



“My dad’s the best role model I could ask for. He was always on the touchline giving me great support and always encouraging me on – really good, really positive. He’s just an inspiration for me.”

– from a young person

### Information and resources

We have advice available to help you initiate conversations and build positive relationships with parents and carers, including videos, presentations and printable resources.

To find out more, visit  
[the cpsu.org.uk/parents](https://the cpsu.org.uk/parents)

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Photography by Tom Hull. The children and adults pictured are volunteers.

# Parents in sport

Helping you to achieve positive relationships with parents and carers



Child Protection in Sport Unit  
play sport stay safe  
enjoy and achieve

**NSPCC**



## Parents play an essential part in their child's enjoyment of sports, encouraging and supporting their child's participation, success and fun when playing sport.

Children and young people take greater enjoyment from participating in sports if their parents are positively involved. They are also more likely to continue playing the sport for longer and have more opportunities to reach their sporting potential.

However, certain types of involvement and behaviours from parents and carers can be challenging, and take away from a child's experience and enjoyment.

As parents commit a lot of time, money and emotional support to their children's participation in sport, sometimes in an emotionally charged environment they may get carried away, for example on the sidelines of a game. This can lead to parents displaying intimidating, aggressive, threatening or abusive behaviour

towards their own or other children, coaches, officials or other parents or spectators. They may also push their child to achieve in sport while neglecting other aspects of their lives.

These behaviours can have a negative impact on their children, their teammates and opponents, other parents, coaches, and officials. It can lead to children and young people experiencing higher levels of pre-competitive anxiety and lowered self-esteem and confidence.

It's vital to set up the right kind of communication with parents and carers from the start. By supporting parents to engage with their child's activity in a positive way and letting them know that you are responsive and open to their ideas, you can help to ensure that everyone involved has an enjoyable experience.

## Why parents are important to sport

Parents are important to sport because they can:

- encourage their children to take up, enjoy, and achieve in their sport
- support their children in practical ways – such as by providing transport or buying kit
- become coaches, helpers and volunteers within the club
- provide positive role models for children through their own behaviour
- help out with things such as club websites and fundraising
- support and motivate their child and the team
- reinforce positive aspects of sports participation



## Reminders for coaches

It's important to:

- take time to get to know your athletes and their parents
- understand athletes and their goals
- share your coaching philosophy and team aims with parents
- make time for communication and follow your club's guidelines on this
- value parents and their contribution