

# The car journey home

The car journey home is something to be enjoyed not endured. Here are some practical strategies for parents to use to create positive car conversations when driving to and from training or competition:



## Keep it positive

Provide positive feedback and avoid criticism, especially from siblings.



## Celebrate effort

Focus on the effort, teamwork, or things they did well, even if the outcome wasn't as expected. Remind them that improvement takes time.



## Refuel, rehydrate

Pack snacks for refuelling, such as milk-based beverages (and dairy alternatives), granola bars and fruit



## Give them space

Appreciate they may want some space. Listen attentively if they talk and let them process their emotions in their own time



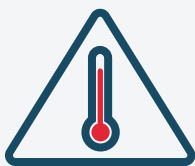
## Discuss future goals

When they're ready, discuss their goals for the future or ways they can improve. Help them consider what they've learnt from the experience



## Reflect together

If the time feels right, ask open-ended questions like, "What was your favourite part of the day?" or "What are you most proud of?"



## Adjust the temperature

After physical activity, children can be sweaty or over-heated. Make sure the car is at a comfortable temperature for the ride home.



## Recovery

Allow time for recovery — both physical and mental. Don't rush them. Encourage a relaxing post-event routine, such as stretching, listening to music, or enjoying some downtime.



## Model healthy behaviour

Stay calm and positive. Your reaction can set the tone. Model resilience by accepting ups and downs with grace, whether you win or lose. Don't criticise the coach in front of them.



## Summary

Ultimately, the journey home should be a supportive and nurturing experience, helping the athlete unwind, recover, and feel encouraged for their next challenge.



For further information, follow this QR code to the SwimWales website

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