

# 10 games/ activities to help encourage the best environment and culture for parents.



These games and activities are to help parents and coaches go the same direction together.

Some of these can be played/done pitch side, others in the club house after a game

These are only a starting block. Change them, get creative and have fun together.

**There is a load of great science to back up why using games with adults in this way helps behaviour change. If you'd like to know more, please get in touch.**

## **1. Balloon game**

Ask parents to blow a balloon up as big as they can without popping it. Winner is the biggest balloon which survives. Make sure you let the blown up balloons fly around the room. Just because it's fun! It also helps if a few parents do pop the balloon.

Point out the the more pressure we put our children under the harder it is to have the resilience to respond.

## **2. Card to Referee from parents**

Ask the parents to sign a card for the ref during the first half of the game. In the card it can say "thanks for enabling our children to play the game they love."

## **3. Jenga Battle!**

Ask for a couple of volunteers to play Jenga. Instruct the other parents that the will need to shout instructions at a those playing Jenga for 60 sections. Instructions only, nothing nasty. Then ask parents to give the players 60 seconds of praise and clapping. Ask those making noise what did they see? Did they notice any behaviour changes/ body language changes in the players of Jenga? How did the players feel. Which did they enjoy most? what helped them play. Then have a discussion about how instructions from the sidelines are not helpful!

## **4. Ball pong ( a bit like beer pong.)**

Set up beer pong.(with or without beer!) Ask 10 volunteers to get in line and then play as the Jenga game above. This version allows more people to experience the pressure. Only this time let every player have two goes with instructions being shouted and two goes with cheering and clapping.

## **5. Card from Kids to parents**

When do people receive real nice post these days! During a training session invite the player to write a 'thank you' card to mum and dad. You can suggest these sentences to the players.

'Thank you for .....

'Your support has meant.....'

'The sacrifices you have made have given me.....'

'Your encouragement has.....'

[www.non-perfectdad.co.uk](http://www.non-perfectdad.co.uk)

'You example has taught me.....'

Don't forget blended families and that mum and dad could have split up. So you might need more than one card per player.

## **6. Counting praise clicker game**

Get yourself 10 clickers, ( they have loads coaching of uses.) Buy a bottle of wine or box of beer. Then on game day give 10 parents the clickers and say to them that the person to the win of the wine is the person with the most clicks. One click every time the parent gives praise. Back to zero every time they say something negative or give an instruction. ([Here is a video of this](#))

## **7. Parents using clickers to count coaching aims.**

What are you looking to see in a game? How many passes, tackles etc. Give the parents clicker and get them counting. You will find this distracts them from the game. (not my idea, but still a good one!)

## **8. Kids shout while parents play the game.**

One day at training ask eight parents to play walking touch rugby while the children shout instructions for 60 seconds, then get the children to shout praise for 60 seconds. Ask the parents who played what it was like when people were shouting and what it was like when people were cheering. Ask the kids 'who likes instructions from the sideline?'

## **9. Fancy dress week!**

On a game day, have a fancy dress competition for parents for raising fund, increasing fun and lightening the whole mood. If you can play an opposition who will join in with this even better!

## **10. Get the kids in front of a camera.**

Children's voices are really powerful. Get your players to make videos about why they play rugby, what helps them be better players and films about your club values and coaching philosophy. These don't have to be films to win Oscars! Most smart phones have a simple film editing app and you will find parents will share these films and take note. (Just make sure you have permission to film the child and put up on social media.)

**Let me know how you get on, send me a tweet, photo or email of you playing games and activities with parents. Let me know how you adapt them.**

**I've spent 20 years working with parents so I am very comfortable leading such activities and games. If you would like to add to your parent engagement a parents meeting or coaches CPD on working with parents then please [email me](#).**