



# YOUNG PEOPLE'S STRATEGY

2015-2017

Action Plan

# Introduction

This document outlines our Young People's Strategy. It has been developed with the assistance and viewpoints of young participants in our sport. It seeks to define the sort of environment they want to see within our sport and what we collectively need to do to help create that for them.

This is written with young people at its heart and is relevant for their coaches, club administrators and parents.

We want our young people to have a positive and rewarding experience from whatever level of involvement they have in the aquatics.

# What our young people have said



## Coaches

**Our coaches are key to creating the right environment within which we participate. We want them to help us by:**

Treating everyone equally

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Working us hard but also making room for less serious time

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Together building a sense of team within our club

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Working towards individual goals and having one-to-one communication on our progress

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Helping us become as good as we can be and meeting our individual goals

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Allowing flexibility in our programme to suit us as athletes (e.g. at exam time performance focus might shift to skills development)

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Communicating well with our parents and coaching them in terms of our parents' expectations of us

## Parents

**Our parents play a critical role in supporting us throughout our participation in our sport. They can help us by:**

Having realistic expectations of us and what we achieve

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Encouraging us without expecting perfection

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Not putting undue pressure on us to win at all costs

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Remembering that they are our parent not our coach

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Acting as a role model in terms of behaviour

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Guiding us to grow into our personal responsibilities

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Not making us feel guilty for the time, money and sacrifices that are being made to allow us participate

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Giving us space when we need it

*"Your child's success in sports does not indicate what kind of parent you are; but, having an athlete that is coachable, respectful, a great teammate and does their best, IS a direct reflection of your parenting." (Anon)*

## Clubs

**The club is at the core of our involvement in our sport and can make a big difference in how enjoyable that experience is by:**

Making us feel part of the decision making processes

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Fostering a culture of teamwork and friendship throughout the club

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Facilitating socialising opportunities that encourages us to make friends and get to know our peers/teammates better

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Making sure that the club is well organised and thinks about what is best for young people

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Dealing with any issues that arise in the right way

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Creating a buzz within the club that makes it fun and enjoyable

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Helping us to achieve our personal and team goals in the sport

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Ensuring that the Chair and committee apply this ethos throughout the club.

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Putting in place effective Club Children's Officers

**“** *We want to participate in a sport that:  
allows us to enjoy it, helps us learn and develop,  
enables us to make friends and makes us feel safe and valued* **”**

