



Positive Coaching Scotland Programme

in association with

The Bill McLaren Foundation

PCS Principles and Tools for Parents

There are three key principles at the heart of Positive Coaching Scotland. These are critical to becoming an effective positive rugby parent and ensuring that young people develop important life skills. These principles form an integral part of a strong and positive club culture.

1. Honour our sport (ROOTS)

The first principle teaches young people how to honour their sport through teaching respect for rules, opponents, officials, team mates, and self.

R	Rules	Always play by the rules
O	Opponents	Always respect your opponents
O	Officials	Always respect the officials
T	Team mates	Always respect your team mates
S	Self	Always respect yourself

Youth sport should not be confused with professional or elite sport. The focus of youth sport is on participation and enjoyment, a positive mental attitude and passion – values shared throughout sport but without the ‘win at all costs’ mentality sometimes associated with professional and elite sport.

As a parent with a child involved in rugby, it’s important to recognise the need to manage your expectations of what your child achieves and ensure you are helping them to enjoy themselves and learn vital life lessons. Hillfoots RFC will give your child the opportunity to develop to his/her full potential as rugby players as well. This process is focused on long term improvement and development. This has the implication that match days are learning experiences and nobody needs to become anxious about the outcome of games.



Tools for parents:

Match day policies

The principles of ROOTS form the foundation of the match day policies for Hillfoots Rugby. Coaches, players and parents will be expected to act accordingly. (Please see appendix).

Be a role model - honour our sport

You are the best person to instigate, lead and create a change in sport culture. By leading by example you are letting other parents, young people and coaches see that your behaviour supports what you believe in. You are the most important role model in your child's life.

Utilise teachable moments

There are times during practice sessions, games and as a spectator of rugby where you may witness both positive and negative examples of behaviour and attitude. These are teachable moments; for example, a young player assisting an injured opponent or a professional player behaving in a controversial way. These provide opportunities to talk to your child about what is happening and to highlight positive behaviour.

Be a culture keeper

A culture keeper reinforces the 'honour our sport' message within a club or organisation. As a culture keeper your main role is to:

- Be familiar with the three key principles of PCS (particularly ROOTS)
- Get to know other parents and people involved with the club or organisation
- Be a role model and take the lead – demonstrate to others how to honour our sport
- Enlist the help of others to ensure everyone participates in the PCS ethos

2. Redefine 'winner' (ELM)

We want young people to see beyond the scoreboard when taking part in rugby. True winning comes from giving the best possible effort, continually improving by learning, and maximising potential by not being afraid to make mistakes and learn from them.

E	Encourage effort, irrespective of outcome, helps player try harder the next time
L	Every experience should be a learning opportunity. Young people don't learn when their only definition of success is winning on the scoreboard.
M	Parents who embrace the Positive Sport Parent ethos recognise the importance of utilising mistakes as learning experiences.

A survey of 10,000 children asked why they participated in sport. Did you know that the answer 'winning' only came 10th on the list? Top of the list included, fun and enjoyment, improving skills and getting fit. But pressure to win featured high on the list of reasons why they dropped out. Constant focus on winning the game is a short-term strategy and may hinder a child's long-term development within sport. Positive Coaching Scotland shifts the emphasis from a scoreboard culture (winning at all costs) to a mastery culture (winning through effort).



Tools for parents:

Dealing with mistakes

Children can sometimes worry about making mistakes and this can affect their performance and enjoyment. No one is successful at everything and it is important that children deal positively with their mistakes and learn from them. We want our young rugby players to move on as quickly as possible after a mistake taking specific learning points on board. In fact we choose to use the phrase 'learning points' in stead of 'mistakes'.

Rewarding effort

As a parent you can work with your child to identify their short and long term goals in rugby. These goals should be based around effort rather than just the end result. Effort goals are motivating because the child is in control and can see when and where they make progress.

For example, an outcome goal for rugby might be to make all tackles on defence. But an effort goal for a struggling player trying to 'grab' tackle would be to get consistent shoulder contact in the tackle. When your child achieves this effort goal, be sure to praise their effort with specific feedback. Then move on to the next effort goal (for instance leg drive) to keep things interesting and challenging.

3. Fill the emotional tank (E-TANK)

Young people need to feel appreciated no matter what their ability. It is crucial that we encourage, teach, appreciate, provide non-verbal support and know how to praise.

- E** **Encouragement** - Encourage your child by using verbal and non-verbal communication
- T** **Teachable moments** - Sport is a fantastic way of teaching life lessons. Parents should utilise teachable moments.
- A** **Appreciate effort** - Praise effort regardless of outcome. Pay special attention to effort goals.
- N** **Non-verbal support** - Encourage and build confidence with positive body language.
- K** **Know how to praise** - Use praise to develop mutual trust by giving truthful and specific feedback.

A child with good self-esteem has the confidence to try new things and make new friends. Confidence helps them understand that if things go wrong, they can put them right. For many young people, confidence is fragile and can be affected by negative comments from parents or coaches. Giving consistent encouragement and praise helps to build self-confidence and self-esteem.



Tools for parents:

Magic ratio

There are times when you have to give your child constructive feedback, whether for their sporting performance or their behaviour. When giving feedback try to give five positive comments to every negative comment – this achieves the 'magic ratio' of 5:1. Although five may sound like a lot, your comments can take the form of positive body language such as smiling, winking or giving a simple thumbs-up.

Constructive feedback

E-TANK allows us to transform criticism into positive feedback. Part of being a parent is having conversations with our children when they are doing something that is not good for them or those around them.

There are some proven ways of delivering feedback that will encourage your child to listen to you and consider your feedback without draining their emotional tank.

- Avoid non-teachable moments – find the right time to talk to your child (straight after the match may not be the best moment).
- In private – your child will accept the criticism better in private rather than in front of other people where they may get embarrassed or defensive.
- Ask permission – if it is something that does not require immediate comment, or that your child is not ready to hear or deal with, and then seek their permission before giving feedback.
- If/then statements – these can help put suggestions into context and allow your child to recognise the impact of their actions

Positive charting

You probably notice the things your child does incorrectly and you probably try to correct or improve them. However, it is equally important and valuable to spot the things which your child is doing well and to reinforce them. Children respond to positive attention and this has an impact on their feelings and encourages them to continue the positive behaviour.

Your role as a parent is to

- Encourage your child to have fun
- Always edify the core values of the club
- Inspire your child to be the best they can be both in sport and in life
- Help develop self-confidence and self-esteem
- Show unconditional support and encouragement for your child in their sporting activities.
- Utilise the above mentioned tools to reinforce the key PCS principles which will be applied by coaches.