Them playing the game.

You playing your part.



All you need to know to create the environment where everyone can enjoy football.

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Creating the environment so we can all enjoy the game

Football is the greatest game in the world. It is played by more people across the globe than any other sport. For a privileged few, it is how they earn a living. But for the vast majority of people who play the game, it is a fun, leisure activity for all ages, to be enjoyed.

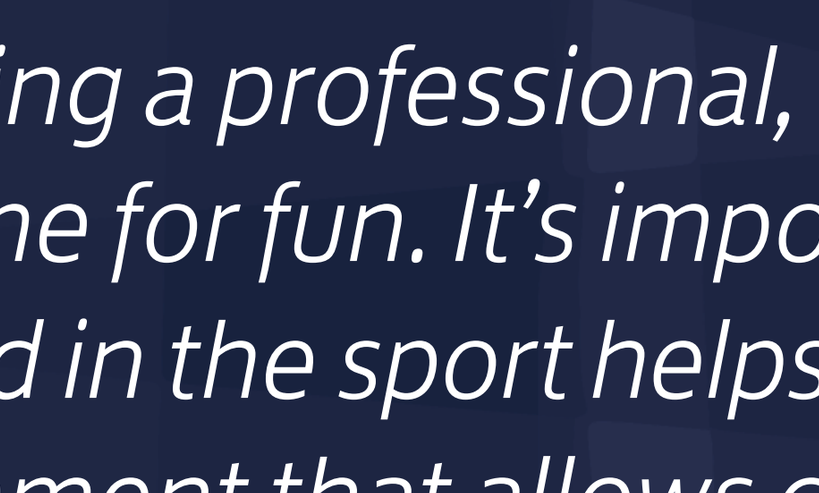
We can all help our children enjoy the game more, by creating the right environment. By allowing them to play with freedom. By letting them make mistakes. By encouraging them to make their own decisions. We can simply *#LetThemPlay*

The FA FOR ALL

CREATING THE ENVIRONMENT SO WE CAN ALL ENJOY THE GAME

“Enjoyment is central to football, particularly for children. While some set out on the pathway to becoming a professional, the vast majority play the game for fun. It’s important that everybody involved in the sport helps maintain a positive environment that allows children to play freely.”

