

9 Alcohol & Substance Abuse Prevention Programme

The subject of alcohol, substances and drugs can be sensitive and may at times be a daunting matter to broach at club level. For many reasons, be they personal or otherwise, this can also cause discomfort and stress for many. The GAA has designed and is implementing a comprehensive programme for responding to alcohol and drug related issues at all levels of the Association so as to assist us in awareness raising on this important matter.

The GAA Alcohol & Substance Prevention Programme (ASAP) is designed to help clubs and individuals respond in a positive way to the difficulties that alcohol and other drugs may cause at club level or for individuals in our clubs.

The ASAP Programme is aimed at both our adult and our younger players. As we continue to study the use of alcohol and drugs the GAA is anxious to develop an expertise and a level of knowledge within the Association so as to prevent this initial abuse of drugs and alcohol. We further aim to educate our members on this subject and to respond as appropriate to misuse and to incidents that arise from such abuse in as appropriate a manner as possible.

When fully implemented, the aim of the ASAP Programme is to have a team of trained ASAP officers at Club, County, Provincial and national level.

The ASAP Programme proposes that every club should develop a Club Drug and Alcohol Policy as a roadmap for what can be achieved in their local area. The manner in which they may commence this work plus a range of other guidance is outlined in greater detail in the ASAP manual.

The ASAP Programme is designed to operate at three levels as follows:



PREVENTION

This aspect of the Programme is designed to prevent the abuse of alcohol and other drugs in the first instance. The prevention strategies explore how to reduce the exposure that young people may have to alcohol or drugs and outlines how we can contribute to a more positive approach on such matters.

EDUCATION

This part of the Programme is designed to raise knowledge and confidence levels around alcohol and other drug related issues. It examines how we can also address alcohol and drugs matters in the context of safeguarding our younger members and as a child welfare and safety matter.

RESPONSE

The response section of the programme is designed to assist our clubs as they respond to drug or alcohol related incidents. It emphasises the close co-operation that should be developed with other agencies and the need to deal with drug and alcohol incidents in a sensitive and confidential manner.

For further details, please check out the GAA Club Manual for Dealing with Drug and Alcohol Related Issues or check out the ASAP web site at www.gaa.ie/asap.