

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 0001 MONDAY 20 DECEMBER**

## **English and Australian sporting stereotypes turned upside-Down Under in parent poll**

*It's just not cricket: English kids want to win at all costs, while Australian youngsters are more gracious in defeat, according to new survey*

While England's cricketers seek an historic Ashes win Down Under, the stereotypical image of the ruthless Australian, fiercely competitive in sport and the 'fair play' Englishman, gracious in defeat, is being turned on its head.

A new survey published today (Monday 20 December) by the Cricket Foundation charity found that more than four out of five English parents (83%) say their child is either 'quite competitive', 'competitive' or 'very competitive'; compared to three-quarters (75%) of Australian parents questioned on their child's competitiveness.

Furthermore, twice the number of English parents think winning is the single most important factor for their child when taking part in sport, 10%, compared to five per cent for Australian children. The latter place a greater emphasis on 'having fun' in sport with 55% saying this is more important than factors like 'winning' or 'never giving up'.

The poll of 1,004 parents of six to 16 year olds – 502 English and 502 Australian parents\* – also found the role-reversal continues when it comes to 'fair play' on the playing fields. Almost double the number of Australian parents say their child is more 'gracious' in both defeat and in victory than their English peers. A fifth of Australian parents (20%) say their child is gracious 'every time' they lose, compared with 12% of English children. Almost a third (29%) of Australian children are gracious 'every time' they win, compared to just 16% of English children.

However, both Australian and English parents share the same major challenge when it comes to their children taking part in sport: time pressures. Over a third of parents in Australia (34%) and England (36%) say the lack of time prevents their children from taking part in more sport. TV and computer games are also obstacles, say both Australian and English parents: 19% of English children prefer to play computer games or watch TV rather than play sport; with the figure dropping slightly to 17% in Australia.

The other challenges cited by English parents are the weather (23%), too much homework (20%) no access to facilities (13%) and not enough access to organised sport (11%). Australian parents, meanwhile, face an apathy among their children to playing sport with over a quarter (27%) 'not interested' in taking part.

Further highlights of the Cricket Foundation's survey include:

- Most parents in England (23%) and Australia (19%) invest between one and two hours in their child taking part in sport (from simply taking them to sports clubs to playing sport at home together);
- Both sets of parents agree that playing competitive sport can bring their children benefits such as learning teamwork (87%), discipline (72%) and social skills (72%);
- The poll, carried out before the start of the third Ashes Test in Perth, found that over a third of English parents (36%) are proud of their national cricket team, compared to just 10% of Australians;
- Over half of English children play cricket in some form (52%), less than 62% of Australian children;
- Australian children are three times more likely to play cricket at home in the back garden (22%), than their English peers (9%); and
- Nearly two thirds of Australian parents (60%) say that winning the Ashes is 'not important' to them; compared with 51% of English parents.

Wasim Khan, Chief Executive of the Cricket Foundation, which runs the 'Chance to Shine supported by Brit Insurance' campaign to educate children through cricket says: "The survey challenges certain stereotypes, while highlighting the benefits of competitive sport. We hope that the England cricket team can continue to lift the nation this winter and inspire the next generation of Ashes winners."

Chance to Shine is the single biggest school sports development programme ever undertaken in Britain. The campaign aims to educate two million children through cricket by 2015 and, since its 2005 launch, has brought competitive cricket to over one million girls and boys in 3,354 state schools in England and Wales.

England captain Andrew Strauss says: "Five years ago very little cricket was played in state schools. Chance to Shine changed that, getting a million kids to play again. It's not just good for cricket; there are other benefits such as life skills and teamwork."

Further details of Chance to Shine and the full survey can be found at [chancetoshine.org](http://chancetoshine.org)

- Ends -

\* Opinion Matters questioned a representative sample of 1,004 parents of children aged 6-16 (502 English parents and 502 Australian parents) between 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> December 2010

For more information please contact:

Fabian Devlin, Head of Communications, the Cricket Foundation  
T. 07920 502 152 E. [fabian.devlin.cricketfoundation@ecb.co.uk](mailto:fabian.devlin.cricketfoundation@ecb.co.uk)