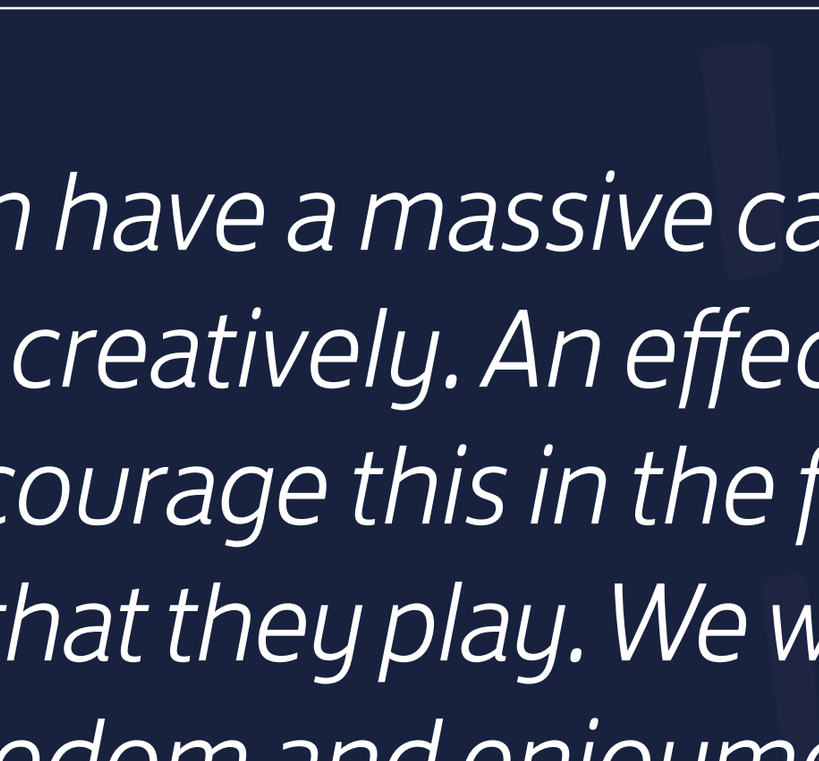
Gareth Southgate

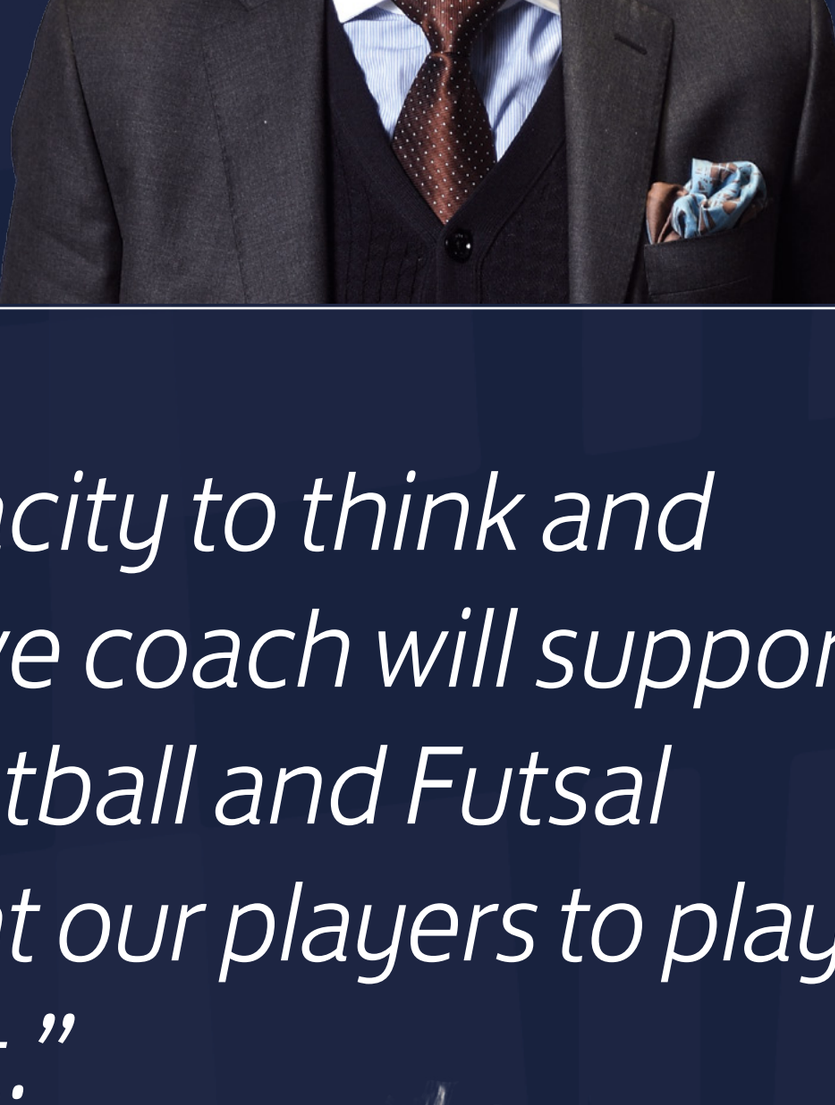




“Children have a massive capacity to think and behave creatively. An effective coach will support and encourage this in the football and Futsal games that they play. We want our players to play with freedom and enjoyment.”

Peter Sturgess





How to make match day enjoyable for everyone

The better the environment we create for the players, the more everyone will enjoy the game. Greeting the opposition and the referee, putting on refreshments, appointing a Match Day Manager, are all ways in which any club at any level can start to make a difference on the day.

“The fact is that kids learn to make good decisions by making decisions, not by following directions.”

