How will the interviews be recorded?

- *A digital Dictaphone will be used to record the interviews*

Will the interviews be confidential?

- *Yes! Audio files will remain strictly confidential. When writing up or presenting the findings quotes from the focus group will be used to illustrate important findings, however, these quotes will remain strictly anonymous through the use of code names*
- *Audio files and transcripts will be stored safely and securely and held for ten years, after which it will be destroyed, in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. The data will be owned by Loughborough University and will only be used for the purpose of this study.*
- *The only exception to our confidentiality policy is if a disclosure is made that indicates a child may be at risk of harm or is being harmed. In this instance the tennis clubs welfare officers will be contacted.*

What if I am not happy with how the focus groups are conducted?

- *The University has a policy relating to Research Misconduct and Whistle Blowing which is available online at [http://www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/committees/ethical/Whistleblowing\(2\).htm](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/committees/ethical/Whistleblowing(2).htm).*

How can I withdraw myself from the interviews?

- *You can withdraw from the focus group at any stage and do not have to provide a reason for withdrawal. Withdrawal will mean that your audio recording will not be transcribed and included as part of the data. Should you wish to withdraw this will not affect your relationship with the researchers, [centre name], the LTA or Loughborough University.*

I have some more questions who should I contact?

- *If you have any questions about your participation please contact the Sam Thrower at s.thrower@lboro.ac.uk*

Will I receive a copy of the focus group transcript?

- *Yes! You will be sent a copy of the focus group and asked if you would like to add or withdraw anything you said.*

Do I have to provide informed consent to be interviewed?

- *Yes, you will need to provide signed informed consent before the focus group can take place. If you are happy to be involved in the focus group then please fill in either the 'Focus Group Informed Consent' on the next page:*

Focus Group Informed Consent

The purpose and details of the focus group has been explained to me. I understand that this study is designed to further scientific knowledge and that all procedures have been approved by the Loughborough University Ethical Advisory Committee.

- I have read and understood the focus group information sheet above and this consent form.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions about my participation.
- I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in the focus group.
- I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the focus group at any stage for any reason, and that I will not be required to explain my reasons for withdrawing.

I understand that all the information I provide will be treated in strict confidence and will be kept anonymous and confidential to the researchers unless (under the statutory obligations of the agencies which the researchers are working with), it is judged that confidentiality will have to be breached for the safety of the participant or others.

I agree to participate in this study.

Your name _____

Your signature _____

Signature of investigator _____

Date _____

Focus Group Guide

- Firstly, thank you for agreeing to be part of this focus group. I am conducting these focus groups in order to understand your shared (but not always the same) experiences of these workshops and the effect they have had on you as a tennis parent.
- Please keep in mind that we are just as interested in negative comments as positive comments, and at times the negative comments are often the most helpful.
- There are no right or wrong answers to the questions you will be asked and we expect you to have different points of view. Your answers should be based entirely on your own opinion rather than answers you think sound right or that I would like to hear.
- We have name tents here in front of us as they help me to remember names but they can also help you too.
- If you want to follow up on something that someone has said, if you want to agree or disagree or give an example feel free to do that. Don't feel like you have to respond to me all the time. Feel free to have a conversation with another person about these questions. I am here to ask questions, listen and make sure everyone has a chance to share.
- We are interested in hearing from all of you so if you're talking a lot, I may ask you to give others a chance, and if you aren't saying much I may call on you. We just want to make sure we hear from all of you.
- The focus group will be recorded using a Dictaphone, as this is the best way to gather and collect accurate information and allows me to concentrate on asking questions and listening to responses.
- Anything you say is entirely confidential which means that anything you say will not in any way be used in combination with your name. I may use quotes when writing up the findings, however, these will remain strictly anonymous and your identity will be protected.

Participant Introduction

For the benefit of the Dictaphone and for anyone who isn't familiar everyone's name in the group let's start by going around the table one at a time and tell us your name and who your child is.

Participation

- How did you originally hear about these workshops?
- After hearing about the workshops, what made you attend?
- Why do you think parent education sessions are generally quite poorly attended by tennis parents?

- Do you think the gender and age of the educator has any impact parent's willingness to attend workshops?

General Experiences

- Overall, how did you find this series of workshops?
 - a. How beneficial do you think these workshops have been for you as a parent?
 - b. Was there anything you felt wasn't covered in these workshops that is relevant to you at this stage?
 - c. How useful were the packs (e.g. slides, articles, task cards) in assisting your learning?

Parent & Child Outcomes

- Do you think these workshops have changed the way you think as a tennis parent?
 - a. Do you reflect more? Are you more self-aware?
- Have these workshops changed the way you feel about your role as a tennis parent?
 - a. Do you feel more confident than you were before in your ability to fulfil your roles?
 - b. Do you feel more relaxed than you were before in your ability to cope with the demands of being a tennis parent?
- Do you think these workshops have had any effect on your behaviour at tournaments?
 - a. Are you able to support your child better (Informational & Emotional support)
 - b. Do you place less pressure on your child?
- Have these workshops had any impact on your behaviour during training?
- Have these workshops had any effect on your behaviour at home?
- Have you noticed any changes in your child as a result of your own behaviour change?

Relationship Outcomes

- Has attending these workshops had any impact on your relationship with other tennis parents?
- Have these workshops had any effect on your relationship with your child's coach?
- Has attending these workshops had any impact on your relationship with your child?

Delivery & Timing of Information

- What is the best way to educate parents in your opinion?
 - a. Do you think the face-to-face learning with the opportunity to develop relationships, have discussions and ask questions would be more effective than more cost effective and practical online resources or webinars?
- At what stage of mini-tennis do you think these workshops should be delivered?

Future Education & Support

- Would you be interested in attending more workshops in the future (e.g., 10-14 age groups)?
- Whose responsibility do you think it is to deliver education to tennis parents? (Coaches? LTA? Researchers?)
- Do you feel like your children would benefit from sport psychology workshops at this stage? If so what would you like to be delivered to the children?
- Would you like a sport psychologist to be involved permanently (e.g., full time or part time) in the centres to provide group and individual education and support to parents and players?
- Would you be prepared to pay for this education and support for yourself and/or your child?

Conclusion

- Are there any areas that you think we failed to cover in relation to your experiences of the workshops and the effect they have had on you as a tennis parent?
- Has anyone got any final points they wanted to make but hasn't yet had an opportunity to do so?

Appendix 9:
Focus Group Transcript Example (study two)

*Introduction not transcribed

I= Sam Thrower, C= Chris Harwood, S = [Participant 1], E = [Participant 2] L = [Participant 3], J = [Participant 4]

I: In terms of your participation how originally did you guys hear about the workshops?

E: from [name removed], she emailed it out

I: that's fine I know sometimes in other centres people come a little bit late and some people come through word of mouth and different things, but that's the way I expected. So after you heard about the workshops what made you attend?

E: naturally nosy!

L: It sounded like an interesting subject area, I felt there wasn't a lot out there for, to back up [child's name], what we do as parents, and there is a lot to back up the children but not a lot of back up for us. And the convenience obviously, we are here, we are hanging around and it seemed an ideal opportunity

E: With the lessons with the coaches you talk about how the child is performed in the lesson you don't really get a chance to talk about your role and how you can help them, it's all about the child. It should be with the coach

S: I'd say there has never been anything for parents and this was the first thing I had ever heard of for parents so I thought...and we were told to come along and I thought yes great ill come and I'll see what it's about

I: Fine that's great and it kind of builds nicely on that point but why do you think tennis parents education sessions are generally not very well attended by parents? and that's not just within this centre but I know they have tried to run things here before

L: I personally think a lot of parents think they know everything

S: I was just going to say exactly the same thing; they don't think there is a need for it

E: Yeah they think they have got it right and they don't need

L: the typical family, the kind of parent who don't come, if they were told they had to come let's say you would get the body language of this and they can't tell me anything...you can't tell me about my child, I know my child better than you so they wouldn't come

I: do you think there are any other reasons other than perhaps that slight ego?

L: I don't know if we as a group, if we naturally mix, it tends to be quite isolated, until you really get to know individuals then you tend to stick to the parents that you get on with and it becomes little cliques, so I think as a general group it's not a smooth group so you can't always know who's up to what, who wants to do that, who would be interested

I: that makes sense, that's great I mean in terms of us asking this question it is more from my point of view, do you think my age or gender or the fact I'm not a parent myself would have any impact on how parents might perceive the workshops

L: I would have personally said no

S: Erm I don't know, I don't know because

E: we just had a name, we didn't know anything about you we just got told a name

S: I had no idea if you were 40 or 20

E: I think the difference that you are not from here that you are from the university, that interested me more, it made it sound like you were the expert, the specialist in what, you are going to have all the answers for us

I: I wouldn't go that far!

S: you know you were talking about the age and stuff, I'll be honest I had no idea what age you were or anything, but my first initial, when I first walked in and I saw how young you were I sort of thought hummmm what's he going to be able to teach me about my child, but then as its gone on you've sort of explained it and you are coming at it from a completely different angle, you are not coming from it as a parent you, and so then the two have gelled together, and that's after seeing you but it wouldn't have stopped me coming in the first place

I: that's really interesting thanks for saying that – so if we start with the general experiences and I'll start very broad with this and if we need to probe it and help you out I will and we will kind of narrow it down as we go through, but overall how did you find this series of workshops

L: I really enjoyed them, I missed the last two or three think but yeah very insightful, things that backed up what I already thought but also helped things be put into place as well

S: I have enjoyed them but I've enjoyed some more than others, some I came and sat and I thought to myself I kind of knew all of this and I feel like it was not a waste of my time that's the wrong, that's a bit too strong but it's a shame you missed the last couple because the last couple for me was really what it was about for me, the tournament one, the body language and all that kind of stuff, that has really gone in

E: We are now there at tournaments aren't we looking at each other

S: I'm at a tournament and I could feel myself tensing and I was saying breath in relaxation breath out tension! So the last two or three

E: I though the last two or three were the best

S: the last two were brilliant

E: because in February I did the basic referee course mainly to help [Child's name] out because he was struggling with referee's decisions at tournaments and how they were responding to children and things like this, it's why I did the basic referee's course, I came home and told

him everything I could and that changed his attitude, he knew when he put a racket up that he could, that it was called In favour of the person who's side it was on and that would happen a second time and again and he took that on board and accepted it. I probably wouldn't have gone on it, if I had known this was coming up, it was when I didn't know this was on, but I found that really useful, it was useful for me just to see how the tournaments are run and I don't know ever go near a referee because you know exactly what they are up against and exactly what they have got to do

I: yeah just how difficult it is for them. Just going back to that point there how, I know it's great and it's really great about how honest you are being because that doesn't always happen. What ones did you prefer, you mentioned the ones perhaps towards the end but which ones didn't you prefer

S: well there was one that you did say at the beginning that this is probably going to be a bit, you're going to be a bit beyond this, it was all how the LTA system works and all the way you work your way through that, and you did say at the beginning that it was just part of the process that we had to go through, I would say if I am honest I think the first one, I remember the first one was okay I think the second one

L: I think it was the mini tennis system and it was right in the middle of all of your workshops and it kind of brought what you had done to a halt, because you had really court us and then I think that one was just like, not you know, we knew that, we knew that, I think that workshop...

S: that might have been better right at the beginning

L: you say that but if that was right at the beginning then we might not have come to the next one

E: I think for parents with children who were younger

L: it is a necessary aspect

I: that's great

C: can I ask very quickly, in terms of that and information giving about the system would it have been better delivered in terms of just maybe reading material for parents to get into, if there had been a presentation or something like that, a form of education they needed to have to

L: or a separate workshop

E: the information covered in that we kind of worked out the hard way, we had already been on the side of the court of listening to other parents, or asking other parents how does this work or how does that work

L: it needs to be taught

S: for people at the start or people just coming into tennis, but at that level they are

L: yeah parents of 5 or 6 year old children,

S: well it could be a 9 year old but they have only just come into competitions and stuff

I: that's great, do you think there was anything that wasn't covered in the workshops that is relevant to you at this at this stage having gone through the whole experience

E: no because as you mentioned it each week we had that little bit, you kind of mentioned something and you would be covering it anyway, I loved the reflection, writing the diary although I did feel like I was slating my child at times, no I loved that because it made me sit there and put it all into perspective , because when you got it down on paper you thought oh ok that wasn't as bad as you realised and that you say different things as soon as they come off court to even what you say half an hour later in the car to then what you would say the next morning, and it's interesting to see how that conversation develops and I know last time [Child's name] had a match that he wasn't happy with I said well let's not talk about it now, you go off and play and we will talk about it later and in the car he read a book and couple of hours later we were virtually home and he started talking about it in a totally different way to how he would have done, and he did say to me is this what Sam told you to do and I said shut up! And he did offer to speak to you and I did find that really useful because I think I was like a bull in a china shop at times with how we dealt with things and it has been helpful talking to others and hearing how other people deal with it because I mean your girls are so different to [Child's name]

S: Boys and girls that just

E: girls I think a bit later on they are like that

I: in terms of the packs I gave you each week how useful did you find them in terms of perhaps the reading, the articles, the task cards I gave you, did you find that relevant in terms of backing up the learning points that we covered in the workshops

E: that one in particular that we said was a bit depressing

I: that was your article Chris, the Jamie Baker one

E: we nearly quit at that point!

