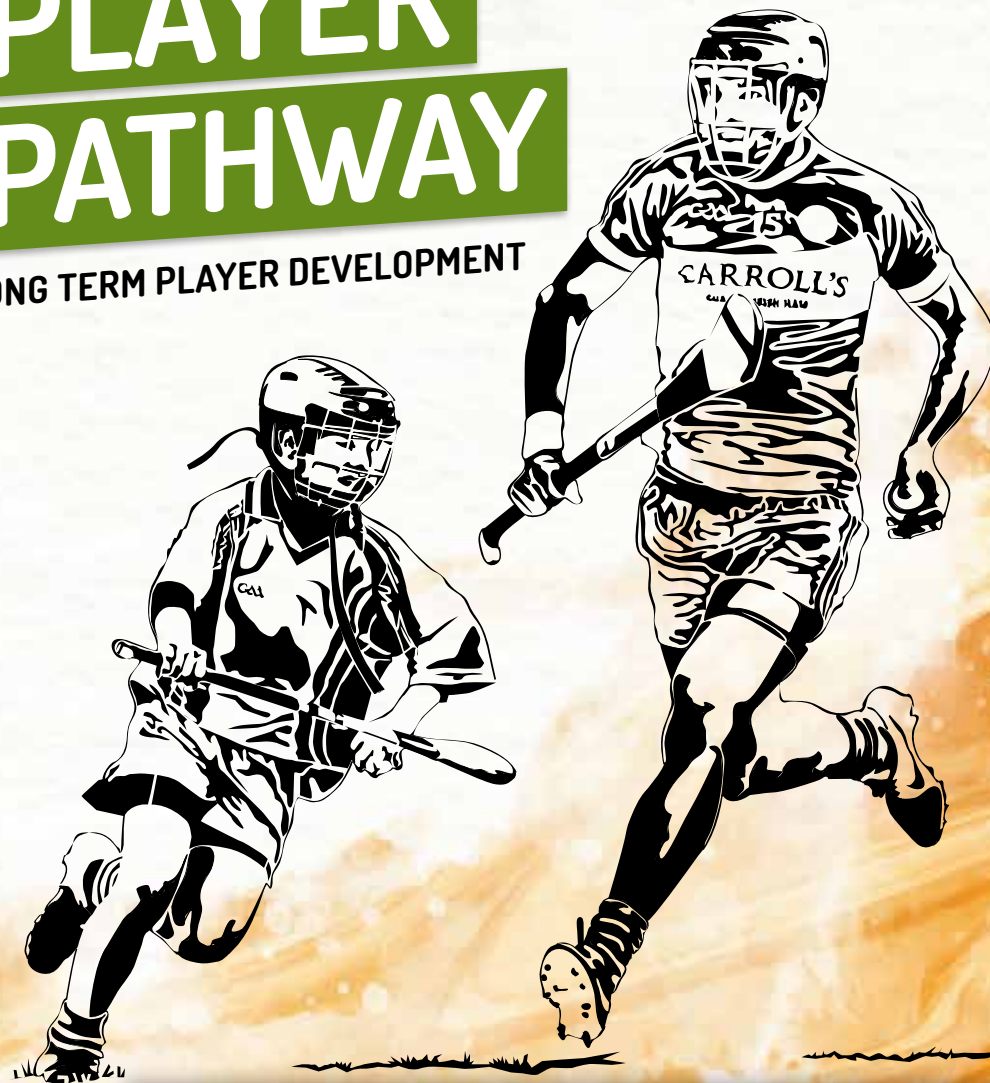




# OFFALY HURLING PLAYER PATHWAY

LONG TERM PLAYER DEVELOPMENT



**Offaly GAA**

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FAITHFUL. ALL THE WAY. 

This Player Pathway is to serve as a guide to mentors, parents and players as to what they should be doing at a particular time in their playing careers. First and foremost, the Player Pathway is designed with player welfare at the heart of the plan. It is intended as an aid to assist coaches and parents concerned with ensuring we are providing the maximum enjoyment and stimulation for our players at the various stages in their hurling career. We hope that it will provide assistance to all in ensuring the development of players to reach their full potential from their first steps into the Academy and up to the adult teams of the club and beyond.

It is important to note that there is no end to our journey as coaches. It is a continuous progression. The pathway laid out in this document may seem like a linear progression but it is the same as everything in life, there will be ups and downs. It is vital to remind ourselves that we are developing young players who all develop at different rates.

As all top coaches in sport will attest to, to continue to improve as a coach you need to adapt and never stop learning. So for the experienced coaches out there reading this document, it might highlight and reaffirm aspects of their coaching they are doing right, but it may also refresh their knowledge or improve certain aspects.

Each section is covered separately and contains guidelines and ideas for players at each level. Each individual player will develop at a different rate, mentally and physically. Consequently, the same applies to teams. It is important to remember that children are not mini adults and should be treated with respect. Patience and perseverance is key. Try to concentrate on 'your' team's development.

Your team may not develop as the team that precedes it. We are concerned with the long term development of each and every player to reach their own maximum potential. This will take time, so patience is required.

We 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. Encourage your players / children to bring their hurls with them at all opportunities, be it visiting relatives or friends, going to the park or bringing in the cows!

