

Each of our Gaelic Games Associations provide injury benefit funds or schemes in the case of members of the GAA, Handball, Rounders and Ladies Gaelic Football Associations while members of the Camogie Association are required to be covered by insurance.

GAA INJURY BENEFIT FUND

WHAT IS THE GAA INJURY BENEFIT FUND?

The mandatory benefit fund provides benefits to registered members playing the national games of Hurling, Gaelic Football, Handball and Rounders' whose Clubs are registered with the fund. The GAA Injury Benefit Fund is a Self-funded benefit fund funded entirely from GAA funds with no outside involvement. The GAA Injury Benefit Fund does not seek to compensate fully for Injuries sustained but to supplement other Schemes such as Personal Accident or Health Insurance. The playing of our national games involves the risk of Injury and it is each individual registered player's responsibility to familiarise themselves with the terms and benefits of the GAA Injury Benefit Fund. The Injury Benefit Fund only provides cover for unrecoverable losses up to the limits specified. The responsibility to ensure that adequate cover is in place lies with the individual member and members should not use the fund as their only recourse or be dependent on the fund to compensate them fully for any losses associated with the injury sustained.

WHO IS COVERED UNDER THE GAA INJURY BENEFIT FUND?

The GAA Injury Benefit Fund only applies to:

- 1.1. Registered Players as per the Official Guide who play on a team registered with the GAA Injury Benefit Fund who incur accidental bodily injury* while playing Hurling, Gaelic Football, Handball or Rounders' only, either in the course of an official competitive Fixture or an Official Sanctioned challenge match or the course of an official supervised training session.
- 1.2. Match officials' i.e. referees, linesmen or umpires injured while officiating at an official competitive fixture of Hurling, Handball, Gaelic Football or Rounders' as specified in 1.1 above.
- 1.3. Voluntary coaches, team managers, selectors and members of official team parties injured during games or training as specified in 1.1 above

The GAA Injury Benefit Fund covers Adult and Youth members of the GAA. Please note that the GAA Membership Year runs from January 1st – December 31st annually and it is a requirement as per the official guide that all members are registered via the Membership system annually. Playing Members should not be permitted to participate in training or fixtures until they have been registered for the current playing year.

FUNDING & SUBSCRIPTIONS

The GAA Injury Benefit Fund is funded in its entirety by annual team subscriptions together with six per cent of Gross Gate Receipts from Championships and National Leagues alongside a significant Central Council contribution. The amount of team subscriptions shall be:

- a) Adult - €1000.00 per team – no maximum per Club or Unit
- b) U21 - €200.00 per team – no maximum per club or unit
- c) Youth - €200.00 per team to a maximum of €1200.00 per Club or Unit
- d) Rounders' – as per agreement
- e) Handball – as per agreement

Cover is also available to registered Primary, Post Primary, Third level schools and colleges teams as well as Inter Firm units. In addition to the above, a claims band programme applies to all registered Clubs\County panels with the sole aim of it to bring equitable distribution to the Fund in that the claims experience of each registered club\county panel is accounted for in the calculation of the annual subscriptions due.

REGISTERING FOR THE FUND

All units registered for the 2017 GAA Injury Benefit Fund were invited to join the 2018 GAA Injury Benefit fund on December 14th 2017. All units were required to log in on GAA Management System – GMS – Servasport and update their 2018 details. Payment was to be received by March 1, 2018. For units which have not yet completed registration, cover will only be in place from the date that payment is received in Croke Park. Willis Towers Watson will decline claims received for injury dates between January 1 and March 1 for units that have not yet completed 2018 registration

BENEFITS AVAILABLE

- Medical expenses – maximum of €4500 with the first €100 not covered
- Dental expenses – maximum of €4500 with the first €100 not covered
- Loss of wages – week 1 – no payment
 - Weeks 2 – 26 – net loss of basic wages covered up to a maximum of €300 per week
- Capital Benefits – cover is available upon direct application to Croke Park once any entitlement to the above benefits has been paid in full.

CLAIMS PROCESS

- All GAA Injury claims must be registered on-line at <https://gaa.willis.ie>
- Each and every club \ county secretary must register for the On-line application
- Once you register on the system for the 1st time, you will need to create a password
- Click Add New claim and enter details in all of the required fields.
- All claims are required to be reported to Willis Towers Watson within 60 days of the injury by entering all of the required details and hitting the update claim button.
- You will receive confirmation of a web reference number and this number should be noted on all documents that are forwarded to Willis Towers Watson
- Once you submit the claim on-line, the claim will be submitted to Willis Towers Watson for acknowledgement.
- Once the submitted claim is reviewed by Willis Towers Watson, Willis Towers Watson will acknowledge the claim and it will be forwarded on-line to the relevant County Board for approval
- Once the County Board approves the claim, the status of the claim will change to Documents required and you will receive a notification detailing the relevant claims documents that need to be submitted to assess the claim.
- You will be able to download the relevant sections of the claim form that need to be submitted and advised of the documentation required for the completion of the claim.
- Details of the required documentation are set out in the GAA Injury Benefit Fund Summary Document effective from 1st January 2018.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Full details in relation to the GAA Injury Benefit is available with the updated 2018 GAA Injury Benefit Fund Summary Document issued to all units on December 18, 2018
- It is important that the summary document is read in full as it sets out the full terms and benefits of the Fund, the above is a summary only.
- Any queries in relation to the GAA Injury Benefit Fund can be directed to Ciara Clarke, GAA Injury Fund Manager by email – ciara.clarke@gaa.ie or telephone – 01 819 2347

LADIES GAELIC FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION INJURY FUND

INJURY FUND

WHAT IS THE INJURY FUND?