S: the article you gave us last week I found that quite heavy going I did sort of skip between it a bit, because I knew what it was about, what I would say is that you know when you give us all the, right at the start you give us all the slides and all this kind of stuff, I do find when we were in there I wasn't really following, but then I didn't really look at that again afterwards if I'm honest. The stuff you gave us to read, I read that and the diary thing but the other thing to me I didn't really use that

I: okay

E: I think right at the end the final bit of the diary we had to do, there were certain slides I knew would be really really interesting so it was handy having it but I not sure we needed every...I'm just thinking of your photocopying bill!

I: were the task cards useful?

L: I was just going to say I haven't used mine, at the time I was thinking this is a really good idea

E: I've taken pictures of them because they are really small so I can zoom in on that

I: okay so zooming in on that how did you find the homework task I gave you in terms of the diary and I know [Participant Name] has been very good at filling that in and already explaining how much she benefited from that, but I'm aware there is a counter narrative to that in terms a lot of parents perhaps not yourselves but in other centres really don't like doing the homework because they are so busy

S: Well it didn't take that long to do,

L: I quite liked it

S: I'll be honest I did most of mine before we started, in the canteen

E: it just focuses you to think about what the sessions been about and what we are supposed to be getting out of it, what you are trying to get across it made us think

S: I try not to read it and think ohh blah blah blah, I try to think no lets really think, and try to write down my absolute first thought as well, and not think about it too much if you know what I mean, because then I think it's more likely what I really think if you know what I mean

I: yeah being honest that's great

C: in terms of the articles, we had a conversation about that, should it be something we give out, I actually found it honest and when I read it back I wondered if the journalist could have added more of the actually positive life skills that he has benefited from, in fact we have got a whole different article where he talks about that, and that actually didn't come out

S: when I read it I felt like what I needed, why am I making my daughter play tennis what's the point, that's how it made me feel, but I knew that wasn't what you were trying to get out so I knew what you were trying to say that it had given him lots of life skills and all that kind of stuff but the way I read it I just thought god it is really

C: did it serve as a bit of a reality check in that sense in that, not to put you off but to think hang on a second here, I need to appreciate that, that it's not an easy sport to play

S: no, I've always thought of tennis as that, I'm not a person who thinks my daughter is going to win Wimbledon, I see it as a life skill something she can have throughout her whole life, university, work, wherever she went and lived she could join a tennis club, she has got the

skills she has got the social skills, who knows where it will go and she can travel with it or whatever

C: is that others perception as well

L: It is mine

E: because [Child's name] does other sport so, because he started off in squash so he had squash lessons and he played tennis tournaments because they don't have squash tournaments because his dad's a county player and he plays because his dad plays so it's become more of a family thing because it's something that [Child's name] really wants to do but when you ask him where he wants to go with it he has his own little goals

L: it is a hard sport to know when to stop and where your limit is and you do get pushed which is quite good to have all this reality check as well that you don't push them so far that it's all they are doing

S: well you can diversify or specify and that's when we said you don't have a choice because when you get to a certain level you don't have a choice because there are not enough days in the week so you have to specify

C: did you read Camilla's article the do's and don'ts, children's preferences one

I: that was the last one

C: would you have preferred a simpler lay synopsis of that

S: yes

E: in the email I confessed I haven't read it but a quick synopsis

S: I would say in that article the bits I found most interesting was when it was, when it went back to what the children said, and the children saying I do like my parents to be there on court side, or I don't like my parents to give me tips just before I go on I find it confusing, those kind of comments from the children I found more useful and more interesting to read than the other stuff

C: yeah so the nitty gritty of the results and the quotes, and that's something that you could do, write that in 3 or 4 pages as a fact sheet.

E: that would make it a little more accessible really wouldn't it, some of us are really busy with work, it's just when you have got so many things to do and you look at the article and think ohhh!! I can't do that at the minute but I really wanted to read it I just couldn't because of all the other things I had to do whereas had it been key points it would have been a bit more accessible

I: good information, if we move on to look at perhaps the outcomes from this process but also your child outcomes and whether there has been any link between those two things, starting off

with your thoughts, do you think the workshops have changed the way you think as a tennis parent are you perhaps more self-aware do you reflect more on things

L: my daughter has unfortunately been injured since we started doing this so I haven't been to any tournaments, I'm sure it's a positive

S: the biggest thing that I have found that I have now done, you know when we had to do the exercise, I did do quite a bit of it, the setting the goals before they go on, I always say to [Child's name] have a great match, enjoy it, but I was setting her a goal like remember what you have been working on, let's really try that serve you have been trying out, and I have actually written that in this bit and I have just found that she is coming off and whether she has won or lost, she's had a good match and she might be a bit sad she has lost but I can say oh those serves you were doing out wide were beautiful today [Child's name], really, really nice...and they she will say did you see that one! And then you think she's okay, I'm okay and I think it's made me think more and more about is I'm not looking so much as a win or a loss but I'm looking at how she performs and where we are going to be in 6months time, that's what it's made me think...you do want them to win but it's not the absolute be all and end all

I: Yeah you are finding other positives from the performance

S: yeah I'm thinking beyond that day

I: yeah so it has changed the way you think about tennis in terms of there still is the win loss element and there always will be because its sport but actually finding other positives in terms of their development and progression. Is that's something that is shared by you guys as well?

L: yeah, I think I've learnt to enjoy it more, the competitions can be just so uncomfortable and so win, lose orientated, it is nice to just go, like [Participant name] said and pick the positives forget the negatives and enjoy it as a family as well I think that is quite important

S: the thing is when you are travelling that kind of distance you are going to travelling that kind of distance for a high level tournament, you are not going to travel that far for a grade 5 or 4 its going to be a good 3 or a 2 and you know you are up against the better players so again you can still take lot positives, you can say look okay you lost against that girl but she is like number 3 nationally, you played brilliantly you really had her on the run you did this and you were thinking and I know what you were trying to do and there you are mixing with the top guys and you lost by 2 points. Positive.

I: in terms of the way you are speaking it sounds like you are more aware now than perhaps you were before would that be accurate.

S: yeah I think it's just made me think, well no I think what it was, I always thought that all your coaches and everything all they wanted to see was win, win, win.

L: some do

S: yeah they sort of do a little bit but I think now I think you hear them talking more about looking for future development, but now I realise it's more about development, and I don't feel so much pressure from that and the pressure is not on my daughter and that its more about development and further on, I think that's what I'm trying to say

E: I think it's made me a lot more aware because I stood next to you didn't I at the London grade 2 and I kept saying to you I didn't like it at all did I, I didn't like it, the minute we turned up I said I didn't like it at all, I know the boys are trying to get into grade 2's, I know [Child's name] has spent a year trying to get into a grade 2 and he finally did it, I stood next to him and I said I don't like this, and all I could think of was what am I doing to [Child's name], what is this doing to him, he was terrified when he went on to court and fortunately [Coach's name] was there wasn't she

S: he had a great match

E: they were all 3 sets they were all very close and he won one and lost four but they were brilliant matches but I drove home and I remember speaking to [Husband's name] the next night saying what are we doing to him, and I think this course has made me more aware

L: did you say we!?

E: I did say we, but that was his goal, his goal was to win a grade 3 and get into a grade 2 and get a wild card and he has done all this in the first couple of weeks of the season, finally getting in there, I thought why? He is 9 years old

L: you'll find a lot of people saying that, once you get too, you seem to be on this journey that you have to get to a national grade 2 and then when you get there it is awful

E: I know! You could have told me! I just stood there and I rang [Husband's name] on the way back and I just said I'm really not happy with this at all, I don't feel comfortable, to me that took the whole enjoyment out of it even though he played absolutely brilliantly and his attitude, everything we have been working on was brilliant that day, but it didn't sit easy with me on the way home

S: He was quite chatty when he came off the court though because I was talking to him

E: he was very nervous and he is quite chatty when he is nervous

S: Oh right okay

E: and he was very nervous that [Coach's name] was watching too because [Coach's name] had come down, but that did make him behave. But he was very nervous because he had the spectators he felt that he had a huge expectation

S: and [Coach's name] was there and [Coach's name] was there

E: and his best friend won and that was the first grade two that he had one so it was all turned into quite a jovial thing

E: it is with [Child's name], we will leave the house and we will say right what are our goals for the day and his goals for the tournament last weekend were that he wanted 50% of his first serves in, that's what he wanted, and we have this app called SA tennis, so he made me take the iPad and I'm recording the whole game, you record every single point and he said well, and I said 55%, but he wasn't happy and I said what's the matter and he said well I missed so many of those drop shots and when I did this shot, and he lobbed me twice and I sat there and thought Sam, Sam! But he has got very separate agendas to what we have got, I've felt that this has helped me immensely but I really need something now for [Child's name] because we are not singing from the same hymn sheet at all and he sees that where he is at now this is his peak, this is, and we are like no you've just got your foot on the bottom of the ladder, everything to him is where he is at now, green, orange, it's so important, but it's not and we are struggling, and you can do the talk all the way, and you think he is relaxed and you get him there and you can see him he is there, and he has got all these goals that he has gone on court with which makes the post-match talk very hard because the first thing he will say will be 2 'I played rubbish', and I will say can you justify it 'what do you mean you played rubbish' and he will come out with all these things that went wrong, and I will say well this went well and he will say yes but! And I'm finding that really difficult to deal with. We have got the complete contrast with [Child's name] because he is only 7, he is a red 1, but you take him on court and he doesn't have any goals his only goal is to find 5 things out socially about his opponent during the match, he does he just chats throughout the game, he makes friends with all his opponents, they love him at tournaments because he is so friendly and chatty and if he loses, he may be on match point, he may be 9-2 up, c'mon [Child's name], and he will lose it 10-9 because he is too busy engaging in a conversation about something with somebody on the side of the court, he is just not, he just loves tennis and at the minute he doesn't want to play because he has got other things he wants to do and he said to me oh I will play in the summer and I think okay then, so he is totally laid back about it and it has put his play more into perspective and he has said he doesn't want to play like [Child's name], and he doesn't want, and he doesn't want all that tension and pressure and a lot of it does come from coaches and certainly not from us it's definitely not from us, it's definitely [Child's name] and how he is and how he plays and we can't, we don't want to push that aside and say it's not important because for [Child's name] it is, so it's having to tread that fine line that we are interested in what he wants to achieve and actually trying to be realistic with him, because the last two weeks have don't nothing but drive him on even more because he was ball boy 'in for the last two weeks down here every day and he's now come away with even grander ideas and he knows what he wants to achieve and he is even more frustrated with his own game, and we

were warned by our coach that he will go through a couple of months of frustration because he knows what he wants to do and he has these higher goals but it would be really interesting to see what you could do with the children and talking to them and seeing what they say

I: and that's something I will come back onto a little bit later in terms of kind of looking towards the future, okay so have the workshops changed the way in which you feel about your roles as a parent, do you feel more perhaps confident in your ability to fulfil your role as a tennis parent

L: I think so,

E: I think it's definitely got us talking more about what's happening and especially at tournaments

L: I think before we were just completely out there and we just learnt from each other, nobody is the right or the wrong, and so you just pick your own way so it's quite nice to have a little bit of background and some more sort of on-paper advice

S: backing up as well what you think as well, so you think well yes I am doing the right, I am saying the right things at the right time as well, I mean you see a lot of parents and you look at them and think well I'm not going to do it that way

L: definite no no's

S: yeah definite no no's, so I think it just makes you, I don't know, I think one of the biggest things for me personally has been the reflection thing because that has just made me the minute [child's name] has come off court, I'm like not straight away with my opinion sort of thing and I just go c'mon go and get a drink, if she wins you might say well done, well played, you did that well, if it's a loss you might just say right let's get a drink, blah blah and then instead of me thinking that cheating cow, that shot was in you won that you just sort of thing no no well that's not going to help is it and then you will talk about it later sort of thing, but it has made me reflect on a lot of things, everything in life! It's made me think about, sometimes I just think mm keep that one in [Own name] which is very hard for me!

L: one of the workshops that was good was about who is the most influential on your child at what age and to be realistic in knowing that now it's us and we are the most major input in what our child thinks and does and achieves and not to, and to go with what we know and to be a bit more self-important

S: and the way they are on court as well, you see how some kids behave on court as well, you see how some kids behave on court, well if you went around to some of the tournaments you would be shocked how some 9 year old little girls behave on court, or are allowed to behave on court, because I would say to my daughter if you behave like that mate you are off the court and we are going home

L: but they are quite often the parents that we were talking about when we were saying some parents are disinterested in it anyway, because they already think they know everything already so who is going to tell them anything different

I: do you think the workshops have made you less stressed as a parent, do you feel like you are less stressed?

