

# Respect

## ARE YOU LOSING IT?

### **New FA Respect films put the spotlight on abusive players and parents**

**02 March 2010:** The latest campaign in the Football Association's Respect programme will be unveiled at Wembley during the England v Egypt game (8pm) – aiming to help further reduce levels of anti-social behaviour both on and off the pitch. The hard hitting 'Are you Losing it?' campaign targets abusive grassroots players and parents, and encourages disaffected team-mates and spectators to put a mirror up to those most in need of a wake up call for their bad behaviour.

The films are part of The FA's drive to promote Respect as everyone's collective responsibility within the game, in a bid to create a fair, safe and enjoyable environment in which the game can be played at every level, from the professional game through to park football.

The FA's 'Are you Losing it?' films are part of the Respect programme and are launched on the back of recent strong progress in addressing player behavioural issues in the game. However recent FA figures also reveal that there is still work to be done, not least in addressing issues of unacceptable behaviour by participants to referees and fellow players, as well as from parents and spectators.

### **FA Respect Programme is making great progress**

- There has been a 9 % increase in the number of qualified referees this season and there are 5,197 trainee referees at Level Nine –<sup>1</sup> a 45% increase on 2008/09
- Dissent cautions are down in 12 out of 16 of the senior professional leagues and divisions. In the Premier League alone dissent cautions are down by 37% whilst in the Championship the numbers are down by 53%, with League One showing an 8% decrease and League Two dropping by 10%.

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<sup>1</sup> The FA's 'Get Into Refereeing' campaign, in association with Carlsberg, aims to recruit a base of over 31,000 registered referees in England by 2012

- Respect has become a compulsory module in The FA's training courses for all new referees and coaches (over 25,000) coming into the game each season
- Referee assaults down 25% on previous season

**But there is still work to be done**

- 800 grassroots games abandoned in 2008/09 season due to player or spectator misconduct<sup>2</sup>
- 1 in 4 parents would not consider confronting an offensive spectator for fear of physical retaliation<sup>3</sup>

The FA's new Respect films, entitled 'Are you Losing it?' feature the narratives of an offending player and parent to demonstrate exactly what team-mates think about their abusive behaviour. The first film, aimed at adult players, depicts an aggressive 'win at all costs' player and his abusive comments, which are overlaid with the voices of his team-mates and their chorus of annoyance and disapproval at his actions. The second film, targeting parents and adult supporters, puts the spotlight on a fresh faced junior player who starts the game with youthful enthusiasm but quickly shrinks in confidence thanks to the over zealous 'support' of their parent.

The FA's approach to the films has been prompted by an ongoing sense of frustration within the grassroots game at the issue of abusive players ruining the game for everyone else. Taking the Respect message directly to football fans and players, the new films will receive their first play at Wembley during the England v Egypt game on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2010.

The launch of the 'Are you Losing it?' campaign is supported by research findings which suggest that 58% of grassroots players are prepared to call the verbal shots by telling a team-mate to calm down if they display offensive behaviour towards an opposing player. Breaking the Respect code of conduct by physically assaulting a player from the opposing side was seen as the most socially unacceptable behaviour by grassroots players. One in four players admitted they would seek to find an alternative team should a team-mate of theirs assault a rival player<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> FA data: Games abandoned due to player or spectator misconduct during 2008/9 season across grassroots football in England\*

<sup>3</sup> OnePoll survey of 2,000 football players and fans (aged 18-45) conducted on 5-7 February 2010

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Ian Watmore, CEO of The FA commented on the Respect programme, saying: “We want people to be passionate about the game in the way they play it and the way they watch it, but there is a difference between passion and abuse. There is a difference between banter and vile comments and I think we need to find that balance in each of those areas.”

Out of the current 1,169 leagues in England, the number that are signed up to the Respect programme now stands at 707, whilst over 80,000 education packs have been distributed to leagues, clubs and referees.

For more information on The FA’s Respect programme visit [TheFA.com/Respect](http://TheFA.com/Respect)

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