

CEO Update on Shaping the Future of Gymnastics in Aotearoa

16 February 2023

A message from Andrea:

Kia ora tatou.

This month marks two years since the Independent Review of Gymnastics New Zealand was published. Thanks to the bravery of those who spoke up, gymnastics in New Zealand is on a journey to enhance the positive impact of the sport and ensure we are adapting to meet the needs of the future.

There is a lot still to be done, and in the short time I have been in the role, I have been heartened by the support and commitment of the gymnastics community.

This email is to give you a quick update on progress that has been made to date.

As you will remember, the Gymnastics New Zealand Steering Committee (GNZSC) was established last year (through an independent appointments panel) to work through the Independent Review of Gymnastics New Zealand and make recommendations to Gymnastics NZ. This steering group includes gymnast specialists, as well as a Sport NZ representative and independent expertise. The Independent Review included fifty recommendations. The GNZSC have carefully reviewed each of these recommendations and categorised them into four themes. From the four themes, nineteen priority actions have been identified and included in a robust work plan ([Shaping the Future of Gymnastics in Aotearoa](#)) designed to proactively and positively respond to the review recommendations.

As we implement these recommendations, we will be looking for feedback and engagement from the gymnastics community – I will keep you posted along the way to ensure these opportunities are shared.

Meanwhile, Gymnastics NZ has made good process (working alongside many of you) in starting to respond to the findings of the review – here are some of the actions already underway:

- Gymnastics NZ has partnered with Safeguarding Children to ensure their practices are fit for purpose. For example – child safeguarding is now central to Gymnastics NZ who are working with all affiliated clubs to have an up-to-date child protection policy, and identified and trained safeguarding representative.
- Under the Gymnastics NZ Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, all gymnastics coaches working with children and young people must have completed safeguarding training (Sport NZ's safeguarding module) and must be police vetted.

- A youth coach specific safeguarding training programme has been developed and delivered to over 250 young gymnastics coaches.
- Research completed as part of the Coach Development Framework identified key areas of focus and two Coach Connect conferences were delivered as a result with a focus on interpersonal coaching skills, health and wellbeing and safeguarding. Further engagement and learning opportunities will be offered as the framework progresses.
- Athlete advisers have been appointed to the five GNZ Technical Committees, to ensure athlete voice is heard and valued.
- Research has been commissioned to investigate best practice globally in medical and health aspects of gymnastics, especially the appropriate training levels for athletes at different ages and stages.
- A high-level assessment of current GNZ policies linked to complaints, discipline and integrity has been completed.
- GNZ has written to the ITC/ITP (new Integrity Transition Committee) requesting that they ensure that complaints processes are developed with a child-friendly approach, ensuring that they are suitable for athletes of all ages to engage with.
- GNZ has written to the Children’s Commissioner (Judge Frances Eivers) inviting the Children’s Commissioner to consider placing a stronger focus on the kaupapa of children and sport and in particular the advancement of children’s rights within the sports context in Aotearoa.

We will continue to update you on progress and opportunities to engage as this work continues.

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, he toa takitini – our strength is not as an individual, but as a collective

Ngā mihi nui | Kind regards

Andrea Nelson

Tumu Whakarae o Takapōpō Aotearoa – Chief Executive Officer