Finally, this Player Pathway is not restricted to the performance or enhancement of the county scene. The club scene is of paramount importance to everything we do and without it there would be no activity at county level. For us to get things right we must build from the bottom up. We all know the real work starts in and on the club field, so let the fun and learning continue for years to come.

*Brian Carroll*






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.	< 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.
Players 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. This pathway provides a framework which players can progress through. Some players will move through each stage at the suggested age groups. However, the quality of instruction provided and the number of hours of quality practice time will influence the speed at which the player can move from stage to stage.



Philosophy	Play to Learn			Learn to Compete			Compete to Win		
									
Stage	Child			Youth			Adult		
Age Group	Age 4 - 11			Age 12 - 17			Age 18+		
Phase	Nursery	Early Go Games	Late Go Games	Early Teenage	Mid Teenage	Late Teenage	Early Adult	Adult	Retirement/Retainment
Age	4 - 6 Years	7 - 9 Years	10 - 11 Years	12 - 13 Years	14 - 15 Years	16 - 17 Years	18 - 21 Years	22+ Years	Becoming a Coach/Officer/Referee

The GAA Player Pathway identifies the different stages and phases of development our players progress through. The capacities that players should develop to move along the pathway at the optimal rate have been identified according to the Total Playing Performance (TPP) Model.

The GAA Player Pathway is available at: <http://learning.gaa.ie/playerpathway>

- ▶ 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 as often as you can.
- ▶ Attend games your child is playing in.
- ▶ Encourage your child to bring their hurl with them as much as possible i.e. when playing with friends, visiting relatives etc.
- ▶ Encourage your child to watch your local adult club team and Offaly (or watch them on TV).
- ▶ Help arrange transport to games / coaching sessions.
- ▶ Attend juvenile AGM.
- ▶ Be positive at home about club, school and coach.



## THE TOTAL PLAYING PERFORMANCE MODEL:



The GAA Player Pathway proposes that in order to make playing Gaelic games fun we should ensure that first of all our players get plenty of regular meaningful games and that we play plenty of games and games-based activities at training. Games-based activities promote vigorous, high intensity training, develop fitness and game awareness, and are great fun!

## 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 the use of these skills sets that will enhance the players’ ability to play hurling at the highest level possible.

It is important to encourage the practice of these skills at an early age to aid the development of the players. These are important, not only in terms of learning how to perform such skills, but also how 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 rules.

# THE COACHES CHECKLIST

The following is a checklist to help you as a coach to review your coaching sessions and then plan for future ones. You can use this to ensure that you provide the best possible hurling experience for your child / youth players.

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 each player at least once?	
Did you refrain from using bad language?	
Did you plan the session in advance?	
Did you coach positively?	
Did you review your coaching session?	

## 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 - 60 minutes
U-14	1 : 10	60 / 70 minutes
U-16	1 : 12	60 / 75 minutes
U-18	1 : 12	60 / 80 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?

## Youth Sample Session

Remember to provide as many games and games-based activities at training as possible. This is particularly relevant throughout the Warm Up and Speed Development phases.

The Warm Up can also include Functional Movement Drills and Neural Activation drills. It is important to stress that the ball should be used as much as possible throughout the session (including both the Warm Up and Speed Development phases).

The following is a sample session for U-14s and can be adapted accordingly to suit the age group.

## Sample U-14 Session:

SECTION	PRE-SEASON	PLAYING SEASON
Warm Up	10 minutes	10 minutes
Speed Development	10 minutes	10 minutes
Conditioned Game	10 minutes	10 minutes
Skill Development	10 minutes	10 - 15 minutes
Conditioned and/or Full Game	15 minutes	15 - 20 minutes
Cool Down	5 minutes	5 minutes
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60 minutes</b>	<b>60 - 70 minutes</b>



**Parental Support**

- ▶ Help develop a love of hurling, encourage it to be 'part and parcel' of your child's everyday life in an enjoyable atmosphere.
- ▶ Provide the child with a hurl and sliotar – correct size, and weight\*.
- ▶ Ensure use of dominant hand\* on top.
- ▶ Keep an eye on the toe of the hurl, ensure that it is pointing out from the body.
- ▶ Go for a few pucks with your child when you can or encourage your child to get a few pucks in every evening.
- ▶ Encourage your child to bring their hurl and sliotar with them every day.
- ▶ Bring child / children to watch your local adult club team and Offaly 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 robbers.

**OFFALY HURLING PLAYER PATHWAY GIVES ALL PLAYERS THE BEST CHANCE OF SUCCESS IN HURLING**

by tailoring training, competition and coaching to their needs at the appropriate stage of development.



**SKILLS TARGETS < 4 YEARS**

A checklist for parents

Coach / Parent to check	Hurl Appropriate: "Strong hand" on top of hurl <input type="checkbox"/> "Toe of the hurl" pointing away from the body during roll lift <input type="checkbox"/>	Weight* <input type="checkbox"/>	Size* <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 1</b>	Grip <input type="checkbox"/>	Ready <input type="checkbox"/>	Lock <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 2</b> Strike sliotar on the ground (right side)	0 - 5m <input type="checkbox"/>	5 - 10m <input type="checkbox"/>	10 - 15m <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 3</b> Strike sliotar on the ground (left side)	0 - 5m <input type="checkbox"/>	5 - 10m <input type="checkbox"/>	10 - 15m <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 4</b> Blocking the sliotar on the ground	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>TARGET 5</b> Dribble the sliotar 5 metres	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>TARGET 6</b> Roll lift the sliotar into the cupped hand	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	

