

Early Specialization And Talent Development In Figure Skaters: Elite Coaches Perspectives

Three Main Themes Emerged from the Coaches' interviews

Managing Early Specialization

Coaches demonstrated their understanding of the importance of multisport involvement and early exposure rather than specialization.



Developing a Well-Rounded Athlete

Results indicated the importance of nurture-related elements in how the coaches perceived optimal athlete development, with acquired skills/capabilities being more important than initial talent.



The Canadian Context

Coaches believed the knowledge and understanding of athlete development in figure skating in Canada is unique. However, cultural factors may affect opportunities for increased athlete development.



Conclusion: Coaches were aware of potential risks associated with early specialization and made it clear that although the culture of figure skating expects this type of involvement, diversification and early exposure are seen as better pathways.