

Player Characteristics

- ▶ Players at this age are more interested in “I” rather than “Team”.
- ▶ They can learn about sharing, waiting their turn and being socially comfortable in their peers’ company.
- ▶ They will only have eyes for the sliotar.
- ▶ Attention span is short.
- ▶ They can respond to playing with a partner, over time with patience.
- ▶ The sliotar can be seen as toy – have a “toy” for each child.
- ▶ They like attention from you as a coach. Ensure this attention is given after positive behaviour, so show an interest in them and what they do well.
- ▶ Treat all fairly, have a word with, and for, each child.
- ▶ Enjoys watching the game, especially if his/her team are winning.
- ▶ Children learn best in small groups.
- ▶ They can be full of energy – allow some free play for them to expend some of this seemingly limitless energy they possess.
- ▶ They tire quickly so allow for plenty of breaks during activities.
- ▶ The child is full of enthusiasm and “bursting with excitement” to be in the field.



4 – 6 SKILL EMPHASIS (all the previous skills to be constantly practised)

- 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 – dominant hand on top of the hurl.
 - toe of the hurl pointing out.
 - ▶ Ground Strike (L&R) – With a “wristy” swing.
 - ▶ Solo – 2 variations:
 - sliotar balanced i.e. ball “stuck” to the hurl.
 - sliotar bouncing.
 - ▶ Ball Hops – One side of the bas.
 - ▶ Tippy Taps – Both sides of the bas.
 - ▶ 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).

4 – 6 PHYSICAL FOCUS – ABC’S & RJT’S

- Movement** – By crawling / running / climbing and generally being a child.
- ▶ ABC’s, RJT’s running – forwards, backwards, sideways, stopping, starting, changing direction, swerving, sidestepping, avoiding other players in fun activities.
 - ▶ Introduce children to balancing through various exercises (single leg stands, hopping etc.).
- Strength** – By involvement in fun activities such as bear crawls etc. Child uses their own body weight.
- ▶ 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.

4 – 6 GAME SPECIFIC

- The majority of the fun and learning should be in the joy of playing i.e. “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 coordination off both sides. Games should be small-sided (2 v 2 max 3 v 3) and of short duration.
- ▶ **Games Sense**
- 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” is a good deterrent to the beehive attack. The use of small numbers and if necessary zones can also help.
 - 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.

NURSERY 4 - 6 YEARS OLD

SKILLS TARGETS 4 - 6 YEARS

A checklist for parents

TARGET 1 - STRIKING Strike sliotar on the ground (right side).	0 - 5m <input type="checkbox"/>	5 - 10m <input type="checkbox"/>	10 - 20m <input type="checkbox"/>
TARGET 2 - STRIKING Strike sliotar on the ground (left side).	0 - 5m <input type="checkbox"/>	5 - 10m <input type="checkbox"/>	10 - 20m <input type="checkbox"/>
TARGET 3 - DRIBBLING Dribble the sliotar 15 metres.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
TARGET 4 - ROLL LIFT Roll Lift the sliotar into the cupped hand.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
TARGET 5 - STRIKING FROM HAND Strike sliotar out of the hand (right side).	0 - 10m <input type="checkbox"/>	10 - 20m <input type="checkbox"/>	20 - 30m <input type="checkbox"/>
TARGET 6 - STRIKING FROM HAND Strike sliotar out of the hand (left side).	0 - 10m <input type="checkbox"/>	10 - 20m <input type="checkbox"/>	20 - 30m <input type="checkbox"/>
TARGET 7 - CATCHING Coach throws a sliotar for player to catch it (with hand protected).	Attempt 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	Attempt 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Attempt 3 <input type="checkbox"/>
TARGET 8 Balance the sliotar on the hurl, stationary (without dropping it for 1 minute).	0 - 10 sec <input type="checkbox"/>	10 - 30 sec <input type="checkbox"/>	30 - 60 sec <input type="checkbox"/>
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"/>
TARGET 9 - 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"/>
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"/>