## 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.

## SKILLS TARGETS 4 - 6 YEARS

A checklist for parents

<b>TARGET 1 - STRIKING</b> Strike sliotar on the ground (right side).	0 - 5m <input type="checkbox"/>	5 - 10m <input type="checkbox"/>	10 - 20m <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 2 - STRIKING</b> Strike sliotar on the ground (left side).	0 - 5m <input type="checkbox"/>	5 - 10m <input type="checkbox"/>	10 - 20m <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 3 - DRIBBLING</b> Dribble the sliotar 15 metres.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>TARGET 4 - ROLL LIFT</b> Roll Lift the sliotar into the cupped hand.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>TARGET 5 - STRIKING FROM HAND</b> Strike sliotar out of the hand (right side).	0 - 10m <input type="checkbox"/>	10 - 20m <input type="checkbox"/>	20 - 30m <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 6 - STRIKING FROM HAND</b> Strike sliotar out of the hand (left side).	0 - 10m <input type="checkbox"/>	10 - 20m <input type="checkbox"/>	20 - 30m <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 7 - CATCHING</b> 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"/>
<b>TARGET 8</b> 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"/>
<b>TARGET 9 - BALL HOPS</b> (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"/>

## Player Characteristics

- ▶ They will want to play as many games as possible.
- ▶ Positive feedback is vital.
- ▶ Each individual player will want your interest and attention.
- ▶ The beehive effect will still be present, but should not be as prevalent.
- ▶ 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.
- ▶ They want to play!! Here is why Go Games are vital, they allow ALL players to play the full game.

## 6 - 8 SKILL EMPHASIS (all the previous skills to be constantly practised)

- ▶ Ground Strike with a "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 bas.
- ▶ Tippy Taps - both sides of the bas.
- ▶ Dribble - two handed.
- ▶ Roll Lift.
- ▶ Jab Lift.
- ▶ Strike from the hand. (Perform swinging action on both sides)
- ▶ Solo
  - sliotar balanced i.e. ball "stuck" to the hurl.
  - sliotar bouncing.
- ▶ All other skills will be practiced during the games.



## 6 - 8 PHYSICAL FOCUS - ABC'S &amp; RJT'S

**Focus on fundamental movements.**

- ▶ 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 of improvement.

**Strength**

- Strength training during this phase should include exercises using the child's own body weight in fun activities.
- By crawling on hands etc.
- Bear crawls.

## 6 - 8 GAME SPECIFIC

“Street / Parish Leagues” “Go Games” - Small sided games (3v3 or 4v4), 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 - all the skills of the game to be practised during these games.
- ▶ “Goal to Goal” - player's practice left and right to continue to develop bilateral co-ordination (on the ground and out of the hand).
- ▶ Basic positional understanding - players play all positions.
- ▶ Basic communication - small sided games (4v5, 6v5, 7v7).
- ▶ Basic rules - they will not fully understand positioning, so don't fret!
- ▶ “Two only in for tackle” is a good deterrent to the beehive effect. Use of zones can really help players identify positions and where to stand.
- ▶ 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.

## SKILLS TARGETS 6 - 8 YEARS

A checklist for parents

<b>TARGET 1 - STRIKING</b> Strike sliotar on the ground (right side).	0 - 10m <input type="checkbox"/>	10 - 20m <input type="checkbox"/>	20 - 30m <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 2 - STRIKING</b> Strike sliotar on the ground (left side).	0 - 10m <input type="checkbox"/>	10 - 20m <input type="checkbox"/>	20 - 30m <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 3 - DRIBBLING</b> Dribble the sliotar 15 metres out and back.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>TARGET 4 - Roll Lift</b> Roll Lift the sliotar into the cupped hand. How many in 60 seconds.	0 - 20 <input type="checkbox"/>	20 - 30 <input type="checkbox"/>	30 - 50 <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 5 - STRIKING FROM HAND</b> Strike sliotar out of the hand (right side).	0 - 20m <input type="checkbox"/>	20 - 30m <input type="checkbox"/>	30 - 40m <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 6 - STRIKING FROM HAND</b> Strike sliotar out of the hand (left side).	0 - 20m <input type="checkbox"/>	20 - 30m <input type="checkbox"/>	30 - 40m <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 7 - CATCHING</b> Coach throws a sliotar for player to catch it from 10 metres (with hand protected).	Attempt 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	Attempt 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Attempt 3 <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 8 - BALANCE THE SLIOTAR ON THE HURL, STATIONARY</b> (without dropping it for 1 minute). Alternatively time a minute and count how many drops a player makes in the minute.	0 - 10 sec <input type="checkbox"/>	10 - 30 sec <input type="checkbox"/>	30 - 60 sec <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 9 - BALL HOPS</b> (without dropping it for 1 minute). Alternatively time a minute and count how many drops a player makes in the minute.	0 - 30 hops <input type="checkbox"/>	30 - 60 hops <input type="checkbox"/>	60 - 120 hops <input type="checkbox"/>



### Player Characteristics

- ▶ They will want to play as many games as possible.
- ▶ They continue to develop their social skills, learning about teamwork, 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.

