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Report on the GAA Child Welfare & Protection Information Day Páirc an Chrócaigh – 30th January 2010.

The Conference was facilitated by Gearóid Ó Maoilmhichíl, National Childrens Officer, Joan O’Flynn, Cathaoirleach Code of Best Practice Implementation Group and Ted Owens Cathaoirleach Child Protection & Welfare Committee addressed the meeting.

Other speakers included Teresa Blake, B.L, GAA Legal Advisor, Bernie Priestley, Irish Sports Council, Paul Stephenson, N.I.S.P.C.C., Dermot Howlin, Paula Prunty and Sandra Claxton (HSE).

Cork was represented by Richard Murphy, Michael Byrne, John Quirke and Marc Ó Síocháin.

The following documents were introduced –

- ‘Give Respect Get Respect’ – An Introduction to the GAA Respect Initiative.
- GAA Guidelines for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse – 4th Edition 2009.
- GAA Code of Best Practice for Youth Sport – available online www.gaa.ie

Under General Rule all clubs are required to appoint a **Children’s Officer** with effect from 2010.

Role of Club Children’s Officer

“Person appointed to ensure the recognition and development of a child and youth centred ethos within each Club and to act as a link between children/young people and adults”. (GAA Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport)

1. Influencing Policy & Practice within the Club to prioritise Children’s Needs.
2. Ensuring all Club Personnel attend Code Workshops (ISC/GAA).
3. Distribution of Code Material.
4. Ensuring that children know how to make concerns known to appropriate adults.
5. Keep records on each member on file including Junior Members, their parents contact numbers and any special needs of the child that should be known to coaches.
6. Ensure each member signs the Joint Code of Behaviour Document.
7. Compliance with the GAA Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport.

A Designated Liason Person is to appointed in each club in 2010.

Garda Vetting :We aim to conclude phase one (up to Minor grade mentors) by March 31st 2010.

The GDA's are currently liasing with the Clubs in Muskerry, Carberry, Duhallow, Imokilly , Beara & Avondhu to complete the task. **The process will start in Seandún and Carrighoun by late February.**

PPS Number is no longer required.

Clubs co – operation in this matter is much appreciated and I urge continued support to complete the task. A significant effort is required on behalf of all clubs to ensure full compliance.

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GAA / Irish Sports Council Four Hour Child Welfare & Protection in Sport Course.

Six tutors are now trained in delivery of this course.

1. This course is mandatory and progression from Foundation Level to Award Level 1 is not permitted until the four hour section is completed in full.
2. Courses are deliverable to a maximum group of 16 people at a time. The tutoring fee is €165 per four hour course, payable to the tutor by the club.
3. The content is based on the GAA Code of Best Practice in Youth Sport and is informative and practical in terms of providing GAA personnel with advice on dealing with welfare/protection issues. The course has been designed in conjunction with the Irish Sports Council.

To arrange a suitable date to deliver the course in your club please email

administrator.cork@gaa.ie or youthofficer.cork@gaa.ie.

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Text Messaging:

Coaches / Selectors should not send text messages to the telephone of players (up to Minor). The best advice is to send group texts re fixtures etc to parents telephones preferably from a designated club mobile telephone.

