

Kilkenny GAA

Child/Youth Player Pathway - The Hurler

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Introduction

“Player Pathways” are universally recognised nowadays, but when you sit back and look at them, they are basically what every GAA club has been, or should be, attempting to achieve, particularly, in the past twenty to thirty years, with the advent of all this modern underage activity.

Player Pathways are essentially, what clubs are all about. Starting at an early age, and helping players through the various age levels, providing learning, enriching experiences for our players, so that they are still playing GAA at the end of their youth careers, then also prepared, and ready for the challenges they face as they progress to the adult ranks in their club/county.

So rather, than be concerned, about the latest “terminology” we should embrace it, safe in the knowledge that GAA clubs/schools have been devising and developing “player pathways” long before the terminology came our way. We are now just “aligning” these Pathways for the benefit of new “recruit” coaches, and even the “experienced” coaches.

Player Pathways help emphasise the need for us all to work with the current group of players that we have, and also then, to realise that we are all part of the “bigger” picture – attempting to get players in a “better place” for next years Club/School Coach and thereby continuing to “Play and Stay with the GAA”.

This, Kilkenny GAA Child/Youth Player Pathway, has been carefully devised to ensure that the framework we are providing for all our GAA players, is in keeping with best practice and compatible with the development needs, here in the county, of the unique National game of Hurling. The “reference points” within, have been co-ordinated to reflect what will give each player the best opportunity to

improve at their own particular rate. In devising, this booklet, we have researched thoroughly, and liaised with trusted club/squad/county/school personnel, who have worked tirelessly over many years, and who have gained useful insights, as to how best to cater for these development needs of the players at the various age levels.

Club/School/Squad coaches, through their work with their own team, might not realise their integral role in developing the “Player Pathway”, and we all must ensure we do our part, to the best of our ability, to improve every player we come in contact with, and help ensuring our players continue to play hurling, and represent our clubs/schools/squads as competitively as possible.

In essence, we envisage this Player Pathway will assist clubs develop their own clear goals, through visible progressions, with joined up thinking, relevant to the needs of their own club, as players progress through the various age levels.

It is important to point out that the basics of the game will never change. The game of Hurling has to be at the centre of everything we do in our “coaching” of child/youth players. From a development perspective, everything we do, should be based on these solid foundations, which have worked and served us so well, with constant practice, of the 4/5 basic skills of the game, namely: (1) Striking (2) Catching (3) Ball Control (4) Tackling and (5) Running, at child level. They, of course, can be broken down into a multitude, and develop as players progress through the various age grades. The basics, coupled with a massive appetite for genuine work rate are, and should be the corner-stone of the game.

While “experienced” coaches might have a handle on all the basics, we are not trying to complicate what is essentially a simple game, rather assist “new” coaches to have an understanding of what we should be trying to improve year on year.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all the best with the GAA season's ahead and do hope that this booklet will help guide you, as you continue to promote and develop hurling with whatever team/age group that you are working with. For all of us, involved in the Kilkenny GAA family, we should consider, that while, "change is inevitable, progress is optional".

Finally, from observing over the years, we know the real work starts in and on the field, so let the fun/learning/enjoyment continue, as has been for

generations, in all our GAA fields, as we prepare, for the next new, exciting, and challenging GAA season(s) ahead.

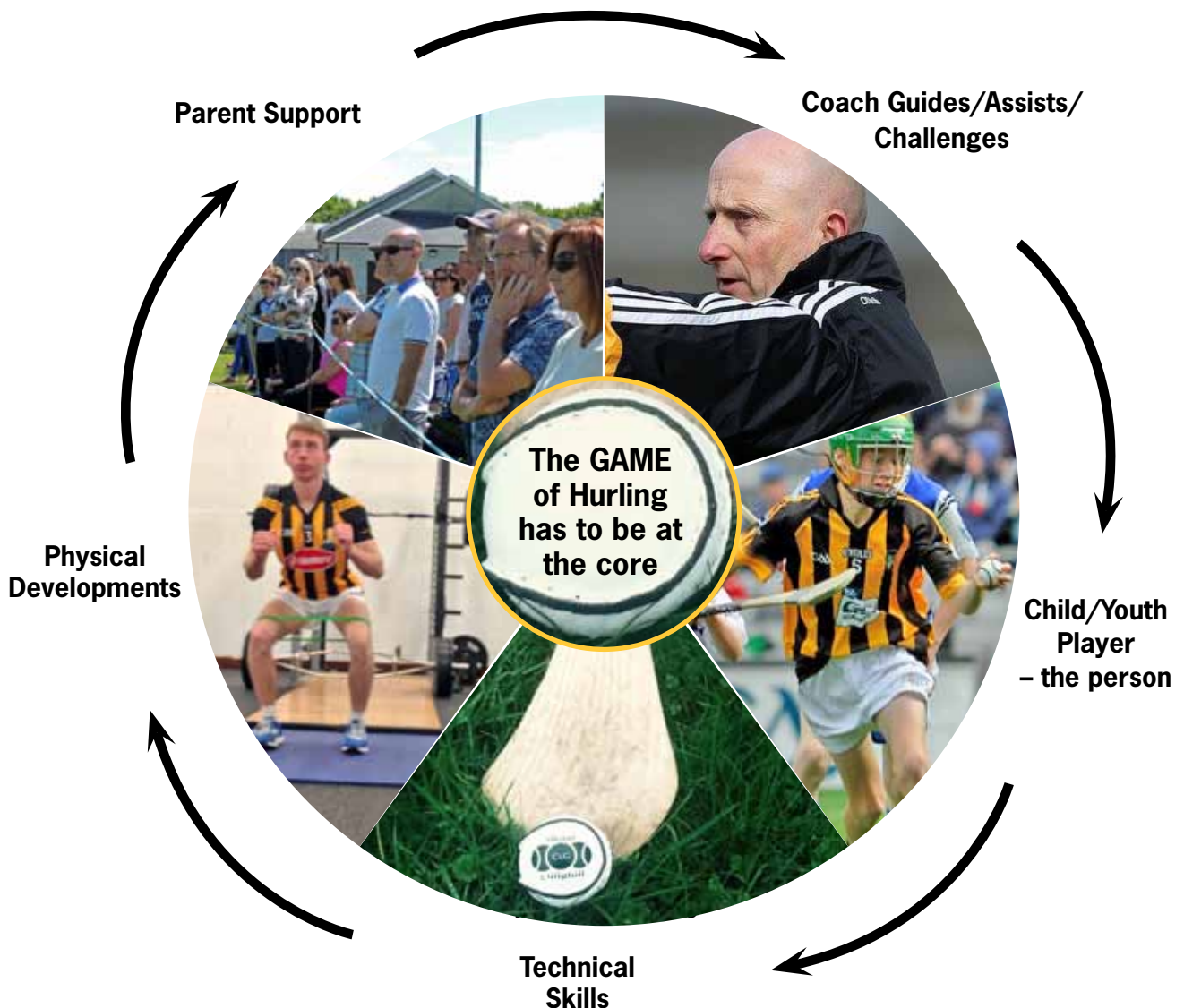
Is mise,

Brian Ryan

Brían Ryan
Kilkenny GAA – Coaching and Games

Child/Youth Player Pathway

We are therefore looking closely at the following factors which can have positive influences on a child/youth becoming a "hurler"



Why and how to best use this resource?

Why?

Through research conducted by Kilkenny GAA Coaching and Games, we know quite well, that there is a plethora of underage GAA activity taking place annually in the county and thereby in your club. We have now decided, it is the opportune time to ask the relevant people to look seriously at what is the “Focus of all this Underage Activity”?

After looking at many Player Pathways, (we also have included a section of the Sport Councils of Ireland’s Consultation Paper on Long Term Player Development for your information), we have developed one, based on our very own unique game, and with age appropriate Kilkenny GAA Coaching interventions, which we feel best suits the development needs of our child/youth players in the county. However, it is vital to point out, that like shopping for a jacket, not all jackets will fit you, so it is vital coaches look at what approach best suits their particular needs.

In the framework, we are promoting within the county, we acknowledge all the factors, which interact to help ensure players can continue their involvement with their relevant team. We are therefore looking closely at the following factors:

- (1) Parent Support** – how parents can provide support to the player.
- (2) Coach Guides/Assists/Challenges** – how coaches can guide, assist and challenge the player.
- (3) Child/Youth Player** – enjoys the game and develops game sense.
- (4) Child/Youth Player** – the person, behind the Player.
- (5) Technical Skills** – how child/youth player improves technically.
- (6) Physical Developments** – how child/youth player develops movement speed and strength.

At Meetings (formal and informal), Workshops, with “on the ground” personnel, we have collectively decided that there must be “Goals” (Short Term/Long term) in mind.

Short term (over a season) - this will be to ensure that all teams representing your club/school/squad are as competitive as possible, but more importantly, Long Term, (over several seasons) that our young players are (a) learning to understand the game, (b) developing physically, and (c) as strong characters, as they progress through the underage ranks. Having our players in a better place, as a hurler, for the next age level, they compete in, has to be another key “goal” of all this underage activity.

Players develop at varying rates, we must be aware of that, therefore the “Pathway” as laid out here are “reference points” only, and we understand and expect that coaches will use their own valuable experiences as they shape their own particular “team” for the season/s ahead.

Society, as we all know has changed, and one of the greatest strengths in the GAA has been the ability to change with the times. For example, years ago the first time one put on a club jersey was probably at U-14 age level. We must now meet the challenge of all this modern day underage activity, and help equip the coaches to deal in a proper fashion with the new challenges faced.

How?

We are now encouraging juvenile clubs to sit down at the start of each new season, under the guidance of each Clubs Juvenile Coaching Co-Ordinator, and using a simple skills template, and this booklet as a “reference point” only, to decide upon 3/4/5 core skills the club would like each age level to develop for the year ahead. (This is only one area of development, as we all realise there is more to improving as a hurler than the skills of the game, amongst others, being Games Sense and Physical Developments etc, which can be referenced from the booklet also). Follow up meetings should then take place during the season to see how coaches are finding the challenge.

This exercise, using a simple skills template, and this booklet as a “reference point” only, should take place annually, at the start of each and every new season, as the core skills will have to be flexible, depending on the needs of the particular teams at the various age levels. This is a genuine challenge, now, in that not only have coaches, (a) the challenge of playing

games, (b) attempting to win their games, but also (c) all players on the panel will have been introduced to, and coached in 3/4/5 selected “core” basic skills. Of course, all the other skills can be coached, but the selected “core skills” can help us all to measure the effectiveness of the coaching, within a calendar year. If we put this structure in place from U-8 to U-12, the belief is that by U-14, each player coming through the clubs/schools will have been introduced to, and coached in, 12/15 basics skills of the game. Research has proven, the more competent a young player is at a particular “hobby”, the higher the chances of that player continuing with the “hobby”, in this case i.e our game.

This structure will not, and is not intended, to hold back the potential “talented” player, as he will practice all the many and varied skills during the games played during the season at coaching sessions or Go Games blitzes/tournaments/challenge/league/championship games.

As mentioned in the introduction, the idea here is to have clear goals with visible progression, through each age level, that is linked via joined up thinking within your own club, and relevant to your own clubs needs, for all coaches, and thereby your club players during each season.

It will assist us in our GAA fields, if we all possess a clear vision or “Focus for all our Underage Activity” of what exactly we should be trying to achieve during a given season, to help give credence to all this modern day underage activity.

We encourage club/school coaches at both Child and Youth level to now see Games, (apart from attempting to win them), with a player centred approach, as an opportunity for players “to play, (hence the enjoyment/fun factor), to learn the game (and thereby strive to understand and improve at

the game) and develop, (by making mistakes, where mistakes in the right learning environment can be looked upon as opportunities to develop, to assist players thrive) during the season. (We understand this might not always be possible to achieve as in the “white heat” of local derbies coaches might have other issues on their minds!).

We envisage there should be something of benefit here to all coaches ranging from the new coaching “recruits”, who can take a thorough read of the Age Level Templates, to give them some indication of the relevant activities for the cohort of players they are working with and the “experienced” coach can dip in to this resource for some fresh ideas to add to the quality of the sessions they are providing for their particular team at any given point and time. There is also included, a “Glossary of terms” for the new “recruit” coach at the back of the booklet.

We would be thrilled to see all the young players, that walk through our GAA Clubs gates, stay with the GAA throughout their lives. However, due to a myriad of reasons, that will not occur in all cases. (dropout rates from the 12 to 20 years age cohort of players can be as high as 58%, across all the codes). We therefore, have a duty of care, that coaches / administrators /parents help ensure that their own juvenile set up is as pro-active as possible, with age appropriate coaching interventions, and that then, after doing our utmost, if players do then decide to leave the GAA, that their memories, are of positive experiences and in a few years time, when they are parents themselves, they will encourage their children to “Play and Stay with the GAA”.

To be inspirational, we need to be aspirational, and while the above is a new challenge, we do believe such a challenge can be taken on by all clubs/schools, and in time the benefits should be seen by all involved at club/school level throughout the county.



Key Principles

Underlying our Player Development Pathway are:

- (1) The Model is a **Player and Game** Centred approach – where the games themselves contain a lot of the learning.
- (2) The Model is comprised of **Short Term Goals**, (players, involved should aim to be as competitive as they can be, in an age appropriate manner) and **Long Terms Goals** (Player continuing to play through their child/youth years).
- (3) **Parents, Coaches, Administrators** have an integral role to play in ensuring best practices are adhered to, during all the various age grade levels within the GAA family, to ensure all players develop according to their own unique abilities and capabilities.



Mission Statement – Player Pathway

Our goal is to ensure all our young player's who attend GAA coaching sessions have the opportunity to learn the game in an age appropriate manner in a fun filled learning environment. We cater for the emergence of all players, some of whom will aspire and reach the highest level they can achieve, and the player who plays at their own respective level.

Player Pathway – What and Why?

A Player Pathway is a detailed description of optimal player development from the beginning of a player's sporting life, to becoming an elite performer. *(In our case, we cater for ALL Players, leading to some players becoming elite performers).*

It also includes a description of the games, technical skills, physical developments and coaching interventions, appropriate to the player at each stage of development.

Player Pathways should challenge the structures we have, in place to ensure they meet the development needs of our players.



What Does a Player Pathway do?

For the Player:

- Describes best practice in the sport.
- Provides clear pathway for progression.
- Provides common reference points for all participants at all levels to benchmark progress.
- Promotes a child/youth player centred approach.
- Attain higher and more sustained levels of success by guiding all participants to achieve their own true potential.
- Supports the holistic development of players.