Alfie Kohn
Lecturer in Education and Psychology

00 GOOD PRACTICE ›

00 RESPECT ›

HOW TO MAKE MATCH DAY ENJOYABLE FOR EVERYONE

GOOD PRACTICE

- ✔ Issue a Code of Conduct to everyone involved at the start of the season.
- ✔ Whatever your role – coach, parent, player, referee – turn up in good time.
- ✔ All players play a minimum 50%.
- ✔ Coaches to stay in the technical area, unless a player is injured.
- ✔ Spectators behind the barrier on the opposite side of the field.
- ✔ Applause for good play for BOTH teams.
- ✔ Only the coach to issue instructions to the players.
- ✔ Respect Handshake before the game.
- ✔ Handshakes all round after the game – regardless of the score.
- ✘ No spectators behind the goals.
- ✘ No shouting at the referee.

HOW TO MAKE MATCH DAY ENJOYABLE FOR EVERYONE

RESPECT

If we do not have Respect for the opposition players and coaches, and especially for the referee, then we do not have a game of football.

- ✔ Support and encourage players.
- ✔ Treat the opposition how you would like to be treated.
- ✔ Let the coaches coach.
- ✔ Remember that the referee may be learning the game.
- ✔ You are a role model to children at all times during the game.
- ✔ Applause for both sides.
- ✔ Make the game fun at all times.
- ✘ Do not encroach onto the pitch.
- ✘ No angry postmortems after the game.

Key recommendations for the game

Your at-a-glance guide to junior football



U7/ 8s

U9/ 10s

U11/ 12s

U13/ 14s

U15/ 16s

U17/ 18s

ALL SIZES, TIMES OR NUMBERS SHOWN ARE THE MAXIMUM ALLOWED UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED (FA SCORY 2017/18)

U7/8s



Format: 5 v 5

Match length: 20 mins E/W

Player game time:
40 mins/day, 60 mins/comp

Pitch size: 40yd × 30yd

Ball size: 3

Goal size: 12ft × 6ft

COMPETITIONS

Two weeks of trophy events, three times a season

KEY LEARNINGS

– having fun
– playing with my friends

U7/8s | U9/10s | U11/12s | U13/14s | U15/16s | U17/18s

U9/10s



Format: 7 v 7

Match length: 25 mins E/W

Player game time:
60 mins/day, 90 mins/comp

Pitch size: 60yd × 40yd

Ball size: 3 for U9s, 4 for U10s

Goal size: 12ft × 6ft

COMPETITIONS

Four weeks of trophy events, three times a season

KEY LEARNINGS

– acquiring skills
–trying my best

U7/8s | U9/10s | U11/12s | U13/14s | U15/16s | U17/18s

U11/12s



Format: 9 v 9

Match length: 30 mins E/W

Player game time:
80 mins/day, 120 mins/comp

Pitch size: 80yd × 50yd

Ball size: 4

Goal size: 16ft × 7ft

COMPETITIONS

Six weeks of trophy events, three times a season.

U12s as U13/14s

KEY LEARNINGS

– being part of a team
– game play

U7/ 8s | U9/ 10s | U11/ 12s | U13/ 14s | U15/ 16s | U17/ 18s

U13/14s



Format: 11 v 11

Match length: 35 mins E/W

Player game time:
100 mins/day, 150 mins/comp

Pitch size: 100yd × 60yd

Ball size: 4

Goal size: 21ft × 7ft

COMPETITIONS

Any varieties including one season-long league table

KEY LEARNINGS

– taking responsibility
– positional awareness

U7/8s | U9/10s | U11/12s | U13/14s | U15/16s | U17/18s

U15/16s



Format: 11 v 11

Match length: 40 mins E/W

Player game time:
100 mins/day, 150 mins/comp

Pitch size: 110yd × 70yd

Ball size: 5

Goal size: 24ft × 8ft

COMPETITIONS

any varieties including one season-long league table

KEY LEARNINGS

– in-game decisions
– tactical appreciation

U17/18s



Format: 11 v 11

Match length: 45 mins E/W

Player game time:
120 mins/day, 180 mins/comp

Pitch size: 110yd × 70yd

Ball size: 5

Goal size: 24ft × 8ft

COMPETITIONS

any varieties including one season-long league table

KEY LEARNINGS

– in-game decisions
– tactical appreciation

U7/ 8s | U9/ 10s | U11/ 12s | U13/ 14s | U15/ 16s | U17/ 18s

Match day best practice for coaches

Every coach at every level can play a huge part in creating the match day environment that everyone can enjoy, not only the players, but the match officials and those watching too.