The injury fund is an injury scheme and NOT an insurance scheme and does not seek to compensate fully for injury, rather to lessen the hardship to players and officials. The fund should supplement other schemes where applicable, i.e. VHI, Irish Life etc.

Rules pertaining to the injury fund are covered in the official guide from Rule 66 to Rule 90 and you should make yourself aware of these.

WHO DOES THE INJURY FUND COVER?

The Injury Fund covers all playing members who sustain an injury in the following:

- a) an official competitive or challenge game
- b) an official and supervised training session

It also applies to Club Officers, Team Mentors and Match Officials (Referees, Umpires and Linespersons) if registered to the injury fund.

HOW IS THE INJURY FUND FUNDED?

The injury fund is funded by all playing members who pay registration fees, as well as some non-playing members.

Fees are determined by Central Council and at present are as follows:

- a) Adult - €25
- b) Juvenile/U18 - €10
- c) U10 - €5

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE SCHEME?

The fund will pay out the following amounts, once all relevant paperwork & prior approval has been received

- a) Medical Expenses - €5,500, which includes GP Visits, Physio (6 Sessions @ 90%), MRI's, Consultant Visits & Surgery (once prior approved)
- b) Dental Expenses - €3,000
- c) Loss of Wages - A maximum €200 per week for a max of 20 weeks. Applies to all adult members but if you're a juvenile with a part time job, you must pay the adult rate in order to qualify.

HOW CAN I MAKE A CLAIM?

In order to claim for the benefits above, you must

1. Submit a Preliminary Claim Form within 8 weeks of getting injured regardless if it's serious or not, available on our website and it must be signed by all relevant parties, as per the form.
2. Private treatment (i.e. MRI's, Consultant visits & Surgery) must be prior approved in order for us to reimburse you.
3. Physio & GP visits are not considered private treatment, and will be refunded once you have submitted your Preliminary Claim Form within eight weeks of the date of injury. (Physiotherapy is required to be carried out by individuals with an appropriate third level qualification).
4. Dental Treatment is not considered private but you must submit a report from your dentist once you have been assessed.
5. Once you have completed all your treatment, you must then submit the Full Claim Form, along with all your paid original receipts (no photocopies) to Rosemary Coyle, LGFA, Croke Park, Dublin 3
6. To claim for loss of wages;
 - a. Your employer sign & stamp your Full Claim Form and
 - b. Submit your last 4 payslips and
 - c. Submit a statement of any social welfare payments.
 - d. Medical Cert from your GP
7. Claims will be checked and verified. You have one year from date of injury to activate the claim and two years to complete claim process.
8. A cheque will be issued to the player/guardian. No third party cheques will be issued.

WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE IF A PLAYER REQUIRES PRIVATE TREATMENT?

Private treatment is considered to be treatment not provided by the public system i.e. HSE or NHS.

If you require treatment outside of the public system, we will require the following documentation in original format posted to the office in Croke Park prior to your visit in order to financially reimburse your expenses:

1. Medical Letter of Referral from your GP, to say he/she has accessed you and is referring you on for an MRI or Consultant Visit.

2. A letter from you the player requesting financial permission for this visit.
3. A letter from a consultant for any further private treatment.

If we do not receive the above pieces of information, along with your Preliminary Claim Form prior to the treatment, then we will not be in a position to reimburse you for these expenses.

IS THERE ANY EXCLUSION FROM THE INJURY FUND?

Travel expenses, prescriptions and medical aids are NOT covered under the injury fund.

The scheme shall not apply in the case of a player/official:

- Who is injured during a game as a result of an assault wherein the claimant has been the aggressor
- Whose injury arises from a pre-existing physical defect or infirmity or from the use of alcohol or drugs
- Players who do not wear mouth guards.
- Who may be pregnant, suffering from concussion etc, any player who plays in this condition is entirely responsible for any consequences that may arise.
- Protective equipment needs to be medically prescribed by your doctor who is aware that it will be worn to play Ladies Gaelic Football and not pose a hazard to other players, then there is no issue with the wearing of same from the LGFA Injury Fund point of view.
- Any person who requires corrective eyewear to participate in Ladies Gaelic Football should consult with their optometrist and review options to ensure safe participation.
- Tell your optometrist of your plans to play Ladies Gaelic Football. He or she will be able to fit you with glasses that use durable, unbreakable polycarbonate for the lens
- You will also need to ensure your frames for sports glasses are as durable as the lenses

FURTHER INFORMATION IN RELATION TO THE INJURY FUND SCHEME?

Rosemary Coyle
Croke Park,
Dublin 3
Email: Rosemary.Coyle@lgfa.ie
Tel: (01) 836 3156

CAMOGIE INSURANCE

PERSONAL INJURY COVER

The Camogie Association, unlike its GAA and LGFA counterparts, does not administer its own injury scheme. This means that injury cover/insurance must be purchased from insurance providers, operating independently in the private sector.

The obligations relating to injury cover within Camogie are detailed in the Official Guide Part 1 Camogie Constitution Rules. The rules around registration of members with the Camogie Association and insurance are key. The rules relating to the playing of the game outlined in Official Guide Part 2 Playing Rules are also relevant. These documents are downloadable from www.camogie.ie/insurance.asap

Obligations on clubs regarding insurance of players, match officials [referees, umpires and linespersons] and members involved in managing and coaching teams.

A: INSURANCE COVER

Rule 23.1 of the Official Part 1 states:

All persons who train with teams and all persons who coach teams are required to be registered members of the Camogie Association. Each club must ensure and be satisfied that its playing members, members who officiate at

games and members involved in training/managing/coaching teams are covered by insurance. Any member not insured may not play, officiate at games or manage/coach teams.