For the Coach:

- Describes best practice in the sport.
- Provides clear pathway for progression for the players they are coaching.
- Gives them guidelines as to appropriate coaching Interventions.
- Gives them an insight into the long term and short term goals for their coaching interventions.

Jimmy D'Arcy

Technical Development & Support Manager GAA

Séamas Ó Dorchaidhe

Rannóg na gCluichí

Keep in Mind ...

“No matter what the initial characteristics (or gifts) of the individuals, unless there is a long and intensive process of encouragement, nurturance, education and training then individuals will not attain capability in their particular fields”

Bloom 1985

Mól an Oige agus Tíochfaidh Siad

Peter Horgan

Education Officer -GAA

Peadar Ó hArgán

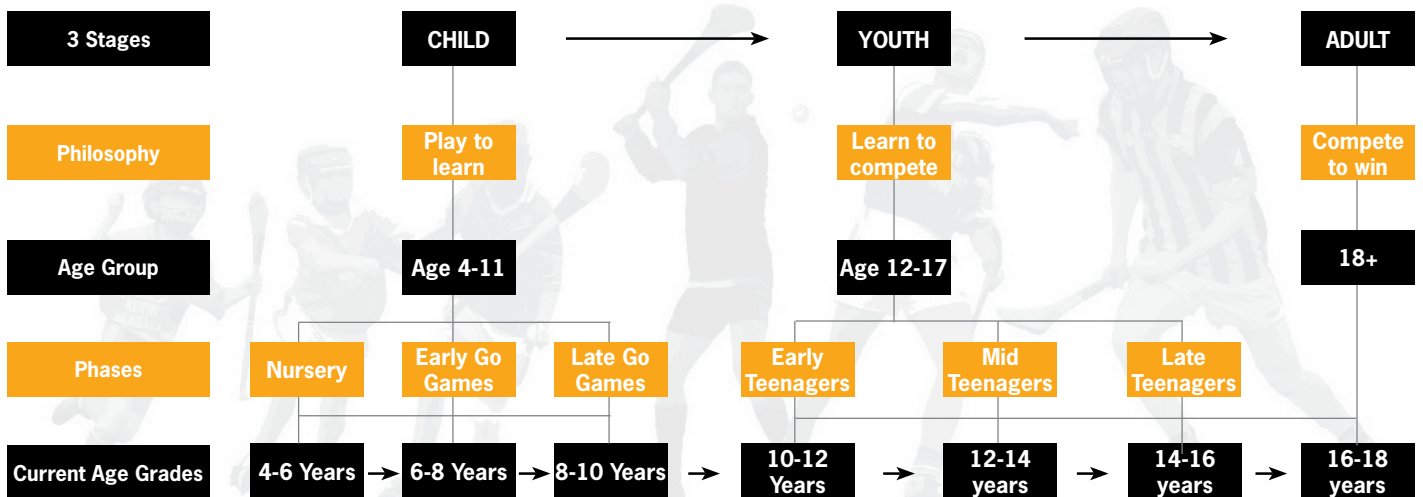
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Player Pathway - The Hurler

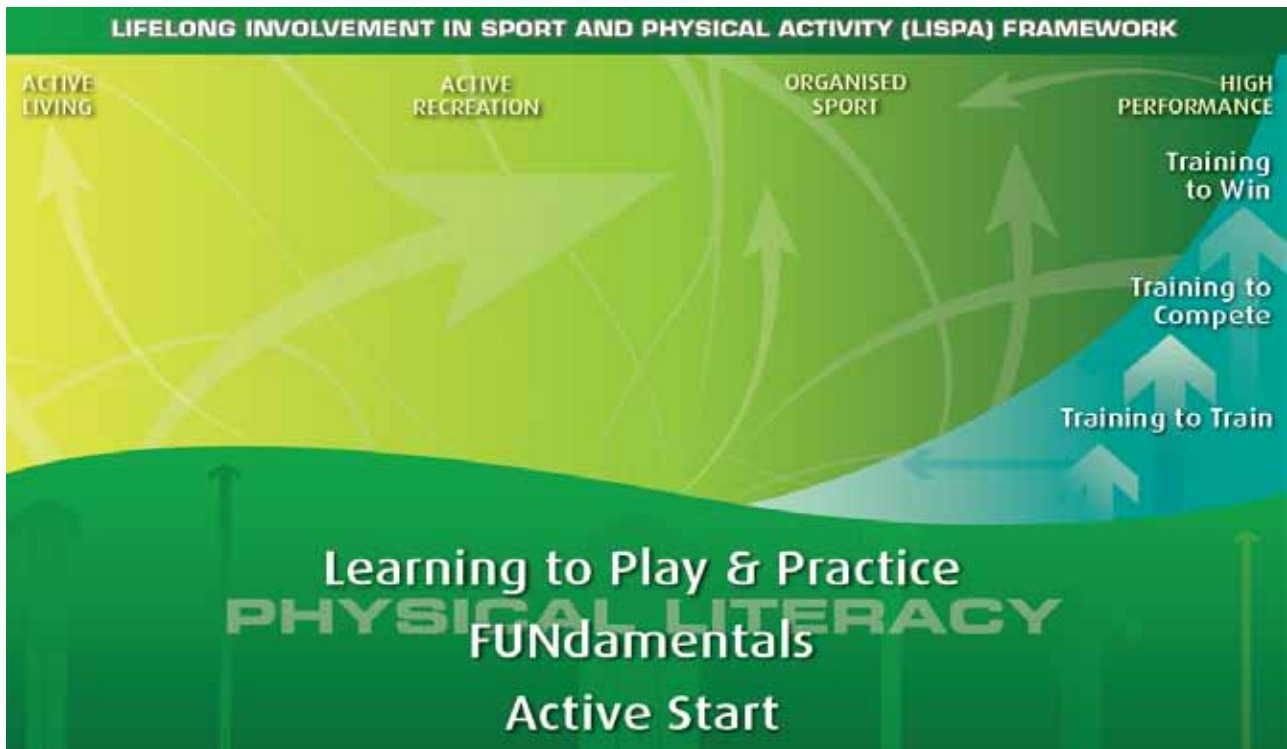
As GAA Coaches, we can only influence during a calendar year the team that we are working with. To give everyone an insight of what a **Player Pathway** can help your club achieve, see the following chart.

Child / Youth Player Pathway



We are unique in the GAA in that all “comers” are taken on board in our communities and the challenge for us all is to cater for the “talented” player who aspires to play at the highest level, and the player who wants to plays at his highest achievable level. The advent of such initiatives as Development Squads is one such development which has helped us in the GAA cater for this diverse playing population of ours. The graphic you see superimposed underneath the chart on this page, has been in use for over twenty years at Coach Education Courses/Workshops throughout the county. We are now just “aligning” these pathways for the benefit of “new” recruit coaches, and the “experienced” coaches. This again emphasises the need for us all to work with the current group of players that we have and also then to realise that we are all part of the “bigger” picture – getting players in a better place for next years club coach and continuing to **“Play and Stay with the GAA”**.

Lifelong Involvement in Sport and Physical Activity (LISPA) Framework



Stages of Participation

Sampling Years	(age 6 – 12)
Specializing Years	(age 13 – 15)
Investment Years	(age 16 and up)
Recreational Years	(age 30 +)

Based on in-depth interviews with players and their families the above stages were developed (Côté et al, '99/'02/'03)

Coaching Ireland - Coaching Strategy 2008

The Coaches Checklist

Coaches can use this handy checklist to help guide you to create the best possible Hurling experience for our Child/Youth players to ensure that you and your players are getting the most from your sessions.

Coaches Checklist	
Did learning take place ?	
Was it safe?	
Did players use the sliotar for the majority of the session?	
Did you involve all your players?	
Were you a good role model?	
Did you, the coach, enjoy the session?	
Did you speak to all players once?	
Did you use bad language?	
Do you plan the session in advance?	
Did you coach positively?	
Did you review your coaching session?	

Self Determination Theory

The quality of a sporting experience and the likelihood of a participant being motivated and staying in sport can often be determined by the motivational climate created by the coach.

This relies on three key psychological needs*:

Autonomy – is feeling that you have control over your own actions

Competence – is having a perception that you possess adequate ability

Relatedness – is having a sense that you belong to the group

Self Determination Theory – A Guide for Coaches –Sports UK.

When we look at the GAA, and compare to this particular research, by virtue of its parish/school/county based system, being part of a team can fulfil the the relatedness need, while the GAA coach can help fulfil the competence and autonomy needs of the player.

In modern Ireland with the erosion of much of our identity, the sense of pride in representing your parish/school/county in any capacity, within the GAA family, is one of the remaining corner stones of our communities.

We all have a right to feel proud of representing our community in whatever capacity we can, and both the coach and the GAA have an integral role to play in this.

* See Glossary of Terms

5 Stages to Player Development

These 5 stages give an over-view, for a player/coach, as to what “key strands” can be developed at each stage.

Stage	Age	Key Strands to Develop
Players to get a “feel” for the sliotar and their hurl	2 - 6	Giving players the opportunity to enjoy themselves, develop physical literacy and fundamental movements
Players learn to be “comfortable on the sliotar”	6 - 8	Skills learning phase – all basic skills to be practised
Player learn to play together and become “more comfortable on the sliotar”	8 - 10	How to play together as a team
Players learn about positions and begin to understand the need for teamwork	10 - 12	Principles of attacking/defending are practised and evolve.
Players learn to perform in pressurised situations/games.	14 - 18	All variables are combined to develop the player into being as good a player as he can be. Guidance, assistance, and challenges from the coach for the player, to enable him to instinctively be able to “make the correct decision, at the right time, for the benefit of the team” . (Physical, tactical, decision making, etc in a pressure game, all aspects combine)

With the above 5 stages to Player Development we are very aware that this is not a linear development pathway and that players will vary from stage to stage. For some players all 5 stages could come very naturally, but for others it could take a long time and they may not be developed in a chronological manner.



Building Pathways in Irish Sport – A Consultation Paper – Irish Sports Council

National Sports Councils

The six-phase model of late specialisation sports

A five-phase model of late specialisation sports was presented to the National Coaching Forum by Istvan Balyi, and this has been subsequently adapted to a six-phase model. This model has been further refined by NCTC, based on consultation with NGBs and following further research. A number of sport-specific examples have also been developed, and it is suggested that each sport develop a model suited to its own needs, structure and pathway phases. It is also intended that the model will be re-worked to suit the needs of players/athletes with a disability, to take into account the phases which are most applicable to such players/athletes. The main elements of the Balyi-Hamilton model of Long-Term Player/Athlete Development are presented here, in a modified form to suit Irish circumstances.



6.1 Phase 1 – The FUNdamental phase TM

Age: Males 6 to 9 / Females 6 to 8 years 60

Objective: Learn all fundamental movement skills (build overall motor skills)

Fundamental movement skills should be practised and mastered before sport-specific skills are introduced. The development of these skills, using a positive and fun approach, will contribute significantly to future Athletic achievements. Participation in a wide range of sports is also encouraged. This emphasis on motor development will produce players/athletes who have a better trainability for long-term sport-specific development.

Fundamental movement skills are observable as locomotor, manipulative and stability skills. There are three stages of fundamental movement skill development: initial (2-3 years), elementary (4–5 years) and mature (6–7 years). 61

The FUNdamental phase should be well structured and fun! The emphasis is on the overall development of the child's physical capacities and fundamental movement skills. The ABC's of athleticism - agility, balance, coordination and speed are very important elements of this phase. Participation in as many sports as possible is encouraged. Speed, power and endurance are developed using basic and enjoyable games. Appropriate and correct running, jumping and throwing techniques are taught (the ABC's of athletics).

The first '**window of accelerated adaptation to speed**' or 'critical period of speed development' will occur during this phase, age 6-8 for girls and 7-9 for boys respectively.

Linear, lateral and multi-directional speed should be developed and the duration of the repetitions should be less than 5 seconds. This is often called the '**agility, quickness, change of direction**' window. Again, fun and games should be used for speed training and the volume of training should be lower.

Strength training during this phase should include exercises using the child's own body weight; medicine ball and Swiss ball exercises. Children should be introduced to the simple rules and ethics of sports. No periodisation takes place, but all programmes are structured and monitored. Activities revolve around the school year, and during summer and winter holidays multi-sport camps are recommended. If children and parents have a preferred sport, participation once or twice per week is recommended, but participation in other sports three or four times per week is essential for future excellence. If children later decide to leave the competitive stream, the skills they have acquired during the FUNdamental phase will still benefit them when they engage in recreational activities, which will enhance their quality of life and health.

6.2 Phase 2 – The Learning to Train phase

Age: Males 9 – 12 / Females 8 - 11

Objective: *Learn all fundamental sports skills (build overall sports skills)*

Specialised movement skills are developed from age 7 to 11, and are specialised sports skills. By-passing the fundamental and specialised skill development phase is likely to be detrimental to the child's future engagement in physical activity and sport. Early specialisation in late specialisation sports can also be detrimental to the proceeding phases of skill development.

One of the most important periods of motor development for children is between the ages of 9 to 12. During this time children are developmentally ready to acquire general overall sports skills that are the cornerstones of all athletic development.

This is the **'window of accelerated adaptation to motor coordination'**. All fundamental movement skills should be further developed and general overall sports skills should be learnt during this phase. If fundamental motor skill training is not developed between the ages of 8 to 11 (females) and 9 to 12 (males), a significant window of opportunity has been lost, compromising the ability of the young player/athlete to reach his/her full potential.

Strength should be developed by medicine ball, Swiss ball and own body-weight exercises, as well as hopping-bounding exercises (or routines). Endurance should be developed further by games and relays. Basic flexibility exercises should be introduced during this phase, while speed can be developed further with specific activities during the warm-up, such as agility, quickness and change of direction. Competition should be well structured. The most suitable framework is single periodisation for this phase, however for a few sports, sport-specific needs will warrant double periodisation (e.g. swimming, tennis). A 70:30 training-to-competition-ratio is recommended.

*“ It took me 7 years,
from 17 years of age,
to become a top class athlete ”*

**Sonia O'Sullivan – Irish Athlete at National GAA
Coaching and Games Conference 2015**

6.3 Phase 3 – The Training to Train phase TM

Age: Males 12 to 16 / Females 11 to 15 years

Objectives: *Build the aerobic base, build strength towards the end of the phase and further develop sport-specific skills (build the “engine” and consolidate sport-specific skills)*

During the Training to Train phase young players/athletes consolidate basic sport-specific skills and tactics. The **‘window of accelerated adaptation to aerobic and strength training’** occurs during this phase. Optimal aerobic trainability begins with the onset of Peak Height Velocity (PHV) or the major growth spurt during maturation. Aerobic training should be prioritised after the onset of PHV, while skill, speed and strength should be maintained or developed further. Special emphasis is also required for flexibility training, due to the sudden growth of bones, tendons, ligaments and muscles.