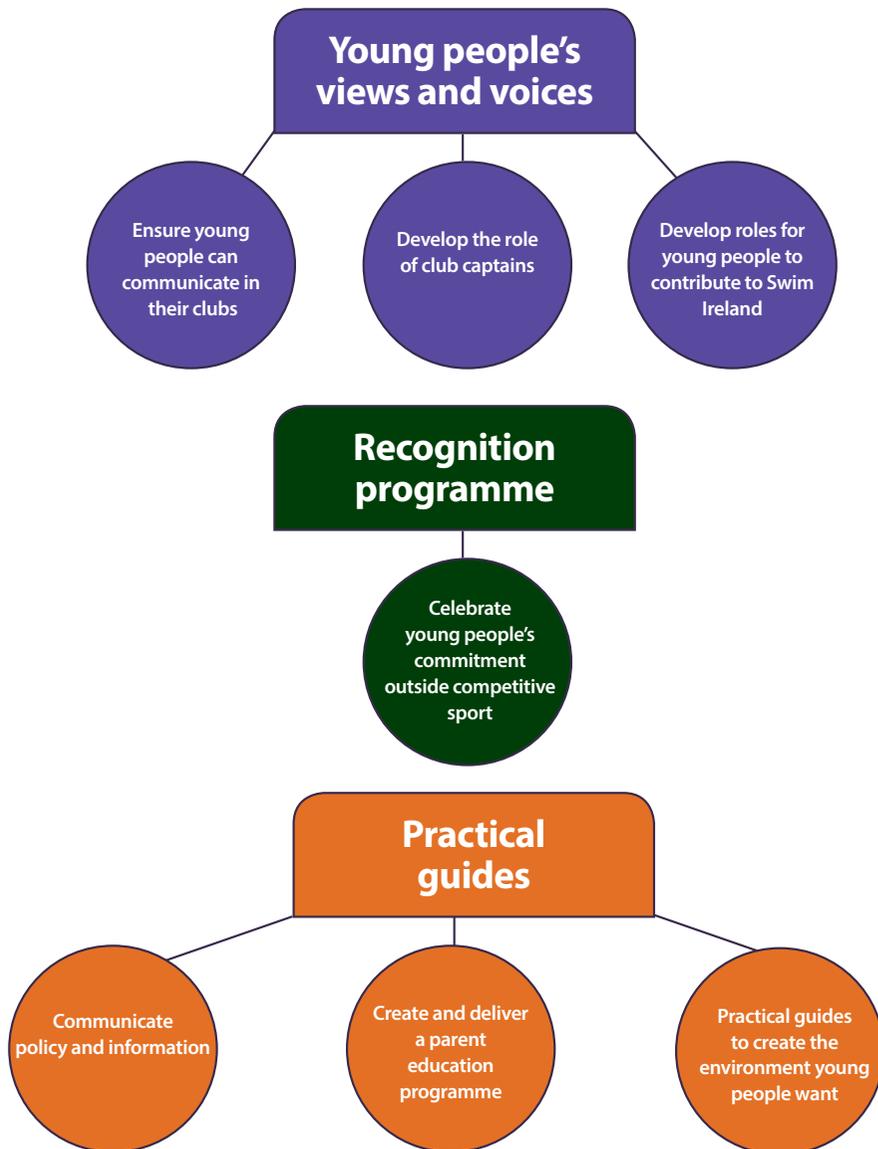


# The Young People's Strategy Action Plan



*The plan is centred around 3 core themes for Swim Ireland to put into action:*

- 1 Engaging effectively
- 2 Assuring the environment is right
- 3 Putting young people at the heart of our structures



## Young people's views and voices

### We will:

- design and deliver a communication training programme aimed at those interacting with young people in our clubs
- develop the role of club captains as a key leadership role within clubs
- determine the most effective role for young people within the broad Swim Ireland structures (e.g. assess the viability of an advocate panel)

## Recognition programme

### We will:

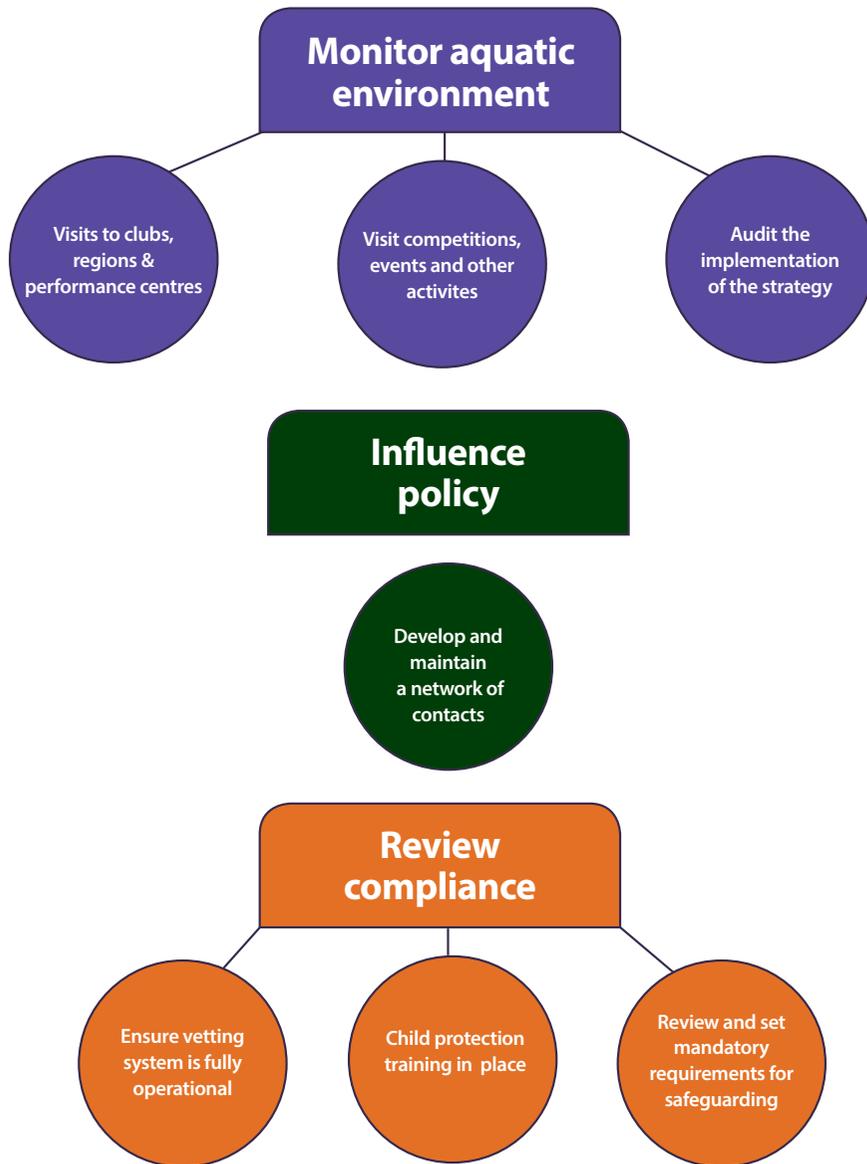
- design and deliver a recognition programme (outside of competition) to celebrate the commitment of young people in mentoring, taking on leadership roles, and involvement in other elements of the running of the sport