Persons and clubs are obliged to comply with this rule which also includes a check that people in the club are correctly registered on the Servasport registration system.

Clubs should also check the detail of the club/ or members' insurance cover to establish the extent of the cover for players, match officials, managers e.g. does the cover extend to all officially sanctioned Camogie games and training. Does the insurance cover the player if she plays on a temporary basis with another club as allowed under rule and as approved by the county board?

If the club has an insurance policy in place it should consider communicating the insurance cover details to relevant parties e.g. players, match officials and managers/coaches.

It is advisable that Units in charge of representative teams e.g. County or Provincial teams also verify the insurance cover of people representing them in a games' context.

B: INSURANCE COVER AND CHALLENGE/TOURNAMENT GAMES

Rule 23.3 of the Official Guide Part 1 states:

In order that all fixtures other than official fixtures are recognised for insurance purposes notification must be given on the following basis:

- To the County Board when both teams are within the County;
- To the relevant County Boards and Provincial Council when teams are from different Counties;
- To the relevant County Boards, Provincial Council and designated Camogie Association staff member when teams are from different Provinces or International. Notification to hold or participate in fixtures other than official fixtures must be sent by email by the relevant Secretaries prior to the date of the proposed fixture.

Approval to host inter-county underage blitzes will be provided by a designated Camogie Association staff member.

Permission must be requested by a date specified by the Ard Stiúrthóir each year.

Each Unit is obliged to comply with this rule.

Please be aware that failure to comply may have implications in how an insurance company considers a claim, in the event of a claim arising from a fixture that may not be deemed official.

Insurance claims must be processed via the relevant insurance company.

The Camogie Association does not handle any insurance claims.

Additional information on insurance requirements for Camogie players may be downloaded at www.camogie.ie/administration.asp

The appointment of a Children's Officers at both Club and County level is an essential element in the creation of a quality atmosphere and in establishing a child and youth centered ethos at both Club and County level.

The role of Children's Officer has continued to evolve as we observe greater diligence in our work with children, as we oversee the implementation of mandatory requirements for coaches and Clubs and as legislation and statutory guidance guides us in our roles.

The Children's Officer has now become a central and key figure in ensuring that our Clubs, County Boards and Provincial Councils, and not discounting our National committees adhere and implement our legal responsibilities when working with children.

The appointment of a Children's Officer at both Club and County level while deemed essential is also a mandatory requirement. These Officers fulfil a key role at Club and County level and are members of the relevant Club Executive and County Committees.

All of the Gaelic Games Associations are committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for all young people who participate in our Gaelic Games and activities.

In our work with young people and with adults a number of national policy documents and requirements act as a resource and govern our commitments. The Children's Officer has a responsibility in ensuring that each of these policy requirements are made known to our membership, are adhered to and implemented.

- **Code of Behaviour (Underage)** – developed as a joint policy document by the Gaelic Athletic Association, the Camogie Association, the Ladies Football Association, the GAA Rounders and GAA Handball Ireland. The Code of Behaviour (Underage) is a major reference and policy publication covering many aspects of good practice procedures required in running the local Club and also outlines each Associations responsibilities and procedures for dealing with the welfare and safety of underage players when playing our games and participating in our activities. This Code outlines the minimum level of good practice behaviour and practice that we require of our underage players, their parents/guardians, our Clubs, our coaches and supporters
- **Safeguarding Training Workshops** – The Gaelic Games Associations have developed three levels of child safeguarding training for our members based on and reflective of similar training programmes initiated by Sport Ireland.
- **Safeguarding 1** The Child Protection in Sport Awareness workshop for coaches and others who work with children.
- **Safeguarding 2** is the workshop for Club Children's Officers.
- **Safeguarding 3** is the Designated Liaison Person workshop.

Whatever a person's role in our Associations they are, where applicable, required to attend the relevant training as provided. Training developed and delivered by the Gaelic Games Associations also reflects the statutory legislation and guidance for the jurisdiction in which it is delivered.

- **Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment** – Each year our Clubs, County Boards and National Child Safeguarding Committee shall be obliged to carry out a risk assessment procedure and thereafter put on display and agreed Child Safeguarding Statement. Much of this work shall be overseen or directed by the relevant Children's Officer in cooperation with the Club Executive or County Committee.

- **Recruitment criteria for coaches – The relevant Children’s Officer shall ensure that all coaches fulfil the following requirements:**
 - Have undertaken Vetting (Garda/Police) checks as directed by their Association within the jurisdiction in which they operate
 - Attend relevant child safeguarding training
 - Possess a coaching qualification relevant to their role as recognised by their Association
 - Have signed the Joint Code of Behaviour
- **Relationship with Designated Liaison Person** – The Children’s Officer should develop an understanding of roles and a good working relationship with their Club or County Designated Liaison Person. While both roles are part of the Association’s child safeguarding strategies they may be issue or area of work that could overlap at any time.

