



## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

*"Creating a community on the beach"*

Not all parents want to be involved, and others will want to be at every session. No matter the situation, it's good practice to be aware of what activities parents can be involved in and where the boundaries are. This will minimise pushy or confronting parents whilst also encouraging reserved parents who may want to be included and feel welcome.

### THE IMPORTANCE OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Coaches always try their best to fulfil the needs of participants so that they have a great experience, but one component that is easily overlooked, is parents. By providing parents with a role to participate in a way that won't impact coaching yet allow them to feel apart of each session and program, creates an experience of community and connection. The more developed the connection to a coach and surf school is, the higher the chances of retention for the surf school, progress for children and employment for coaches.

### INVOLVING PARENTS IN POSITIVE AND MEANINGFUL WAYS

#### The first meet up

To ensure parents are involved of their own accord but in a way that suits the coaching environment, it's important to be clear and direct as soon as possible. This could easily be at the first session, with a follow up at the end of the first lesson if further communication is required.

#### Creating roles

Letting parents know they are welcome to be apart of the program provides extra value for themselves, their kids and the community that is created at a surf school. By sharing available roles that are required to fill, this allows parents the chance to choose to participate, whilst being in a way that suits everyone.

Some suggestions where there can be more than one parent for each role:

- Photographer/videographer
- Carry gear
- Setting up beach umbrellas or other beach equipment
- Setting up a 'parent zone' for parents staying to socialise and interact



Asking parents to take photos of the group can help them feel involved and build relationships



## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

*"Creating a community on the beach"*

### CREATING LIMITATIONS

Limitations are to minimise unwanted outcomes, such as parents in the water interfering with coaching and potentially putting at risk their own child or others. This can be resolved by putting limitations on their participation, making sure to communicate the reason limitations are in place and they are in the best interest to the children's safety and their surfing experience.

Some suggestions :

- Parents are not allowed to help in the water when coaching is underway
- Parents asked to leave tips or improvements of children until after each session
- Parents asked to discuss coach questions or feedback after the session in private
- Ask for constructive feedback to be respectful and solution focused

### CREATING A COMMUNITY PROGRAM

If parents feel as though they are also a part of the program, it provides them with additional value and creates more meaningful connections for the whole family with surfing, surf schools and coaches. Any way in which they can be a part of the journey alongside their child, is an opportunity to expand and strengthen relationships.

Some ideas to aid this process naturally are letting know parents they can aid their child by:

- participating in and helping their child with their logbook and program goals
- giving positive feedback and praise for any goal that is met by the child
- going online to self-learn and follow the learning of their children (logbook or coach guided)
- consider surfing with their children out of the program for more practice and bonding (if confident)

The above ideas will at the very least aid in building relationships with parents and minimise any challenges that may be faced. Creating a community of parents in a surf school will benefit every aspect of the programs that are run, leading to a win for everyone and an even more enjoyable SurfGroms experience.