### 8 - 10 SKILL EMPHASIS (all the previous skills to be constantly practised)

- ▶ Grip, Ready, Lock and Swing.
- ▶ Ground Strike (L and R) with a “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.
- ▶ Include occasionally:
  - Ball Hops - one side of the bas.
  - Tippy Taps - both sides of the bas.
  - All Around the World - four edges of the bas.
- ▶ All other skills will be practised during the games.



### 8 - 10 PHYSICAL FOCUS - ABC'S & RJT'S

**Movement** - 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.

- ▶ ABC's, RJT's, CPS running - forwards, backwards, sideways, stopping, starting, changing direction, swerving, sidestepping, avoiding other players in fun activities.

**Strength** - use own bodyweight, walking on arms, crawling, fun pushing, pulling activities.

### 8 - 10 GAME SPECIFIC

**“Street / Parish Leagues” “Go Games”** - small sided games (5v5, 6v6), 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 (all the skills of the game, to be practised during these games).
- ▶ “Goal to Goal” - player’s practice left and right to continue to develop bilateral coordination (on the ground and out of the hand).

#### Games Sense

- ▶ 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” is 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 teammates 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.



## SKILLS TARGETS 8 - 10 YEARS

A checklist for parents

<b>TARGET 1 - STRIKING</b> Strike sliotar on the ground (right side).	0 - 10m <input type="checkbox"/>	10 - 25m <input type="checkbox"/>	25 - 40m <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 2 - STRIKING</b> Strike sliotar on the ground (left side).	0 - 10m <input type="checkbox"/>	10 - 25m <input type="checkbox"/>	25 - 40m <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 3 - Roll Lift</b> 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"/>
<b>TARGET 4 - STRIKING FROM HAND</b> Strike sliotar out of the hand (right side).	0 - 20m <input type="checkbox"/>	20 - 45m <input type="checkbox"/>	45 - 60m <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 5 - STRIKING FROM HAND</b> Strike sliotar out of the hand (left side).	0 - 20m <input type="checkbox"/>	20 - 45m <input type="checkbox"/>	45 - 60m <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 6 - CATCHING</b> Coach strikes a sliotar for player to catch it from 20 metres (with hand protected).	Attempt 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	Attempt 2 <input type="checkbox"/>	Attempt 3 <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 7 - BALANCE THE SLIOTAR ON THE HURL, STATIONARY</b> (without dropping it for 1 minute). Alternatively time a minute and count how many drops a player makes in the minute.	0 - 10 sec <input type="checkbox"/>	10 - 30 sec <input type="checkbox"/>	30 - 60 sec <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 8 - BALL HOPS</b> (without dropping it for 1 minute). Alternatively time a minute and count how many drops a player makes in the minute.	0 - 30 hops <input type="checkbox"/>	30 - 60 hops <input type="checkbox"/>	60 - 120 hops <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>TARGET 9 - TIPPY TAPS</b> (without dropping it for 1 minute). Alternatively time a minute and count how many drops a player makes in the minute.	0 - 30 hops <input type="checkbox"/>	30 - 60 hops <input type="checkbox"/>	60 - 90 hops <input type="checkbox"/>

## Player Characteristics

- ▶ They will want games, games and more games.
- ▶ Characteristics here to be developed, e.g. – 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 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.

## 10 - 12 SKILL EMPHASIS (all the previous skills to be constantly practised)

- ▶ Ground Strike (off both sides).
- ▶ First Touch – constant practice.
- ▶ Strike from the hand (off both sides) “nice and tidy” – look for C-shaped swing. Stationary / on the run.
- ▶ Hand Pass.
- ▶ 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.
- ▶ Include occasionally:
  - Ball Hops – one side of the bas.
  - Tippy Taps – both sides of the bas (to help develop good wrist dexterity).
  - All Around the World – four edges of the bas (to help develop good coordination and wrist dexterity).
- ▶ All other skills will be practised during the games.

10 - 12 PHYSICAL FOCUS - ABC'S & RJT'S

**Movement** - 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.

- ▶ 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.

**Strength**

- ▶ 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 bodyweight 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.

10 - 12 GAME SPECIFIC

**Games**

- ▶ "Go Games" - all players play!!
- ▶ "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".
- ▶ 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 Man's Land" - striking and catching.

**Games Sense**

- ▶ Reading the game:
  - anticipation of teammates / opposition movements.
- ▶ Decisions to be made:
  - when to pass / travel with sliotar / move.
  - who to pass to and who to mark.
  - where to move to.
- ▶ Support your teammates in attack / defence.
- ▶ Small sided games (depending on numbers available - 4v4, 6v6, 10v10).
- ▶ Hurl with your head up - when in possession, scan the field to look for options for passing or shooting.
- ▶ 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.

SKILLS TARGETS 10 - 12 YEARS

A checklist for parents

**TARGET 1 - STRIKING**

Strike sliotar out of the hand on the 21, to hit the net in the goal without bouncing (right side).

Attempt 1   
10 points

Attempt 2   
10 points

Attempt 3   
10 points

**TARGET 2 - STRIKING**

Strike sliotar out of the hand on the 21, to hit the net in the goal without bouncing (left side).

Attempt 1   
10 points

Attempt 2   
10 points

Attempt 3   
10 points

**TARGET 3 - HANDPASS**

(Catching hand) Player to handpass sliotar in front of chest of teammate 5 metres away.