THE CLUB CHILDREN’S OFFICER

The Club Children’s Officers shall assist in promoting a child and youth centered ethos in the Club. In their work the Club Children’s Officer shall be the link between the children/young people and the adults within the Club and shall be the primary protagonist of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) in the Club. In taking up this role the Club Children’s Officer should:

- Have good communication skills, be approachable and open minded
- Have knowledge with and be familiar with our Child Welfare and Protection Codes and Guidelines
- Have an understanding of relevant child welfare/protection legislation
- Have undertaken a Garda Vetting/Access NI/CRB check relevant to their jurisdiction
- Have attended the relevant awareness training on child welfare and protection and availed of Children’s Officer training

ROLE

The key role of the Club Children’s Officer is to ensure the implementation and promotion of the relevant Child Welfare and Protection Codes and Guidelines for good practice in their Club so as to ensure that young people can participate, enjoy and benefit from our Gaelic Games in safe and enjoyable surroundings. The Code of Behaviour (Underage) is the agreed good practice reference and policy document that is central to guiding the Children’s Officers in their roles.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Promote awareness of the joint Code of Behaviour (Underage) within the Club
- Ensure that all persons, in accordance with their allocated roles, fulfil their vetting, child safeguarding and coach educational requirements as appropriate
- Identify the need and facilitate the delivery of Child Protection in Sport Awareness Workshops and other relevant Child Protection and Welfare training within the Club
- Distribute and oversee the implementation of the **Code of Behaviour – when working with underage players** and ensure in so far as possible, that all Players, Coaches, Team Mentors, Parents, Guardians, Officials and Spectators adhere to the Code
- Promote an Anti-Bullying ethos in the Club and deal with instances or allegations of Bullying in a fair, impartial and constructive manner and in collaboration with others as appropriate
- Display the Association’s Anti Bullying Statement and ensure it is adopted at Club level
- Ensure that each under age member signs and submits an annual membership form, a parental consent form as required (away trips etc) and that the necessary medical information of an underage player, as deemed relevant, is made known to the Club and/or the team coaches
- Support the implementation of the RESPECT initiative at Club level in co-operation with team personnel, underage members, referees, spectators, parents/ guardians and the Club Executive
- Influence policy and practice in the Club in order to prioritise the needs of our underage players and make an annual report the Club AGM
- Promote greater consultation with under age players and participation by them in Club activities and

planning and that young people are afforded the opportunity to express concerns about their sports activities/experiences within the Club

- Encourage the involvement of parents/guardians in organising Club activities
- Develop good practice procedures in the recruitment and selection of persons working with young people in the Club
- Retain Vetting ID documentation of Club members as part of the vetting process if required
- Oversee the implementation of Garda Vetting/Access NI/CRB checks, as appropriate and for relevant personnel, within the Club
- Monitor, in association with team coaches, any significant trends or developments relating to the participation of young people in Gaelic Games and report accordingly to the Club Executive or Management Committee
- Maintain on-going contact with the County Board Children's Officer and with other Club Children's Officers and as required with the National Children's Officer
- Report regularly to the Club Executive as required
- Deal with breaches of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) as per relevant guidelines
- Make referrals of alleged allegations of abuse to the Club Designated Person
- Oversee the carrying out of the annual risk assessment procedure and thereafter putting an agreed Child Safeguarding Statement on display in the Club

THE COUNTY CHILDREN'S OFFICER

In the context of promoting and implementing our commitment to creating a safe and enjoyable environment for all young people who participate in Gaelic Games and activities, County Boards are obliged at the outset to appoint a County Children's Officer.

The County Children's Officer's shall be a member of the County Committee and should:

- Have good communication skills, be approachable and open minded
- Be familiar with their Child Welfare and Protection Codes and Guidelines
- Have undertaken a Garda Vetting/Access NI/CRB check relevant to their jurisdiction
- Have attended relevant basic awareness training on child welfare and protection and Children's Officer training as deemed relevant by the Gaelic Games Associations
- Be familiar with relevant child welfare/protection legislation
- Have the confidence of all Clubs and in the particular of Club Children's Officers within the County

ROLE

The key role of the County Children's Officer is to oversee the implementation and promote an awareness of the joint Code of Behaviour with the co-operation of Clubs in the County and with Club Children's Officers.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Ensure that each Club in their County has appointed a Club Children's Officer and that these Children's Officers are aware of their roles and responsibilities
- Regularly liaise with all Club Children's Officers; respond to their queries; support and assist them to develop and implement an annual work plan
- Promote and co-ordinate Child Protection in Sport Awareness Workshops for all Clubs in the County
- Oversee the carrying out of the annual risk assessment procedure at County level and thereafter putting an agreed Child Safeguarding Statement on display in the County offices and premises
- As deemed appropriate liaise with Child Protection in Sport Awareness Workshop Tutors and ensure that all Club and County personnel receive child welfare training relevant to their roles
- Ensure that the activities of underage County Development Squads and County underage teams' activities are compliant with the relevant Gaelic Games Codes, with the RESPECT initiative and with relevant playing models, in co-operation with County Committees
- As required, liaise and advise the County Coaching and Games Development structures on strengthening a child centred ethos in their programmes and activities
- Assist, if required, the County Vetting Co-ordinator in the processing of vetting applications on behalf of

the Association to the relevant authorities

- Advise on good practice in the recruitment and selection of persons working with young people at Club and County level
- Promote greater consultation with under age players and participation by them in Club and County activities
- Deal with breaches of the joint Code of Behaviour (Underage) as per relevant guidelines
- Monitor and report on any significant trends or developments relating to the participation of young people in Gaelic Games
- Review and report to the County Committee on the extent and nature of implementation of the relevant Association Codes within the County and by Clubs
- Maintain regular communication and liaison with the National Children's Officer

AWAY TRIPS, HOSTING AN EVENT AND TRANSPORT

AWAY TRIPS

Many teams and Clubs participate in trips away from home throughout the year. These trips are seen as additional to the regular games that take place as part of a County fixtures schedule or during inter Club blitzes. Trips away from home are often viewed as a means by which young teams and players may be rewarded for their endeavours at the end of their season or as a means by which greater team morale and camaraderie can be developed, regardless of age.