J: yeah I do, at the weekend I was with some parents with children a year younger and they actually commented how laid back I was, you could see that they were going through the same anguishes I had gone through a year or so back, it's been so useful for everybody this sort of thing, I think everybody is going through the same thing, and I just said a few things which we had discussed and what I had learnt, you can see that they were in exactly the same position that we were in a little while ago so everybody just goes through the same

E: I've got a friend who her boy is 16 and under and so I spent quite a bit of time with her at tournaments and hearing what she says before he goes on and what she says when he comes off, and you are there and you want to write it all down because it's just amazing, it's just absolutely brilliant, of course her younger one is green so they are so chilled about the green stage and he is as well because it's like I can see where I've got to go, I think that makes a difference I think with [Child's name] he is the older one, whereas [Child's name] see's oh I've got a long way to go yet to even get anywhere near where [Child's name] is let alone even further on,

I: do you think it's almost that sort of understanding the whole perspective and perhaps the length of the journey and getting it into perspective in terms of the bigger picture reduces that stress or is it other things

E: yeah I think it is getting it in perspective reduces the stress for [Husband's name] and I

S: I liked it when you did that pyramid and said you are here and then you've got Andy Murray the one at the top and that was like the reality check wasn't it. What I liked about that it wasn't just here is the goal here there was all these other levels that can be your goals as well, and I liked that, because it wasn't just here, I mean I knew there were the other levels but I didn't realise how many levels there were to be honest so that was quite interesting, I liked that, and again it made you think ah well it would be nice if we got to one level wouldn't it, or we got to that level or who knows or [Child's name] might end up working within, something to do with that level, who knows

J: it was nice to see the levels as well because when they come here and they say ITF championship or whatever I have no idea! I don't know what that is or who is in it or what that means or a grade 5 or 4 or, we sort of know our level but you don't understand what is ahead really

E: I was talking to [Child's name] about practicing, I mean I'm a musician and when I practiced I was in a room on my own, I dealt with my own emotions and when it didn't go right only I heard it didn't go right, so I have nobody to prove a point to I would just maybe walk about the room for a rest and just come back into the room and play a bit later, but [Child's name] every time he wants to practice he has to have somebody on court with him to return the ball so that person you are showing them all of your emotions while you are practicing, so we found him, he's got this 6 and under lad, he is now going to be [Child's name] hitter, he is going to hit with him a couple of times a week, so they started today and he came off grinning and I said what was different and he said because he is not my coach, he is not my mum and dad, he is not my older brother he is someone else's older brother and we get on really well and we chat and I've not got to prove anything and he asked me what I want to do and we did what I wanted to do and we did a bit of what he wanted to do and there was no pressure and it was just really, really relaxed and I often say to [Husband's name] I can't get my head around the stressors that [Child's name] is coming out with compared to when I did the music because I haven't experienced not being a sports person I haven't experienced that kind of pressure, and [Child's name] says you are always out in the open you are at a tournament you've got all of these parents watching you, they've all got opinions of what you are doing, saying and how you are playing, he said you can be standing there and losing trying to play your best and you look up and everybody is watching you and you know they are all thinking things about you and there is no escape, you are just there with all these people and as he said to me I am only 9, he doesn't sometimes like that situation he feels himself put in

L: is that a conscious decision you made because [Husband's name] doesn't take him to tournaments, because [Husband's name] is the tennis player but [Husband's name] doesn't take him to tennis

E: [Husband's name] doesn't take him to tournaments no, [Husband's name] is very laid back, I mean you know [Husband's name] don't you Chris, I mean [Husband's name] is very laid back on a tennis court, he never ever gets cross I mean he plays with [Partner's name] and they are chalk and cheese, he finds it very hard, he can't deal with [Child's name], he finds it really hard to deal with [Child's name] on court, he doesn't know what to say to him when he comes off, he finds it really hard to, say [Child's name] comes off he will say maybe you need to work on this with your forehand, he thinks he is giving constructive feedback to [Child's name] but [Child's name] takes it as criticism so he finds that and he will ring me and go what am I going to say to him he is in the corner he really isn't very happy what shall I say to him...so quite often I will then, he will pass the phone over and I will talk to [Child's name] and bring him round and he will go back on court, he will go on for his next match but [Husband's name]

finds it really hard, he finds it hard with [Child's name] because he makes no effort what so ever and he finds it hard with [Child's name] because he does try so hard and [Husband's name] stays at home with the little girl and finds that the easiest, but no it is , it's how he was as a junior he finds it very different to how [Child's name] is because he didn't have the mini tennis he didn't start until he was 11 so it was very different

I: have the workshops had any effect on your behaviour, I guess the logical starting point would be your kind of your behaviour at tournaments, do you think you behave differently now than perhaps you would have before you went through the workshop process

S: at tournaments a bit more relaxed I think

L: parents are all different, some don't even watch at all they are like out the building, some are like so intense they are doing all that or you can just stand back and just

S: well [Child's name] knows where I am standing so, because I never think she looks at me but she does and as long as she knows where I am I just stay and let her go off and just say have a great match, enjoy it and that's it. And of course I was trying to sit down in the Lendl pose and that is going through my head permanently

E: and not knowing the score I now try not to know the score, my son is a fog horn and he does yell it out quite a lot but I try now never to know the score so I can just watch the game for what it is, and when he comes off and says it was like 15-30 I'll think ohh thank goodness I didn't know the score, I will try and stand back and, I know I talk to other people more because I know I walked up to you, every time [Child's name] went on court I scurried over

S: breathe in relaxation breath out tension

E: I find I talk to parents more about how they feel when their child is on court,

L: I think the boy's game is more intense than the girls; the girls seem to be a bit more chillaxed

E: I would much rather watch the girls because there are a few tears, there are a few tears but no it was a lot more relaxed, we had one pair didn't me, there was a lad sitting on the terraces really shouting at his son, saying I've not brought you all this far to do this, you played absolutely rubbish and he was really ripping into him, fortunately next week he came second in the grade two, I was so relieved because the way he had spoken to his son, it was all I could do not to stand there it was awful, it was proof that I am getting it right there is no way I would say that

I: do you think it has affected your behaviour in any way, do you feel there has been a difference or not

L: breathe more

S: Just with the goal setting things, before they go on and play, I'm very much doing that, trying to make every match positive, whatever the outcome is, even if [Child's name] comes off and says oh I played rubbish or something, she might say oh I didn't play very well and everything I will say well feel might feel you missed those but however you were doing that really nicely [Child's name], you were moving them around, and you find the positives, you just say your bit and you say let's go and get a drink

I: so it's almost been that communication

S: that I would say is a lot better with me

J: we had a bad tournament, at our last tournament because we were so relaxed!!

S: [Child's name], are you talking about [Location], [Child's name] was alright wasn't she I mean, she came off and she was okay and then she did get a couple of wins and stuff in her extra matches but she had a really long day the day before and you just knew in the morning when she woke up it wasn't going to be a good day

E: we've tried to make it more of a social event for [Child's name], so we make sure we know who is going to be there, and he will either get there early and warm up with them or we make sure we stay behind at the end and he will have a little play with them afterwards, we do look to see who is in it, I know the LTA were talking about making it so you can't see who has entered, but we play quite a lot in the north west he has got quite a lot of friends up there now because that's where my parents are from and he will look and see who is in it, so I then know that I've got parents, I've got mums there who I know I get on really well with, so I know I've got people there to talk too, [Child's name] will say, oh you will have Jo to talk to and you will have so and so to talk too, so you will have all these parents to talk too, and so then he sees it more as a social thing, but the nationals that wasn't a social thing, despite having [Child's name] and [Child's name] there it wasn't a social thing

J: You notice other parents more now, I notice other parents

L: I do

J: we were watching [child's name] yesterday and she kept looking back every point to her mum, it was only training

E: I do watch what other parents do more because I was watching you at the nationals

S: we were lying on the floor we were!

I: that kind of brings me onto the next question, if it's had any effect on your behaviour in training, obviously we have looked at the tournament aspect of it, do you behave differently at training now or would you say it was pretty consistent throughout

S: Same really, yeah I don't think, yeah

L: the only thing that upsets me at training is if they aren't trying, but that's always been, when you have made an effort and got them here and then they look like they want to be somewhere else, not that that happens very often

S: I've only had that a couple of times,

L: training is always quite good isn't it?

S: yeah they usually come off, we [Child's name] normally comes out buzzing after a training session it's always positive

I: relaxed for you

S: yeah do its easy

L: Yeah we do have great squads here

E: [Child's name] is different in squads here than he is in his lessons, in his lessons he books a court in the far corner so I can't even see where he has gone, because he knows it's only him or his coach or his hitter or whoever he has gone with, that's it, I hear what they choose to tell me at the end so he then he knows, he says you are doing all your work, so you are doing your work so you are happy then I will go and do all this and then I'll come back and tell you, so like he came off today absolutely grinning ear to ear and I knew they had had a really good time, sometimes he will ask me to come on and they use the coaches eye on the iPad, sometimes they come and record and he has got a signal, not a rude one, he's got a signal that tells me to go away, at that point I will scurry off court and hide and they will come and find me later on

S: the ages, the different ages they do of squads and individuals and stuff I think is, the girls one, the boys one they are much better in squads than individuals whereas girls like individuals not squads and they tend to do more hours, do you remember it was more hours, and they say boys just work so much better in squads than individuals,

E: [Child's name] would happily just do academy and no lessons

L: its less work for them isn't it

S: whether it's more fun and they relax and so they play better

I: Have you noticed any changes in your children as a result of your subtle behaviour changes

E: [Child's name] tells me off he says that Sam wouldn't let you say that or do that!

L: [Child's name] hasn't been playing much so I can't really

S: I think because I have been doing the goals thing [Child's name] seems sort of more chilled when she is going on, looks sort of more chilled when she is going on, I'm not sort of saying c'mon, c'mon! Well I've always said it you know she might say well I've beaten her before and I will say every day is different, don't think that just do what you have been practicing and so maybe she has gone on more relaxed and positive I don't know, I don't know

I: has anyone else got any points on that one

J: just give her a freddo and off she goes! That's where we are going wrong!

I: have you got any more points on that Chris, I know you have been scribbling away

C: yeah I think, reflecting back on the things you have been saying about behaviour, the changes in your behaviour particularly during tournaments seems as if there are behaviours you've changed which are for yourself in terms of managing things like breathing and body language and the way you watch a match maybe, the behaviour change in terms of your child and the way you set goals for them that help them out and maybe also behaviour with other parents and the increased sociability as a way in which you manage the situation. And it's interesting to hear about you noticing other parents i.e. that your observations, the behaviour change in terms of observations of other parents and do you use those as points of comparison in the sense that I know I'm doing right because you are more aware that other parents are not quite on the right track

S: yeah well when you see someone dragging their child across the grass

L: well they really isolate themselves as well don't they, they are in a corner, they don't talk to any other parents, they have nothing to do with you and as soon as the child comes off they isolate their child as well, whereas

S: yeah they always take them off and just give them a good talking too almost don't they whereas ours will all chat to each other

L: and they seem to know each other nationally now and

S: yeah it's the first time I've seen [Child's name] at a tournament and [Child's name] I came over to [Child's name] and said how did you get on in a match, now I don't think they have ever really spoken to each other before so that was a nice things to see and looking at each other and the children asking how did you get on, so it's the social side of it

E: have you had an ice cream yet! That was asked a lot!

I: that actually takes us on nicely to the next section, I know we have covered it in parts but do you think the workshops have had any impact on your relationship with other parents, perhaps within our little group or perhaps your desire to interact with other parents at tournaments and stuff like that

L: I think me and [participant name] realise that we were separated at birth! No it is because we do speak more openly about general things, the way the girls are

S: yeah I don't worry a about saying my opinions because I think everyone is pretty well on the same level, so you are not afraid to say it

L: before it was an unspoken thing

S: before I would keep quiet about that because I'm wasn't sure what they are going to say, so now I will say it because I know where they are coming from with that or blah blah

I: yeah so it's almost like you have a point of reference or a baseline that you know where everyone has come from

S: Yeah because I feel we have talked about stuff that we have done in the workshops when we have been away from you, it has come up in conversations and we will say I didn't like Sam's shirt too much! But no that's good isn't it that means it's being talked about and thought about, I mean the diversifying and specifying one I was talking to my husband about in bed! We were lying in bed and I was saying well we had to do this one and he would say what about that and I would say well la la la, you know and we were lying in the pitch dark and [participant name] looked at mine as said whoa! But again there is no right or wrong!

I: obviously staying within this relationship theme, but has it sort of affected your relationship with coach in any way or perhaps do you feel like you can interact more because you have slightly more knowledge or anything like that?

L: Yeah I think we can have a little bit more say with a little bit more ground knowledge

S: confidence

L: yeah and confidence, because it has always been not their rules but we are led by them, whatever they say we take on board and we don't have anybody else to ask apart from maybe other parents and sometimes you do think there is a line and does she really need to be doing another lesson and does she really need to be doing that, does she really need to be travelling there or doing this so I think yeah it's made us more empowered and it's our child and we decide, not full on but like mediator kind of thing.