There are two windows of accelerated adaptation to strength training for females. Window one is immediately after PHV and window two begins with the onset of menarche. This window for males begins 12-18 months after PHV.

It should be noted that both aerobic and strength trainability is dependent on maturation levels, thus early, average or late maturers need a different emphasis placed on these components at different times.

At present most of these decisions are made on chronological age (age groups) and not on individual needs/maturation level.

Single, double and occasionally (depending on sport-specific demands) triple periodisation is the optimal framework of preparation during this phase. During competitions players/athletes play to win and to do their best, but the major focus of training is on learning the basics as opposed to competing. Training and competition ratios are optimised because too many competitions waste valuable training time and conversely, not enough competition inhibits the practice of technical/tactical skills and learning how to cope with the physical and mental challenges presented during competition.

A 60:40 training-to-competition ratio is recommended by experts during the Training to Train phase and the 40 percent competition ratio includes competition and competition-specific training. However, these percentages vary according to sport and individual specific needs. Players/athletes undertaking this type of preparation will be better prepared for competition in both the short and long-term, than those who focus solely on winning. During this phase, players/athletes train in competitive situations daily, in the form of practice matches or competitive games and drills.



The Training to Train phase addresses two of the critical or sensitive periods of physical development. Players/athletes who miss this phase of training will not reach their full potential, as these critical periods have been missed. The reason why so many players/athletes plateau during the later stage of their careers is primarily because of an over-emphasis on competition instead of on training during this important period in their athletic development.

The Learn to Train and Training to Train phases are the most important phases of athletic preparation. During these phases we 'make or break' a player/athlete!

6.4 Phase 4 – The Training to Compete phase TM

Age: Males 16 to 18 / Females 15 to 17 years

Objectives: *Optimise fitness preparation and sport, individual and position specific skills as well as performance (fine-tune “engine”, skills and performance)*

This phase of development is introduced after the goals and objectives of the Training to Train stage have been achieved. The training-to-competition and competition-specific training ratio now changes to 50:50. Fifty percent of available time is devoted to the development of technical and tactical skills and fitness improvements, and fifty percent is devoted to competition and competition-specific training.

During the Training to Compete phase, high intensity individual-event and position-specific training is provided to players/athletes year round. Players/athletes, who are now proficient at performing both basic and sport- specific skills, learn to perform these skills under a variety of competitive conditions during training. Special emphasis is placed on optimum preparation by modelling training and competition.

Fitness programmes, recovery programmes, psychological preparation and technical development are now individually tailored to a greater degree. This emphasis on individual preparation addresses each player/athlete's individual strengths and weaknesses. Double and multiple periodisation is the optimal framework of preparation.

“ The way you react to a player making mistakes plays a major role in creating or combating a “Fear of Failure” If you manage things right, mistakes can be golden opportunities to improve performance ”

Ronald Smith - “Sports Psychology for Youth Sports”

6.5 Phase 5 – The Training to Win phase TM

Age: Males 18 years and older / Females 17 years and older

Objectives: *Maximise fitness preparation and sport, individual and position specific skills as well as performance (maximise “engine”, skills and performance)*

This is the final phase of athletic preparation. All of the player/athlete’s physical, technical, tactical, mental, personal and lifestyle capacities are now fully established and the focus of training has shifted to the maximisation of performance. Players/athletes are trained to peak for major competitions.

Training is characterised by high intensity and relatively high volume. Frequent “prophylactic” (preventative) breaks help to prevent physical and mental burnouts. Training-to-competition ratio in this phase is 25:75, with the competition percentage including competition-specific training activities.

16 Building Pathways in Irish Sport

The LTPAD Model within the Irish Sport System

6.6 Phase 6 – The Retirement / Retention phase

Objectives: *Adjustment/Retain players/athletes for coaching, administration, officials, etc.*

This phase refers to the activities performed after a player/athlete has retired from competition permanently. During this final phase, some ex-players/athletes move into sport-related careers that may include coaching, officiating, sport administration, small business enterprises, master’s competition, media, etc.

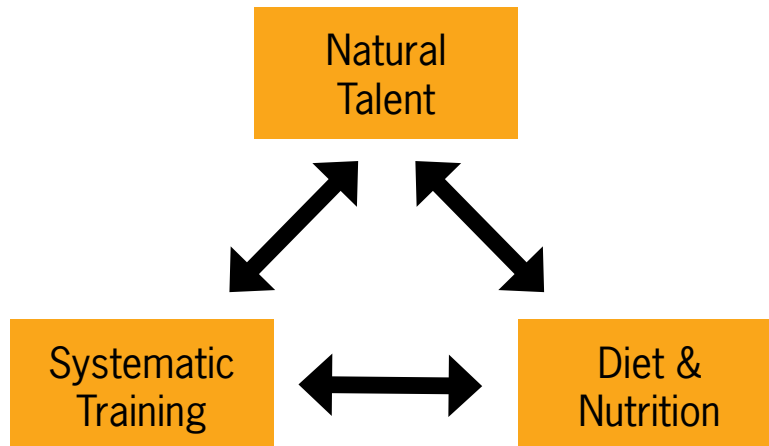
It also involves an important period of adjustment for ex-players/athletes.

The possible positioning of the six phases of LTPAD within the Irish sports system is outlined in Figure 2. The model proposes a framework within which individuals progress along the pathway, based on their choices and capabilities. As wide a range of options as possible, in participation or performance, should be made available.

Towards a plan for the sporting health and well-being of the nation

A “Healthy Hurlers” balanced diet

Of all factors that determine performance, diet is the most easily altered.

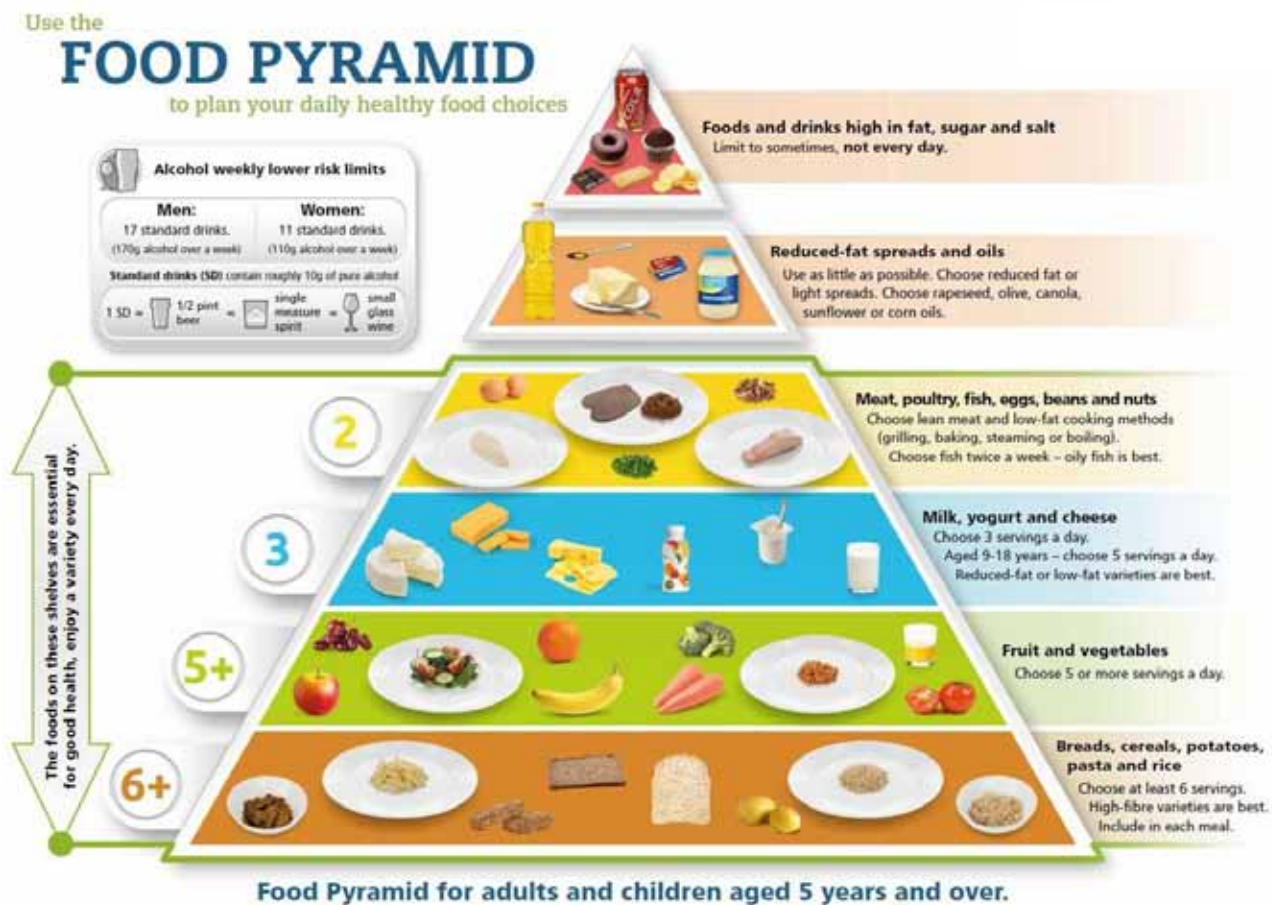


- An adequate diet enhances the training and performance of hurlers.
- Good food choices will not make a mediocre hurler into a champion, but poor food choices may prevent the potential champion from realising his potential.
- After natural talent and appropriate training, an adequate diet is known to be the next most important element for enhancing the training and performance of hurlers.
- A healthy and varied diet is really important to help the hurlers body grow and get the most out of the training.

Tick the boxes (X or ✓) below to compare how you fill your “fuel” tank with what Noreen Roche (Dietician to the Kilkenny Senior Hurling Panel) recommends:

Checklist for a daily “healthy hurlers” balanced diet	Do you follow Noreens Tips? Tick the boxes (X or ✓)
Never skip meals – especially breakfast, eat all your lunch.	
Drink plenty of fluids – especially water (up to eight glasses a day).	
Eat good sources of protein every day – chicken, meat, fish, milk, cheese, yoghurt, nuts, soya.	
Eat lots of carbohydrate foods throughout the day – wholegrain bread, high fibre cereals, pasta, fruit and vegetables.	
Don’t forget fats are important – choose healthier food sources.	
Eat at least five portions of fruit and vegetables each day.	
Include good sources of iron and calcium - at your age these are very important nutrients.	
Make sure you enjoy your meals and snacks .	
After sport you may feel hungry so you should eat both before and after exercise .	

The Food Pyramid is the most important guide for the Hurler.



Source: Department of Health

Some tips for the Hurler

Eat a snack or light meal 2-3 hours before coaching session or a match e.g.

- Porridge with low-fat milk, honey and fruit
- Breakfast cereal with low-fat milk and fruit juice
- Toast with low-fat spread and jam, honey, or syrup
- Yoghurt drink and a scone with low-fat, spread
- Pasta with tomato-based sauce
- Baked potato with tinned spaghetti or ratatouille
- Vegetable soup and a bread roll
- Sandwich with lean meat or turkey and salad
- Pitta bread filled with chopped banana and honey
- Low-fat creamed rice with dried fruit
- Low-fat yoghurt and fruit
- Smoothie made with low-fat milk, yoghurt and banana, mango or berries

Recovery after hurling coaching session/games.

It is important to replace what you have used and get you ready for your next session, here are a few samples:

- Ham, tuna or turkey sandwich with water
- Flavoured low-fat milk with a banana
- Yoghurt drink with a cereal bar
- Fruit smoothie with bagel, or pancake with jam
- Pot of low-fat yoghurt, a banana and a fig roll
- Cereal bar and flavoured low-fat milk.

What and when to drink?

	BEFORE EXERCISE	DURING EXERCISE	AFTER EXERCISE
When	Approx. 30 minutes before exercise	Every 15-20 minutes	Soon after and for the next couple of hours as needed.
Drink	Aim: 200 to 400 ml	Aim: 150 to 200ml	Aim: 400 to 800 per hour of exercise.
What	Water, istic sports drink*	Water, istic sports drink*	Water, istic sports drink* low-fat milk

*(depending on sport, age, advice of a dietician)

Water is generally suitable once you have eaten your pre-training snack and the session is less than 60 minutes.

Don't forget a **good night's sleep** is also essential to help your body recover well.

Further information can be found at:

www.indi.ie/fact-sheets
www.ndc.ie
www.safefood.eu
www.healthpromotion.ie



GAA Coaching Sessions - Guideline only

Age Group	Coach/Player Ratio	Duration
Nursery	1:4	40/45 minutes
U-8	1:8	45/50 minutes
U-10	1:8	50/55 minutes
U-12	1:8	55/70 minutes
U-14	1:10	60/75 minutes
U-16	1:12	60/80 minutes
U-18	1:12	60/90 minutes

Have our clubs available and qualified coaches to cater for all our players based on the above coach/ player ratios?

Have we all available child/youth players in our GAA fields?

Sample Youth Coaching Session - Guideline only

Section	Pre-Season	Playing Season
Warm-up	8-11 min	7-10 min
Specific Sport Skills (can include Neural Activation, Movement Drills and all elements of Speed)	15-20 min	18-20 min
Small sided/Conditioned games	12 min (2 x 6)	10 min (2 x 5)
Full Game	20 min/ 24 min (2 x 10 – 2 x 12)	30 - 40 min (3 x 10 , 2 x 15, - 2 x 20, 4 x 10)
Cool Down	5 min	5 min
Total	60 – 70 min	70 – 85 min

95 % of Hurling session should be completed using the hurl and sliotar

All GAA Coaches to have undertaken:

- Code of Best Practice for Youth Sport (GAA)
- Foundation/Award 1/Award 2 (GAA Coaching Courses)
- Garda Vetting



Child/Youth Player Pathway

We are therefore looking closely at the following factors which can have positive influences on a child/youth becoming a “hurler”



Coaching Interventions and Player Development


The idea of this “Player Pathway” for the hurler, is to help create the ideal environment, age appropriately, to allow all our players, develop at their own rate. We strongly emphasise that the following pages are to be used as a “reference point” only. We must remember that the fun of enjoying the game, being with their friends, learning new skills, are integral to that cohort’s participation in sport, as well as developing characteristics learned from participating in a team environment, which will stand to players, not just on the field, but in everyday life. We certainly do not envisage this booklet will lead to “hot housing” *of players at early ages, but new “recruit coaches/parents” can use the reference points as a helpful guide, and we acknowledge and are fully aware, that “experienced coaches” will draw on their own “experiential” learning, built up over many years on the field.