An example of rewarding a team or organising a trip is to invite the team or a number of teams to attend inter-county matches. This is a popular means by which young people may see and attend games where their chosen code is played at a high level of skill and competitiveness. Visiting other Clubs and playing matches against teams of a similar age group in other areas or counties will also give younger players an insight into the broad geographical nature and community ethos attached to our Games while creating greater camaraderie with their colleagues and within their own Clubs.

The pre-planning and detailed organising of such trips for younger players will require a high degree of care and preparation and adults should always remember the key roles of responsibilities they have during such trips on behalf of their Club, on behalf of parents and on behalf of the young people themselves.

PRE-TRIP PREPARATIONS

- A detailed programme of activity should be approved in advance at Club level following agreement with the other Club(s) involved in the away trip.
- Where possible a member of your organising group should be familiar with the away venue, should visit the venue in advance if deemed necessary and ensure themselves that the venue can cater for the planned programme of activities. This is particularly relevant should an overnight stay be required.
- Parental/guardian consent must be obtained in writing so as to permit any young person under 18 yrs. of age participate in any organised trip. Contact details for all parents/guardians must be obtained in advance of the trip.
- Young people (of an appropriate age) and their parents/guardians should sign a form agreeing to abide by the programme and to any agreed procedures that relate to the organised trip.
- An agreed Code of Behaviour, specifically designed for the trip, should be discussed, outlined and agreed with all players and adults that are participating on the trip.
- Medical information, deemed relevant by the parents/guardians of players, should be made known to the leaders of the Club's trip and what action, if any, may be required of them in the case of an emergency. (See Appendix 1)
- Such information, including food or other related allergies should have previously been recorded on the annual/registration form of each underage Club member. (See Appendix 1)
- A detailed programme which includes the following should be presented to all players and their parents/guardians:
 - A time schedule of departure and arrival at your destination.
 - Full information about the trip; including all activities and events planned.
 - Emergency contact numbers of Club personnel who are accompanying the group
 - During the trip and contact details for parents/guardians
- All adults accompanying the underage team should be made aware as to what their responsibilities are and what role(s) they may have during the trip.
- It is the Club's responsibility to ensure that the trip itself and all activities taking place throughout the trip adhere to insurance cover, that all participants are eligible members of their Association's relevant injury

scheme and that the activities of the trip do not compromise the conditions of their injury scheme or any additional insurance policy.

- Where it is deemed necessary the organisers of all such trips should seek and gain the permission of their County Board prior to announcing the details of the programme to their members.

DURING THE TRIP

- It is essential that at least one individual with first aid qualifications be part of your organising group and that this individual be present or available throughout the trip.
- Young people must be adequately supervised throughout the trip as per our recommended ratios of adults to young people. This ratio may differ depending on the age group of participants, the activities to be undertaken, whether there is an overnight stay, if the trip is abroad etc.
- Supervision ratios will depend on the nature of the activity, the age of the players and any special needs of the group. It is recommended that a minimum ratio of 1:8 for under 12 years of age players and a ratio of 1:10 for players over 12 yrs. of age. When abiding by such ratios a coach must always be accompanied by at least one other suitably qualified adult at all times.
- Organisers of Club trips should always be mindful of ensuring that additional adults accompany their group on trips away for supervision purposes and in case of emergencies or unforeseen circumstances. These adults are subject the same vetting and child safeguarding requirements as are coaches.
- There must be at least two adults of each gender with mixed groups.
- Adults are required to be familiar with the agreed rules on smoking and on the consumption of alcohol during the trip, as outlined in the GAA Code of Behaviour. As a basic minimum, adults are required to avoid smoking while working with young players and must not consume alcohol or non-prescribed drugs while young players are in their care.

OVERNIGHT STAYS

When participating in an overnight stay a number of matters require careful preplanning and agreement.

By agreement with all parties, including players and parents, a decision is required whether the Club will avail of hotel or guest house accommodation or if invited will avail of a hosting arrangement by the host Club in the houses of their Club members.

Regardless of what form of accommodation is agreed upon adequate and specific supervisory ratios of adults to children must be agreed in advance. This ratio, which is very dependent on the age category of the children/young people, may also vary should the group be participating in certain outdoor activities or in water sports and will also vary if the group is a mixed gender group.

HOTEL OR GUEST HOUSE ACCOMMODATION

- Check out the proposed accommodation for children/young people and Club mentors. Ensure that it complies with health and safety regulations, is accessible, is of a suitable standard and is appropriate for the particular age group and programme of events.
- When availing of overnight accommodation adults (except parents) should not share a room with a child. If exceptional or emergency circumstances so dictate and the presence of an adult is deemed necessary there should be more than one child in the room with the adult at all times.
- Where children are sharing a room it must be with others of the same age grouping and gender.
- All children should be provided with a bed each and should not have to share a bed with another child.
- It is also preferably that the sharing of rooms be done with fellow Club members at inter Club event and that such arrangements are made known in advance of the trip to the each child's parents.

HOME STAY ACCOMMODATION

- When availing of home stay accommodation the host Club is responsible for choosing a host family that has been recommended to them and have been satisfactorily vetted in accordance with Association requirements.
- When availing of home stay accommodation adults (except parents) should not share a room with a child. If exceptional or emergency circumstances so dictate and the presence of an adult is deemed necessary there should be more than one child in the room with the adult at all times.
- When availing of home stay accommodation Children must not share a room with adults from the host

family.

- All children should be provided with a bed each and should not have to share a bed with another child.
- Where children are sharing a room it must be with others of the same age grouping and gender. It is also preferably that the sharing of rooms be done with fellow Club members at an inter Club event and that such arrangements are made known in advance of the trip to the child's parents.

