

## WHY A PROGRAM FOR ELITE ATHLETES?

Playing sport at the top level comes with rewards, it also comes with risks, including:

- Injury – major and chronic
- Mental health (including from pressure, poor performance, and being dropped)
- Difficulties balancing sport and other commitments
- Motivational 'burn out'
- Alcohol and other drugs (including 'sports drugs')
- Antisocial behaviour

### MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE:

*"Discussing depression and the importance of always talking to your mates, making sure no one is hiding anything like wanting to kill themselves or anything like that."*

Young athletes do not have realistic expectations; for example, a pre-season survey of 112 NRL Juniors showed:

- Only 12% thought it likely they would underperform – whereas 95% reported underperforming during the season.



- Only 5% thought they would lose their place in the team, but 50% were dropped.



- Only 8% thought they would feel down or worried, but 52% did feel that way in the season.<sup>1</sup>



### THE PRESENTERS:

*"They're good blokes, supportive. I liked how they came to our games, made connections and wanted to speak with us."*

*"Yeah, it was just good to have Glenn and Frank there to talk to, I knew they would be there for me if I needed them."*

## COMPARED TO A CONTROL GROUP, SELF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS DEMONSTRATED<sup>2</sup>:

### Better suicide awareness

(68% would act appropriately if a friend appears to have suicidal thoughts, as compared to 44% in the control)



### Higher reported levels of knowledge about:

- How to improve self esteem and resilience (74% vs 40%)



- How to improve mental health and well being (85% vs 68%)



### TIME MANAGEMENT:

*"I found it really useful, the goal setting. I have been able to use it with school and with planning getting into a trade."*

*"Time management, especially with school. To make sure you can balance training and study time management is important."*

## WHAT THE SPORTSLIFE IQ SELF PROGRAM DOES:

Prepares young men and women to cope with the challenges of high level sport and their lives outside sport. Participants find the program, helps them:

- Feel more confident
- Balance school and sport
- Manage the pressures of elite sport
- Deal with conflict better
- Develop mental health literacy
- Understand the risks of substance use

### PROFESSIONALISM:

*"(We learnt) the difficulty lots of players face with various issues like publicity, what other players are doing, making the right decisions, how to handle the lifestyle."*

*"I learned how to be professional and keep a good image on and off the field."*

### LIFE SKILLS:

*"They don't only teach you how to do something, but also how to deal with it."*

1. Argyle Research (2014) Evaluation of the SportsLife iQ program. [www.sportslifeiq.com.au](http://www.sportslifeiq.com.au)

2. Independent research compared outcomes of NRL Juniors at two clubs, where one group did the SELF program and the other did not. Argyle Research (2014)