We also know, from international research, sampling of various sports, at an early age, is recommended, so experimenting with, and experiencing many sports can take place.

Therefore, we highly recommend players experience the family of GAA games, including gaelic football, handball, and rounders, as the skills learned in these games, can lead to learning valuable skills, that will transfer to the hurling field, and vice-versa.

With this cohort of players, we want them, in this order, (1) to love playing hurling, (2) to love playing with their club/school/squad/county and (3) (with the competitive nature inherent in every sport) to love to win. This ethos sits well in player development with the “play to learn”, “learn to compete” and “compete to win” phases.





There is the “participation” element in GAA, which we fully endorse and cater for as an Association to the best of our ability, (e.g. “Go Games and “Super Games Centres”) and we also have the “top” level aspect of the game. We have a duty of care, in this instance, to the history of Kilkenny hurling, to ensure what we do at underage plays its part in providing players for our county teams. We must ensure this “inter-county” pathway is as strong as it has been over several generations. For example, the generation, in Kilkenny, before us, and prior to modern day research, knew that the U-14 age grade was time enough for players to play in their first championship. The structures that we have, served us well, with championships from U-14 to U-18. They have not been altered, and we do see these structures as age appropriate, and playing their part, in providing players for the county scene. Players, with proper attitude and application, can then progress to the current excellent learning environment, (within the “compete to win” phase), with strong leadership from the top class Management Team/Backroom Team/County Board, currently in place, which has seen Kilkenny thrive at the highest level over the past number of seasons.

At the “top level” of sport one of the most striking images we have noticed via media outlets over the past number of years, is of “top” level players, in many codes, including our local heroes, pictured enjoying/”having the crack” in their training environment. There is a great message for us all, that sport even at the highest level, (for hurlers - senior inter-county level), still conjures up strong enjoyment levels, including the thrill it must be for those players, of competing and measuring themselves, with and against, the top hurlers across the county and country.

Every time we tog out we should aim to win, but coaches must buy into the concept that at child/youth level, players should be rewarded for effort, self development, “doing their best”, as well as winning. By being involved in child/youth coaching, one of the many benefits is seeing how your players develop throughout these vital formative years. The coach who sees one of “his” players playing with their club/county at adult level, has to be one of the most satisfying elements of coaching this cohort.

As a simple “tip” for coaches, we would ask coaches to remember to treat every child/youth they come in contact with, the same way you would have liked to be treated yourself, when you were that age! Hurling is a passionate game and always should be, just in an age appropriate manner.

Our aim as child/youth coaches must be to ensure all players progress, at their own unique rate of progression, and we must allow for this. After a full year of hurling coaching, another aim, must be that each hurler has improved and be in a “better place” as he progresses, ready to take on, and relish the next challenge, he faces, as he progresses to the next age level.

Recommended for the games children play:

While we are all well versed in the “Go Games” ethos, small-sided, with full participation and the fact that every child gets a “go”, for the younger players, at stages during the season, we should consider including the following conditions in the game to encourage use of these skills sets that will stand to player throughout their playing careers. If we do not encourage practice of these skills at an early age, the chances are some players will not develop them. These are important, not only in terms of learning how to perform such skills, but also how and where to position yourself to tackle your opponent who is performing those skills.

U-8 Five minutes of ground hurling per half.

U-10 Five minutes of ground hurling and/or lift and strike per half.

U-12 Then progress to “full” hurling.

Reference Points for Individual Age Levels

2-4 Year Old

Parent Support

Help develop a **love of hurling** by it becoming ‘part and parcel’ of your child’s every day life in an **enjoyable atmosphere**.

Provide the child with a **hurl and sliotar – correct size, and weight***.

Watch for use of **dominant hand*** on top.

Keep an eye on **toe of the hurl**, pointing out from the body.

Go for a few pucks with your child when you can or encourage your child to get a few in every evening.

Encourage your child to bring the **hurl and sliotar** with them every day on trips etc.

Brings Child/ren to watch **local adult club team** and **Kilkenny teams (or watch them on TV)**.

Get a **“feel” for the hurl and ball (i.e. develop ball sense)** in whatever way the child likes – hit the ball, cops and robbars.




* See Glossary of Terms

4-6 Year Old (Nursery)

Parent Support	Coach Guides/Assists	Child Enjoys Games Develops Games Sense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide correct size “hurl, sliotar” and club/county gear where possible. • Watch for use of dominant hand on top. • Keep an eye on toe of the hurl, pointing out from the body. • Go for a few pucks with your child. • Encourage your child to bring the hurl and sliotar with them every day on trips etc. • Bring child/ren to watch local adult club team and Kilkenny teams (or watch them on TV). • Encourage your child to play and praise them for their genuine efforts. • Be positive at the kitchen table about club or school and coach. • Always offer a positive attitude towards our game. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a patient role model/ leader. • Patience, enthusiasm, preparation and more patience are vital for this age level. • Keep up to date by, attending Kilkenny GAA “Fun Do” Workshops. • Create a “fun environment” with the focus on the player enjoying the coaching sessions, to include positive inter-action, plenty of variety and enthusiastic coaches. • Coaches remember: Always note that head, hands & feet are correct with the players. (Compare to your observations of Kilkenny Senior Hurlers in action). • Coaching sessions to be pre-planned focusing on ABC’s, RJT’S, fundamental movements, hand/eye co-ordination work, balance, agility, mobility, stability and skill’s introduction. • Take an interest in all children outside their “GAA lives. • Allow for plenty of “Free Play” but instill the need to behave, when requested. • Give parents a guide that follows the coaching for their age group that allows them to practice at home. • The coach should be prepared to feed off the children’s enthusiasm. Enjoy the experience as this is a precious “time” in a child’s life. 	<p><u>GAMES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of the The Fun and Learning should be in the joy of “pucking around”, completing their first roll lift etc on their own or with a parent/brother/sister or neighbour. • “Goal to Goal” Player’s practice left and right to develop bilateral co-ordination. • “Knock the Cones” Ideal for developing bi-lateral co-ordination off both sides. Games should be small-sided and of short duration. <p><u>GAMES SENSE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic positional understanding Defending/Attacking is not on their radar, but scoring is. Create plenty of opportunities for scoring in many different forms. All Players must go back and stand “shoulder to shoulder” with their partner, in their starting positions, after every wide ball, score or sideline. Give them 5 seconds to get there. The “Beehive” (all players following the ball) effect will be strong. They will not understand positioning, so don’t fret! “Two in for tackle” in a good deterrent to the Beehive attack. • Scoring and winning are most fun, so create activities with loads of scoring opportunities, points for best strike, best score, best save, best block, quickest child to be like a statue etc.


4-6 Year Old (Nursery)

The Child behind the Player	Technical Skills (Basics are key)	Physical Developments Movement - Speed - Strength
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They can learn about sharing, waiting their turn and being socially comfortable in their peers company. • Players at this age are more interested in “I” rather than “Team”. • They will only have eyes for the sliotar. • Attention span is short, so arrange activities quickly, and have short bursts of activity, with plenty of variety. • They can respond to partner play, over time with patience. • The sliotar can be seen as toy – have a “toy” for each child. • They like to be shown an interest in, so plenty of questions and make sure you treat all equally, have a word with, and for, each child. • Enjoys watching the game especially if his team are winning. • Children work best in small groups. • They can be hyper – allow some free play for them to expend some of this seemingly limitless energy they possess. • Allow for plenty of breaks during activities. • The child is full of enthusiasm and “bursting with excitement” to be in the field. • They appear to have bundles of energy but can tire quite easily. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get a “feel” for the hurl and ball (i.e develop ball sense) in whatever way the child likes – Striking the sliotar, cops and robbers. • Proper hurl – size and weight for each child. • Grip, Ready, Lock and Swing. Strong hand on top of the hurl. • Ground Strike (L&R) With a “nice wristy” swing. • Solo – 2 variations : - Sliotar balanced i.e. ball “stuck” to the hurl - Sliotar bouncing. • Ball Hops - One Side of the bás. • Tippy Taps Both sides of the bás. • Dribble 2 Stages : - Two handed - One handed (only to emphasise “stronger” hand on top of the hurl). • Roll/Jab Lift Nice controlled movement. • Catching two handed and then one handed. 	<p><u>MOVEMENT</u> by crawling/ running/climbing and generally being a child...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABC’s, RJT’s running – forwards, backwards, sideways, stopping, starting, changing direction, swerving, sidestepping, avoiding other players in fun activities. • Introduce children into balancing through various exercises (single leg stands, hoping etc.) <p><u>STRENGTH</u> By involvement in fun activities such as bear crawls etc. Child uses own body weight.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Health Organisation recommends that children participate in 60 minute of physical activity every day. • The GAA’s Fun Do Pack is a must - use resource for coaches working with this age group. Available online at www.learning.gaa.ie

6-8 Year Old

Parent Support	Coach Guides/Assists	Child Enjoys Games Develops Games Sense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide, helmet, hurl, sliotar and club/county gear, where possible. • Enquire and take an active interest as to how the coaching sessions are going for your child. • Go for a few pucks with your child. • Attend the coaching sessions. Help out, if assistance is required. • Help with transport to games/coaching sessions. • Attend Club Juvenile AGM. • Bring your child/ren to watch local adult club team and Kilkenny or watch them on TV (to help with “observational learning”). • Encourage your child to play and praise them for their genuine efforts. • Be positive at the kitchen table about club or school and coach. • Always offer a positive attitude towards our game. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a role model/ leader. • Patience, enthusiasm, preparation, and more patience are vital for this age level. • Create a “Fun environment” with the focus on player enjoying the coaching sessions. “Spot an Fix”, but try to avoid over-coaching. • Coaching sessions, to include positive interaction, plenty of variety and enthusiastic coaches. • Coaches remember: Always note that head, hands & feet are correct with the players. • Coaching sessions to be pre-planned focusing on ABC’s, RJT’S, fundamental movements, hand/eye co-ordination work, balance, agility, mobility, stability and skill’s introduction. • Take an interest in all children outside their “GAA lives”. • Coach should be friendly, fair and firm. • Encourage players to practice skills at home. • Keep up to date with latest coaching information via formal coach education courses, attending Kilkenny GAA Workshops and researching in your spare time. • Give parents a guide that follows the coaching for their age group that allows them to practice at home. 	<p><u>GAMES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Knock the cones” • “No Man’s Land” • “Go Games” • “Parish/Street Leagues” • “Backs and Forwards” • “Three Goals and in” All the required aspects of the game are practised in such a game. • “Four Goal Game” This is an ideal method of reducing the beehive effect. • “Goal to Goal” Player’s practice left and right to continue to develop bilateral co-ordination. (On the Ground and out of the hand) <p><u>GAMES SENSE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic positional understanding Players play all positions. • Basic communication Small sided games (4v5, 6v5, 7v7) • Simple Rules They will not fully understand positioning, so don’t fret! • “Two only in for tackle” is a good deterrent to the “Beehive” effect. • Players should now be capable of looking up and beginning to show small but progressive signs by understanding the basics of defending and attacking. • All players must go back and stand “shoulder to shoulder” with their direct opponent, in their starting positions, after every wide ball, score or sideline. Give them 3 seconds to get there. • In games ensure that there are plenty of scoring opportunities, first team into position, best score etc. players of this age level respond to plenty of scores!. • Children should be introduced to the simple rules and ethics of sports.

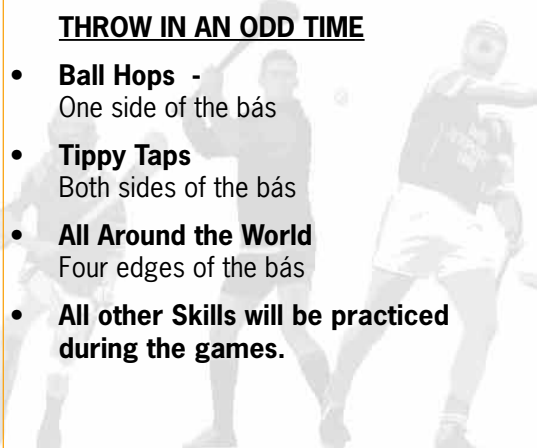

6-8 Year Old

The Child behind the Player	Technical Skills (Basics are key)	Physical Developments Movement - Speed - Strength
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They will want games, games, and more games. (Assure them, they will get games, once they work their “best” during earlier activities). • Positive feedback is vital. • Shower them with your interest, in the individual player. • The beehive effect will still be present, but should be not as prevalent. • They will see the need and begin to understand the idea of being able to “help” their teammates. • They will respond to discipline and fairness from the coach. • Respect can be ingrained in their sessions. • Can pass to their friends rather than to a teammate in the “best” position. • The child is full of enthusiasm and “bursting” with excitement to be in the field. 	<p>All the previous skills to be constantly practised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grip, Ready, Lock and Swing. Get a “feel” for the hurl and ball (In whatever way the child likes – Strike the sliotar, cops and robbers). • Ground Strike with a “nice wristy” swing 5 Stages - Sliotar stationary Sliotar moving Player stationary Player moving Player moving and sliotar moving. • First Touch – Constant practice. • Ground Clash- 3 Stages - On padded hurl On tyre Against an opponent (stationary then movement). • Ball Hops - One side of the bás. • Tippy Taps Both sides of the bás. • Dribble - Two handed. • Roll Lift • Jab Lift • Strike From the Hand (Both sides) • Solo – - Sliotar balanced ie ball “stuck” to the hurl - Sliotar bouncing • All other Skills will be practiced during the games 	<p>MOVEMENT Focus on fundamental movements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABC's, RJT's Running – forwards, backwards, sideways, stopping, starting, changing direction, swerving, sidestepping, avoiding other players in fun activities. • Introduce speed for the first time in the form of relays and mini races. • Linear, lateral and multi-directional speed should be developed and the duration of the repetitions should be less than 5 seconds. This is often called the ‘agility, quickness, change of direction’ window. <p>STRENGTH Strength training during this phase should include exercises using the child’s own body weight in fun activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By crawling on hands etc Bear crawls. • World Health Organisation recommends that children participate in 60 minute of physical activity every day. • The GAA's Fun Do Pack is a must-use resource for coaches working with this age group. Available online at www.learning.gaa.ie