REVIEW OF TRIP

A full review of the trip should involve all who participated from the Club and the result of the review should be retained and reviewed if and when the group intend organising another or similar trip or if the Club intends re-visiting the area or the host Club again.

HOSTING AN EVENT

The hosting of a scheduled game, a challenge match, an underage blitz or an inter Club tournament is now seen as a normal event for most Clubs in Hurling, Football, Camogie, Ladies Football, Rounders and Handball.

While such events are generally organised by age category and by code, so as to provide inter Club games and offer skill development opportunities, these events by their very nature can also provide young people of all ages with a positive social experience allowing them gain independence within a safe environment.

The safeguarding criteria and guidance that applies to away trips, recruitment, travel, health and safety also apply to the hosting of an event with the additional responsibility that when hosting you are organising the games or the event for more than your own Club or team.

A number of ground rules apply to hosting an event.

- 1 Don't be pressurised into offering to host an event if you cannot do it or if you do not have adequate resource of facilities to cater for the proposed event.
- 2 Be absolutely clear that you have the full support of your own Club when embarking on hosting an event
- 3 Clarify with those that requested of you host the event (e.g. Juvenile Board, Féile Committee ...) what is required of your Club
- 4 Form an organising team, with a nominated person in charge, to oversee the hosting
- 5 Allocate specific responsibilities to each member of the organising team
- 6 Agree a timescale and a plan for the delivery of all of your actions (see draft action plan)
- 7 Agree your plan or outline your plan with the governing body who requested your Club to host the event (e.g. Juvenile Board, Féile Committee ...)
- 8 Meet regularly to review all work in progress
- 9 If you are providing a home stay option for your guest Clubs you must abide by the guidance given under the Home Stay Accommodation
- 10 Never presume that somebody else had done it!

EVENT ACTION PLAN

EVENT: INTER CLUB UNDER 14 TOURNAMENT

It is very useful to draw up an event action plan that can be used as a guide for all persons working on the event and also as a check list for the organising committee in reviewing their progress to date.

Below is the commencement of an Event Action Plan for an U14 Inter Club Tournament that your Club had been invited to organise by the County Board. It contains some identified actions and sufficient blank spaces for the identification and delivery of other actions. You have eight weeks notice of the event. Complete this event plan in advance of meetings and as your preparations develop and are completed.

ACTIONS	By When? (Date)	Responsibility? (Name)	Done? (Date)
APPROX. 8 WEEKS BEFORE EVENT			
Accept invitation to host event	8 weeks before	Relevant Club Committee	
Establish Organising Committee and named person in charge	8 weeks before	Appointed by Club Committee	
1st meeting of Tournament Committee	7 weeks before	Organising Committee Chair	
Allocate responsibilities at 1st meeting		Name the tasks and people	
Agree correspondence to visiting Clubs		Agree with Secretary	
Prepare budget at 1st meeting		Responsibility of Treasurer	
Identify sponsors (if appropriate)		Overseen by Treasurer	
Book pitches or venues as appropriate		A Committee member	
Agree on home stay option and plan accordingly (see Home Stay Section)			
APPROX. 6 WEEKS BEFORE EVENT			
Organising Committee meeting			
Post correspondence to visiting Clubs with relevant forms etc.			
Check insurance implications if any			
Complete event plan and circulate			
Check out all venues by visit			
APPROX. 4 WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT			
Organising Committee meeting			
Confirm participating teams and Clubs			
Make 'draws' and circulate information			
Arrange for First Aid at tournament			
APPROX. 2 WEEKS BEFORE THE EVENT			
Organising Committee meeting			
A team withdraws from the Tournament			
APPROX. 1 WEEK BEFORE THE EVENT			
2nd team withdraws from tournament			
New sponsor seeks role in the Tournament			
DAY OF THE TOURNAMENT			
Up early!			
Register each team and their coaches			
Check dates of birth			
AFTER THE EVENT REVIEW			
Organising Committee meeting			
Financial report			
Event report			
Treat the organising Committee and all helpers!			

TRANSPORT

Adequate preparation and an insistence on the use of safe transport arrangements regardless of the length of journey are key elements of good practice when considering any trip taken by an underage team or players. This applies regardless of the length of journey or indeed the mode of transport availed of, whether it is public, private or personal transport.

The transport arrangements for underage players is a priority safety matter for sports organisations, for Clubs, parents and for young people themselves. While it may be preferential to avail of private bus or coach transport it is also recognised that in some instances this is not feasible and certain Clubs and teams could not operate without the goodwill of volunteers and parents who ensure that children are transported to an event or a match and are returned safely.

In so far as we rely on many parents to provide transport in our Clubs the challenge we face in ensuring that all such services are provided in a safe environment that compiles with our own standards of good practice and with local or national legislative requirements.

It is recognised that private cars are used by many Clubs and teams as a common practice when transporting children to games as part of a County fixtures schedules or as part of inter Club blitzes. It is however advisable if possible not to use members' cars when travelling on away trips of great distance. In such circumstances Clubs are advised to avail of bus or coach transport and it is essential therefore that all aspects of the transport arrangements are checked out and agreed in advance. The safety and welfare of children is paramount and must be considered a priority at all times when transporting our underage players from one venue to another.