S: we had a great relationship with our coach anyway and [Coach's name] has even asked you know oh what have you been doing, or what was it about and I would sort of say this this and this. So she has actually asked what it has been about so

J: she came to one didn't she?

S: yeah that first one wasn't it so yeah I feel more, you can have your say a bit more sort of thing

I: perhaps a bit more confidence that you have your

S: I think it's sort of reminded us all that it is our child, I'd say at the end of the day that it is your child and it is your decisions

L: and your money!

E: [Child's name] has two coaches and they are both opposite ends of the spectrum, so it's been quite interesting the one where you wanted us to talk about coaches about goals and things, and there was one of them I was with in the car with her and we were taking him to a

lesson with the other coach and we were going to have them all on court together and I was thinking this is going to go one of two ways...but in the car it was a really interesting conversation and we are singing from the same hymn sheet but when we got to his lesson to his other coach, he kind of scurried of when I mentioned what we were doing and I don't know if he thinks [Child's name] is too young to be looking at all this, he had a very different outlook on what [Child's name] should be doing and he just said oh well its interesting that's good, whereas the one we travelled with was just oozing with enthusiasm and she is the one, [Child's name] will come off court and the first person he contacts is his ex-coach in [Location] because he wants [Coach's name] to know everything because [Coach's name] is still his isolated coach, he is back at the minute he is back for a few weeks and he will be on [Coach's name] a lot, and he then wants to speak to the coach we went with in the car, I don't want to mention names! He wants to talk to her a lot about what he is doing but the other one he doesn't tell anything too, now whether he does in the lessons I don't know but there is no talk about tournaments or what he is doing and I find that quite hard but [Husband's name] was coached by him as well and he said no, no you are fine this is just his way, I find that hard because I like to talk, and so I love one of his coaches that I can talk a lot too and we talk over the goals and I've talked a lot about what we are doing here and coming to tournaments, she's come to watch him play, she's come to see him in the academy as well whereas the other one is totally the opposite end, it's just [Coach's name] at the early stages of tennis he doesn't need to come and watch him play he doesn't need to see any of that so I have found that, to me it's made that divide quite bit seeing how it can be with a coach, when you put your ideal coach thing up that was really interesting because you then laughed and moved on and said that's your ideal coach but in the real world, but actually the coach he had who is now in [Location] fitted, and I rang him up the next night and said you fitted everything Sam put up about the ideal coach, you fit every category of that, it's just a shame you had to go

L: you could always move!

E: I know I keep offering, don't tell [Child's name]!

I: that was really good, in terms of the final point in terms of these relationships, obviously has it had any impact on your relationship with your child in any way

S: more relaxed, I would say, but that's probably because I'm more relaxed and so whatever you do your child will usually be the same back with you, if you are tense about something then they are going to be tense and maybe stroppy with you or they won't try so I would say more relaxed

L: I concur

E: I feel like I am saying the right things to him and I don't think I was before, just trying to put it all in perspective for him I found it all a bit easier, although he keeps accusing me of quoting what I've learnt here! Yeah we do sit and talk, because at home we've got the other two its chaos but we do talk a lot in the car on the way to and from tournaments, but he seems very interested to know what we are doing what I am getting out of it not just what he will as a player get out of it

L: he is a stats man, when he was ball boy 'in and I said how are you doing and before you knew it he was telling me every competition he has won, what place he is how many he has won and how many he has lost and I was thinking whoa! Have a good day!

E: yeah at age 8 he had read the Carol Dweck book and [Husband's name] and I sat down and we put it all in [Child's name] speech and we said this is what you could be like and [Child's name] is a fixed mind-set, and he stood there hands on hips and said listen guys, I'm fixed mind-set and there is nothing either of you too or Carol Dweck can do to turn me into a growth mind-set and [Husband's name] said on that not lets go to the lesson. But yeah he is stats and that's why he wanted to know what his first serve were, but that's where he is and that's where we are trying to support that on court, it's all there, it's all ticked have I done this and have I don't that

C: yeah that's where he is right now and I think one of the most important things is you keep trying to be as, using the performance goal approach as much as you can but trying to keep hammering the growth mind-set because there will become a time when he will bank on that again, he won't necessarily be able to see that now just because of his age cognitively but he will, in time

E: he has got all the terminology, I don't think he understands a lot of it but he has it all

C: but it's important that he has that memory to go back to of his mum when he was 9 thinking well remember when you said this to me oh yeah I do remember that

E: it seems like when we do take him to tournaments, we don't want him to know what seed he is so we won't tell him and we will get there and someone will say ohh you are seeded number 1 again [Child's name] and you know therefore we are going to have a bad tournament because he then ups the pressure, he then thinks his performance is not going to be good unless he wins

I: Social comparison comes in doesn't it; I've got a few more conclusion points and almost looking towards the future. In terms of the delivery and the timing of information, what's the best way in your opinion to educate parents, obviously, we've gone through a very much workshop, interaction, a build-up relationships between myself and you guys, do you think that is the best way to educate parents or do you think perhaps more online resources, webinars things like that may be more beneficial

E: I like to talk

J: I like the way you did it, but I like to then go away and read in my own time, the papers, I read them once then I feel like I need to read them again and I like to do it in my own time, listen to everything here and then go away in my own time and do it

S: if it was done online it probably wouldn't go in as much, if you just sent the stuff out online, I think the face to face, because it gives you the opportunity to ask a question and get an answer straight away doesn't it rather than emails and stuff like that

I: Good, obviously relating back to one of the points we made earlier about other parents coming and obviously the logistical side of things and parents not being able to make it do you think that perhaps there is a place for more webinars or online based resources that maybe people can access in their own time or maybe access in their if they are not at the centres of they can't make it or perhaps they are less likely to come to things like this

S: it would be a great thing to have a link on the LTA for parents, I mean Judy Murray did a few things didn't she parents, tennis parents and stuff I can never understand why the LTA haven't done anything on their website to link to something like this, or information where you can get how to handle tournaments, that kind of things that we have discussed and stuff and if they did some kind of link like that or these are some groups you could go to or something I think that would be brilliant because know body knows where to go and get anything and again with parents it's just you've talked over the years you just learn it all by talking to other people that's how we have all learnt everything out there

L: and if you can catch them even earlier than us

S: because I have looked at stages for things, you know how to work with your child, how to, and I've never been able to find anything out, I only found that one thing Judy Murray did one and that's all there has ever been and I've searched the whole LTA website and there hasn't been anything

L: or even if it's during the squads you know, when parents bring their kids down for half an hour instead of the kids playing to do some kind of seminar with the kids maybe even as well because I think they are a bit rabbits in a headlight a lot of the time aren't they, they don't grasp the concept of what is going on all of the time, they are not all like [Child's name]! With the kids maybe as well

J: I think that was one good thing to come out of it for me, I sort of discussed some of the stuff with her and it made me listen to what she was feeling, stuff that I wouldn't have ordinarily asked her, I was telling her about the one where you specialise in a sport or, we did quite a few bits and bobs and I was telling her the difference and I said about doing squads and she said

well I do think that as play rather than work, that's quite interesting, and it was quite interesting how she was feeling about things that I wouldn't probably have asked her

I: yeah that's good, erm I think we have touched on this as well but when do you think would be the best time to deliver this kind of education to parents and we have obviously spoken to perhaps you guys might have been a little bit too far through for the system based stuff, do you think?

E: I think the discussions and the feedback; I think we are at the right stage for that because you've had the experience at tournaments, I think the more towards the end was more aimed at us but towards the beginning about the mini tennis that would be good at the start

S: for people right at the start, where people can go to get help

E: because you spend a lot of time trying to work out the LTA system, what is this mini tennis rating, okay there are posters and it shows you but you are doing a lot of finding things out for yourself or asking parents of older children

J: the tournament of children change as you get to orange because at red you just go along anywhere and it lasts an hour and a half, but once you get to orange it's a bit more formal and people start travelling a little bit further afield I think at the beginning of orange I think or something

I: in terms of kind of future education and support would you guys be interested in more education perhaps for the next stage looking at that 10-14, 10-12 age group and looking at perhaps how your roles shift and

L: I would

J: I would yeah

I: no that's good, whose responsibility do you think it is to educate parents, and there are sort of points looking at future education and support but

J: it's up to their own devices yeah

S: it's up to us to find out where we can get the education from

E: it's up to us to tell somebody what we need to know, and that person can then tell us where we can find it out, so if we wanted to find out about how we could improve our role we should ask a coach, it's up to us to ask the questions and be pointed in the right direction

J: but if you don't know the questions

L: no I would have though a performance academy like this, that's here to a certain standard, should be able to deliver some kind of education

I: yeah so you think it kind of rests with the centres

J: it's everybody isn't it, it's a bit of everybody but they need to say like in the next few years you need to be thinking about which route you want to go and that sort of thing

S: because you are very much working this next term aren't you, it's nice, I mean we do have that kind of mating thing but that was only up until September wasn't it really, so 6 months ahead. I suppose they don't really know where your child is going to be in two years' time but they can kind of say to you, yeah I would come from here though wouldn't it, say your child is this I think you've got the opportunity it could go that way, we could be looking at that or we could be looking at that, being realistic, but also it would give you a bit of an idea of the financial what would, if your child makes it to that stage they you are going to be looking at this this and this and then you've got to be thinking well hang on a minute can I afford to do that, can we afford the time do that and how is school going to work with that

C: just to follow up on that very briefly in terms of again just coming back to the format of these presentations and the way it's been structured over time, do you think the performance academy should, I mean do you think it's a coach, a very well educated coach let's say should take on a, would they be capable of taking on a Sam type role, would you want someone who was providing an induction programme like this or do you see the education just be to having the confidence to ask them for bits a pieces of information

J: go on, I think bits of information, I wouldn't expect them to do that sort of role, but I would like them to say what's on offer or what our, more information

S: yeah I don't think I would like so much to come in and it was a coach from here telling us, I would rather it came from someone who was from outside because we feel more power,

L: a neutral

S: whereas if it was a coach then they have the upper hand a bit again

E: it is nice to know there is this confidentiality thing where we can say what we want here

S: yeah you wouldn't say things to a coach, it could be your coach and then you know you are actually wanting to say the coaching I feel has been affecting him, you couldn't say that could you whereas saying it to you, its, yeah okay you might go and tell people but I don't think you do, but you can say it sort of thing

I: yeah it's a good point, do you think your children would benefit from this kind of workshop, obviously tailored in a different way and developmentally specific

L: I think [child's name] could definitely do with it

S: well I said to you, you should have got them in and given them a question sheet, I think it would be really interesting to see if they matched up with the parents

L: I'm sorry do you mean a focus group or do you mean a

I: no like the workshops

L: yeah sorry

I: obviously there is a big emphasis on strength and conditioning and different aspects of sport science; thus far the psychological side of it hasn't really come into

S: I think it would be a brilliant thing, and I think it's a great thing to start as young as possible because I think for all your school life everything it would make you be able to put everything into perspective, you've got exams coming up, whatever, anything, I think it's a really really good thing

E: It's a life skill isn't it what they are experiencing now, a lot of children wouldn't experience until they are a lot older so

S: and they've got SATS and goodness knows what and changing classes and all that kind of sessions

J: it wouldn't have to be a long session would it; it couldn't be a short session

S: 20 minutes or something, you know just get their attention

I: yeah little strategies and skills, do you think there is a place for a sort of full time, part time or permanent sport psychologist within these centres

S: are you looking for job Sam!