8-10 Year Old

Parent Support	Coach Guides/Assists	Child Enjoys Games Develops Games Sense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide, helmet, hurl, sliotar and club/ county gear where possible. • Enquire and take an active interest as to how the coaching sessions are going for your child and go for a few pucks with your child. • Attend games your child is playing in. • Arrange transport to games/coaching sessions. • Attend Juvenile AGM. • Bring child/ren to watch local adult club team and Kilkenny teams (to the games or on TV). • Encourage your child to play and praise them for their genuine efforts. • Be positive at the kitchen table about club or school and coach. • Always offer a positive attitude towards our game. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a role model/leader. • Patience, enthusiasm, preparation are vital for this age level. • Create a “fun and learning environment” with the focus on each player enjoying the coaching sessions. “Spot and Fix”, but try to avoid over-coaching. • Coaches remember: always note that head, hands & feet are correct with the players. • Coaching sessions to be pre-planned focusing on maintenance of ABC’s, RJT’s fundamental movements, hand/eye co-ordination work, balance, agility, mobility, stability and skill’s development. • Take an interest in all children outside their “GAA lives”. • Encourage players to practice skills at home. • Keep up to date via formal coach education courses, attending Kilkenny GAA Workshops and researching in your spare time. • Give parents a guide that follows the coaching for their age group that allows them to practice at home. 	<p><u>GAMES</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Game can be the Teacher! • “Street/Parish Leagues” “Go Games” Small sided games, conditioned with full participation. • “Three Goals and in” All the required aspects of the game are practised in such a game. • “Backs and Forwards” All the required aspects of the game are practised in such a game. • “Four Goal Game” This is an ideal method of reducing the beehive effect. • “No Man’s Land” Throwing and Catching <i>(All the Skills of the game, to be practiced during these games).</i> • “Goal to Goal” Player’s practice left and right to continue to develop bilateral co-ordination (on the ground and out of the hand). <p><u>GAMES SENSE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation of Games All players must go back and stand “shoulder to shoulder” with their direct opponent in their starting positions, after every wide ball, score or sideline. Give them 3 seconds to get there. • “Two only in for tackle” in a good deterrent to the Beehive Effect. • Positional understanding When to pass Where to solo with sliotar/when/where to strike to. • Hurl with your head up. • Move with sliotar take 4 steps Who to pass to/mark. • Where to move to. Support your team mates in attack/defence Small sided games (4v4, 6v6, 10v10) • Learning to look up when striking/passing the sliotar should be encouraged. • Communication with teammates. Learning to call for a pass when in a better position, letting their teammates know that they are free to strike/pass etc. • Learning to understand from coaches guidance.

8-10 Year Old

The Child behind the Player	Technical Skills (Basics are key)	Physical Developments Movement - Speed - Strength
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They will want games, games and more games. (Assure them, they will get games, once they work their “best” during earlier activities.) • They continue to develop their social skills, learning about team work, sharing, waiting their turn, and generally “getting on” with their peers. • Vital that coaches continue to show an interest in all players- have a word for every child. • Like to be shown an interest in outside of their GAA lives. • Defending and attacking principles can be further developed, although some players will learn these at a faster rate than others. • Support play and general team play can be expected of the child. • Can pass to their friends rather than to a teammate in the “best” position. • The child is full of enthusiasm and “bursting” with excitement to be in the field. 	<p>All the previous skills to be constantly practised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grip, Ready, Lock and Swing • Ground Strike (L and R) with a “nice wristy” swing 5 Stages - Sliotar stationary Sliotar moving Player stationary Player moving Player and sliotar moving • First Touch – Constant practice. • Ground Clash- 3 Stages - On padded hurl On tyre Against an opponent (Stationary then movement) • Dribble • Frontal Block Ground Clash • Chest Catch (Body protected) • Intro to Shoulder Clash (e.g. hurling rope) • Roll/Jab Lift (Toe of the hurl points out away from the body) • Strike from the hand (On both sides) Stationary On the run • Sidelines • Free taking • Flick the sliotar away <p><u>THROW IN AN ODD TIME</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ball Hops - One side of the bás • Tippy Taps Both sides of the bás • All Around the World Four edges of the bás • All other Skills will be practiced during the games. 	<p><u>MOVEMENT</u> Linear, lateral and multi-directional speed should be developed and the duration of the repetitions should be less than 5 seconds. This is often called the ‘agility, quickness, change of direction’ window.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABC’s, RJT’s running – forwards, backwards, sideways, stopping, starting, changing direction, swerving, sidestepping, avoiding other players in fun activities. <p><u>STRENGTH</u> Use own bodyweight, walking on arms, crawling, fun pushing, pulling activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Health Organisation recommends that children participate in 60 minute of physical activity every day. • The GAA’s Fun Do Pack is a must - use resource for coaches working with this age group. Available online at www.learning.gaa.ie 

10-12 Year Old

Parent Support	Coach Guides/Assists	Child Enjoys Games Develops Games Sense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide, helmet, hurl and sliotar and club/county gear where possible. • Enquire and take an active interest as to how the coaching sessions are going for your child and go for a few pucks with your child. • Attend games your child is playing in. • Help arrange transport to games/coaching sessions. • Attend juvenile AGM. • Bring child/ren to watch local adult club team and Kilkenny teams (to help with observational learning). • Encourage your child to play and praise them for their genuine efforts. • Be positive at the kitchen table about club or school and coach. • Always offer a positive attitude towards our game. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a role model /leader. • Ability to communicate, demonstrate a sense of fair play and hold discipline are strong attributes to help coaches work with this age level. • Create a “Fun and Learning environment” with the Focus on each player enjoying the coaching sessions. • “Spot and fix” but avoid over-coaching. • Coaches remember: always note that head, hands & feet are correct with the players. • Keep up to date via formal coach education courses, attending Kilkenny GAA workshops and researching in your spare time. • A focus on “task and mastery” increases fun and enjoyment • Implement “twitter coaching” as a guide, for yourself (get the point across in the least amount of words required) • Coaching sessions to be pre-planned. • Provide plenty of feedback, not just what you say, but also what you do, as young players are sensitive to body language. • Encourage players to practice skills at home. • Take an interest in all children outside their “GAA lives”. • At this age “true” player development still should focus on the development of the player, not of the team. 	<p><u>GAMES</u></p> <p>The Game can be the Teacher.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Go Games” • “Parish/Street Leagues” Small sided and conditioned with full participation. • “Three goals and in” All the required aspects of the game are practised in such a game • “Backs and Forwards” All the required aspects of the game are practised in such a game • “Four Goal Game” This is an ideal method for players to learn to hurl with the head up/using space and spreading the play. • “No Mans Land” Striking and catching. (All the Skills of the game, to be practiced during these games) <p><u>GAMES SENSE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading the game Anticipation of team-mates/opposition movements. • When to pass/travel with sliotar /move Who to pass to and who to mark. • Where to move to • Support your team mates in attack/defence • Small sided games. • (Depending on numbers available - 4v4, 6v6, 10v10). • Hurl with your head up • Communication with teammates. • Learning to call for a pass when in a better position, letting their teammates know that they are free to strike etc. • Learning to understand under a coaches guidance.

10-12 Year Old

The Child behind the Player	Technical Skills (Basics are key)	Physical Developments Movement - Speed - Strength
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They will want games, games and more games. • Characteristics here to be developed, eg - being humble in winning and gracious in defeat. • The vast majority are still there to enjoy the experience of participating with their friends, learning new skills etc. • The player should have a greater “game” and “team sense” derived from the previous years experiences. • The players like to be acknowledged. The coach should aim to have a word for every child at each coaching session. • Involvement in sport can help them feel good about themselves and form safe relationships outside the family. • May see the first signs of a child becoming a little independent. 	<p>All the previous skills to be constantly practised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ground Strike (Off both sides) • First Touch – constant practice • Strike from the hand (Off both sides) “Nice and tidy” Stationary On the run • Hand Pass The 3/4 variations • Frontal Block • High Catch – Judging the flight of the sliotar Timing your jump to perfection • Shoulder Clash Quick, wristy swing • Ground Flick Sliotar away to beat the “big swing” • Tackling • Hooking From behind From the side Blocking/flicking sliotar away. • Stopping High ball/batting • Sidelines • Free taking • How to use the body in the tackle. Shouldering/holding a player off/ making space to strike/catch. <p><u>THROW IN AN ODD TIME</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ball Hops - One side of the bás • Tippy Taps Both sides of the bás (To help develop good wrist dexterity) • All Around the World Four edges of the bás (To help develop good co-ordination and wrist dexterity) • All other Skills will be practiced during the games 	<p><u>MOVEMENT</u></p> <p>This is the ‘window of accelerated adaptation to motor coordination’. All fundamental movement skills should be further developed and general overall sports skills should be learnt during this phase.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endurance should be developed further by games and relays. • Basic flexibility exercises should be introduced during this phase, while speed can be developed further with specific activities during the warm-up, such as agility, quickness and change of direction. • ABC’s, RJT’s Running – forwards, backwards, sideways, stopping, starting, changing direction, swerving, sidestepping, avoiding other players in fun activities. <p><u>STRENGTH</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner resistance activities, pushing, pulling, in fun based activities. • Introduce players to body weight exercises, core strength and also running and jumping techniques throughout the session. • Strength should be developed by own body-weight exercises, as well as hopping-bounding exercises (or routines). • Proper warm up and cool down activities to take place at every session • Rest is an important component of physical development to allow the body recover and adapt to training

12-14 Year Old

Parent Support	Coach Guides, Challenges and Assists	Enjoys – Games Develops Games Sense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide, helmet, hurl and sliotar and club/county gear where possible. • Enquire and take an active interest as to how the coaching sessions are going for your child and go for a few pucks with your child. • Attend games your child is playing in. • Help arrange transport to games/coaching sessions. • Attend juvenile AGM. • Bring child/ren to watch local adult club team and Kilkenny teams (to help with observational learning). • Encourage your child to play and praise them for their genuine efforts. • Be positive at the kitchen table about club or school and coach. • Always offer a positive attitude towards our game. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a role model/leader. • Clear, concise instruction will help you get your point across. Rehearse, if need be. • Enjoyment, mastery and socialising should remain the focus of coaches working with the youth player. • Create a “Culture of Learning” relevant for each player in your “team”. • Coaches remember: Always note that head, hands & feet are correct with the players. • Coaching sessions to be pre-planned. • Keep up to date via formal coach education courses, attending Kilkenny GAA workshops and researching in your spare time. • Encourage players to practice skills at home. • Encourage youth players to replicate their work on the field in their lives e.g. with their school work. • Coaching activities should be planned, where possible, on the premise that nothing works in isolation. Technique should be learned, incorporating decision making, while creating an environment that mimics the physical demands of the game. 	<p><u>GAMES</u></p> <p>The Game can also be the Teacher.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Go Games” to “Full Sided” with Conditioned games Balanced with use of drills relevant to your teams own needs. • “Three Goals and in” All the required aspects of the game are practised in such a game • “Backs and Forwards” All the required aspects of the game are practised in such a game • Four Goal Game This is an ideal method for players to learn to hurl with the head up/using space and spreading the play. • “No Mans Land” – Striking and catching • Two Touch Hurling • Two/three Second Rule • *If you require “extra” games for your “team” – then do so. <p><u>GAMES SENSE</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision of skills developed under pressure. Ability to break the tackle • Passing – short, long diagonal • Teamwork Players become more aware of need to work with their team mates in terms of creating space/closing down space etc. • Players work as a team whether it be in defence or attack and develop required traits to assist them in this. • Communication, understanding each other’s strengths, areas to improve and their own team’s strength. • Developing the capability and ability of knowing which skill to use in a particular situation. • Develop the “sense” of what to do, where to move to, when a player has and does not have the sliotar.

12-14 Year Old

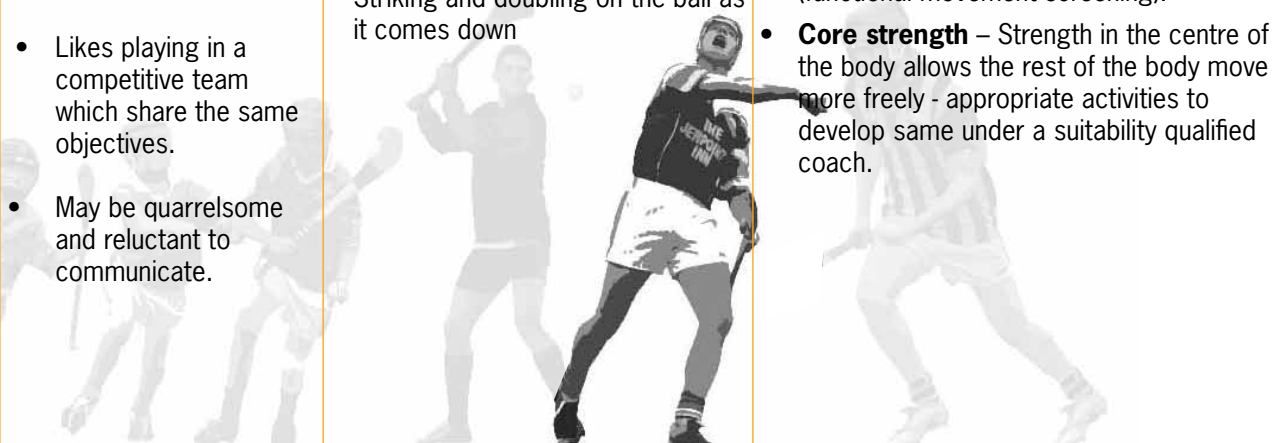
The Youth behind the Player	Technical Skills (Basics are key)	Physical Developments Movement - Speed - Strength
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The vast majority are still there to enjoy the experience of participating with their friends, learning new skills etc. However, winning can become an integral part of some players psyche. This competitive edge must not be blunted, but only encouraged in an age appropriate manner. Puberty is happening so a lot going on for the youth. Be aware players can develop at different rates (chronological v's biological) Learns to recognise that current actions can have an effect on the future. Arguing and reasoning skills improve. Communication and interpersonal skills improve. 	<p>All the previous skills to be constantly practised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strike from the hand (Also on the run): Long striking Short striking Striking diagonally First catch, then first touch In that order Ground Strike Both sides Stationary Movement Both Player and sliotar moving Hand Pass – three variations, stationary and on the run. Tackling – blocking / hooking. Catching – low, chest, high. High Catch – Judging the flight of the sliotar Timing your jump to perfection Hurl with your head up Solo and strike from the hurl. Dispossessing player on a solo. How to use the body in the tackle. Shouldering/holding a player off/making space to strike / catch All other Skills will be practiced during the games <p>THROW IN AN ODD TIME</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ball Hops - One Side of the bás Tippy Taps Both sides of the bás (To help develop good wrist dexterity) All Around the World Four edges of the Bás (To help develop good co-ordination and wrist dexterity) 	<p>MOVEMENT</p> <p>All speed work can be developed through fun games/activities/routines and in the games themselves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speed and agility (multidirectional) Fundamental and dynamic movement The 'window of accelerated adaptation to aerobic and strength training' occurs during this phase. Special emphasis is also required for flexibility training, due to the sudden growth of bones, tendons, ligaments and muscles <p>STRENGTH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning correct teaching points of GAA sport specific exercises which will stand the player in good stead throughout his GAA playing days. Stability, balance and mobility To be developed Body weight exercises with correct techniques and teaching points learned and ingrained in each player. Proper warm up and cool down activities to take place at every session. Rest is an important component of physical development to allow the body recover and adapt to training.