## Practical guides

### We will:

- evaluate the most effective means for communicating safeguarding information to members and young people
- create and deliver a parent education programme specifically designed for parents with young people involved in our sport
- develop and deliver practical guides (for coaches, parents and clubs) on how to create the environment young people want in our sport

# Assuring the environment is right



## Monitor aquatic environment

**We will:**

- carry out visits to clubs and regional activities including performance centres
- visit competitions and other events and activities to support the right environment for young people
- develop an auditing tool to help monitor adherence to the Young People's Strategy and assess through annual audit visits

## Influence policy

**We will:**

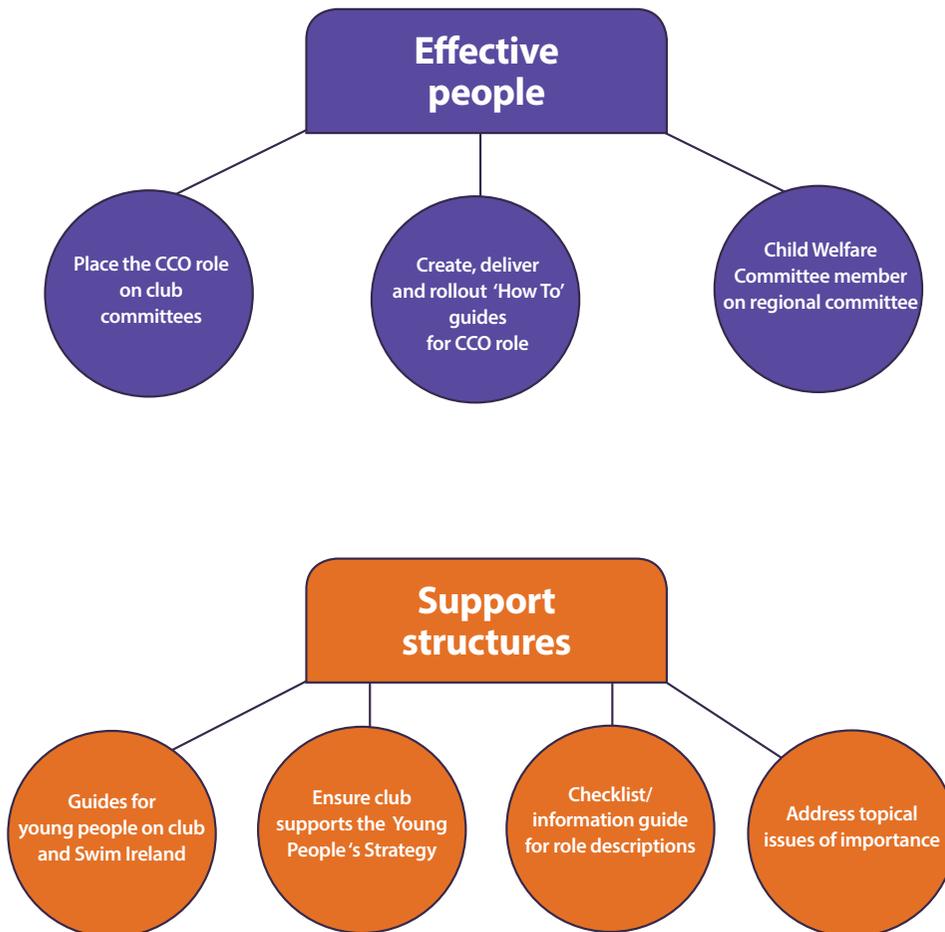
- develop and maintain a network of contacts with specific departments and outside agencies so that we can effectively influence policy and best practice guidelines

## Review compliance

**We will:**

- ensure the vetting system is fully operational, accessible, accurate and up to date
- ensure specific roles receive child protection training and we will train new tutor/up skill existing tutors
- review and set mandatory safeguarding requirements for clubs and members

# Young people at the heart of our structures



## Effective people

### We will:

- place the CCO role within the club committee structure
- create, deliver and rollout short CCO workshops/videos on various topical issues that will act as 'How To' guides for people performing this role
- put Child Welfare Committee member role as a member of the regional committee

## Support structures

### We will:

- develop an interactive workshop for young people to explain what to expect from Swim Ireland and their club
- ensure clubs develop structures to support the Young People's Strategy and its ethos
- develop a check list/information guide for role descriptions and ensure that these are included in all relevant governance and presentation information packs
- address topical issues of importance for young people (e.g. alcohol use in sport) through information briefings, inclusion in workshop materials and/or online campaigns

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## Vision of Young People

*We want to participate in a sport that:  
allows us to enjoy it , helps us learn and develop,  
enables us to make friends and makes us feel safe and valued*