Attempt 1   
10 points

Attempt 2   
10 points

Attempt 3   
10 points

**TARGET 4 - HANDPASS**

(Opposite hand) Player to handpass sliotar in front of chest of teammate 5 metres away.

Attempt 1   
10 points

Attempt 2   
10 points

Attempt 3   
10 points

**TARGET 5 - HANDPASS**

(From the bas of the hurl) Player to handpass sliotar in front of chest of teammate 5 metres away.

Attempt 1   
10 points

Attempt 2   
10 points

Attempt 3   
10 points

**TARGET 6 - CATCHING**

Coach strikes a sliotar from 30 metres for player to catch it.

Attempt 1   
10 points

Attempt 2   
10 points

Attempt 3   
10 points

**TARGET 7 - HOOKING**

Coach strikes sliotar from his hand; player standing behind coach has to attempt to hook.

Attempt 1   
10 points

Attempt 2   
10 points

Attempt 3   
10 points

**TARGET 8 - FRONTAL BLOCK**

Coach strikes sliotar from his hand; player standing in front of coach has to attempt to block.

Attempt 1   
10 points

Attempt 2   
10 points

Attempt 3   
10 points

## Player Characteristics

- ▶ The vast majority are still there to enjoy the experience of participating with their friends, learning new skills etc. This can be difficult as you now have subs, and some may not get to play! Ensure that everyone plays in challenges or league rounds!
- ▶ 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.
- ▶ Understanding of what players are going through; puberty is happening so a lot going on for the youth.
- ▶ Be aware players can develop at different rates (chronological v biological) i.e. players may be the same age but vary in size.
- ▶ Learns to recognise that current actions can have an effect on the future.
- ▶ Arguing and reasoning skills improve.
- ▶ Communication and interpersonal skills improve.

## 12 - 14 SKILL EMPHASIS (all the previous skills to be constantly practised)

- ▶ Strike from the hand (also on the run):
  - long striking.
  - short striking.
  - striking diagonally.
  - accuracy.
- ▶ First catch, then first touch - in that order.
- ▶ Ground Strike:
  - both sides.
  - sidelines.
- ▶ 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.
- ▶ The "Troy" tap up (see Glossary of Terms).
- ▶ All other skills will be practised during the games.
- ▶ Include occasionally:
  - Tippy Taps - both sides of the bas (to help develop good wrist dexterity).
  - All Around the World - four edges of the bas.



## 12 - 14 PHYSICAL FOCUS - ABC'S & RJT'S

**Movement** - all speed work can be developed through fun games / activities / routines and in the games themselves.

- ▶ Speed and agility (multi-directional).
- ▶ 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.

### Strength

- ▶ 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.

## 12 - 14 GAME SPECIFIC

**Games** - the game can be the teacher.

- ▶ "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.
- ▶ "Bucks and Forwards".
- ▶ 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 Man's Land" - striking and catching.
- ▶ Two Touch Hurling.
- ▶ Two / three Second Rule.
- ▶ If you require "extra" games for your "team", then do so.

### Games Sense

- ▶ 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 teammates 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.

**SKILLS TARGETS 12 - 14 YEARS**

<p><b>TARGET 1 - GROUND STRIKING</b> 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.</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p><b>TARGET 2 - FREE TAKING</b> 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</p>	<p>Balls must be struck over the bar. Score: 10 points for A and B. 20 points for C and D. Maximum score: 60 points.</p>
<p><b>TARGET 3 - JAB LIFT AND STRIKE</b> 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.</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p><b>TARGET 4 - GROUND CUT</b> 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</p>	<p>Balls must be struck over the bar. Score: 10 points for A and B. 20 points for C and D. Maximum score: 60 points.</p>
<p><b>TARGET 5 - BALL CONTROL</b> Six grid poles are placed in a line 2 metres apart. Players must begin at a cone, 5 metres from the first pole; jab lift the ball on to the hurl; carry it through the poles; around an end cone which is 5 metres from the final pole and back through the poles to the start. The ball must not be taken in to the hand or dropped at any time.</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p><b>TARGET 6 - LONG PUCK</b> 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.</p>	<p>Score: Up to 60 metres - 5 points per ball. 60-70 metres - 10 points. &gt; 70 metres - 20 points. Maximum score: 40 points.</p>

Maximum Overall Score: 300 points.

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

**Player Characteristics**

- ▶ 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 players are still there to enjoy the experience of participating with their friends, learning new skills etc.
- ▶ Player can be under exam pressure.
- ▶ Understanding of what players are going through; puberty is happening so a lot is going on for the youth. Be aware players can develop at varying rates, (chronological v biological) i.e. players may be the same age but vary in size.
- ▶ Player can crave acceptance from parents, coaches and peers. However, during youth the player seeks more acceptance from their peers than their parents. E.g. they will refuse to listen to what parents say but accept what peers say.
- ▶ Player can have high expectations.
- ▶ Likes playing in a competitive team which share the same objectives.
- ▶ May be quarrelsome and reluctant to communicate.

**14 - 16 SKILL EMPHASIS** (all the previous skills to be constantly practised)

- ▶ 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:
  - judging the flight of the sliotar.
  - meet the ball at the highest point possible in your swing.
  - a "nice" and "tidy" swing.
  - follow through properly.
- ▶ 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.
- ▶ The "Whelehan" lift (see Glossary of Terms).
- ▶ All other skills will be practised during the games.
- ▶ Include occasionally:
  - "Keep Me Uppies" (individual and team).
  - Striking and doubling on the ball as it comes down.



