



# The Club and County Children's Officer

[www.gaa.ie](http://www.gaa.ie)



# THE CLUB AND COUNTY CHILDREN'S OFFICER

---

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 establishing a child and youth centered ethos at both Club and County level.

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 act as a resource to us and govern these commitments:

- A Code of Behaviour - when working with underage players - jointly published by the Gaelic Athletic Association, Camogie Association, Ladies Football Association, Rounders Council of Ireland and the Irish Handball Council
- GAA Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport
- GAA Guidelines for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse
- Camogie Association's Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Young Players
- Ladies Football Association's Code of Ethics and Good Practice for Young Players

The appointment of a Children's Officer at both Club and County level is not just essential but is also a mandatory requirement.

This leaflet, promoted by the Gaelic Athletic Association, Camogie Association, Ladies Football Association, Rounders Council of Ireland and the Irish Handball Council, outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Children's Officer so as to be of assistance to those who undertake such roles.



# 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 they shall be the link between the children/young people and the adults within the Club. In their role the Club Children's Officer should:

- Have good communication skills, be approachable and open minded
- Have good knowledge and be familiar with their 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

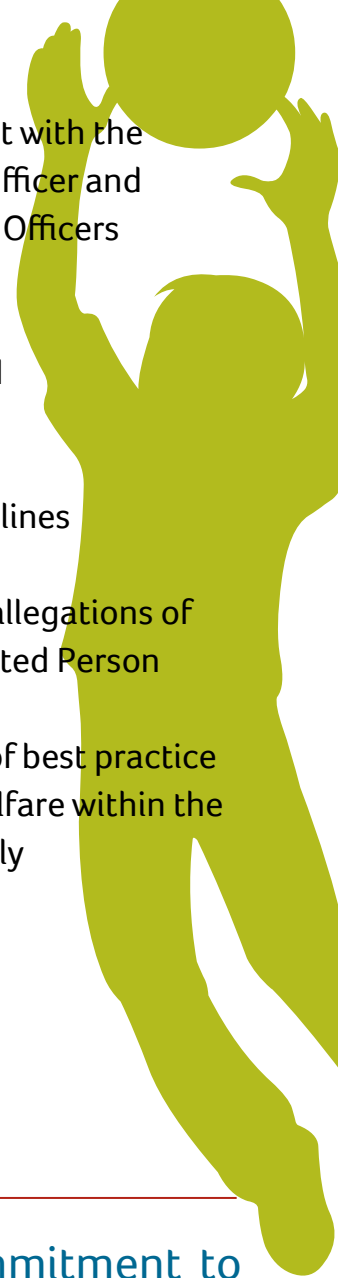
## KEY ROLE

The key role of the Club Children's Officer is to ensure the implementation and promotion of the relevant Child Welfare 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.

## KEY TASKS

- Promote awareness of the relevant Codes of Behaviour and Best Practice within the Club
- Distribute copies of the Joint Code of Behaviour - when working with underage players - at Club level
- 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
- Ensure in so far as possible, that all Players, Coaches, Team Mentors, Parents, Guardians, Officials and Spectators adhere to the Joint **Code of Behaviour – when working with underage players**
- Ensure that each under age member signs and submits an annual membership form
- Support the implementation of the **RESPECT** initiative at Club level in co-operation with team personnel, underage members, referees, spectators, parents and guardians
- Influence policy and practice in the Club in order to prioritise young people's needs
- Promote greater consultation with under age players and participation by them in Club activities and planning
- Ensure that there are steps young people may take 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
- Oversee the implementation of Garda Vetting/Access NI/CRB checks, as appropriate, 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
- Report regularly to the Club Executive as required
- Deal with breaches of the code as per relevant guidelines
- Make referrals of alleged allegations of abuse to the Club Designated Person
- Conduct an annual audit of best practice in child protection and welfare within the Club and report accordingly



## 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 Office. The County Children's Officer's 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 the relevant basic awareness training on child welfare and protection and Children's Officer training
- Be familiar with relevant child welfare/protection legislation
- Have a commitment to attend other relevant training as required
- Have the confidence of all Clubs and in the particular of Club Children's Officers within the County

### KEY ROLE

The key role of the County Children's Officer is to oversee the implementation and promote awareness of the Gaelic Games' Codes of Best Practice and Behaviour with the co-operation of Clubs in the County and with Club Children's Officers

# The County Children's Officer

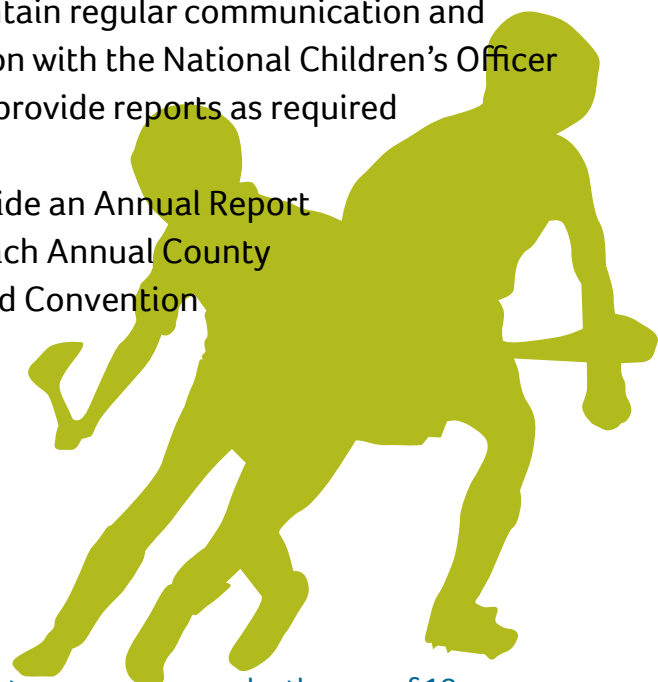
---

## KEY TASKS

- Ensure that each Club has appointed a Club Children's Officer
- 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; regularly liaise with workshop tutors; ensure that all relevant materials for workshop are provided in a timely manner to the relevant Club/tutor; post-workshop ensure that feedback/registration sheets are collected and returned in accordance with training requirements
- Ensure that the activities of County development squads and/or County under age players, their parents and mentors are compliant with the relevant Gaelic Games Codes, in co-operation with Coiste na nÓg where relevant
- As required, liaise and advise the County Coaching and Games Development structures on strengthening a child centred ethos in their programmes and activities
- Assist, where 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 by all Clubs
- Promote greater consultation with under age players and participation by them in Club and County activities
- Deal with breaches of the Code as per relevant guidelines
- Monitor and report to the County Board and relevant Committees on any significant trends or developments relating to the participation of young people in Gaelic Games
- Review and report to the County Board Executive 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 and provide reports as required
- Provide an Annual Report to each Annual County Board Convention

### \*Young People

The term 'young people' is used throughout this leaflet and denotes any person under the age of 18 years.





GAA, Páirc An Chrócaigh,  
Baile Átha Cliath 3

Guthán +353 1 836 3222  
Faics +353 1 836 6420  
nationalchildrensoffice@gaa.ie  
www.gaa.ie

GAA, Croke Park,  
Dublin 3

Tel +353 1 836 3222  
Fax +353 1 836 6420  
nationalchildrensoffice@gaa.ie  
www.gaa.ie

This leaflet, is published and promoted by the Gaelic Athletic Association,  
Camogie Association, Ladies Football Association,  
Rounders Council of Ireland and the Irish Handball Council



Tá leagan Gaeilge den bhileog seo ar fáil ar [www.gaa.ie/clubzone](http://www.gaa.ie/clubzone)