14-16 Year Old

Parent Support	Coach Guides, Challenges and Assists	Enjoys – Games Develops Games Sense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide, helmet, hurl and sliotar and club/county gear where possible. • Attend club meetings as requested. • Enquire and take an active interest as to how the coaching sessions are going for your youth player and go for a few pucks with your youth player. • Attend games your youth player is playing in. • Attend Juvenile AGM. • Encourage your youth to play and praise them for their genuine efforts. • Be positive at the kitchen table about club or school and coach • Always offer a positive attitude towards our game. • Bring youth to watch local adult club team and Kilkenny teams (to help with observational learning). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a role model/ leader. • Create a “Competitive Culture of Learning and Improvement” for each player in your team, with challenges for youth players to work on their game outside of the collective. • Coaches should create a “Motivational” climate in which the youth player experience “mastery” and are rewarded for effort and self development, rather or as well as winning. • Ability to challenge/assist your players is a vital attribute to possess when dealing with this age level. • Ideally Coaches should concentrate on the satisfaction of Relatedness, which can be achieved through building friendships, group identity and cohesion. • Coaching sessions to be pre-planned and aimed to “equip” youth players to be in a position to deal with all eventualities they might come up against in a game situation in the fastest field game in the world. • While the coach relishes the “competitive” nature of Hurling he must still be aware that some players are still there to enjoy the experience of participating with their friends, learning new skills etc. • Keep up to date via formal coach education courses, attending Kilkenny GAA workshops and researching in your spare time. • Encourage youth players to replicate their work in the field, in their lives in general eg with their school work. • Encourage positive lifestyle choices for the player. • Attend Kilkenny GAA’s Strength and Conditioning pre-arranged demo sessions with Development Squad Players to listen, learn and take in age appropriate exercises for this cohort to ensure that your sessions are sport specific and grounded in sound sporting principles. • Coach encourages “buddy” practices. 	<p>GAMES The Game can also be the Teacher.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full Sided, Conditioned and Small-sided Games Balanced with use of relevant drills/games related activities to suit your own teams needs. • “Three Goals and In” All the required aspects of the game are practised in such a game. • “Backs and Forwards” All the required aspects of the game are practised in such a game. • “No Mans Land” Striking and controlling on the hurl. • Short Puck out Game If you require “extra” games for your “team” – then do so. <p>GAMES SENSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Principles of Play (Attacking/defending) • Hurl with your head up • Learn how to create space Willing to help out a teammate. Willing to make a decoy run. • Learn how to close down space Willing to help out a teammate. Willing to cover for a teammate. Delay Deny Dispossess Distribution • Team Play • Learning whether to “stay or go”, in a particular moment in time in the game. • Reading the game Clearances from opposition Clearances from your own teammates Players making dummy runs • Developing the ability to know which skill to use in a particular moment in time in a game – hook or block, catch or bat. • Develop the ability to time your tackle to perfection • Communication “One up for the dropping ball” • Understanding each other’s strengths, areas to improve. • Learn how to work when “on” and “off” the sliotar.

14-16 Year Old

The Youth behind the Player	Technical Skills (Basics are key)	Physical Developments Movement - Speed - Strength
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winning is becoming an integral part of their psyche. This competitive edge must not be blunted, but only encouraged in an age appropriate manner. However the coach must be aware that some player's are still there to enjoy the experience of participating with their friends, learning new skills etc. Player can be under exam pressure. Puberty is happening so a lot going on for the Youth. Be aware players can develop at varying rates, (chronological V's biological) Promote positive lifestyle choices. Player can crave for acceptance, from parents, coaches and peers. Player can have high expectations. Likes playing in a competitive team which share the same objectives. May be quarrelsome and reluctant to communicate. 	<p>All the previous skills to be constantly practised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catching – Win your own ball to do that players must first decide to go for the sliotar. Judging the flight of the sliotar Timing your jump to perfection Over head strike Strike from the hand Make room to strike Shorten grip on the run A “nice” and “tidy” swing. First Touch – constant practice Competing for the high ball/ Flick in the air. Tackling- blocking/hooking/ flicking the ball away. Lift and strike Hand pass -three variations. How to use the body in the tackle. Shouldering/holding a player off/ making space to strike /catch Sidelines Free taking Shot stopping All other Skills will be practiced during the games <p><u>THROW IN AN ODD TIME</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Keep me Uppies” (Individual and team) Striking and doubling on the ball as it comes down 	<p><u>MOVEMENT</u></p> <p>Endurance built into your sessions through, drill activity, small sided, full sided games using the sliotar, in all activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ‘window of accelerated adaptation to aerobic and strength training’ occurs during this phase. Optimal aerobic trainability begins with the onset of Peak Height Velocity (PHV) or the major growth spurt during maturation. Aerobic training should be prioritised after the onset of PHV, while skill, speed and strength should be maintained or developed further. Due to sudden growth spurts, flexibility should be a key aspect for this age level. Proper warm up and cool down activities to take place at every session. Rest is an important component of physical development to allow the body recover and adapt to training. <p><u>STRENGTH</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning correct teaching points of GAA sport specific exercises, under suitably qualified personnel, which will stand the player in good stead throughout his GAA playing days. Stability, balance and mobility work. Bodyweight exercises through such activities as circuit training. Introduce player to the concepts of FMS (functional movement screening). Core strength – Strength in the centre of the body allows the rest of the body move more freely - appropriate activities to develop same under a suitably qualified coach.

16-18 Year Old

Parent Support	Coach Guides, Challenges and Assists	Enjoys – Games Develops Games Sense
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide, helmet, hurl and sliotar and club/county gear where possible. • Enquire and take an active interest as to how the coaching sessions are going for your youth player and go for a few pucks with your youth player. • Attend games your youth player is playing in. • Encourages youth player to watch local Adult Club team and Kilkenny (or watch them on Tv.) • Help arrange transport to games/ coaching sessions. • Attend juvenile AGM. • Be positive at the kitchen table about club or school and coach. • Always offer a positive attitude towards our game. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a role model/leader. • Create a “Competitive Culture of Learning and Improvement” for each player in your “team” with challenges for youth players to work on their game outside of the collective. • Ability to guide/ challenge/assist your players is a vital attribute to possess when dealing with this age level. • Promote the competitive edge in an age appropriate manner. • Guiding, assisting, challenging the player to enable him/her to make the correct decision at the right time for the benefit of the team. {Physical, tactical, decision making, etc in a pressure game, all combine to empower the player}. • Coaches to decide and make their own informed decision on a preferred “style of play”, taking into consideration one, which best suits his team and his panel of players. Coaches encouraged to remember the “corner stone” of the game, as mentioned in the Introduction. • The value of the coach focusing on and reinforcing individual improvement cannot be underestimated. • Coach to be aware some player can be involved in multiple teams, so tailor sessions accordingly. • Coaching sessions to be pre-planned and aimed to “equip” youth players to be in a position to deal with all eventualities they might come up against in a game situation in the fastest field game in the world. • Keep up to date via formal coach education courses, attending Kilkenny GAA workshops and researching in your spare time. • Encourage youth players to replicate their work in the field, in their lives in general e.g. with their school work. • Encourage Positive Lifestyle choices for the player. • Attend Kilkenny GAA’s Strength and Conditioning pre-arranged demo sessions with Development Squad Players to listen, learn and take in age appropriate exercises for this cohort to ensure that your sessions are sport specific and grounded in sound scientific principles. 	<p>GAMES (The game can be the teacher!)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full sided, conditioned and small sided games balanced with use of relevant drills/games related activities to suit your own teams needs. • “Three Goals and In” All the required aspects of the game are practised in such a game. • “Backs and Forwards” All the required aspects of the game are practised in such a game. • “No Mans Land” Striking and catching against a direct opponent. All the skills of the game, to be practiced during these games. • <i>If you require “extra” games for your “team” – then do so.</i> <p>GAMES SENSE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Players to become aware of varying “styles of play”/ tactics or whatever becomes the latest “fad”, and how to deal with such eventualities. (Handy here to remember what can be termed as the “corner stone” of the game, from the Introduction) • Team Play – As instilled from the previous years of development. • Competitive spirit /edge – call it what you like – It becomes increasingly prominent and an integral part of a team’s modus operandi. All previous elements combined to ensure each player is well versed in all the required areas with the players having the ability/freedom to improvise as required, on the field of play, to deal with all eventualities that the opposition can throw at them, in the fastest field game in the world. • Enabling the player to make the correct decision at the right time for the benefit of the team. Physical, tactical, decision making, etc. in a pressure game, all combine. • Feedback is essential to increase competence. • Shared “goals” help develop team identity and increase feelings of relatedness. • Learning whether to stay or go in a particular moment in time in the game. • Reading the game Make space/create space /make a decoy run to draw players away from your teammate in possession. To know when to move into a teammates position to cover for him if he has moved out of position. • Developing the capability and ability of knowing which skill to use in a particular situation. Hook or block, catch or bat. Develop the ability to time your tackle to perfection. • Communication “One up for the dropping ball”. Cover for each other. • Learn how to work when “on” and “off” the ball.

16-18 Year Old

The Youth behind the Player	Technical Skills (Basics are key)	Physical Developments Movement - Speed - Strength
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch for late developers. Here “late developers” can pass out the former “star”. Be aware of this, from both players perspective. • Be conscious of “talented” player’s commitments to their inclusion with multiple teams. Tailor their training as required. “Rate of perceived exertion” (RPE out of score of ten), multiplied by training minutes, can be used as a simple guide to check what “training load”, (measured in training units) the player is completing per week. • Player can be under exam pressure. • Be aware that this player can be facing life-changing events – college/socialising etc.. • Player to take ownership of the need to work on individual practices to stay within the team structure or to get himself in a position to the move to the next level of the game. (adult/underage Inter County) – some will embrace this, others might not. • During this time the youth is developing his unique personality and opinions. • Tends to be very knowledgeable ! 	<p>All the previous skills to be constantly practised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catching - win your own ball. Players must decide first of all to go for the sliotar. Judging the flight of the sliotar Timing your jump to perfection • Strike from the hand Make room to strike Shorten grip on the run • First Touch – constant practice to perfect. • Competing for the high ball Flick in the air. • Tackling • Blocking Frontal and ground • Hooking From behind From the side • Flicking the ball away. • Hurl with your head up • Lift and strike • Hand Pass Three variations • Drop Shot • Dummy Handpass • Diving Hook • The “Delaney” Hop • How to use the body in the tackle. Shouldering/holding a player off/ making space to strike /catch etc • Sidelines • Free taking <p><u>THROW IN AN ODD TIME</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “All Around the World” Four edges of the bás • “Keep me Uppies” (Individual and team) Striking and doubling on the ball as it comes down. 	<p><u>MOVEMENT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed and endurance can be built up during the games themselves. Also can be developed with specific routines implemented during your sessions. • Strength can help with speed improvement. • The ‘window of accelerated adaptation to aerobic and strength training’ occurs during this phase. • Special emphasis is also required for flexibility training, due to the sudden growth of bones, tendons, ligaments and muscles. • Speed – All areas to be covered to include: agility, quickness, multi directional speed, external reaction skills, co-ordination, acceleration, deceleration and speed repeatability. <p><u>STRENGTH</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning correct teaching points of GAA sport specific exercises, under the supervision of a suitably qualified person, which will stand the player in good stead throughout his GAA playing days. • Stability, balance and mobility work. • Circuit Training routines integrated on/off the “Field”. (Incorporating dumbbell, medicine balls etc) • The Player should start completing pre-training routines, using foam rollers and bands to help prepare the body for subsequent training. • Attendance for Development Squad Players at pre-arranged Strength and Conditioning sessions, will educate the player. They can also pass on any knowledge to their club peers. • To develop muscular whole body, multi joint strength, muscular endurance, explosive power, and recovery. • Factors that should be improved and can lead to power development, which will be important as the player faces his next physical development stage: Plyometrics, dynamic movement, speed, agility, strength. • Proper warm up and cool down activities to take place at every session. • Rest is an important component of physical development to allow the body recover and adapt to training.

Skills Targets Children/Youths - Hit your own Target



Age Appropriate - Skill Targets

One of the biggest challenges, we face as coaches, is the need for us to encourage our player to practice the skills of the games outside of the organised coaching sessions, an attribute, we all know is vital if a player is going to derive the maximum enjoyment when playing hurling. There is a tried and tested way to help encourage this practice, by simply arranging “Skills Targets”, formerly known as “Skills Tests”, (we use the Feile na nGael Skills Tests for the U-14s), and let players know that they will be tested in x number of weeks. Players are competitive and will practice to ensure that they perform as well as they can, especially when all their peers are in the same mode.

At younger age levels, it is vital that **all children participating** get a feeling of success, so we recommend clubs/schools operate a **Bronze, Silver** and **Gold** scoring system. We want as many children/youths as possible hitting their targets!

These accompanying “Skills Targets” are only guides and we, as is best practice, expect coaches to use their own discretion depending on the abilities and capabilities of the particular group of players that they are coaching in any given season.

Each skill target to be awarded 10 points per attempt.

The more scores the player can achieve the better the feeling of success and players believing they are competent, at an activity, can lead them striving to improve and thereby thriving in the GAA field.

A **Gold, Silver** and **Bronze** award are the best scoring options to ensure the above happens.

Using the **SPIR – Method** of teaching a skill:

- **S**how the skill
- **P**ractise the skill
- **I**nstruct the player and provide feedback
- **R**eward the player

One of the many “rewards” a coach can give a player (**most important to acknowledge the players improvement**) is for the club to provide club gear to the participants/top scorers/most improved player etc.

Skills Targets 2-4 Age Group - Just a simple checklist for parents.

Skills Targets 4-8 Age Group - Just a simple checklist for parents/nursery coaches.

