

11 Away Trips and Overnight Stays



Many teams and clubs participate in trips away from home throughout the year. Such trips are often viewed as a means by which young teams and players may be rewarded for their endeavours at the end of their season or as a means by which greater team morale and camaraderie can be developed, regardless of age.

Attending inter-county matches, at an away venue, is a popular means by which young people may see and attend games where their chosen code is played at a high level of skill and competitiveness. Visiting other clubs and playing matches against teams of a similar age group in other areas or counties will also give younger players an insight into the broad geographical nature and community ethos of the GAA while creating greater camaraderie with their colleagues and within their own clubs.

The pre-planning and detailed organising of such trips for younger players will require a high degree of care and preparation and adults should always remember the key roles of responsibilities they have during such trips on behalf of their club, on behalf of parents and on behalf of the young people themselves.

Pre trip preparations

- A detailed programme of activity should be approved in advance at Club level following agreement with the other club(s) involved in the away trip.
- Where possible a member of your organising group should be familiar with the away venue, should visit the venue if deemed necessary and ensure themselves that the venue can cater for the entire programme of activities. This is particularly relevant should an overnight stay be required.
- Parental/guardian consent must be obtained in writing so as to permit any young person under 18 yrs of age participate in any organised trip. A separate Parental Consent Form (See Appendix 3) should be completed for each child on the trip.
- Young people (of an appropriate age) and their parents/guardians should sign a form agreeing to abide by the programme and to any agreed procedures that relate to the organised trip.
- An agreed code of behaviour, specifically designed for the trip, should be discussed, outlined and agreed with all players and adults that are participating on the trip.

- Medical information as deemed relevant by the parents/guardians of players should be made known to the leaders of the Club's trip. Club leaders should also be made aware as to any medication that players may be taking and what may be required of them in the case of an emergency. (See Parental Consent Form Appendix 3)
- Such information, including food or other related allergies should have previously been recorded on the annual/registration form of each under age club member (See Juvenile Application Form Appendix 4).
- A detailed programme which includes the following should be presented to all players and their parents/guardians:
 - A time schedule of departure and arrival at your destination.
 - Full information about the trip; including all activities and events planned.
 - Emergency contact numbers during the trip.
- All adults accompanying the under age team should be made aware as to what their responsibilities are and what role(s) they may have during the trip.
- It is the club's responsibility to ensure that the trip itself and all activities taking place throughout the trip adhere to insurance cover, that all participants are eligible members of the GAA injury scheme and that the activities of the trip do not compromise the conditions of the GAA injury scheme or any additional insurance policy.
- Where it is deemed necessary the organisers of all such trips should seek and gain the permission of their County Board prior to announcing the details of the programme to their members.

Transport

Transport is a central element of any trip taken by an under age teams. It is advisable not to use members' cars when travelling on away trips. Most Club trips avail of bus or coach transport and it is

essential therefore that all aspects of the transport arrangements are checked out and agreed in advance. Safety should be considered a priority at all times, regardless of cost.

The following should be considered:

- All vehicles should be well-maintained and roadworthy and should be properly taxed and insured.
- Transport should be fully accessible for people with disabilities whether they are members of the group or for others who may accompany them.
- Seat belts must be worn at all times on buses and coaches.
- Alternative access to transport should be available in case of emergency.
- Vehicles should be equipped with a First Aid kit



and a fire extinguisher and leaders of the group should be familiar with how to use them.

- When hiring a vehicle information should be sought as to the company's reputation and reliability.
- Ensure that passengers remain safely seated at all times.

During the trip

- It is essential that at least one individual with first aid qualifications be part of your organising group and that this individual be present or available throughout the trip.
- Young people must be adequately supervised throughout the trip as per our recommended ratios of adults to young people. This ratio may differ depending on the age group of participants, the activities to be undertaken, whether there is an overnight stay, if the trip is abroad etc.
- A generally acceptable ratio of 1:8, i.e. one adult per eight young people, is deemed in most instances to be a normal sports activity ratio. Organisers of club trips should always be mindful of ensuring that additional adults accompany their group in case of emergencies or unforeseen circumstances.
- There must be at least two adults of each gender with mixed groups.
- Adults are required to be familiar with the agreed rules on smoking and on the consumption of alcohol during the trip, as outlined in the GAA Code of Behaviour. As a basic minimum, adults are required to avoid smoking while working with young players and must not consume alcohol or non prescribed drugs while young players are in their care.

Overnight Stays

- When participating in an overnight stay a specific ratio of adults to children should have been agreed in advance. This ratio, which is very

dependent on the age category of the children/ young people, may also vary should the group be participating in certain outdoor activities or in watersports etc.

- Check out the proposed accommodation for children/young people and Club leaders. Ensure that it complies with health and safety regulations, is accessible, is of a suitable standard and is appropriate for the particular group and programme.
- When availing of overnight accommodation adults should not share a room with a child. If exceptional or emergency circumstances so dictate and the presence of an adult is deemed necessary there should be more than one child in the room with the adult.
- Where children and young people are sharing a room it should be done so with others of the same age grouping and gender. It is also preferably that the sharing of rooms be done with fellow club members at an inter club event.

Review of trip

A full review of the trip should involve all who participated from the club and the result of the review should be retained and reviewed if and when the group intend organising another or similar trip or if the club intends re-visiting the area or the host club again.