

# Template Code of Conduct for Coaches

The following is an example of a coach/volunteer Code of Conduct, but clubs should also contact their own governing body to ensure they incorporate their own specific guidelines.



*“NAME OF GAA HANDBALL CLUB”*

Coaches and volunteers involved in sport for young people have a great opportunity to be a positive role model and help build an individual's confidence.

## **COACHES/VOLUNTEERS ARE EXPECTED TO:**

- Ensure the safety of all children by careful supervision, proper pre- planning of coaching sessions, using safe methods at all times.
- Consider the wellbeing and safety of participants before the development of performance.
- Encourage and guide participants to accept responsibility for their own performance and behaviour.
- Treat all young people equally and ensure they feel valued. Have no favourites.
- Encourage all children not to discriminate on the grounds of religious beliefs, race, gender, social classes or lack of ability.
- Not allow any rough or dangerous play, bullying, or the use of bad language or inappropriate behaviour.
- Appreciate the efforts of all young people and not over-train the young people. Never exert undue influence over performers to obtain personal benefit or reward.
- Be positive, approachable and offer praise to promote the objectives of the club at all times.
- Not let any allegations of abuse of any kind to go unchallenged or unrecorded. Incidents and accidents to be recorded in the club incident/accident book. Parents will be informed.

- Report accidents or incidents of alleged abuse or poor practice to the designated person.
- Administer minor first aid in the presence of others and where required refer more serious incidents to the club "first aider".
- Have access to telephone for immediate contact to emergency services if required.
- Foster team work to ensure the safety of youth members in their care.
- Ensure the rights and responsibilities of youth members are enforced.
- Report suspected abuse to the appropriate designated safeguarding children officer.
- Not abuse members physically, emotionally or sexually.
- Maintain confidentiality about sensitive information. Please note the reporting of information relating to safeguarding a young person through your organisations reporting procedures would not be a breach of confidentiality.
- Respect and listen to the opinions of young people.
- Take time to explain coaching techniques to ensure they are clearly understood.
- Develop an appropriate working relationship with participants, based on mutual trust and respect.
- Ensure they maintain healthy, positive and professional relationships with all athletes. Coaches and others in positions of authority and trust in relation to athletes aged 16 and 17 years must not engage in sexual relationships with them while that unequal power relationship exists
- Be a role model, displaying consistently high standard of behaviour and appearance (disciplined/committed/time keeping), remember children learn by example.
- Refrain from smoking and consumption of alcohol during club activities or coaching sessions.
- Never condone rule violations, rough play or the use of prohibited substances.
- Protect themselves from false accusation:
  - Not spending excessive amounts of time alone with children away from others
  - Never taking children to their home
  - Not administering First Aid involving the removing of children's clothing unless in the presence of others
- Hold appropriate valid qualifications and insurance cover.
- A coach or other club officer should not accept any club member under the age of 18 as a friend on their own personal social media site, or share their own site details with them. Unless that coach is related to that particular child at the club. Problems can arise when coaches and other people in a position of responsibility at a club accept children as "friends" on their own personal social networking site.
- It is important for coaches to ensure that their interactions and communications with young members in real life and via social media reflects their role and position of responsibility for that young person.
- Coaches should lock down access to their social media site to ensure that only their accepted "friends" have access to their photos and information.

- Coaches should only use electronic<sup>1</sup> based communications to share sport/activity/club-related information with young members and avoid personal, non-sport messages/photographs/videos or banter.
- Make the sport/activity **fun**.

**COACHES/VOLUNTEERS HAVE A RIGHT TO:**

- Access on-going training and information on all aspects of leading/managing activities for youths, particularly on Safeguarding.
- Support in the reporting of suspected abuse.
- Access to professional support services.
- Fair and equitable treatment by the governing body/club.
- Be protected from abuse by children/youths, other adult members and parents.
- Not to be left vulnerable when working with children.

Any misdemeanours and general misbehaviour will be dealt with immediately and reported verbally to the designated person. Persistent breach of the code will result in dismissal from the club/sport.

Dismissals can be appealed by the coach/volunteer with final decisions taken by the club committee or referred to the governing body depending on the disciplinary procedures within the sport.

**EMERGENCY ACTION/FIRST AID:**

All coaches, leaders and members should be prepared with an action plan in the event of an emergency and be aware of our First Aid Procedures.

This will include:

- Access to First Aid equipment
- Telephone contact if the participant is a minor
- Telephone contact to the Emergency Services

*Signature of coach/volunteer* \_\_\_\_\_

*Printed name of coach/volunteer* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date* \_\_\_\_\_

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<sup>1</sup> Electronic communication may include, texting, facebook, twitter etc.