**14 - 16 PHYSICAL FOCUS - ABC'S & RJT'S**

**Movement** - endurance built into your sessions through, drill activity small sided, full sided games using the sliotar, in all activities.

- ▶ 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. This means that some players have to miss your session or reduce what they do!

**Strength**

- ▶ 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 Functional Movement Screening.
- ▶ Core strength - strength in the centre of the body allows the rest of the body to move more freely - appropriate activities to develop same under a suitability qualified coach.

**14 - 16 GAME SPECIFIC**

**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".
- ▶ "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 Man's Land" - striking and catching.
- ▶ "Short Puck Out Game" - if you require "extra" games for your "team", then do so.

**Games Sense**

- ▶ 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 - combine with teammates / pass the ball / support on and off the ball.
- ▶ Decision making.
- ▶ 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".

**SKILLS TARGETS 14 - 16 YEARS**

<p><b>TARGET 1 - GROUND STRIKING</b> Three hurling balls are placed on the line four metres apart. Players must run and strike the balls on the ground into the goals. The balls are placed 25 metres from the goals. Repeat on the alternative side.</p>	<p>Score: 5 points per score. Maximum score: 30 points.</p>
<p><b>TARGET 2 - FREE TAKING</b> Two hurling balls are placed on the 21 metre line as follows: A. 25 metres to right of centre B. 25 metres to left of centre Two hurling balls are placed on the 45 metre line as follows: C. 25 metres to right of centre D. 25 metres to left of centre</p>	<p>Balls must be struck over the bar. Score: 10 points per score. Maximum score: 40 points.</p>
<p><b>TARGET 3 - JAB LIFT AND STRIKE</b> Player starts on a 60 metre mark. Sliotar placed out on a 55 metre mark. He runs, jab lifts to gain possession of the ball and then strikes sliotar over the bar before he reaches the 45 metre line. Players to do this at full pace. Balls must be struck from the following positions: A. Centre of the goals B. 10 metres to right of centre C. 10 metres to left of centre Balls must be struck over the bar. 3 attempts on each side.</p>	<p>Scores can be deducted, at the coaches' discretion, based on less than 100 per cent effort. Score: 10 points per ball right and left side. Maximum score: 60 points.</p>
<p><b>TARGET 4 - GROUND CUT</b> 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. 25 metres to right of centre D. 25 metres to left of centre</p>	<p>Balls must be struck over the bar. Score: 10 points for A and B. 20 points for C and D. Maximum score: 60 points.</p>
<p><b>TARGET 5 - BALL CONTROL</b> Players attack a low ball struck from 50m away. They must gather possession cleanly through a catch or maximum of "one touch". 5 balls in total are attacked.</p>	<p>Scores can be deducted, at the coaches' discretion, based on less than 100 per cent effort. Score: 10 points per controlled ball. 5 points deducted if "two touches" taken. No points if more than "two touches". Maximum score: 50 points.</p>
<p><b>TARGET 6 - LONG PUCK</b> Players must strike a total of four hurling balls from the hand from the end line through a target 10 metre wide. Two strikes from each side. Distance is measured from the first bounce. If end line is crossed prior to striking the ball that puck is null and void.</p>	<p>Score: 60 -75 metres - 5 points per ball 75-90 metres - 10 points &gt; 85 metres - 20 points Maximum score: 80 points.</p>

## 14 - 16 YEARS OLD

### SKILLS TARGETS 14 - 16 YEARS continued

#### TARGET 7 - CATCHING

Players must catch a high ball within a designated 15m x 15m zone struck from 50 metres away. Players must start outside the zone and judge the flight of the ball as it enters. If the ball does not enter the zone in a correct manner the ball is considered void.

Score: 10 points per ball caught.  
Maximum score: 40 points.

#### TARGET 8 - HOOKING

Player 1 (on the 45 metre line with sliotar) - Player 2 (being tested) standing 2-3 metres behind Player 1. 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 to shoot for a point. Player 2 must "hook". Player 1 must try not to avoid the "hook".