A NUMBER OF BASIC REQUIREMENTS APPLY WHEN TRAVELLING TO GAMES AS FOLLOWS:

- That every parent has supplied at least two emergency contact numbers to the team coaches that may be used in the event of an emergency concerning their child or the group or in the event of a change in schedule
- That all players have completed a travel consent form
- That any medical conditions of players are made known to team coaches in advance of any trip and as part of the annual registration process
- That parents are supplied with the contact telephone number of the team coach in charge on the day and of any other accompanying coaches
- That any particular rules or regulations relating to a trip are made known to parents and children alike and agreed in advance of departure
- That the Club is satisfied that the proposed trip has been planned and agreed in accordance with child welfare procedures where the safety of the child is paramount in all preplanning of the trip

BUS AND COACH TRANSPORT:

The following should be considered when availing of bus and coach transport:

- The company chosen must be a reputable transport company with a proven track record in transporting children
- The driver must be vetted in advance of the trip by the bus company or your Club
- All vehicles should be well-maintained and roadworthy and should be properly taxed and insured
- Transport should be fully accessible for people with disabilities whether they are members of the group or for others who may accompany them
- Seat belts must be worn at all times on buses and coaches
- Alternative transport should be available in case of emergency
- Vehicles should be equipped with a First Aid kit and a fire extinguisher and leaders of the group should be familiar with how to use them
- When hiring a vehicle Club personnel should have no hesitation in enquiring as to the company's reputation and reliability
- Adult coaches should ensure that children remain safely seated at all times during the journey
- An adequate ratio of adults to children on the bus must be ensured at all times taking the age of the group members into consideration and the need for male/female ratios with mixed gender groups

PRIVATE TRANSPORT IN CARS

If an adult has to transport a child/children there are a number of safety measures that should be agreed so as to minimise any potential child welfare or safety risks to their children and or adults:

- If a child is being transported by car the parents of the child should be informed as to who will be transporting their child, why this mode of transport has been chosen, how long the journey may take, the departure time and the estimated time of return
- It is important that children are comfortable with whoever may be the driver of the car in which they travel and are made aware as to what are the transport arrangements made for them by their Club
- Drivers must ensure that they have adequate insurance to carry the required number of passengers
- If the driver is in a paid position in the Club or in the Association or is in receipt of expenses for the trip they may be required to have additional insurance cover to enable them transport any passengers
- Central collection and drop off points are recommended when transporting children
- The driver (and other team personnel) should be contactable by mobile phone in case of emergencies
- With the exception of their own child an adult should not transport a child alone, except in emergency or exceptional circumstances
- In accordance with transport legislation where applicable children must use appropriate child restraints and seat belts when travelling in a car or other vehicles
- No driver should ever consume alcohol or non-prescribed drugs prior to driving
- No driver should smoke in the car when transporting children on behalf of the Club or Association
- Where a driver may be under medical care or taking prescribed medication he/she must ensure that such medication may not inhibit their driving abilities
- All drivers and persons who have access to children on our behalf should have undertaken a vetting background check in accordance with the Association's guidelines and should have been informed that their vetting application has been accepted

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

When using public transport please ensure that

- That the full travel schedule is made known in advance to all parents and players
- That drop off and pick arrangements have been agreed in advance
- That where available, seat booking arrangements are agreed in advance e.g. trains
- That an adequate number of adults accompany the group in a supervisory role
- That a contingency plan is in place in case a scheduled public transport arrangement or booking is cancelled, is late, or has been missed by the group

This section of the Code of Behaviour (Underage) seeks to ensure that while we respect the rights of all members to use social media it is important to be mindful of the benefits and at times its negative impact can have on our members and particularly children and young people.

We should additionally be conscious that any inappropriate or contentious public postings or language used by members associated with any of the Gaelic Games Associations, regardless of what form of social media has been used, may lead to a negative perception by some of our Associations.

Members of our Associations shall be held responsible for their use of social media and where such usage may at any time impact negatively on the general welfare of a child in our Association or on the ethos of our Associations disciplinary action may follow.

We therefore propose general guidance in the use of social media particularly for those who are working with children in our Clubs and Counties. We also seek the cooperation of parents, whose children may have access to such social media apps, and seek to ensure that sensible use of social media, as it may impact on children, can be agreed with parents.

Messaging apps have developed rapidly in recent years from devices that were originally utilised for making calls and texting to current usage of mobiles for messaging, sharing pictures, videos, web links, e-documents and other such message sharing apps. While technology was advancing so also should have our vigilance, particularly in respect of the involvement of young people. With such regular access to new and easy to use technology certain ground rules relating to communication and the taking of photographs or recording of images may unfortunately be overlooked.

The Code of Behaviour (Underage) seeks to give guidance, not in a manner that may prohibit the use of such modern communication and recording technologies, but to urge caution and to have certain safeguards in place so as to prevent instances of harm or unacceptable behaviour. We seek in this Code to ensure as far as is practicable to avoid the misuse of social media apps. So as not to impact negatively on any child and on those who work with them.

COMMUNICATIONS IN RELATION TO UNDERAGE TEAM ACTIVITIES

All coaches should make it known that our Associations' preferred option of communicating team information for underage teams is via the parental/guardian mobile phone of each players and not via the mobile phone of the child. If requested by a parent to send messages regarding games or training via the mobile phone of the child the coach/club should enquire as to the rationale of such requests and if in agreement must receive any such request in writing. Upon any agreement any messages sent to the child can only be as part of the team group text that will also go to their parents and to all other members of that group text. Coaches are not permitted to communicate individually via social media with underage players.

Our Associations do not approve of Clubs or coaches engaging in or facilitating messaging apps in which players and coaches participate nor do we approve of the creation of Club messaging forums for underage players. Many such social media platforms have been shown to be most insecure, lack controls and are poorly managed and monitored in some instances. Such insecure usage should give cause for concern and by their nature may be susceptible to accessing or misuse by unscrupulous individuals quite often outside of our control. Experience has also shown that uncontrolled messaging apps, unfortunately have a greater chance of being used as a forum of exchanging inappropriate messages and images between children.

