

Noamh Seosamh Lann Abhaic

Saint Joseph's GAC Glenavy
Cumann Lutchleas Gael

Code of Best Practice for Youth Coaches

Role of Coach/Team mentor

Team Coaches and Mentors can ensure that sport has a beneficial impact when they adhere to the following guidelines.

Youth coaches are requested to :-

- Respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat each one equally regardless of age, gender or ability.
- Ensure that nobody involved with the team acts or speaks to another person in a manner or engages in any other conduct which threatens, disparages, vilifies or insults another person on the basis of that person's race, religion, colour, descent, national, ethnic or socio-economic background.
- Be positive during coaching sessions so that participants always leave with a sense of achievement and an increased level of self-esteem.
- Recognise the development needs of young people (avoid excessive training or competition) and ensure that they are matched on an individual or team basis.
- Be punctual, properly attired, lead by example and avoid smoking or consumption of alcohol in the presence of young people.
- Plan and prepare appropriately for each session and ensure proper levels of supervision.
- Develop an understanding of the Otú Coaching Model and ensure that you have the appropriate level of coaching accreditation.
- Ensure games and playing equipment are customised to suit the needs of those involved in terms of age, ability, experience and maturity.
- Avoid over-coaching ie. Insisting upon set (stereotyped) playing patterns where individual decision-making and creativity are stifled or when young people are confined to playing in a set position on a continuous basis.
- Don't shout or lecture players or reprimand/ridicule them when they make a mistake. "Children learn best through trial and error. They should not be afraid to risk error to learn".
- Set realistic and stretching, but achievable goals.
- Praise and reinforce effort/commitment and provide positive feedback.
- Don't equate losing with failure and do not develop a preoccupation with medals and trophies. The level of improvement made by young players is the best indicator of coaching effectiveness.

- Encourage Parents/Guardians to play an active role in organising activities.
- Never use any form of corporal punishment or physical force.
- Never use foul language or provocative language or gestures to a player, opponent, or match official. (The Coach should only enter the field of play with the Referee's permission and should not question their decisions or integrity).
- Avoid sending messages – voice/text/e-mail – to players. (All messages/circulars etc. should be in writing and directed to the young person's parents/guardians).
- Do not have a situation where you are alone in a car or dressing room with a player.
- Do not take coaching sessions on your own.
- Avoid any inappropriate touching when assisting players to perform a technique or when first aid is being administered. (Keep an adequate record of each injury and ensure that another official - Referee/ Team Mentor – is present when a player is being attended to and can corroborate the relevant details).
- Make adequate provision for First Aid and do not encourage or allow players to play while injured.
- Ensure players are safely attired and that proper insurance arrangements are in place.
- Ensure that all dressing rooms and areas occupied by the Team, prior to during or immediately following the completion of any match/training session are left clean and not damaged in any way.
- Ensure that unrestricted access to the Internet is not provided on the Club premises.
- Every effort should be made to ensure that the greatest possible number of young people maintain an ongoing involvement and that they experience the feeling of success that comes from someone saying "WELL DONE" or "YOU TRIED AS HARD AS YOU COULD" or "YOU GAVE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE TO THE TEAM"
- Ensure all club equipment – Footballs – Jerseys – Training Gear – First Aid Kit – Goal Grids – are returned to their proper place. Any shortages must be reported immediately.
- Ensure accurate and prompt communication of results to Club Secretary, Club PRO, Divisional Committees, etc... as appropriate.
- Provide team details, match results/reports, etc... for the Club PRO for press releases and the Club website
- Liase with the Club Officers as required regarding :-
 - Problems with players
 - Equipment
 - Availability of training pitches

Any youth coach who fails to adhere to this code of practice may be asked to appear before the Club Disciplinary Committee.