I: not me personally! I've got enough on my plate! but in terms of the discipline do you see pretty much part time S&C coaches, do you think there is a place or would you like there to be a some sort of sport psychologist here on a full or part time basis

J: yeah we use the physiotherapist chap who comes here, we only see him every now and again but we know we can access him if we need him; it's nice to know who he is and know he is here

E: it's knowing that there is somebody here that you can speak too

S: if you knew someone was here that you can email or you can, you might not be able to physically see them all the time but say you knew they were there, they came once a month they were there or something that you can still contact them about anything. Because at the moment, I'm not being funny but yes we could still contact you but it could be at the end of today we never see you again, it would be a sad day Sam! It could be, that we are never going to see either of you again, and then you sort of think we've got no email address and you sort of think what was the point of all that then, well okay you have got something from it but it's nice to know there is always somebody you can always contact just to reinforce where you are going and keep you on the right track sort of thing

I: would that apply for yourselves as well as your children in terms of a sport psychologist could obviously do the role I have done but could also work with the children, would you be interested in sort going to them with oh I don't know what to say or I've been saying this is that the right thing to say that kind of thing

L: yeah I think our children are slightly too young to know, they don't, not communicating this well, I think when they are older and there are more clashes with parents and the child then definitely and you know where the child is coming from and thinking more, at our age well certainly with my child I don't, I'm not always aware of her negative and positive thoughts, she just floats through life and I don't really get any comeback from it, I don't, not that way, so I wouldn't take her anywhere at this moment but certainly when she got to the teenage years and things like that and there were proper behavioural difference and things like that I would want too, I would definitely want to take her somewhere then

S: but also it would give her the opportunity to express something maybe to somebody else, not you and again that

C: I think the point about the sport psychologist and the time at which maybe the child benefits, I think there is a difference between a sport psychologist role working in a support capacity when the child is going through transitional issues or mental issues but also the pure educational role, so I would be working with an individual not just because they are going through adolescence but just because it would be an opportunity to teach them, you know run a 20min session on goal setting so a sport psychologist would work as an educator, they wouldn't necessarily be, we I'm not going to say therapy but it would, there is a difference between two roles and some people have a conception about psychologists as a thing when there is issues developing and in reality its more educational

J: it might be a group thing though, they are old enough now to appreciate like we have appreciated that others are going through the same things, and the kids can appreciate that other kids are going through the same things you know, so a group session would be good

I: erm it's a shame to end on this point, but obviously everything incurs a cost in life, would this kind of support, education be something, in terms of sport psychologists being here or being accessible to you guys, would that be something you would be prepared to pay for, or would that be the final straw that breaks the camel's back in terms of the amount of money that you guys shell out

L: I dunno the [Centre name] here give us days when we can go and see the coach and the gym instructor and the physiotherapist for free as part of what we pay in as a whole, but then [Child's name] has just recently been injured so I have taken a privately to the same physio so I have had to pay extra on top of just what they have given us, and I think that is sort of the way it would go, if you are using it as part of a small package that the [Centre name] allows you to enter into that's fine and then anything above and aboard that, if you need extra help then to incur a cost on that

S: I personally, if it was paying for me to do it I probably wouldn't be so keen, if it was for my daughter to do it and I thought it would be beneficial for her I would sort of be a bit more okay depends how much it was

C: when we did the meeting, I'm not sure how many parents attended when I did the audit of this particular centre around psychology support on a separate but related matter, the parents talked about the tariff of services you can pay for, and there was a discussion around, if there was half an hour cost to this, it was part of the bigger package it might sacrifice half an hour of physical fitness for half an hour of that

S: yeah like your S&C you could take 20mins off that and put it into something else

C: but there was certainly a feeling that the centre should be in part responsible for providing a basic level

S: yeah because there is no more time in the week, we can't find any more time, and that's the problem as well if someone says well it's got to be another 20mins, half an hour you will be thinking when am I supposed to fit in everything else

L: and I also think, they have full timers here, one of the full time lads lodges with me in the week and he has really got no back up at all, 16 and he is only here for two years and particularly for those individuals who have left home you know they rarely see their parents, I mean we have a great relationship, but I'm sure there are some who are lodging who are just in and out of the house and don't speak to them and I think there is a duty of care to them there should be somebody

I: I mean only a final point in terms of was there anything you thought you would want to bring up when you came here today that you haven't had the chance to do yet or any sort of final points

J: You know when you read the papers and they have got links to other papers, could I sort of email you, would you be able to get some of these papers

I: yeah absolutely, just drop me an email and if I don't have it on my database I'll be able to get it and I can send it across to you for sure

S: I can't think of anything else

I: Chris anything else

C: I think the one thing that court my ear when we were talking about the delivery style of the webinar is the social aspect is quite important isn't it, the sense of the time together in a workshop, one of the reasons I ask the question, if we were trying to develop this further nationally for example just how would you do it because I can't clone 25, 30 Sam's but there is a sense of the fact there is a body of work here, obviously we've just touched on workshops for mini tennis parents in the first stage, but the work we've done goes right up to 16, 17 years of

age in terms of workshops or materials, so it's interesting just to reflect back on that in terms of the best time to have it is when you are here so there is real time management issues about if you listen to a webinar for example or getting other resources, when you would actually get to that, whereas physically you are already here with your son or daughter so you can actually attend a social session and then maybe reflect, maybe even have the chances of reflecting the session with your son or daughter about what went on in a more eager proactive way than if you were just listening to a webinar at home on a laptop. I was just wondering if anyone has any further reflections on is there, would a webinar or an online resource have certain values even if we couldn't get a social together, or is it a case of there really must be some social workshop

S: whether you had the first one was the social one, you know what I mean you started it up with the gathering, and then you said right okay I am now, you would have to accept, let's say you got 20 people to the first one, for arguments sake you would then have to say right from now I am going to send these out and get your feedback and you are going to lose some, that's naturally going to happen, but then if you keep and you did every 6months you got back together again

L: I'm not great at that, I don't mean technically I just mean time management, I much prefer this type of focus,

E: but that's where we are, we are at that age where we would prefer to sit and talk as a group whereas, when I said to [Child's name] and he was doing something

L: I don't think it's naturally that I think we are here anyway, and like you say

L: Yeah exactly that

I: yeah sorry we are pretty much finished. Thank you all for your time, what I will do I will have the beauty of typing this all up, I will sent you the transcript so if anyone wants to withdraw anything they said or add anything you can have the opportunity to do so.

C: I think the key thing is the resources that you need, so obviously we have major access to a lot of resources, I think one of the things with this project from the LTA's point of view is the LTA hearing more about the kind of stuff that works or potentially works, because untimely they need to invest more in this kind of area from a parent player kind of perspective right through the developmental cycle

S: rather than leaving it too late

C: yeah I think you are right because the tennis parent website, I mean I started working with the LTA on tennis parents and issues back in 2006 on parental stressors and really nothing was done about that rather than me sending out information and papers and you just get the FQA, when my child has this issue or my child has that

S: it's probably all the same questions

C: yeah it doesn't quite give you the same sort of breadth of being able to chat together in a forum and being able to explore something in a bit more depth

Appendix 10.
Club/Centre Invitation Letter (study three)

Hi [Name],

We are emailing you to inform you that we have launched an online education programme for British mini-tennis parents. The Loughborough Tennis Parent Education Programme (see www.ltpep.com) offers a series of eight 20-30 minute online educational videos, a mini-tennis parent forum and a library database.

The programme provides mini-tennis parents with all the information they need to support their child's journey, navigate the LTA's organisational system, make informed decisions about their child's talent development pathway and fulfil their roles before, during and after competitions.

The website is the result of a 2 year research project which has explored parents' education and support needs and conducted a series of face-to-face workshops in high performance centres. The online resource has been designed to be used on laptops, tablets and smart phones and therefore represents a free, modern, flexible and convenient approach tennis parent education. To access the resource mini-tennis parents will have to register and fill in a 15-20 minute online questionnaire - this will allow us to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme.

We would like to ask you to email the mini-tennis parents attending your centre and invite them to participate in the programme. If you are happy to do so, we have drafted an email for you to use (see attached) to save you time but please feel free to edit or write your own. We have also developed some A4 posters that can be printed off and put up around your centre (e.g., on the doors to the balcony) to further promote the programme/website (also see attached). Please cc' us in on the email so we can keep track of how many clubs have send it out.

If you have any questions or feedback please don't hesitate to contact us.

Many Thanks

Sam Thrower, Dr Chris Harwood & Dr Chris Spray

Loughborough University

Appendix 11:
Parent Invitation Email (study three)

Email Subject:

New Online Educational Resource for Mini-Tennis Parents

Email Text:

Dear Mini-Tennis Parents,

A group of researchers at Loughborough University have developed an online education programme for British mini-tennis parents. The 'Loughborough tennis parent education programme' (LTPEP) includes eight 20-minute educational videos, a mini-tennis parent forum and a library database. The resource has been designed for use with laptops, tablets and smart phones, and therefore represents a free, modern, flexible and convenient approach to tennis parent education.

The programme will provide you with all the information you need to support your child's journey, navigate the LTA's organisational system, make informed decisions about your child's talent development pathway and fulfil your roles before, during and after competitions.

The resource is also being used as part of a research project and will require you to fill in a 15-20 minute questionnaire before and after you have access to the workshops and forum.

We encourage all of you to engage in the programme, as we believe it will ensure that you have a positive influence on your child's long-term participation and development within tennis.

For more information and how to register visit www.ltpep.com and click 'about us'. The programme also has a twitter feed: @LTPEP

Many Thanks

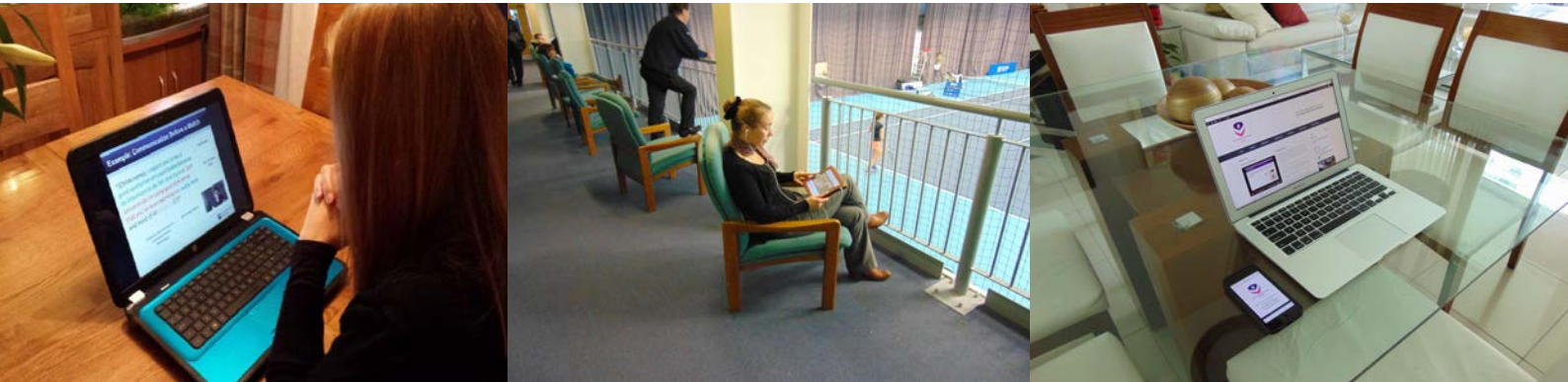
Appendix 12:
Promotional Poster (study three)



LOUGHBOROUGH
LTPEP

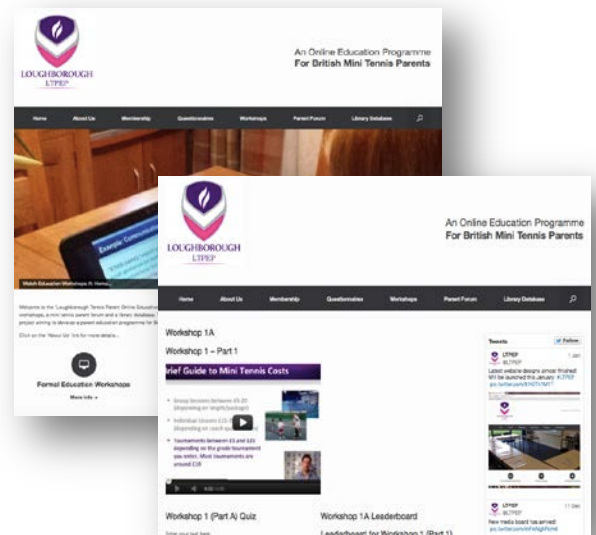


An Online Education Programme For British Mini Tennis Parents



Researchers at Loughborough University have launched a free online educational resource for mini tennis parents. Features include:

- 8 x 20 minute educational videos
- Mini tennis parent forum
- Library database



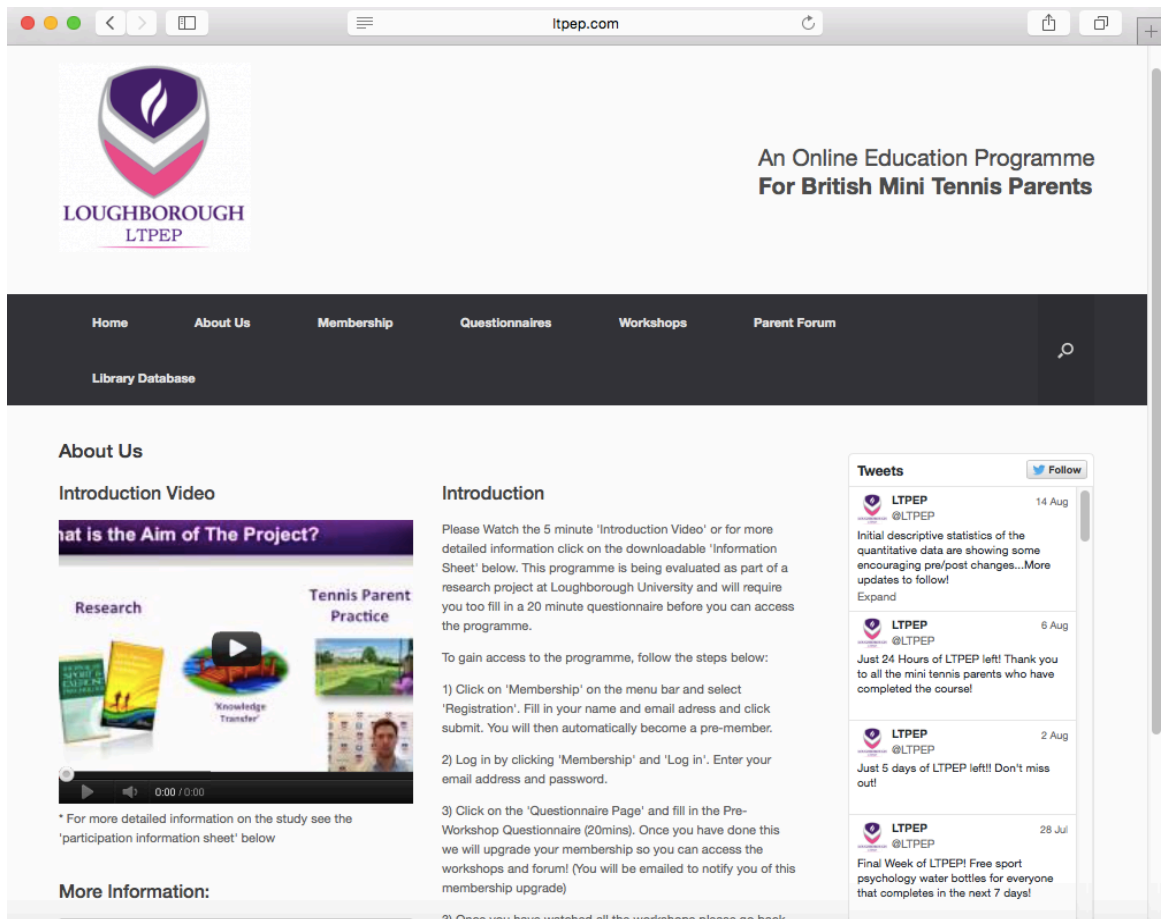
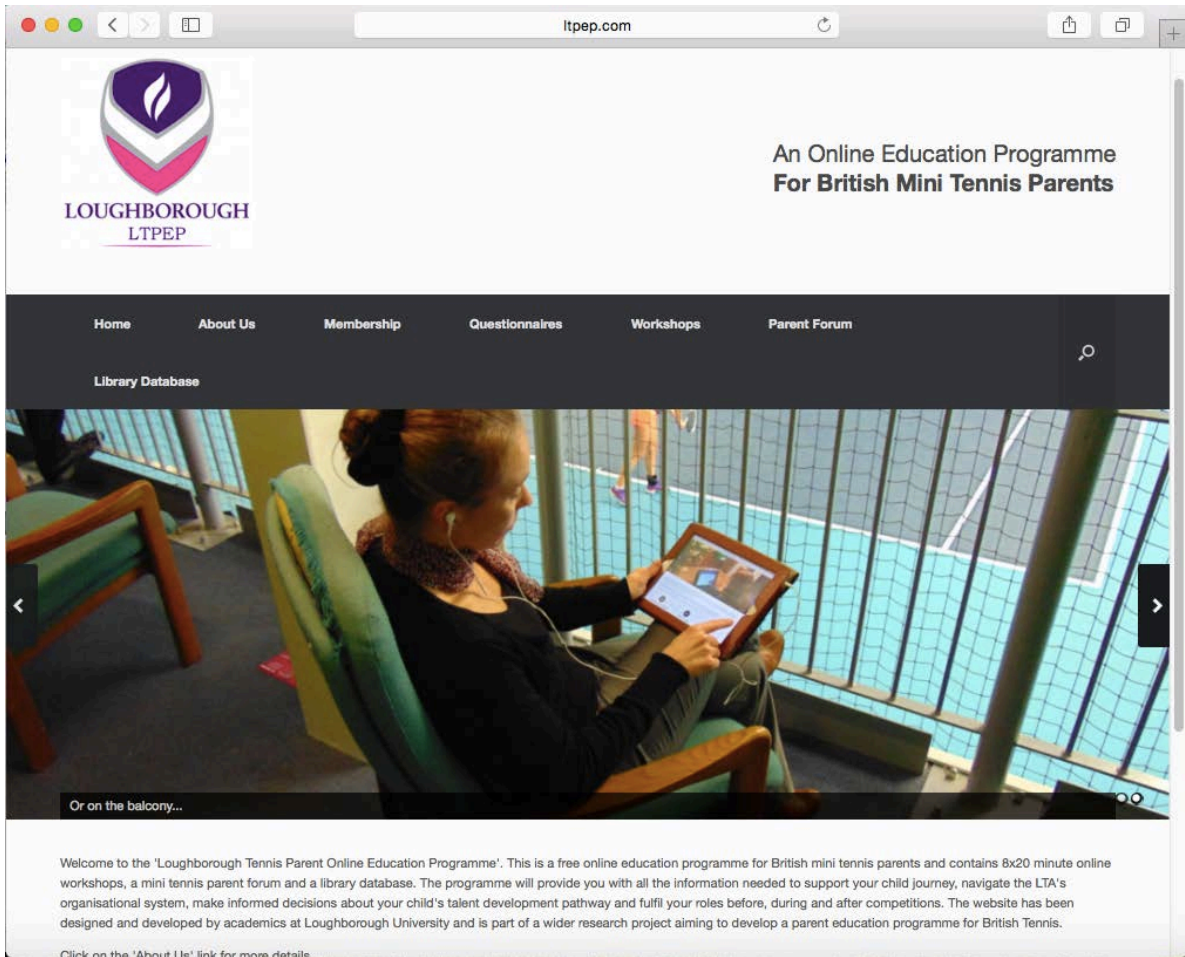
Find out more at:

www.ltpep.com

@LTPEP




Appendix 13:
Website and Twitter Examples (study three)



ltpep.com

How are you, SamThrover?

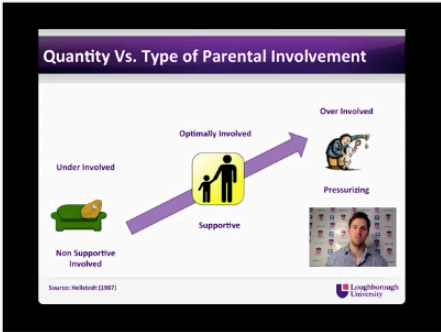


An Online Education Programme For British Mini Tennis Parents

Home About Us Membership Questionnaires Workshops Parent Forum

Library Database

Workshop 1A



Quantity Vs. Type of Parental Involvement

The diagram illustrates a spectrum of parental involvement. On the left, 'Non Supportive Involved' is represented by a person sitting on a sofa. In the middle, 'Supportive' is represented by a person standing with a child. On the right, 'Over Involved' is represented by a person leaning over a child. A purple arrow points from the left towards the right, with 'Optimally Involved' positioned above it. Below the 'Supportive' icon, there is a small photo of a man. The source is cited as 'Sources: Hellmuth (1987)' and 'Loughborough University'.

Leaderboard for Workshop 1 (Part 1)

Tweets Follow

LTPEP @LTPEP · 14 Aug
Initial descriptive statistics of the quantitative data are showing some encouraging pre/post changes...More updates to follow!
Expand

LTPEP @LTPEP · 6 Aug
Just 24 Hours of LTPEP left! Thank you to all the mini tennis parents who have completed the course!

LTPEP @LTPEP · 2 Aug
Just 5 days of LTPEP left!! Don't miss out!

LTPEP @LTPEP · 28 Jul
Final Week of LTPEP! Free sport psychology water bottles for everyone that completes in the next 7 days!

Twitter, Inc.

Home Notifications Messages

Search Twitter




LOUGHBOROUGH LTPEP

TWEETS 341 FOLLOWING 669 FOLLOWERS 235 FAVORITES 214

LTPEP @LTPEP
The Official Twitter Page of Loughborough University's Free Mini Tennis Parent Online Education Programme (ltpep.com). Contact: admin@ltpep.com
UK
ltpep.com
100 Photos and videos

Tweets Tweets & replies Photos & videos

LTPEP @LTPEP · Aug 14
Initial descriptive statistics of the quantitative data are showing some encouraging pre/post changes...More updates to follow!

LTPEP @LTPEP · Aug 6
Just 24 Hours of LTPEP left! Thank you to all the mini tennis parents who have completed the course!

LTPEP @LTPEP · Aug 2
Just 5 days of LTPEP left!! Don't miss out!

LTPEP @LTPEP · Jul 28
Final Week of LTPEP! Free sport psychology water bottles for everyone that completes in the next 7 days!

LTPEP @LTPEP · Jul 23

Who to follow · Refresh · View all

- 10sworld.com** @10sworld Follow
- Digswell Tennis Club** @dig... Follow
- JGPT** @JGPTennis Followed by Priority Tennis a... Follow

Find friends

Trends · Change

- Dolgopolo**
Novak Djokovic struggles past Alexandr Dolgopolo in Cincinnati...
9,441 Tweets about this trend
- Simons Halep**
3,706 Tweets about this trend
- Murray**
Western & Southern Open Tennis: Fird-11

Appendix 14:
Online Information Sheet and Informed Consent Form (study three)



Pre Workshop Questionnaire

p.1 Introduction

Add item

Welcome to the Loughborough Tennis Parent Education Programme Questionnaire.

Before completing the questionnaire you will need to confirm that you have read the information sheet and agree to participate in the study (by clicking 'Submit and Continue' on each page)

The questionnaire itself will explore your perceptions of your own tennis parenting abilities in a number of different areas within junior tennis. The purpose of this questionnaire is not to compare your scores with other parents but to evaluate the effectiveness of the Loughborough Tennis Parent Online Education Programme (LTPEP)

The questionnaire is completely confidential, can be saved part way through and takes around 20 minutes to complete.

Note that once you have clicked on the CONTINUE button at the bottom of each page you can not return to review or amend that page

Add item

p.2 Participant Information Sheet

Add item

Educating and Supporting British Tennis Parents: A Web-Based Intervention

Introduction:

You have been invited to participate in this research study, which is being conducted at Loughborough University. It is important for you to understand why the research is being conducted and what it will entail. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and please contact the lead researcher if you require more information or clarification. Thank you for reading this and for taking the time to consider participation in this study.

Who is conducting the research?

- Lead Researcher: Sam Thrower, PhD Researcher, School of Sport, Exercise and Health Sciences,

Loughborough University, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 3TU, s.thrower@lboro.ac.uk, +44 07716065298.

- Additional Researcher: Dr Chris Harwood, Reader, School of Sport, Exercise & Health Sciences, Loughborough University, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 3TU, c.g.harwood@lboro.ac.uk, +44 (0)1509 22634.
- Additional Researcher: Dr Chris Spray, Senior Lecturer, School of Sport, Exercise & Health Sciences, Loughborough University, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE11 3TU, c.m.spray@lboro.ac.uk, +44 (0)1509 226339.

What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of this study is to explore the effectiveness of a web-based education programme for British mini tennis parents.

Who is doing this research and why?

This study is part of a wider project aiming to develop a parent education programme for British Tennis. This project is funded by Loughborough University.

Has this study gained ethical clearance?

The current study has been cleared by Loughborough University ethics committee to proceed.

Are there any inclusion/exclusion criteria?

Participants are required to be a parent of a British mini tennis player.

What will be required from me as a participant?

Participants will be required to register and watch 8 x 20min online workshops. At the start and end of the programme participants will also be required to fill in a 20-minute online questionnaire.

How long will the study take?

We encourage participants to watch two 20min workshops per week. This will allow participants the time to apply what they have learnt during the workshops. Therefore, the study should take around 4 weeks.

Is there anything I need to do between each of the workshops?

Yes. Participants will be encouraged to offer feedback on each workshop (via a comments box), complete practical tasks after each workshop, and engage in discussions in the online forum.

Once I take part, can I change my mind?

Yes! If at any time, before, during or after registering for the online education programme you wish to withdraw from the study please just contact the main investigator. You can withdraw at any time, for any reason and you will not be asked to explain your reasons for withdrawing.

How is data collected?

Data will be collected from the online questionnaires, tweets, feedback comments and forum posts.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

All questionnaire and demographic data will remain strictly confidential and will only be seen by the research team. The forum (and any posts within the forum) can be viewed by anyone visiting the website - however, only members can post in the forum. Feedback comments will be seen by other participants but only those who have registered for the programme. Tweets may also be used as data but these are already in the public domain. When writing up or presenting the findings quotes will be used to illustrate important findings, however, these quotes will remain strictly anonymous through the use of code names. The only exception to our confidentiality policy is if a disclosure is made that indicates a child may be at risk of harm or is being harmed.

How will data be stored?

Data will be stored safely and securely and held for ten years, after which it will be destroyed, in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. The data will be owned by Loughborough University and will only be used for the purpose of this study. Only the research team will have access to the data.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The findings of this research will be written up for publication in an academic journal. In addition to this, the findings will be used as part of a wider project, which is developing a parent education programme for British tennis.

What do I get for participating?

Participants will receive free education and support that is underpinned by academic research. After completing all workshops parents will be provided with access to a library database of supplementary academic reading material.

I have some more questions who should I contact?

