



CAR RIDE HOME

Considerations for Parents

A Guide for Parents: Best Practices for the Car Ride Home

1. Be Consistent with Your Emotion

Find consistent emotion after all games: not too excited after a win or too upset after a loss or poor performance. What your child needs to know is that you support their football participation, regardless of the result.

2. Let Your Child Lead the Way

Maybe your child will want to talk about the game or maybe they will want to listen to music. Give them the space they want, and understand they may feel differently after each game.

3. Ask Open Ended Questions

If your child DOES want to talk about the game, don't direct the conversation. Rather, ask lots of open ended questions! (See list on page 2.)

40% of children (approx. 1500) surveyed by the Irish FA said they feel under pressure from Parents and/or Coaches!

Let's make the Car Ride Home a pressure-free experience!

4. Try a Rating Scale

Does your child want to talk about the game and their performance? Try a 1-10 rating scale to help you understand how they are feeling. Just listen to their ratings and don't offer your own opinions. Ratings can be an important way to learn about your child's level of confidence and self-belief. Get creative with the topics such as effort, leadership, communication, respect for the referee - in addition to topics around skills and football performance.

5. Table Things for Later

If you feel there is something about your child's performance that should be addressed such as a lack of effort or focus, or if you want to instruct them on how they could do something differently next time, remember that conversation will be much more effective when the emotion isn't so high.



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6. Listen

While this seems like a common-sense parent behaviour after a game, it requires some intentionality when the emotion can be high. Remember, an important factor in your child feeling motivated and enthusiastic about their football experience is if they feel AUTONOMY. Give them a voice, listen to their perceptions of their experience without interjecting your opinions, and support their healthy development and confidence.

7. Establish a Tradition

A Car Ride Home tradition such as a song you play or a Favorite Moment of the Match shared can provide the stability your child needs as they navigate the ups and downs of development. Additionally, these traditions can become an important part of your family and provide a sense of belonging and connection.

Open Ended Questions Parents Can Ask

- How do you feel?
- What went well for you?
- What do you want to do better next time?
- How did you help a teammate today?
- What were your two favorite moments in the game?
- What teammate were you most impressed with, and why?
- What was challenging for you in the game?
- Tell me about what the coach said at half-time.
- Who do you think the best player was on the other team, why?
- Is there anything you want to work on this week at training?
- Was there anything that surprised you?
- What did you notice about the other team's tactics?
- What are you proud of from today's game?