Any form of individual social media communication by a coach with an underage player shall be deemed a serious breach of the Code of Behaviour (Underage).

GUIDELINES FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC/RECORDED IMAGES

It should be noted that having photographic and filming guidelines is not about preventing parents and guardians from taking pictures, but rather to ensure that only those who have a right to take photographs do so and that all images are captured in a sensible and non-intrusive way.

These safeguards should still permit and facilitate the recording of relevant and suitable materials, should allow us to photograph the enjoyment gained by participating in our games, should enable coaches to use the latest technology in the delivery of training skills and should also enable Clubs to promote their activities in a safe and non-threatening manner.

A common sense approach is required when deciding on what may or may not be appropriate as we do not wish to prohibit the recording of games, coaching or celebrations at club level through the use of photography or by recording on video equipment

The key issues that we should address regarding the use of images and photographs of children/young people are:

- Ensuring agreement and permission of parents/ guardians in the taking and any use of images/ photographs
- Seeking such agreement as part of the annual membership affiliation process or by use of parental consent forms
- Avoiding the individual identification of children in group or team photographs unless by agreement e.g. for special events, an award or achievements ceremony
- Ensuring prior accreditation is given to 'professional photographers' who may attend your games or events
- Ensuring that images/photographs chosen are suitable and in good taste with the images chosen or recorded focussing on activity rather than a particular child
- Clubs, coaches and volunteers permitting the use of video equipment as a legitimate coaching aid and as a means of recording special occasions; however, care should be taken in the dissemination, storage and use of such material
- Parents and spectators taking photographs/recordings should where possible seek permission in advance from the Club/County Board and should also be prepared to identify themselves if requested and state the purpose for their photography/filming. If Club/County Board personnel are unhappy about any matter relating to such photography the permission granted may be withdrawn immediately

It should be noted that we have little or no influence on what photographs may be taken and published in local or national newspapers as such photography is covered by a different set of guidelines. Should we ever be unhappy with the publication of such photographs or images we can address this matter with the individual newspaper or the Press Council of Ireland and the Office of the Press Ombudsman.

SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

The world of social and digital media is an enjoyable and engaging place and is in itself a useful asset in promoting our Clubs and activities within the membership and to a wider audience. We must be aware that while these communication tools can be used to our advantage vigilance is also required to ensure that our use of such communication methods shall at all time be appropriate.

- Each individual is responsible for any posting, comments or their conduct while engaging with such sites
- Any social media site approved or promoted by a Club/County must be subject to terms and conditions regarding its usage and must also be under the direct monitoring of a nominate person
- Agree a club policy on reporting of games, club news and use of images or photography
- Club sites may be used to promote training times, fixtures and events
- Content published on Club web sites or social network pages should at all times be factual and follow the parameters of good behaviour
- Clubs should ensure all members are aware of acceptable usage policies regarding communication between coaches or other adults and underage players
- Social media sites should not be used as a forum for exchanging views between other clubs or irate members. Such usage should be terminated by the site controller.

MOBILE PHONES

Except in exceptional circumstances, or in the case of very young children, most underage players attending our training or games generally have a mobile phone or access to a phone.

While the ownership and general use of the mobile is primarily a matter between the child and their parents the use or accessing of the mobiles at our events or in our clubhouses or dressing rooms is a matter for us to monitor and or pursue and if need be to agree with parents.

While we never wish to curtail the rights of a child we can in relation to the use of a mobile limit the use of mobiles on our premises and if doing so we should inform the parents in advance. Guidance in relation to mobile phone usage includes:

- Do not permit the use of any phones in dressing rooms or shower area
- Avoid any instances of individual communication via mobile phone with any of the underage players
- If in agreement with other coaches seek parental permission for all phones of underage players to be 'bagged' prior to a game and returned to the players after each game
- Be vigilant as to the use, or excessive use, of a mobile phone by any underage player while they are under your care
- Advise children if they receive an offensive photo, email or messages, not to reply, but to save the offensive materials, note the time and date of receipt and that they should inform their parents. Should any such incident regarding the use of mobile phones occur during their attendance at the Club the team coach should note this and report the matter to the Club Children's Officer.

WEB SITE CONTENTS POLICY

- The Club/County Board Website and its operator must make all reasonable attempts to insure that web pages are in keeping with the ethos of our Associations and do not contain unacceptable content or any links to questionable material. Links to external websites are meant for convenience purposes only.
- No endorsement of any third party products or services should be expressed or implied by any information, material or content referred to or included on, or linked from the Club website.
- Agree a Club/County Board web site content policy, following discussions at your Club Management or Executive Committee and with members, including the underage members of the Club. This content policy will promote your strategy on the safe use of the Internet and also outlines the parameters of behaviour and specifies the consequences of breaching those parameters.
- Content published on web site or social network page should at all times be factual and follow the parameters of good behaviour.
- All decisions on the appropriate use of photographic images and other similar content should be in accordance with the Guidelines for Photographic/Recorded Images.
- Avoiding the individual identification of children in group or team photographs or images unless by agreement e.g. for special events, an award or achievements ceremony.
- Advocacy of or opposition to any politically or socially controversial subjects, issues, or candidates is prohibited on Club/county websites.
- Disparagement or promotion of any person or class of persons is prohibited.
- Content that may be considered not to be in keeping with the ethos and dignity of Associations is prohibited.

The GAA will shortly publish new Social Media Guidelines available on www.gaa.ie