Please contact the lead researcher (Sam Thrower) should you have any further questions, his details can be found at the top of this information sheet.

What if I am not happy with how the research was conducted?

The University has a policy relating to Research Misconduct and Whistle Blowing which is available online at [http://www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/committees/ethical/Whistleblowing\(2\).htm](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/committees/ethical/Whistleblowing(2).htm).

Add item

p.3 Participant Informed Consent Form



The purpose and details of the study have been explained to me. I understand that this study is designed to further scientific knowledge and that all procedures have been approved by the Loughborough University Ethical Advisory Committee.

I have read and understood the information sheet and this consent form. I have had an

Add item

opportunity to ask (via email) questions about my participation. I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in the study. I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the programme at any stage for any reason, and that I will not be required to explain my reasons for withdrawing.

I understand that all questionnaire information I provide will be treated in strict confidence and will be kept anonymous and confidential to the researchers unless (under the statutory obligations of the agencies which the researchers are working with), it is judged that confidentiality will have to be breached for the safety of the participant or others.

I understand that the forum (and any posts within it) can be viewed by anyone visiting the website. I recognise that any feedback comments I make will not be confidential or anonymous as other members will be able to see them. I also understand that any tweets will be in the public domain.

By beginning the questionnaire, you acknowledge that you have read this information and agree to participate in this programme/research study, with the knowledge that you are free to withdraw your participation at any time without penalty

Add item

Add item

p.4 Questionnaire



Demographic Information

Add item

Add item

This section is all about your demographic information. Some of the questions may seem a little personal but they allow us to see what sort of populations/groups are using the programme. Don't forget all the information you provide here is confidential, but if you still don't want to answer any questions then you can always select the box 'prefer not to answer'!



1 What is your full name? *

Add item

Add item

Appendix 15:
Pre-Workshop Questionnaire (study three)

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

All questionnaire and demographic data will remain strictly confidential and will only be seen by the research team. The forum (and any posts within the forum) can be viewed by anyone visiting the website - however, only members can post in the forum. Feedback comments will be seen by other participants but only those who have registered for the programme. Tweets may also be used as data but these are already in the public domain. When writing up or presenting the findings quotes will be used to illustrate important findings; however, these quotes will remain strictly anonymous through the use of code names. The only exception to our confidentiality policy is if a disclosure is made that indicates a child may be at risk of harm or is being harmed.

How will data be stored?

Data will be stored safely and securely and held for ten years, after which it will be destroyed, in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. The data will be owned by Loughborough University and will only be used for the purpose of this study. Only the research team will have access to the data.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The findings of this research will be written up for publication in an academic journal. In addition to this, the findings will be used as part of a wider project, which is developing a parent education programme for British tennis.

What do I get for participating?

Participants will receive free education and support that is underpinned by academic research. After completing all workshops parents will be provided with access to a library database of supplementary academic reading material.


I have some more questions who should I contact?

Please contact the lead researcher (Sam Thrower) should you have any further questions, his details can be found at the top of this information sheet.

What if I am not happy with how the research was conducted?

The University has a policy relating to Research Misconduct and Whistle Blowing which is available online at [http://www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/committees/ethical/Whistleblowing\(2\).htm](http://www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/committees/ethical/Whistleblowing(2).htm).

p. 3 Participant Informed Consent Form

 The purpose and details of the study have been explained to me. I understand that this study is designed to further scientific knowledge and that all procedures have been approved by the Loughborough University Ethical Advisory Committee.

I have read and understood the information sheet and this consent form. I have had an

opportunity to ask (via email) questions about my participation. I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in the study. I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the programme at any stage for any reason, and that I will not be required to explain my reasons for withdrawing.

I understand that all questionnaire information I provide will be treated in strict confidence and will be kept anonymous and confidential to the researchers unless (under the statutory obligations of the agencies which the researchers are working with), it is judged that confidentiality will have to be breached for the safety of the participant or others.

I understand that the forum (and any posts within it) can be viewed by anyone visiting the website. I recognise that any feedback comments I make will not be confidential or anonymous as other members will be able to see them. I also understand that any tweets will be in the public domain.

By beginning the questionnaire, you acknowledge that you have read this information and agree to participate in this programme/research study, with the knowledge that you are free to withdraw your participation at any time without penalty

Add item


Add item

p. 4 Questionnaire

Demographic Information

Add item

Add item

 This section is all about your demographic information. Some of the questions may seem a little personal but they allow us to see what sort of populations/groups are using the programme. Don't forget all the information you provide here is confidential, but if you still don't want to answer any questions then you can always select the box 'prefer not to answer'!

Add item

 1 What is your full name? *

Add item

2 What is your date of birth? *



7 What is your marital status? *



Add item

Single (including divorced, widowed, separated)

Add item

Married

Add item

Living with partner

Show all (5) Show all (5)

3 What is your gender? *



Male

Female

Add item

8 How many children under 18 years of age live in your household? *



Add item

1

2

3

Show all (6) Show all (6)

4 What is your ethnic group? (Ethnic group questions ARE NOT about nationality, place of birth or citizenship. They are about color and broad ethnic group -- UK citizens can belong to any of the groups indicated). *



ASIAN or ASIAN BRITISH -- Indian

ASIAN or ASIAN BRITISH -- Pakistani

ASIAN or ASIAN BRITISH -- Bangladeshi

Show all (16) Show all (16)

Add item

Add item

9 What is your current employment status? *



Add item

Employed Full Time

Employed Part Time

Homemaker

Show all (9) Show all (9)

5 If you answered 'other' to the ethnic origin question above, please provide further details:



Add item

Add item

Add item

6 What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? If currently enrolled, highest qualification received: *



No schooling completed

GCSE's (Or Equivalent)

A Levels (Or Equivalent)

Show all (6) Show all (6)

10 What is your estimated household income? *



Less than £15,000

Between £15,000 and £25,000

Between £25,000 and £50,000

Show all (7) Show all (7)

Add item

Add item

11 How many years experience do you have as a tennis parent? *



Less than 1

Between 1 and 2

Between 2 and 3

Show all (11) Show all (11)

Add item

Add item

12 What is your child's current age? *

3 years old 4 years old 5 years old Show all (8) Show all (8)

Add item

Add item

13 What is your child's Mini Tennis/LTA player rating? *

No LTA rating

Red 4

Red 3

Show all (15) Show all (15)

Add item

Add item

14 Is your child a talent ID player? *

Yes

No

Add item

Add item

15 What 'LTA talent / player development' county of the UK (e.g., Derbyshire) does your child's tennis fall under? *

I do not know

Avon

Bedfordshire

Show all (41) Show all (41)

Add item

Add item

16 What is the name of the Centre or club where your child plays the MAJORITY of his/her tennis? *

Add item

Add item

Tennis Parent Emotions

Below you will find a list of words that describe a range of feelings that you may experience when involved in tennis (e.g., tournaments, matches, training). Reflecting on the **most recent month** where you were involved as a tennis parent, please indicate on the scale next to each item how much you have experienced these feelings. There are no right or wrong answers so please answer accurately and honestly. Do not spend too much time on any one item.

Add item

17 Reflecting on the most recent month where you were involved as a tennis parent, please indicate on the scale next to each item how much you have experienced these feelings?

	Not at all	A Little	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
Uneasy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Upset	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Exhilarated	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Irritated	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pleased	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tense	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

number between 1 (not at all true) and 5 (very true) to indicate how much that statement is a true reflection of you. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers so please answer as honestly and accurately as possible.

Add Item

20

When thinking about my child in tennis...

<p> Set your child clear and consistent behavioural expectations (e.g., effort, sportspersonship) before a match</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p> Help your child to reflect on a match to identify strengths and areas for improvement</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p> Make age appropriate decisions about the frequency that your child competes in tennis tournaments</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p> Select a coach with specific skills based on your child's developmental needs</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p> Watch a match without advising or instructing your child</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p> Provide feedback to your child after matches based on personal improvements and not overall outcome</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p> Evaluate the appropriateness of your child's coach based on your child's developmental needs</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p> Share tennis relevant information about your child with your child's main coach</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p> Openly communicate with your child's main coach</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<p> Not interfere with anything that happens on court during a match (e.g., bad line calls, disputes)</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Add Item

Add Item

Add Item

Tennis Parent Goals

Through this next set of questions, we want to know what your goals are for your child in tennis. What is important to you for your child to achieve? Please read each statement and select a

Add item

You have now completed the Pre-Workshop Questionnaire!

We will upgrade your membership so that you can access the workshops and online forum (You will receive an email once this has been done)

Thank you for your time!

Add item

	Not at all true/Somewhat true/Very true *				
	1	2	3	4	5
My goal is for my child to learn new skills and get as good as possible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The most important thing to me is for my child to be the best athlete	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The most important thing to me is for my child to improve their skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My goal for my child is to improve so that they are better than others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like my child to work hard to become the best they can be	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would like my child to be better than others at their sport	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want my child to feel successful when they learn new skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want my child to think that success means being better than others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want my child to feel successful when they do their best	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I want my child to show that they are better than others	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My goal for my child is to master the skills in their sport	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My goal for my child is to be better than others in their sport	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

+ Add question column

Add item

Add item

Appendix 16:
TPES Expert Panel Example (study three)

Tennis Parent Efficacy Scale (TPES)

The "Tennis Parent Efficacy Scale" (TPES) measures the efficacy beliefs of British tennis parents during childhood/mini tennis (5-10 years).

Items were generated based on recent tennis parent research, which has identified the challenges British tennis parents' face (i.e., Harwood & Knight 2009a, 2009b; Thrower et al. 2014) and the characteristics of expert sport parenting (Harwood & Knight, 2014).

Items have been grouped into 11 tennis parent efficacy dimensions. These include:

1. **Parent-Coach Relationship** (Be able to develop and maintain healthy relationships with your child's coaches)
2. **Parent-Parent Relationship** (Be able to develop and maintain healthy relationships with other tennis parents)
3. **Learning** (Be able to learn and improve your tennis parenting knowledge and skills)
4. **Emotional Support** (Be sensitive to and understanding of your child's tennis experiences)
5. **Informational Support** (Be able to provide your child with advice and guidance about their tennis)
6. **Tangible Support** (Be able to provide your child with the finance, time and transport required to participate in mini tennis)
7. **Organisational** (Be able to organise your child's mini tennis training and tournaments)
8. **Developmental** (Be able to make appropriate tennis related decisions based on child and talent development)
9. **Pre Match/Training Role** (Be able to fulfil your roles as a tennis parent before a match/tournament)
10. **In Match/Training Role** (Be able to fulfil your roles as a tennis parent during a match/tournament)
11. **Post Match/Training Role** (Be able to fulfil your roles as a tennis parent after a match/tournament)

This expert panel document consists of three sections:

- A. Section A of this document requests information about your background.
- B. Section B of this document provides you with the items from each of the 11 dimensions and asks you about its relevance to tennis parents, its clarity, and its specificity as efficacy items. It also gives you the opportunity to suggest modifications to the questions, or provide any further comments regarding your responses.
- C. Section C of this document asks you about the format, layout, and presentation of the TPES

Section A: Background Information

Name:	[REDACTED]
Age:	[REDACTED]
Gender:	[REDACTED]
Current Job Title:	[REDACTED]
Current Employer:	[REDACTED]
Length of time working in academia:	[REDACTED]
Highest qualification:	[REDACTED]
Approximate number of publications in international peer reviewed journals:	[REDACTED]
Length of time providing sport psychology support:	[REDACTED]
Name of sport psychology accreditation:	[REDACTED]
Main sport that you research in/work with:	[REDACTED]

Section B: TPES Items

The following questions aim to measure parent's perceptions of their tennis parenting abilities in a number of different areas. Please rate the suitability of each question by marking yes, no, or unsure in the relevant, clear, and specificity columns. If you have any ideas of how the questions can be improved, please detail these in the comments box (below each question).

Parent-Coach Relationship Efficacy

	RELEVANT	CLEAR			SPECIFICITY	
		Is this question easily understood?				
Rate how confident you are right now that you can...						
1	Show that you respect the expertise of your child's main coach	Is this item an important aspect of tennis parenting?			Does this item measure parent-coach relationship efficacy?	
		Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No
		Y				Y
Q 1 Comments:						
2	Show that you trust your child's main coach to look after your child's tennis development	Is this item an important aspect of tennis parenting?			Does this item measure parent-coach relationship efficacy?	
		Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No
		Y				Y
Q 2 Comments:						
3	Establish clear roles with your child's main coach	Is this item an important aspect of tennis parenting?			Does this item measure parent-coach relationship efficacy?	
		Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No
		Y				Y
Q 3 Comments:						
4	Be honest with your child's main coach	Is this item an important aspect of tennis parenting?			Does this item measure parent-coach relationship efficacy?	
		Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No
		Y				Y
Q 4 Comments:						
5	Openly communicate with your child's main coach	Is this item an important aspect of tennis parenting?			Does this item measure parent-coach relationship efficacy?	
		Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No
		Y				Y

Q 5 Comments:

6	Share tennis relevant information about your child with your child's coach	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
		Y			Y					Y

Q 6 Comments:
 My general feedback on this dimension is that I think as a participant it may be difficult to differentiate between how confident I feel to show trust and respect towards a coach and my perception of how much I trust and respect that coach. I would anticipate that answers would be more likely to reflect perceptions of the relationship (which in itself is useful and important) rather than efficacy beliefs.

