

Special Section: Coaching young people

Coaching young people is a privilege ... and a responsibility.

For Cricket Ireland, the first focus for coaches of young people is to make it safe. However, if we want kids to stick with cricket, we first need to understand why kids play sport.

Researchers have been asking kids why they play sport for many years. The most common reasons kids give are:

- It's fun
- They enjoy being active
- They enjoy being fit and healthy
- They like learning new skills
- They like making friends
- They like being appropriately challenged ('stretched but not broken')

It may be obvious, but the retention of young players in the game is essential for the future of cricket. The players of today are likely to be the scorers, umpires, coaches, administrators, volunteers, fans, and, of course, adult players of the future.

Coaches who make cricket fun will not only have happy players, they will also have happy parents and caregivers. For very young children, parents/caregivers are key decision-makers and influencers. Parents/caregivers will often decide what sport a child plays, and many will take an active interest in ensuring the experience is a positive one for their child.

Cricket Ireland acknowledges the key role parents play in youth sport, and it encourages clubs and coaches to explore ways to involve parents so they can be active and positive contributors to their child's cricketing experience.