



## **Guidelines on Best Practice for Youth Coaching Sessions**

### Pre-amble

- These guidelines are primarily designed to assist those clubs who have recently commenced youth development but is also intended to be a useful reference document for clubs with more established youth development programmes.  
It is recommended that these guidelines are read in conjunction with a <sup>1</sup>Code of Ethics and Good Practice document.
- Adhering to best practice not only reflects well on individual clubs and their provincial and national governing bodies but is also a factor considered by sports councils, government agencies and a sport's national and international governing bodies when assessing the levels of funding and other resources needed to assist development and suitability for formal club accreditation.
- There is an amount of work involved initially to set up systems to follow both these guidelines and the requirements of a Code of Ethics and Good Practice policy/document but once operational, maintaining the systems is easily managed.

### General Club organisation

<sup>1</sup>A club child protection policy document (usually referred to by the title 'Code of Ethics & Good Practice') should be adopted and each club member who is involved with the management of the club and, especially, the organisation and delivery of youth coaching sessions should be familiar with the document.

In particular, as a minimum requirement, those club members should be aware of the policy document's guidelines and code of conduct for coaches / managers / volunteers, the general guidelines on supervision and safety, the role of children's officers and designated persons and the name and contact details of the club's **Designated Person and Children's Officer**.

The club's Hon. Secretary should hold a copy of the club's child 'Code of Ethics & Good Practice' document on file and a copy should be accessible via the club's website.

Youth players' parents should be made aware that the club has a policy in place and that the policy contains codes of conduct for youth players and their parents. This can be effected by mentioning the policy's existence on the club's youth registration forms.

The club should maintain a database of the names of all club members who organise/deliver or assist with youth coaching sessions.

The list should contain the following information for those club members:

- Their date of birth, mobile phone number, postal and e-mail addresses;
- Details of any coaching qualifications attained including the year of attainment;
- Whether they are a member of the Cricket Ireland/ECB Coaches Association;
- <sup>2</sup>Whether they have received or have applied for a Garda Criminal Database check/report (Garda Clearance) including date of application or receipt of same;
- <sup>2</sup>Whether they have attended and have a certificate of attendance for a Child Protection in Sport Awareness (Code of Ethics) Workshop including the date of attendance;
- Whether they have attended and have a certificate of attendance for a recognised First Aid course.

The club should maintain a database of all registered youth players (ie those aged 18 and under) who participate in club activity/sessions to include:

- Name and birthdate (not age);
- Parents' names, contact number (preferably for a mobile) and an e-mail address;
- Any relevant medical information;
- What school the youth player attends.

## **Session Management**

The senior session coach / organiser should draw up a session plan, circulate it in advance to those coaches / assistants / volunteers scheduled to attend and print off several copies to have available at the session.

The senior session coach / organiser should ensure that:

- <sup>3</sup>An adequate number of coaches / assistants / volunteers are scheduled to safely manage the session;
- That he/she has their mobile numbers and they have the senior session coach/organiser's mobile number;
- That they have a copy of the session plan;
- That adequate first aid arrangements are in place and that the other coaches/assistants are aware of the procedures to be taken in the event of an accident.

The session plan should identify the list of equipment, the age group(s) attending and the likely numbers of participants plus any other items needed.

### ***Sample list of equipment and other items:***

8 x blue cones & poles; 4-6 bean bags; 10 x Skill balls; 10 x tennis balls; 2 x sets of stumps; 4 x plastic bats; cone tree with cones; tape/chalk for footmarks etc.

Print-out of the relevant youth database for the age group due to attend; <sup>4</sup>blank registration forms; name labels.

First Aid kit.

<sup>1</sup>Accident Report form.

<sup>1</sup>Incident Report form

Post-session, the plan should be reviewed and amended to reflect any changes to the session content that occurred during delivery of the session.

<sup>3</sup>An attendance log should be kept recording each player who attended the session and noting whether each player paid a session fee or if they pay an annual subscription.

<sup>4</sup>Where a player is attending a club session for the first time a session fee **MUST** be charged and the player's details (*as listed above on page 2*) should be noted **BEFORE** the player takes part in any activity.

<sup>1</sup>It is advisable to have new players complete a simple youth registration form at the earliest opportunity.

### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup>A sample copy of a club child protection policy document, which follows Cricket Ireland's current Code of Ethics and Good Practice document, is available from the Munster CDO. The sample document contains blank Youth Registration, Accident Report and Incident Report forms.

<sup>2</sup> It is highly recommended that all adult (ie 18+) club members who are involved in the club's youth activities should have Garda Clearance and have attended Child Protection in Sport Awareness (Code of Ethics) Workshop.

<sup>3</sup> Some considerations as to what might be considered an 'adequate number' would include the ability to:

Effectively deliver the planned session content for the numbers attending;

Cope in the event of an accident occurring;

Accurately compile the session's attendance and payment log;

Accurately record the actual session content as delivered.

<sup>4</sup>It is highly recommended that, for insurance purposes, **a minimum initial fee is charged before any individual player commences activity** and that such payment is properly recorded.

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