Skills Targets 8-10 Age Group - First Club/School – Skills Targets

(Each Skill can gain a maximum of 30 points)

Gold Award: 180 -270 Points

Silver Award: 90 -180 Points

Bronze Award: 0-90 Points

Skills Targets 10-12 Age Group

{Each Skill can gain a maximum of 30 points}

Gold Award: 240 - 360 Points

Silver Award: 120 - 240 Points

Bronze Award: 0 - 120 Points

Feile na nGael skills Under 14 as per page 48/49

Scoring System for the 16-18 Age Group:

{Each Skill can gain a maximum of 30 points}

Gold Award: 280 - 420 Points

Silver Award: 140 - 280 Points

Bronze Award: 0 - 140 Points



Ideally, Skills Targets should cover as many skills of the games as possible, and focus on the bilateral co-ordination skills being developed at an early age.



“ Do the best you can until you know better, and when you do know better, do better. ”

Skills Targets 2 - 4 Years



Just a simple Checklist for Parents

Coach/Parent to check: Hurl Appropriate: Weight* Size*
 "Strong Hand" on top of hurl
 "Toe of the hurl" pointing away from the body during roll lift

TARGET 1	Grip <input type="checkbox"/>	Ready <input type="checkbox"/>	Lock <input type="checkbox"/>
TARGET 2 Strike sliotar on the ground (right side)	0 – 5 M <input type="checkbox"/>	5-10 M <input type="checkbox"/>	10-15 M <input type="checkbox"/>
TARGET 3 Strike sliotar on the ground (left side)	0 – 5 M <input type="checkbox"/>	5-10 M <input type="checkbox"/>	10-15 M <input type="checkbox"/>
TARGET 4 Blocking the sliotar on the Ground	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
TARGET 5 Dribble the sliotar 5 metres	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
TARGET 6 Roll Lift the sliotar into the cupped hand	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		

*“ Would you give a pen to a four year old child
and ask them to write a novel? ”*

Give them time to learn to use the hurl well, first of all!

* See Glossary of Terms

Skills Targets 4 - 8 Years

Just a simple Checklist for Parents/Coach



TARGET 1

Strike sliotar on the ground (right side)

0 – 5 M 5 – 10 M 10 – 20 M

TARGET 2

Strike sliotar on the ground (left side)

0 – 5 M 5 – 10 M 10 – 20 M

TARGET 3

Dribble the sliotar 15 metres

Yes No

TARGET 4

Roll Lift the sliotar into the cupped hand

How many in 60 seconds

0 – 10 10 – 20 20 – 30

TARGET 5

Strike sliotar out of the hand (right side)

0 – 10 M 10 – 20 M 20 – 30 M

TARGET 6

Strike sliotar out of the hand (left side)

0 – 10 M 10 – 20 M 20 – 30 M

TARGET 7

Catching

Coach throws a sliotar for player to catch it

Attempt 1 Attempt 2 Attempt 3

TARGET 8

Balance the sliotar on the hurl, stationary

(without dropping it for 1 minute)

0 – 10 Sec 10 – 30 Sec 30 – 60 Sec

{Alternatively time a minute and count how many drops a player makes in the minute}

60 – 30 30 – 10 10 – 0

TARGET 9

Ball Hops*

(without dropping it for 1 minute)

0-30 Hops 30-60 Hops 60-120 Hops

{Alternatively time a minute and count how many drops a player makes in the minute}

60 – 30 30 – 10 10 – 0

* See Glossary of Terms

Skills Targets 8 - 10 Years

Players can be paired off with a “buddy” for these skills targets



TARGET 1

Strike sliotar on the ground (right side)

Best score of the 3 attempts to count.

0 – 10 M <input type="checkbox"/>	10 – 25 M <input type="checkbox"/>	25 – 40 M <input type="checkbox"/>
10 pts <i>or</i>	20 pts <i>or</i>	30 pts

TARGET 2

Strike sliotar on the ground (left side)

Best score of the 3 attempts to count.

0 – 10 M <input type="checkbox"/>	10 – 25 M <input type="checkbox"/>	25 – 40 M <input type="checkbox"/>
10 pts <i>or</i>	20 pts <i>or</i>	30 pts

TARGET 3

Roll Lift the sliotar into the cupped hand

How many in 60 seconds?

0 – 20 <input type="checkbox"/>	20 – 40 <input type="checkbox"/>	40 – 60 <input type="checkbox"/>
10 pts <i>or</i>	20 pts <i>or</i>	30 pts

TARGET 4

Strike sliotar out of the hand (right side)

Best score of the 3 attempts to count.

0 – 20 M <input type="checkbox"/>	20-45 M <input type="checkbox"/>	45-65 M <input type="checkbox"/>
10 pts <i>or</i>	20 pts <i>or</i>	30 pts

TARGET 5

Strike sliotar out of the hand (left side)

Best score of the 3 attempts to count.

0 – 20 M <input type="checkbox"/>	20 – 45 M <input type="checkbox"/>	45 – 65 M <input type="checkbox"/>
10 pts <i>or</i>	20 pts <i>or</i>	30 pts

TARGET 6

Balance the sliotar on the hurl

(Without dropping it)

0 – 25 Sec <input type="checkbox"/>	25 – 50 Sec <input type="checkbox"/>	50 – 60 Sec <input type="checkbox"/>
10 pts <i>or</i>	20 pts <i>or</i>	30 pts

{Alternatively time a minute and count how many “drops” a player makes in the minute}

60-30 <input type="checkbox"/>	30-10 <input type="checkbox"/>	10-0 <input type="checkbox"/>
10 pts <i>or</i>	20 pts <i>or</i>	30 pts

TARGET 7

“Ball Hops”

(Without dropping it for 1 minute)

0-30 Hops <input type="checkbox"/>	30-60 Hops <input type="checkbox"/>	60-120 Hops <input type="checkbox"/>
10 pts <i>or</i>	20 pts <i>or</i>	30 pts

{Alternatively time a minute and count how many “drops” a player makes in the minute}

60-30 <input type="checkbox"/>	30-10 <input type="checkbox"/>	10-0 <input type="checkbox"/>
10 pts <i>or</i>	20 pts <i>or</i>	30 pts

Skills Targets 8 - 10 Years

Players can be paired off with a “buddy” for these skills targets



TARGET 8

“Tippy Taps”*

(Without dropping it for 1 minute)

0-30 Hops 30-75 Hops 75-90 Hops
 10 pts or 20 pts or 30 pts

{Alternatively time a minute and count how many drops a player makes in the minute}

60-30 30-10 10-0
 10 pts or 20 pts or 30 pts

TARGET 9

Catching

Coach strikes a sliotar from 20 metres player to catch it (with hand protected)

Attempt 1 Attempt 2 Attempt 3
 10 pts 10 pts 10 pts

In the case of a draw in your school/club to decide first, second and third placing repeat Target 8, based on the highest score.



* See Glossary of Terms

Skills Targets 10 - 12 Years

Players can be paired off with a “buddy” for these skills targets



TARGET 1

Strike sliotar out of the hand (right side)

on the 21, to hit the net in the goal without bouncing

Attempt 1

10 pts

Attempt 2

10 pts

Attempt 3

10 pts

TARGET 2

Strike sliotar out of the hand (left side)

on the 21 to hit the net in the goal without bouncing

Attempt 1

10 pts

Attempt 2

10 pts

Attempt 3

10 pts

TARGET 3

Handpass (“Catching” Hand) –

Player to handpass in front of chest of team-mate

Distance 5 metres

Attempt 1

10 pts

Attempt 2

10 pts

Attempt 3

10 pts

TARGET 4

Handpass (“Opposite” hand) –

Player to handpass in front of chest of team-mate

Distance 5 metres

Attempt 1

10 pts

Attempt 2

10 pts

Attempt 3

10 pts

TARGET 5

Handpass (from the bás of the hurl) –

Player to handpass in front of chest of team-mate

Distance 5 metres

Attempt 1

10 pts

Attempt 2

10 pts

Attempt 3

10 pts

TARGET 6

Catching

Coach Strikes a sliotar from 20 metres player to catch it

Attempt 1

10 pts

Attempt 2

10 pts

Attempt 3

10 pts

TARGET 7

Hooking

Coach strikes sliotar from his hand,

player standing behind coach has to attempt to hook

Attempt 1

10 pts

Attempt 2

10 pts

Attempt 3

10 pts

TARGET 8

Frontal Block

Coach strikes sliotar from his hand,

player standing in front of coach to attempt to block

Attempt 1

10 pts

Attempt 2

10 pts

Attempt 3

10 pts

Skills Targets 10 - 12 Years

Players can be paired off with a “buddy” for these skills targets



TARGET 9

Batting - Overhead

Coach strikes/throws sliotar from his hand, player has to attempt to bat back

Attempt 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	Attempt 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Attempt 3 <input type="checkbox"/>
10 pts	10 pts	10 pts

Púc Fada - Points scoring

TARGET 10

Players to score a point, from the hand (using “preferred” side) from the required distances directly in front of the posts

30 M <input type="checkbox"/>	45 M <input type="checkbox"/>	65M <input type="checkbox"/>
10 pts	10 pts	10 pts

Púc Fada - Points scoring

TARGET 11

Players to score a point, from the hand (using “other” side) from the required distances directly in front of the posts

21 M <input type="checkbox"/>	30 M <input type="checkbox"/>	45 <input type="checkbox"/>
10 pts	10 pts	10 pts

TARGET 12

“All around the World”*

(Consecutively without dropping it for a minute)

0-45 Hops <input type="checkbox"/>	45-90 Hops <input type="checkbox"/>	90-120 Hops <input type="checkbox"/>
10 pts or	20 pts or	30 pts

{Alternatively time a minute and count how many drops a player makes in the minute}

60-30 <input type="checkbox"/>	30-10 <input type="checkbox"/>	10-0 <input type="checkbox"/>
10 pts or	20 pts or	30 pts

In the case of a draw in your school/club to decide first, second and third placing repeat target 10 based on first player to miss.

“Success is something players take ownership of and in time it becomes personally meaningful. Success is a process, not a product. The process of doing one's best is the key to success. The determining criterion of success is whether a player gave his best that day. Doing one's best is the most important statement a player can make about the importance of an activity and the meaning it has. With years of experience comes self-knowledge and self-awareness. So players learn over time what it means to do your best, to give 100%”

* See Glossary of Terms

Feile na nGael

Under 14 Hurling Skill Test



1. GROUND STRIKING

Six hurling balls are placed on the 20 metre line four metres apart. Players must run and strike the balls on the ground from alternate sides. The balls must travel a distance of 20 metres.
Time allowed – 10 seconds.

Score: 5 points per ball.

2 points will be deducted for every second over the allotted time.

Maximum score: 30 points.

2. FREE TAKING

Four hurling balls are placed on the 45 metre line as follows:

(a) 10 metres to right of centre

(b) 10 metres to left of centre

(c) 25 metres to right of centre

(d) 25 metres to left of centre

Balls must be struck over the bar.

Score: 10 points for (a), and (b). 20 points for (c) and (d)

Maximum score: 60 points.

3. JAB LIFT AND STRIKE

Three hurling balls are placed on the 20 metre line, twelve metres apart. The centre ball is in line with the centre of the goals. Players must jab lift the ball into the hand and strike on the run to pass over the bar, first from the right side and then left or vice versa.

Time allowed 10 seconds.

Score: 10 points per ball right and left side. 2 points will be deducted for every second over the allotted time.

Maximum score: 60 points.

4. GROUND CUT

Four hurling balls are placed on 30 metre line as follows:

(a) 10 metres to right of centre

(b) 10 metres to left of centre

(c) 10 metres to right of centre

(d) 10 metres to left of centre

Balls must be struck over the bar.

Score: 10 points for (a) and (b). 20 points for (c) and (d)

Maximum score: 60 points.

Feile na nGael Under 14 Hurling Skill Test



5. BALL CONTROL

Six grid poles are placed in a line 2 metres apart. Players must begin at the cone, 5 metres from the first cone; jab lift the ball on to the hurl; carry it through the poles; around the end cone, 5 metres from the final cone and back through the poles to the start. The ball must not be taken in to the hand or dropped at any time.

Time allowed 15 seconds.

Score: 50 points. 5 points deducted each time the ball is touched by the hand or dropped. 2 points deducted for every second over the allotted time.

Maximum score: 50 points.

6. LONG PUCK

Players must strike two hurling balls from the hand from the end line. Distance is measured from the first bounce.

If end line is crossed prior to striking the ball that puck is null and void.

Score: Up to 60 metres, 5 points per ball. 60-70 metres, 10 points. Over 70 metres 20 points.

Maximum score: 40 points.

Maximum Overall Score: 300 points.

Player with highest score at end of competition will be winner. In the event of players ending with even points, skill 4 will be repeated.



Skills Targets 16 - 18 years

(A selection under "Game" pressure)



These set of Skills Targets would be ideally organised, on non-collective team coaching nights. Players to be grouped into evenly matched "teams of three".

Scoring System for the 16-18 Age Group:

Gold Award: 280 - 420

Silver Award: 140 - 280

Bronze Award: 0 - 140

TARGET 1

Attempt 1 Attempt 2 Attempt 3

Ground Strike – (moving player and sliotar)

10 pts 10 pts 10 pts

In three's – Player 1 (with sliotar) on the 21 metre line, Player 2 (being tested) on the 45 metre line, and Player 3 on the 65 metre line.

Player 1 feeds sliotar into Player 2, who must double on the sliotar, which ever side it comes to him, and he is to keep the sliotar moving in the same direction.

Coaches "eye" important here as the "feeder" must give a nicely struck sliotar to give the player being tested a decent chance of connection. Patience required!

TARGET 2

Attempt 1 Attempt 2 Attempt 3

Striking out of the hand - (Cross Bar Challenge)

10 pts 10 pts 10 pts

Player, on the 21, to attempt to strike the cross bar with the sliotar out of his hand (Left side)

TARGET 3

Attempt 1 Attempt 2 Attempt 3

Striking out of the hand – (Cross Bar Challenge)

10 pts 10 pts 10 pts

Player, on the 21, to attempt to strike the cross bar with the sliotar out of his hand (Right side)

TARGET 4

Attempt 1 Attempt 2 Attempt 3

Ground Cut - Player to take a ground cut and strike sliotar over the bar.

10 pts 10 pts 10 pts

Sliotar is placed on the 45 metre line directly in front of the posts.

TARGET 5

Drop shot* –

0-30 M 30-45 M 45-60 M

Player to perform a "Drop shot" * and cover a required distance

10 pts or 20 pts or 30 pts

Best score of the 3 attempts to count.

* See Glossary of Terms

Skills Targets 16 - 18 years

(A selection under “Game” pressure)



TARGET 6

Free Taking –

Players to point a free from the required distances directly in front of the posts

45 M

10 pts

65 M

10 pts

90 M

10 pts

TARGET 7

Puc Fada – point scoring

Players to score a point, from the hand (using “preferred” side) from the required distances directly in front of the posts

65 M

10 pts

80 M

10 pts

90 M

10 pts

TARGET 8

Puc Fada – point scoring

Players to score a point, from the hand (using “other” side) from the required distances directly in front of the posts.