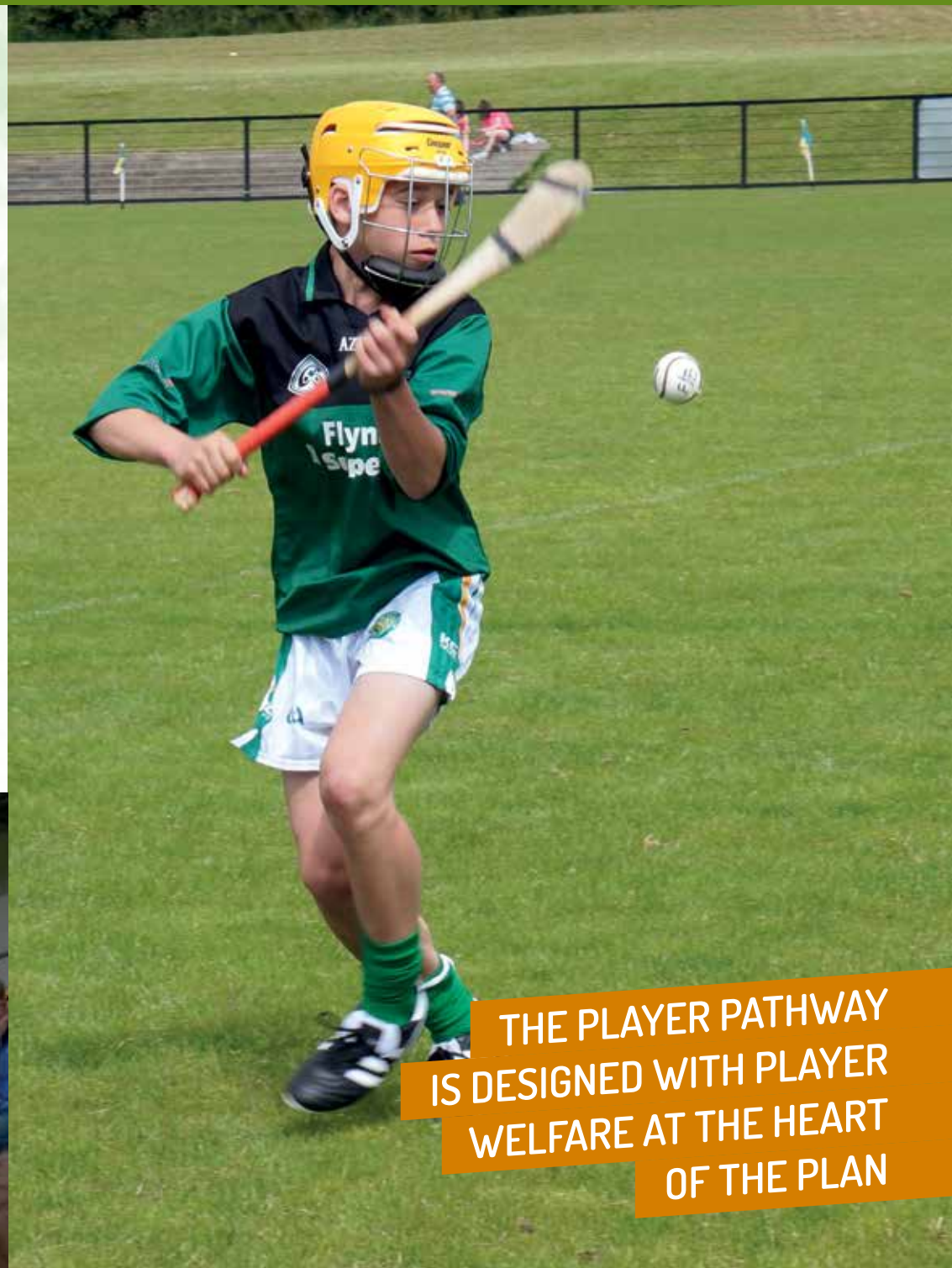
Score: 10 points per "hook"  
Maximum score: 30 points.

#### TARGET 9 - BLOCKING

Player 1 (on the 45 metre line with sliotar) - Player 2 (being tested) standing 5-10 metres in front of Player 1. 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.

Score: 10 points per "block"  
Maximum score: 30 points.

Maximum Overall Score: 420 points.



THE PLAYER PATHWAY  
IS DESIGNED WITH PLAYER  
WELFARE AT THE HEART  
OF THE PLAN



## Player Characteristics

- ▶ 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 players are still there to enjoy the experience of participating with their friends, learning new skills etc.
- ▶ Player can be under exam pressure.
- ▶ Understanding of what players are going through; puberty is happening so a lot is going on for the youth. Be aware players can develop at varying rates, (chronological v biological) i.e. players may be the same age but vary in size.
- ▶ Player can crave acceptance from parents, coaches and peers. However, during youth the player seeks more acceptance from their peers than their parents. e.g. they will refuse to listen to what parents say but accept what peers say.
- ▶ Player can have high expectations.
- ▶ Likes playing in a competitive team which share the same objectives.
- ▶ May be quarrelsome and reluctant to communicate.

## 16 - 18 SKILL EMPHASIS (all the previous skills to be constantly practised)

- ▶ 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.
- ▶ 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.



## 16 - 18 SKILL EMPHASIS continued

- ▶ Include occasionally:
  - sidelines.
  - free taking.
  - “All Around the World” – four edges of the bas.
- ▶ “Keep Me Uppies” (individual and team).
- Striking and doubling on the ball as it comes down.

## 16 - 18 PHYSICAL FOCUS - ABC'S & RJT'S

### Movement

- ▶ 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.

### Strength

- ▶ 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.



**16 - 18 GAME SPECIFIC**

**Games** - The game can be the teacher

- ▶ “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”.
- ▶ “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.
- ▶ “Short Puck out Game” - If you require “extra” games for your “team”, then do so.

**Games Sense**

- ▶ 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 teammate’s 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.

**SKILLS TARGETS 16 - 18 YEARS**

**TARGET 1 - GROUND STRIKE** - (moving player and sliotar)  
 Player 1 (with sliotar) on the 45 metre line, Player 2 (being tested) on the 21 metre line in the centre of the goals. Player 1 feeds sliotar into Player 2, who must double on the sliotar into the goals behind him, whichever side it comes to him.

