

Keeping up with your Kids

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"W HY this sudden interest in Frank Lampard? Anyway, who is he in the first place?" asked my friend whose brain I had been trying to pick and had failed as she obviously had no idea who Mr. Lampard was. "He's a football player and not just any football player, but my son's favourite one." I replied as if that made it all clear. Still no sign of realisation dawned on her face. So I proceeded to tell her that I wanted to be able to have some idea as to what my son was referring to when he raved about some goal scored by Frank Lampard. "Are you trying to be super mum?" asked my friend with a hint of laughter in her voice. Well, not quite super mum but being super cool mum can't hurt, right?

The reasoning behind my sudden interest in football is simply that I have learnt over the years that it is actually nice to be able to share my children's interests and "obsessions" with them. As they say, "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em" and I try and do exactly that. Being part of the female species makes it a little easier for me to relate to my daughters regarding their thought processes or their choice of games or toys, well, at least to a certain extent. However, even that is not quite adequate, especially with times changing as quickly as they are, and the number of new games and toys being dangled in front of their eyes via advertisement reaching dizzying proportions.

If I think back to when my son was three years old, I have a vague recollection of trying to memorise the names of as many dinosaurs as I could. Aged three years, he was already a budding palaeontologist and his favourite past time was to look through his book of dinosaurs and name each and every one of them. So as a parent, when your child asked you to point out a pachycephalosaurus or tell you the difference between an Allosaurus and a Tyrannosaurus, you really had to have done your background research thoroughly. We then graduated to his fascination for cars. Incessant questions such as "How fast does that car go" or "did you

see that Lamborghini Diablo?", and "Do you know its top speed?" had me making quick calls to my husband and running to the computer every now and then saying, "Hold that thought, I'll be right back." Prior to that, the only significance of cars was that it should be able to transport me from point A to point B. Nowadays, whether a car has sports suspension or regular suspension actually means something to me!

We went through the Pokemon phase where even my husband was sucked into the world of Pikachu and Charmander. Yes, we even played the board games with the children and went to watch the movies when they came out. I guess it paid off when our children would turn around and ask us to verify that a certain pokemon would actually evolve into A or B pokemon and our answer would have their friends looking in awe as we were raised to "alright kind of parents" status. The last few years have seen me playing Star Wars Bombad Racing on the play station (and getting quite competitive) or reliving my childhood by

watching reruns of Scooby Doo with my youngest daughter or having Beyblade battles with all three of them. Just for those who have not been initiated into the world of Beyblades, they are glorified spinning tops, very much like our *latims* or *lattoos*, only a very modern version. Oh yes, the Beyblades also have names! Imagine calling your lattoos "Dragoon" or "Dranzer".

To be perfectly honest, it is actually rather enjoyable at times to put aside your adult worries and day to day activities and sit with the kids and be a kid for a short time. Finding joy in the most insignificant of things and laughing at jokes that at other times would probably have you groaning is a remarkably refreshing experience. I am still on my mission to find out more about Frank Lampard and so far I have found out that he is an attacking mid field player for Chelsea! Now I have to find out what his favourite colour is and what he eats for breakfast... ■