45 M

10 pts

65 M

10 pts

80 M

10 pts

TARGET 9

Overhead Strike –

In three’s – Player 1 (On the 45 metre line with sliotar), Player 2 (being tested) stands on the 21 metre line. Player 3 on the end-line. On Coaches call Player 1 “feeds” sliotar in to Player 2, who must attempt an Overhead strike in the direction of Player 3.

Vital to be patient as the “feeder” must try to give a perfectly “flighted” ball for the required skill being tested.

Attempt 1

10 pts

Attempt 2

10 pts

Attempt 3

10 pts

TARGET 10

Solo, Delaney Hop* and Striking from the hurl over the bar

In two’s, Player 1 (being tested) on a 50 metre mark, Player 2 behind the goal.

Player 1 starts on a 50 metre mark. Sliotar placed out on the 45 metre line. He runs, jab lifts on to the hurl without catching sliotar, solos to a 30 metre mark, while moving, performs a “Delaney Hop”, he must be soloing with sliotar under control, by the time he reaches a 21 metre mark, then strikes sliotar from the hurl (using his “preferred” side) over the bar. Players to do this at full pace.

Scores can be deducted, at the coaches discretion, based on less than 100 per cent effort.

Attempt 1

10 pts

Attempt 2

10 pts

Attempt 3

10 pts

* See Glossary of Terms

Skills Targets 16 - 18 years

(A selection under “Game” pressure)



TARGET 11

Solo, Delaney Hop* and Striking from the hurl over the bar

In two's, Player 1 (being tested) on a 50 metre mark, Player 2 behind the goal.

Player 1 starts on a 50 metre mark. Sliotar placed out on the 45 metre line. He runs, jab lifts on to the hurl without catching sliotar, solos to a 30 metre mark, while moving, performs a “Delaney Hop”, he must be soloing with sliotar under control, by the time he reaches a 21 metre mark, then strikes sliotar from the hurl (using his “other” side) over the bar. Players to do this at full pace.

Scores can be deducted, at the coaches discretion, based on less than 100 per cent effort.

Attempt 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	Attempt 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Attempt 3 <input type="checkbox"/>
10 pts	10 pts	10 pts

TARGET 12

Catching – (Under “Game” pressure)

In three's – Player 1 on the 21 metre line, Player 2 (being tested) stands on the 45 metre line with Player 3 beside him.

Player 1 feeds the sliotar into Player 2, who must catch the sliotar cleanly, while his opponent (Player 3) attempts to stop him catching it. (within the rules!).

Attempt 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	Attempt 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Attempt 3 <input type="checkbox"/>
10 pts	10 pts	10 pts

TARGET 13

Hooking – (Under “Game” pressure)

In three's – Player 1 (on the 45 metre line with sliotar), Player 2 (being tested) standing 5 metres behind Player 1. Player 3 behind the goal. On coaches call, Player 1 sprints off, with Player 2 in hot pursuit. Player 1 can strike the sliotar at any stage before he reaches the 21, Player 2 must “hook”.

Attempt 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	Attempt 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Attempt 3 <input type="checkbox"/>
10 pts	10 pts	10 pts

TARGET 14

Blocking – (Under “Game” pressure)

In three's – Player 1 (on the 45 metre line with sliotar), Player 2 (being tested) standing 5-10 metres in front of Player 1. Player 3 behind the goal. On coaches call, Player 1 sprints off, with Player 2 facing him. Player 1 must strike the sliotar, to score a point while moving at any stage, before he meets Player 2. Player 2 must “block” either directly or by judging the flight of the sliotar.

Attempt 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	Attempt 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Attempt 3 <input type="checkbox"/>
10 pts	10 pts	10 pts

In the case of a draw in your school/club to decide first, second and third placing repeat Target 7, based on the first to miss.

* See Glossary of Terms

Club Cill Chainnigh

An opportunity for clubs who promote “Best Practice” when working with their juvenile players to attain a Club Cill Chainnigh “Coaching and Games” flag to fly proudly at their GAA grounds.

Each year for the past number of seasons, Kilkenny GAA Coaching and Games offer juvenile clubs in Kilkenny the opportunity to apply for the “Club Cill Chainnigh” Coaching and Games Flag Award, to acknowledge their development work and for clubs who “Promote Best Practice for our Juvenile Players” throughout the year.

Clubs who apply, and receive the “Flag” (there are Three/Two Star Flags available) will be presented with their flag, to fly proudly at their club grounds, at an end of year ceremony. There will also be a small equipment grant available to clubs. It basically is a simple checklist for an active, healthy and progressive juvenile section in your club.

Application forms are sent to each Club’s Juvenile Coaching Co-Ordinator, and the forms are to be returned via email by end of October each year.

Criteria:

1. Club Juvenile Coaching Co-ordinator in place.
2. Club Juvenile Committee in place.
3. Street / Parish League organised by the Club Juvenile Committee.
4. Provide a regular Coaching and Games programme for all your juvenile players U-8 to U-12 (Go Games) and U-14 to U-18 Bord Na Nog with additional blitzes / challenge games “in both codes” as required. This to include clubs fielding two teams at U-8/U-10 age levels, where numbers allow. All players to receive game time, not sideline time! No walkovers to be conceded unless exceptional circumstances arise.
5. “Skill Targets” to be undertaken at each age grade. U-8 to U-18 (Reference “Skill Targets” section) and to have representative of the club for U-14 Feile na nGael Skills Final held in Nowlan Park.
6. Coach education - one Foundation coach involved with each club team from U-8 to U-18.
7. Players, as nominated, to attend hurling and gaelic football development squads U-14 to U-17.
8. Host “club visit” or arrange team “day away” trip for juvenile team(s).
9. Cumann na mBunscoil/Post Primary Schools: provide school club coaches or assistance provided as requested by local Primary School and Post Primary Schools. Primary school - where local school requests, club coach to provide 8 hours of gaelic football coaching (September to November) and 8 hours of hurling coaching, (April to June) during a calendar school year.

10. Local Primary schools/club assist in promoting the regionally held Kelloggs Cul Camps.
11. Attendance of club coaches at relevant coach education courses and workshops/ conferences.
12. Code of Best Practice attended by present club mentors.
13. Respect Initiative in place U-10 to U-18. Player/ coach behaviour at games as decided by “Coaching and Games Committee” Cill Chainnigh/ Club Cill Chainnigh Committee.
14. A regular schedule of meetings or “Communities of Practice” arranged by the Club Juvenile Coaching Co-ordinator.
15. Any other “Coaching” initiative undertaken by the club during the current season. (E.g Lifestyle advice inputs from “Guest Speakers”/ “Functional Movement Screening” of U-14 to U-18 players arranged to aid with injury prevention / Suicide Awareness Talks etc).

If you have any queries do not hesitate to contact us at any stage, for further details on the following numbers:

North Kilkenny Clubs Contact:

Brian Ryan (087) 2492343

South Kilkenny Clubs Contact:

James Meagher (087) 3510045

or any member of Kilkenny GAA Coaching and Games Committee



Glossary of Terms

Agility – is the ability to move and change direction and position of the body quickly and effectively while under control.

All Around the World – A player keep the sliotar up in the air, as many consecutive times as he can, while touching the sliotar on the (1) edge of the heel, (2) the bás itself, (3) the edge of the toe of the hurl, (4) and the other side of the bás. Helps to challenge the player to improve his hand eye hurl co-ordination and develop good wrist dexterity.

Backs and Forwards – A game where one set of backs are competing against one set of forwards. Ideal to swap players after a set number of minutes/scores to allow players experience the skills sets required to be able to play in a variety of positions.

Balance – is the ability to maintain stability. Players are often required to perform skills while off balance or while balanced on one foot.

Ball Hops – A player keep the sliotar up in the air, as many consecutive times as he can, while bouncing the sliotar on one side of the bás only. Improves hand eye hurl co-ordination.

Beehive Effect – When all players follow the sliotar, ignoring their positions during the game.

Conditioned Game – A game either - full sided, small sided, or backs and forwards – where conditions are imposed (on individuals or teams) on foot of the playing rules. E.g. ground hurling only, two touch hurling etc.

Conditioning – The bodies ability to work easily and/or with lessened stress while performing a chosen activity.

Co-Ordination – The ability to move different body parts simultaneously or in sequence in order to perform a specific task.

Delaney Hop – A move whereby the player bats the sliotar from the bás, of the hurl, on to the ground and back to the hurl, to enable the player to cover more ground and manage additional catches, while on a solo run.

Dominant Hand – The child is encouraged to hold the hurl with the “stronger” or “dominant hand” on top of the hurl.

Drills – *(Should be GAA games specific)* Activities where players operating under varying organisational formations execute the skills of the game under varying levels of pressure and intensity in terms of movement, time, space, opposition and/or competition.

Drop Shot – Player, while in possession of sliotar in his hand, drops sliotar to the ground and “on the bounce” he strikes the sliotar. Method of striking the sliotar when under pressure for space or a method of creating space for yourself while striking the sliotar.

Dummy Handpass – Method of attempting to throw an opponent off balance and send him on a “dummy run”. The player in possession throws the sliotar up, as if he is going to handpass the sliotar, instead he catches the sliotar and heads in a different direction.

Fly Keepers – A game with no goalkeeper, last man back stands in goal. Ensure teams can only score from within a certain distance.

Four Goal Game – A game where teams are broken into two, with both teams attacking and defending two goals (set diagonally apart). When a team scores into one goal, they can next only score into goal they are attacking diagonally across. Assists in teaching players to keep spread out and using space.

Full Game – The version of a game in which participating teams have the maximum number of players and play in accordance with the specific rules and pitch dimensions as determined for that age/or level e.g. Adult, 15-a-side, Go Games, etc.

Get a feel for the Hurl and Ball (i.e. develop ball sense) – Activities involving the use of the hurl and ball undertaken by players to develop ball manipulation skills and hand-eye co-ordination as part of any specific activities using the hurl and sliotar eg going for a few pucks , wall ball, alley, pucking against the wall etc.

Goals only – A conditioned game, perhaps for a 2/3 minute period, at any one time to ensure goals are worked by forwards and defended against by the backs.

Goal to Goal – A game where individual players attempt to score as many goals as possible and to save as many shots as possible against an opponent who does likewise. Both are in “goals” and shooting directly across at an opponents “goal”. Ideal method of developing bi-lateral co-ordination “on the ground” or “out of the hand” as players must strike every second shot from either left or right side.

Hot Housing - the act of giving a child a lot of extra teaching or training in an activity , because you want them to be very good at it.

Keep me uppies – Individual or team keep a sliotar up in the air as many consecutive times as possible by striking the sliotar up in the air and doubling on it's return.

No Mans Land – Two teams have a “court” area each to defend and attack – aim of game is to get sliotar to hit the ground in the other teams court, while opposition try to prevent sliotar from hitting the ground. Variations: 1. No catching - players must attempt to control and strike the sliotar without catching it and 2. Teams can be marking each other in full opposition.

Nursery – A GAA Programme devised to cater for new beginners to the game.

Parish/Street League – A league with teams consisting of all potential players in the parish, selected from districts/townlands/streets (depending on rural/urban make up of the club). All Players play and a well organised Parish/Street League marries the ethos of “Go Games” (full participation) with the inclusion of extra parents/adult players to mentor the teams. An ideal format to start the season at underage level.

Player Pathway – A Player Pathway is a detailed description of optimal player development from the beginning of a player's sporting life to continuing to play the game until retirement age is reached.

Psychological needs – are the mental needs that motivate a person to achieve goals and perform certain activities.

Short puck out game – Used to encourage defenders to be alert at all times and forwards to be likewise alert, to such tactics in a game.

Size of Hurl – As a *general guideline* in modern times, the top of the handle of the hurl should be up to the top of the child's "tracksuit pocket". Traditionally the term was "Hurl to be hip height".

Speed – is the ability to move quickly across the ground.

Strength – the extent to which muscles can exert force by contracting against resistance (holding or restraining an object or person).

Strength and Conditioning – is a discipline that uses exercise prescription specifically to improve performance in any athletic competition.

Strength and Conditioning Coach – helps athletes with injury prevention, rehabilitation and with proper mechanics within their sports performances.

Three Goals and In – A traditional game played with one goalie and a combination of 1v 1 games with a "goalie" where the first player to reach three goals, gets a break and heads into goal for the next series of games to commence.

Tippy Taps – A player keeps the sliotar up in the air, as many consecutive times as he can, while touching the sliotar on alternative sides of the bás of the hurl. Helps to challenge the player to improve his hand eye hurl co-ordination and develop good wrist dexterity.

Training load – measured in units, is simply the function of training volume and training intensity and it can be expressed by the following formula: Training load = training volume (RPE) x training duration. Distinguished by the three colour code : Green - good to train again, Yellow - can train but should avoid high intensity, Red - Body not recovered, player can be in danger of over reaching and be susceptible to injury.

Two only in for the tackle – During a game, for younger players, this condition on the game will help reduce the beehive effect (where all players follow the ball) in that at any one time, only two players can tackle for the sliotar.

Two/Three second rule – During this game players are only allowed two/three seconds on the sliotar at any one time.

Two/Three passes before a clearance – Used sparingly but used to encourage forwards to chase, hook and block their opponent and defenders to move to a suitable position to support their team mates while in possession.

Two touch hurling – During this game players are only allowed "two touches" while playing the sliotar at any one time.

Weight of Hurl – As a *general guideline* the child should be able to hold the hurl straight out from the body with the dominant hand, comfortably for about 10 seconds. This will ensure the child will have good control of the hurl while playing the game.

References and Acknowledgements

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Cuman na mBunscoil Cill Chainnigh

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Kilkenny GAA Coaching and Games Committee

Kilkenny GAA Inter-County Management Teams at Minor, U-21 and Senior Level

Kilkenny GAA Development Squad Coaches

Kilkenny GAA Juvenile Clubs in attendance at Regional Club Meetings

Kilkenny GAA Post Primary Committee

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Modern Printers, Unit 11B Loughboy Industrial Estate, Kilkenny

National Sports Council - Building Pathways in Irish Sport – A Consultation Paper – Irish Sports Council

Photographs - Willie Dempsey, Gerry O'Neill, Caroline Clifford, Seamus Reade, Eoin Hennessy

Self Determination Theory – A Guide for Coaches - Sports Coach UK

The GAA's "Fun Do" Resource Pack – (Croke Park Coaching and Games Team)

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