A good coach can be a positive role model that youngsters will remember for the rest of their lives.



MATCH DAY BEST PRACTICE FOR COACHES

There are lots of different ways you can create that positive environment.

Here are just a few:

- You could take the pressure off yourself and give players ownership for choosing the formation and the team.
- All players getting at least half the available game time is a great way to create good team spirit. You could plan your substitutions before the game.
- The score line is only one way to measure development. You could set team and individual player targets.
- Some coaches think they are not involved unless they continually offer instruction. But instead of doing a running commentary throughout the game, let the players make decisions, allow them to make mistakes and learn from them.

MATCH DAY BEST PRACTICE FOR COACHES

- Advanced technical coaching terms can confuse young players. Try to use appropriate language.
- Instead of getting anxious and uptight on match day, try and relax and enjoy it. Remember don't shout at match officials, children could copy your behaviour.
- Reward effort rather than just ability.
- No one enjoys it when a game ends with an angry post mortem. You could save your feedback until training night. Always try and be constructive whatever the result.

These players are starting on their football journey, remember how much you enjoy the game and pass it on to them!

Match day best practice for parents

Whether you played yourself, or if you are new to football, the game is a great activity that can be enjoyed by all the family.

Kids love playing, and they like their parents to take an interest. What they don't like is when mums and dads get too involved from the touchline, or put too much pressure on them to do well.



MATCH DAY BEST PRACTICE FOR PARENTS

The FA asked young players up and down the country why they play the game.
Here are the top six reasons:

Trying my hardest is more important than winning.

I love playing football because it's fun.

It helps keep me fit and healthy.

I like meeting new friends through football.

It's a really good game and I love it.

I like playing with my friends.



MATCH DAY BEST PRACTICE FOR PARENTS

Match day tips

- ✔ Do offer praise, encouragement and applause – for both sides.
- ✔ Do stand in the designated area for spectators.
- ✔ Praise for effort and attitude not just talent.
- ✔ Focus on the process not the result.
- ✔ Focus on your child's enjoyment.
- ✘ Don't issue instructions from the touchline.
- ✘ Don't follow your son/daughter up and down the touchline.
- ✘ Avoid pressuring your child about winning or losing.

Useful information and contact details

SAFEGUARDING

For more information on Safeguarding children within football, best practice guidance, including how to report a concern go to: *www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/safeguarding*

If the matter is urgent and you cannot contact your Club's welfare officer, you can call The NSPCC 24-hour helpline on *0808 800 5000* – or if it is an emergency because a child or children are at immediate risk, then call the police or children's social care in your area and let us know via: *safeguarding@thefa.com*

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USEFUL INFORMATION AND CONTACT DETAILS

DISCRIMINATION & EQUALITY

The FA is working hard to make football a game For All, for more details of our work look here: *www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/inclusion-and-anti-discrimination*

At the same time we want to make sure no-one is excluded from being involved, so if you see or experience discrimination in the game, tell us here: *equality@thefa.com*. If you want to know more about coaching diversity bursaries, girls football, disability football or faith and football just drop us an email at: *info@thefa.com*

The FA FOR ALL

#LetThemPlay

USEFUL INFORMATION AND CONTACT DETAILS

DISABILITY PLAYER PATHWAY

Did you know that disability football is the seventh largest participation team sport in the country?

There are player pathways in place from grassroots where there are now 1991 affiliated disability teams, through to a talent pathway which has 600+ individuals engaged and six impairment specific international squads that compete in World and European Championships. To find out more visit: *www.thefa.com/disability*

The FA FOR ALL

#PlayYourPart

USEFUL INFORMATION AND CONTACT DETAILS

FUTSAL

Futsal is an exciting, fast paced modality of football that originates from South America in the 1930s. It is played across the world in a format that is officially recognised by both UEFA and FIFA.

The nature of the game places a large emphasis on technical skill and ability in situations of high pressure. Many of the top world class footballers played Futsal in their youth and credit it with supporting their footballing development , when played and coached correctly. Check: *http://www.thefa.com/get-involved/player/futsal/what-is-futsal* for more info.

The FA FOR ALL

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