



Behind the scenes of TT Kidz with Chris Turner

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As the next phase of [TT Kidz](#), our 8-week inspiring programme aimed at 7-11-year olds gets underway in October we asked our Youth Participation Officer, and first hand deliverer of TT Kidz at his club, Chris Turner all about the programme.

[See available TT Kidz places this autumn here.](#)

But first, here he is in action delivering TT Kidz!

What is your involvement in table tennis?

"I have had a near lifetime involvement in Table Tennis, as a player from about the age of 12 through to being a coach and administrator, and now Youth Participation Lead for Table Tennis England supporting clubs, leagues and other organisations to develop their junior offerings."

How is TT Kidz a good first step into table tennis for kids?

"TT Kidz is designed to be fun, engaging and inspiring and the best first impression to the sport. The tasks are designed to also develop key skills such as hand eye coordination. We want the sessions to be less about technical instruction and more about kids hitting a ball, having some success with knocking some cups over and having fun with friends, and then moving through our awards programme where the technical skills can be developed further."

How are you involved with developing the TT Kidz programme for Table Tennis England?

"My role as Youth Participation Lead is to support clubs and leagues to develop their junior offering and support organisations and partners such as schools to deliver table tennis. Ultimately, I want to see more children playing the sport and developing a really strong interest in the game. Who knows where that initial interest may take them!

"TT Kidz is our offer aimed at 7-11-year-olds and includes club work through our eight week programme; our awards programme which clubs can use to help retain children and give them a sense of achievement. We also have TT Kidz for schools which is helping schools to deliver table tennis, as well as a partnership with Premier Education who are the largest coaching provider in schools in the country."

What would you say the main goals for TT Kidz are?

"TT Kidz is aimed at U11s so the main goal is to increase the number of U11 children playing table tennis and continuing to stay involved in the sport, and to also support clubs to have links with local primary schools. I believe TT Kidz is a great initiative and truly believe table tennis is a great sport for children to play! It can be something enjoyed by families, so I would like to see TT Kidz delivered in community centres and other places so more children can access the game. During lockdown Table Tennis England delivered community packs to households and we had some fantastic feedback about families enjoyed time together playing the sport.

"I was very fortunate to come from a town with a strong table tennis set up with lots of schools delivering the sport and localised competitions such as a junior league, so ultimately trying to support more areas to develop something similar. My old coach used to say he was on a mission to spread the gospel of table tennis so I suppose I've carried that with me!"

Why did your club start to deliver TT Kidz?

"At my club we had a good presence in local primary schools and knew that children, given the opportunity simply love playing table tennis. TT Kidz was presented to us and has really strong branding and buzz around it.

"One of the other things we really liked about it was how it was packaged for the child with a bat being included. We would often find that kids would come to the club and didn't have a bat, so we were lending bats out which was fine, but it's much better for the child when they have their own bat.

"The marketing support from Table Tennis England was also really beneficial too, and allowed us to reach children we wouldn't have through our school's network."

What benefits did your club experience?

"The big benefit for the club is more children playing table tennis, leaving the venue with big smiles on their faces!

"Table Tennis England provided powerful Facebook marketing which has also helped create awareness in the local community that there is a table tennis club in the area and as a result we have recruited older children for

sessions outside of TT Kidz. It also means more parents are seeing us who may tell their friends and take away information about the club's other activities. For example, we've just launched a book a table scheme on Saturday afternoons so hopefully some parents may take advantage of that and have an hour with their kids or friends.

"Table Tennis is such an accessible sport and something families can do together. Imagine a family of four, two parents, two kids playing doubles; kids verse parents!

"As a coaching team we always say 'you never know who is going to walk through your door.' By this we mean that it could be a parent who runs a business and wants to sponsor the club; it could be a parent with a key skill set that might help your club. Liam Pitchford and Tin-Tin Ho had to walk through the door of a table tennis club for the first time at some point! One of our coaching team got into the sport through his children's involvement in TT Kidz. He had a sports coaching background and has developed the table tennis knowledge along the way and now works in schools bringing children into the club and running a really successful junior league."

Why should clubs run TT Kidz?

"TT Kidz is a fun, engaging and inspiring first experience in table tennis. If a club is wishing to attract new U11s into their club TT Kidz is the perfect platform to support that. We support clubs with digital marketing as well as marketing materials and an easy to use centralised booking system for parents to book their children on to. We also provide lesson plans and training on how to work with children, so a chance to upskill coaches also.

"I also believe TT Kidz can be a great introduction to coaching for the club's older juniors who might be thinking in that direction or to simply provide them with some responsibility which can help develop their communication and leadership skills.

"As part of the price, kids also receive a bat so they come to your club ready to go!

"As I said above, you never know who might walk through your door – you may recruit new volunteers or maybe a future England senior international may start in your club through TT Kidz."

[Find out more about TT Kidz here and book a place!](#)

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