Score: 10 points per score.  
 5 points per ball doubled on.  
 Maximum score: 50 points.  
 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 - FREE TAKING**

Two hurling balls are placed on the 21 metre line as follows:  
 A. 5 metres from the right sideline  
 B. 5 metres from the left sideline  
 Two hurling balls are placed on the 45 metre line as follows:  
 C. 5 metres from the right sideline  
 D. 5 metres from the left sideline  
 Two hurling balls are placed on the 65 metre line as follows:  
 E. 10 metres from the left of centre  
 F. 10 metres from the right of centre

Balls must be struck over the bar.  
 Score:  
 10 points per score.  
 Maximum score: 60 points.

**TARGET 3 - JAB LIFT, DELANEY HOP AND STRIKE**

Player 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 he strikes sliotar from the hurl over the bar. Players to do this at full pace. Balls must be struck from the following positions:  
 A. Centre of the goals  
 B. 10 metres to right of centre  
 C. 10 metres to left of centre

Balls must be struck over the bar.  
 Scores can be deducted, at the coaches’ discretion, based on less than 100 per cent effort.  
 Score: 20 points per ball.  
 Maximum score: 60 points.

**TARGET 4 - GROUND CUT**

Four hurling balls are placed on 30 metre line as follows:  
 A. 25 metres to right of centre  
 B. 25 metres to left of centre  
 C. Sideline to the right of the goals  
 D. Sideline to the left of the goals

Balls must be struck over the bar.  
 Score:  
 10 points for A and B.  
 20 points for C and D.  
 Maximum score: 60 points.

**TARGET 5 - BALL CONTROL UNDER PRESSURE.**

Player 1 attack a low ball struck from 50m away. Player 2 standing 5 metres behind Player 1. Player 1 must gather possession cleanly through a catch or maximum of “one touch” while under pressure from chasing Player 2. Five balls in total are attacked.

Scores can be deducted, at the coaches’ discretion, based on less than 100 per cent effort.  
 5 points deducted if “two touches” taken.  
 No points if more than “two touches”.  
 Maximum score: 50 points.

## SKILLS TARGETS 16 - 18 YEARS continued

**TARGET 6 - LONG STRIKE AND SCORE**

Players must strike a total of six hurling balls from the hand over the bar. One strike from each side at each distance. Balls must go over the bar.

Score:  
65 metres - 5 points per ball  
80 metres - 10 points  
90 metres - 20 points  
Maximum score: 70 points.

**TARGET 7 - CATCHING UNDER PRESSURE**

Player 1 must catch a high ball within a designated 15m x 15m zone struck from 50 metres away. Player 2 places pressure on Player 1 as he attempts to catch the ball. Player 1 must start outside the zone and judge the flight of the ball as it enters and must be airborne when catching the ball.

If the ball does not enter the zone in a correct manner the ball is considered void.

Score: 10 points per ball caught.  
Maximum score: 40 points.

**TARGET 8 - HOOKING**

Player 1 (on the 20 metre line with sliotar) - Player 2 (being tested) standing 2-3 metres behind Player 1. On coaches' call: Player 1 sprints off, with Player 2 in hot pursuit. Player 1 can strike the sliotar and shoot for goal at any stage before he reaches the 14 metre line, Player 2 must "hook". Player 1 must try not to avoid the "hook".

Score: 10 points per "hook"  
Maximum score: 30 points.

**TARGET 9 - BLOCKING**

Player 1 (on the 45 metre line with sliotar) - Player 2 (being tested) standing 5-10 metres in front of Player 1. 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" by judging the flight of the sliotar only.

Score: 10 points per "block"  
Maximum score: 30 points.

Maximum Overall Score: 450 points.

WE ARE CONCERNED WITH  
THE LONG TERM DEVELOPMENT OF  
EACH AND EVERY PLAYER TO REACH  
THEIR OWN MAXIMUM POTENTIAL

**A**

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

**All around the world** – A player keeps 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 bas itself, (3) the edge of the toe of the hurl, (4) and the other side of the bas. Helps to challenge the player to improve his hand eye hurl co-ordination and develop good wrist dexterity.

**B**

**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** – 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 keeps the sliotar up in the air, as many consecutive times as he can, while bouncing the sliotar on one side of the bas only. Improves hand eye hurl co-ordination.

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

**C**

**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 body's 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.

**D**

**Delaney hop** – A move whereby the player bats the sliotar from the bas, 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.

**F**

**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.

**G**

**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 opponent's “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.

**H**

**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.

**K**

**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.

**N**

**No man's 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.

## P

**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 off 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** – The mental needs that motivate a person to achieve goals and perform certain activities.

## S

**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** – The player stands tall but relaxed, with their hands down by their sides. The distance from the ground to their wrist is the correct length. The player should be able to hold the hurl at the top and the hurl should be just touching the ground. Traditionally the term was “Hurl to be hip height”.



**Speed** – 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** – 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.

## T

**Three goals and in** – A traditional game played with one goalie and a combination of 1 v 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 bas 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, it is simply the function of training volume and training intensity which can be expressed by the following formula: training load = training volume (RPE) x training duration. Distinguished by the three colour codes: Green – good to train again; Yellow – can train but should avoid high intensity; Red – body not recovered, player can be in danger of overreaching and be susceptible to injury.

**Troy tap up** – A move whereby the player taps the sliotar from the ground to his hand.

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

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

## W

**\*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.

**Whelehan pick up** – A move whereby the player lifts the sliotar from the ground with the use of the bas of the hurl and the foot.