

## How will my child develop psycho-socially?

Psycho-social development refers to a child's developing ability to interact in a social world. Through interacting socially with others (e.g., through sport) children gain insights into themselves.

There are many theories relating to psycho-social development, one of the main theories is that by Erikson. This theory proposes that your child will move through the following stages. All stages are age-related, not age-dependent:

- **Infancy** (0-18 mths) –main relationship is with their mother (or primary caregiver) as they learn to trust that their basic needs will be met.
- **Early childhood** (2-4yrs) –main relationship is with their parents and children begin to develop autonomy as they explore the world around them.
- **Preschool age** (4-5yrs) –main relationship is with their family and children start to develop initiative, courage, and independence often through play and exploration.
- **School age** (6-12 yrs) – neighbours and other school children form the main relationships and children start to increase their self-awareness as well as their self-confidence.
- **Adolescence** (13-19yrs) – peers and role models are likely to influence adolescents the most and children at this stage are likely to be pre-occupied with how they appear to others.
- Three further stages of early adulthood (20-39yrs), adulthood (40-64yrs), and maturity (65yrs+) complete this theory.

### Adolescence: Heightened emotions and a focus on peers

- Concerns about physical changes can be a source of sensitivity and heightened emotions. Hormones also affect moods and general emotional responses.
- Difficulties in handling stress (demands of school, peer pressure) can lead to mental health problems, such as depression and anxiety disorders.
- In order to establish greater independence adolescents must orient themselves toward their peers. Positive peer relationships are very important and should be stimulated by parents and coaches.

Psychosocial development is related to development in other areas, such as cognition and physical development. Young people need to learn independent-thinking, decision-making, and problem-solving skills from their parents and other caring adults (such as coaches and trainers), so they can apply these skills within their peer network. The sport environment can offer a beneficial environment in this regard, providing opportunities for your child to develop both through individual and group activities.