Parent-Parent Relationship Efficacy

		RELEVANT			CLEAR			SPECIFICITY		
		Is this item an important aspect of tennis parenting?			Is this question easily understood?			Does this item measure parent-parent relationship efficacy?		
		Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
1	Interact and communicate with other tennis parents	Y			Y			Y		
Q 1 Comments:										
2	Share relevant tennis information with other tennis parents	Y			Y			Y		
Q 2 Comments:										
3	Provide other tennis parents with emotional support (e.g., being caring)	Y			Y			Y		
Q 3 Comments:										
4	Resolve disputes with other tennis parents if they	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure

occur	Y	Y	Y	Y
Q 4 Comments: Good changes to this section! Please also see general comments for parent-coach relationship efficacy, as I feel this point is relevant for this dimension too.				

Emotional Support Efficacy

	RELEVANT	CLEAR	SPECIFICITY
	Is this item an important aspect of tennis parenting?	Is this question easily understood?	Does this item measure tennis parent's emotional support efficacy?
1	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Q 1 Comments:			
2	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Q 2 Comments:			
3	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Q 3 Comments:			
4	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Q 4 Comments:			
5	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Q 5 Comments:			

Informational Support Efficacy

		RELEVANT		CLEAR		SPECIFICITY	
		Is this item an important aspect of tennis parenting?		Is this question easily understood?		Does this item measure tennis parent's informational support efficacy?	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1	Provide your child with advice regarding their tennis	Y		Y		Y	
Q 1 Comments:							
2	Provide your child with information to help them understand mini tennis (e.g., age groups, stages, court sizes, equipment and scoring systems, demands)	Y		Y		Y	
Q 2 Comments:							
3	Provide your child with guidance in relation to their tennis	Y		Y		Y	
Q 3 Comments: Questions 1 & 3 are now very similar.							

Tangible Support Efficacy

		RELEVANT		CLEAR		SPECIFICITY	
		Is this item an important aspect of tennis parenting?		Is this question easily understood?		Does this item measure tennis parent's tangible support efficacy?	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
	Rate how confident you are right now that you can...						

1	Provide your child with the finance needed to participate in mini tennis	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
		Y			Y								Y
Q 1 Comments:													
2	Provide your child with the time commitment needed to participate in mini tennis	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
		Y			Y								Y
Q 2 Comments:													
3	Provide your child with transport to mini tennis training and competition/match	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
		Y			Y								Y
Q 3 Comments: This dimension may be more likely to reflect actual tangible support provided right now, rather than efficacy beliefs.													

Organisational Efficacy

		RELEVANT			CLEAR			SPECIFICITY		
		Is this item an important aspect of tennis parenting?			Is this question easily understood?			Does this item measure tennis parent's organisational efficacy?		
		Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
1	Rate how confident you are right now that you can... Enter your child into the right grade (i.e., standard) of tournaments based on their ranking and rating	Y			Y			Y		
Q 1 Comments:										
2	Identify which stage(s) of mini tennis your child is allowed to play in each season based on their age and rating	Y			Y			Y		

Q 2 Comments:										
3	Organize your child's tournament schedule to help them improve their mini tennis rating and ranking	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
		Y			Y			Y		
Q 3 Comments:										
4	Understand the governing body's (The LTA) talent identification selection process	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
		Y			Y			Y		
Q 4 Comments:										

Development Efficacy

	RELEVANT	CLEAR			SPECIFICITY		
	Is this item an important aspect of tennis parenting?	Is this question easily understood?			Does this item measure tennis parent's development efficacy?		
<i>Rate how confident you are right now that you can...</i>							
1	Make age appropriate decisions about the number of sports/activities your child engages in	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
		Y			Y		
Q 1 Comments: I would remove 'age' as appropriate parenting decisions may be based on more than just a child's age.							
2	Make age appropriate decisions about the type of learning your child engages in (e.g., play vs. practice)	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
		Y			Y		
Q 2 Comments: I think type of training (as in the previous version) or activities would be more appropriate here than learning.							
3	Make age appropriate decisions about your child's tennis tournament schedule	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
		Y			Y		
Q 3 Comments: See Q1							
4	Make age appropriate decisions about the amount of	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure

	tennis training your child does	Y					Y			
Q 4 Comments: See Q1										
5	Make decisions about the most appropriate tennis tournaments to attend based on your child's developmental needs during this stage	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
Q 5 Comments: This question feels similar to Q3 – I'm not sure participants would differentiate between them. I'm not sure why Q5 to Q8 have the addition of 'based on your child's developmental needs'. This also assumes parents will understand the term 'developmental needs' – I would be tempted to remove it, as again, appropriate parenting decisions may be based on more than just a child's development stage.										
6	Make decisions about the most appropriate training group(s) based on your child's developmental needs during this stage	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
Q 6 Comments: See Q5										
7	Select a coach with specific skills based on your child's developmental age/needs	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
Q 7 Comments: See Q5										
8	Evaluate the appropriateness of your child's coach based on their developmental needs	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
Q 8 Comments: This reads as based on the developmental needs of the coach! See Q5										

Pre Match Role Efficacy

		RELEVANT	CLEAR	SPECIFICITY
		Is this item an important aspect of tennis parenting?	Is this question easily understood?	Does this item measure tennis parent's pre match/training role efficacy?
	<i>Rate how confident you are right now that you can...</i>			

1	Manage the range of emotions that you experience before a match (e.g., worry, nervousness, excitement)	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure	
Q 1 Comments: I would add 'may' experience.														
2	Teach your child how to cope with challenging match (e.g., cheating or pre-match nerves) situations	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure	
Q 2 Comments:														
3	Reinforce to your child that you value personal improvement rather than the result before a match	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure	
Q 3 Comments: This assumes that parents agree with this approach! Some social desirability may come into play here.														
4	Set clear and consistent behavioural expectations (e.g., effort & sportspersonship) before a match	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure	
Q 4 Comments: Expectations for whom?														

In Match Role Efficacy

		RELEVANT			CLEAR			SPECIFICITY		
		Is this item an important aspect of tennis parenting?			Is this question easily understood?			Does this item measure tennis parent's in match/training role efficacy?		
		Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
1	Rate how confident you are right now that you can... Manage the range of emotions you experience during a match (e.g., anger, anxiety, embarrassment, frustration)	Y			Y			Y		

Q 1 Comments: I would add 'may' experience.										
2	Role model appropriate morals and values to your child during matches	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure	Yes	No	Unsure
Q 2 Comments: What are 'appropriate morals'? This term could be widely interpreted.										
3	Watch a match without advising or instructing your child	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure
Q 3 Comments:										
4	Not interfere with anything that happens on court during matches (e.g., bad line calls, disputes)	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure
Q 4 Comments:										
5	Use appropriate non verbal communication (e.g., clapping, nodding) to praise your child's effort, attitude and improvements during competition	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure
Q 5 Comments:										

Post-Match Role Efficacy

		RELEVANT		CLEAR		SPECIFICITY	
<i>Rate how confident you are right now that you can...</i>		Is this item an important aspect of tennis parenting?		Is this question easily understood?		Does this item measure tennis parent's post-match/training efficacy?	
1	Manage the range of emotions you experience after a match (e.g., disappointment, pleasure, upset, irritated, happy)	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure
Q 1 Comments: I would add 'may' experience.							

2	Provide feedback to your child at a time when they are ready	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure
Q 2 Comments:										
3	Address poor on-court conduct that does not meet your behavioural expectations (e.g., creating consequences for throwing a racket)	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure
Q 3 Comments:										
4	Provide feedback to your child after matches based on personal improvements not overall outcome	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure
Q 4 Comments:										
5	Help your child to reflect upon the match to identify strengths and areas for improvement	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure	Yes Y	No	Unsure
Q 5 Comments:										

Section C

This section presents the proposed format of the TPES and the response scales used. It only includes the instructions and a sample of questions from the questionnaire. Following this, there are some questions regarding your general impression of the format and response scales and whether you feel that any changes are required.

Instructions

- The following questions explore your perceptions of your own tennis parenting abilities in a number of different areas within mini tennis.
- There are no right or wrong answers so please answer honestly and accurately. The purpose of this questionnaire is not to compare the scores of one parent with another but to evaluate the effectiveness of this tennis parenting education programme. All information is strictly confidential and your answers will only be seen by the researchers.

- Below you will find a list of different statements. Using the scale, please rate (by placing a tick in the relevant box) how confident you are that you can do them **right now**. Rate your degree of confidence by recording a number from 0 (Cannot do at all) to 10 (Highly certain can do).

		Rating												
		Cannot do at all...	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Highly Certain Can do...
<i>Rate how confident you are right now that you can...</i>														
1	Trust your child's coach													

General Impressions

1. Are the instructions preceding the TPES easy to follow? Is there anything else that we need to include? This seems very straight forward. If you use the term efficacy anywhere, I think this needs defining.

2. Are there enough different response options for you to answer the questions?

Yes.

3. Is there anything you would add to the TPES to improve it?

Possibly something around parents' efficacy to know where to access additional support from if needed.

4. Is there anything you would delete to the TPES to improve it?

I would possibly look again at the questions that make assumptions about optimal parenting (i.e. speaking during matches is bad, giving feedback afterwards is good) as social desirability may skew participants' responses.

5. Are the items in each scale inter-related at face value?

Yes.

**6. Do you have any further comments on the TPES?
Great job! I can see why you have developed a tool specifically for tennis!**

Thank you for your time and feedback!

Appendix 17:
Email Interview Guide (study three)

Hi (Name)

Thank you for completing the Loughborough Tennis Parent Education Programme. In addition to the questionnaire data you have provided, we are very much interested in your views and opinions of the programme. We noticed that you didn't participate in the forum (which is not a problem!) but we were wondering if you would mind giving us your views of the programme privately via a short email interview? All we are asking you to do is write your responses to six questions below, the more detail you can provide the better!

**Your rights as a participant are extended to this part of the research. To reiterate, all email responses will be strictly confidential. We may use quotes to illustrate important findings but they will remain anonymous "e.g., Parent 1 suggested..."*

1. After hearing about the online education programme, what made you register?
2. What were your experiences like of using an online educational resource and do you think this represents the best way of educating and supporting tennis parents?
3. What aspects of the programme (e.g., workshop, quizzes, forum, library database) do you think could be improved and how?
4. How beneficial has the programme been for you as a tennis parent and why?
5. Has the programme has any impact on the way you think, feel or behave as a tennis parent, if so how?
6. Why do you think participation in online parent education programmes is generally quite poor?

Thank you for your anticipated support!

Sam
LTPEP Research Team
admin@ltpep.com

Appendix 18:
Email Interview Transcript Example (study three)

1. After hearing about the online education programme, what made you register?

I know I have not been good enough as a tennis parent. With my eldest boy I used to discuss results more than processes with him at mini-red level! He now doesn't particularly enjoy tennis and I take some blame for this. Based around twitter I learnt a great deal about how a parent should behave but I feel that I still make mistakes and so a course would help me say the correct things to my children. My youngest son still plays in grade 3/2 tournaments at Green and my eldest plays in grade 4/5s as well as team matches so my tennis parent education is still important.

2. What were your experiences like of using an online educational resource and do you think this represents the best way of educating and supporting tennis parents?

I like the flexibility that online courses give i.e. can be carried out at home when convenient. I would be prepared to turn up to a scheduled course at a venue and time but life with two boys playing two sports and two working parents might make this difficult. I enjoyed using the course although I was a bit disappointed that I couldn't find out which of my answers were incorrect in the quizzes.

3. What aspects of the programme (e.g., workshop, quizzes, forum, library database) do you think could be improved and how?

With more participants the forum might have been a livelier place. It might have been useful to discuss with fellow parents more although I was guilty of not instigating any discussions.

4. How beneficial has the programme been for you as a tennis parent and why?

It has been beneficial although the past 6 years I have educated myself about good parenting in tennis. This would have been very beneficial when my children were starting out in tennis or for a parent who hasn't educated themselves on this.

5. Has the programme has any impact on the way you think, feel or behave as a tennis parent, if so how?

It has confirmed that I need to be very careful about what I say to my boys and I still talk about results after matches, which I must not do. I hope the current batch of Easter tournaments will test my resolve on this.

6. Why do you think participation in online parent education programmes is generally quite poor?

Probably the main reason is parents are very busy. I do think some lack the humility to take such a course; many parents seem to think that they know more than their coaches about how their children should be taught. It would be good if there were incentives (e.g. LTA/coach fund/give 2 hours of free lessons?) or requirements (e.g. to enter a grade 3 event a parent/guardian must have taken this course) that parents take such a course. I think all coaches should be encouraging this course to their parents.