



Colin Regan & Caroline Currid

This Sporting Life: Why encouraging positive lifestyle choices off the field can contribute to the player on it



What is the ASAP programme?

- A unique collaboration between the GAA and the HSE
- The first programme of its kind introduced by a National Governing Body
- Designed to reduce the harm caused by drugs and alcohol
- Aimed at all GAA members, to be delivered by the club ASAP Officers with support from county, provincial and national level officials
- Includes a manual, DVD, and website offering support, information and best practice



What does it require and what does it do?

- Requires **every club** to appoint an ASAP officer (1,400+ to date)
- Helps clubs create their own **Drug and Alcohol policy**
- Specifies appropriate measures of
 - Education
 - Prevention
 - Responseto any and all drug and alcohol related matters for all our members – players, coaches, administrators, volunteers



What has this got to do with coaching our youth players?



Everything.....



Alcohol consumption and sport

- Link between alcohol consumption and sport well established internationally
- The GAA is no exception
 - Irish biggest drinkers in Europe with high occurrence of binge-drinking
 - prompted GAA to set up Task Force in 2004
 - GAA endorsed the research into Gaelic Games and alcohol consumption by Trinity College in 2010



Alcohol use amongst GAA players

- N=960; Mean age 24.0 years (S.D. 5.2). 90% current drinkers; 8% smokers
- 31% regularly exceeded the recommended 21 standard drinks per week; 54% binged once a week
- Over 87% of the 864 drinkers reported at least one harm due to their drinking
- All alcohol misuse outcomes were higher than the national average for males of a similar age

‘Alcohol use amongst amateur sportsmen in Ireland’ – O’Farrell et al (2010)

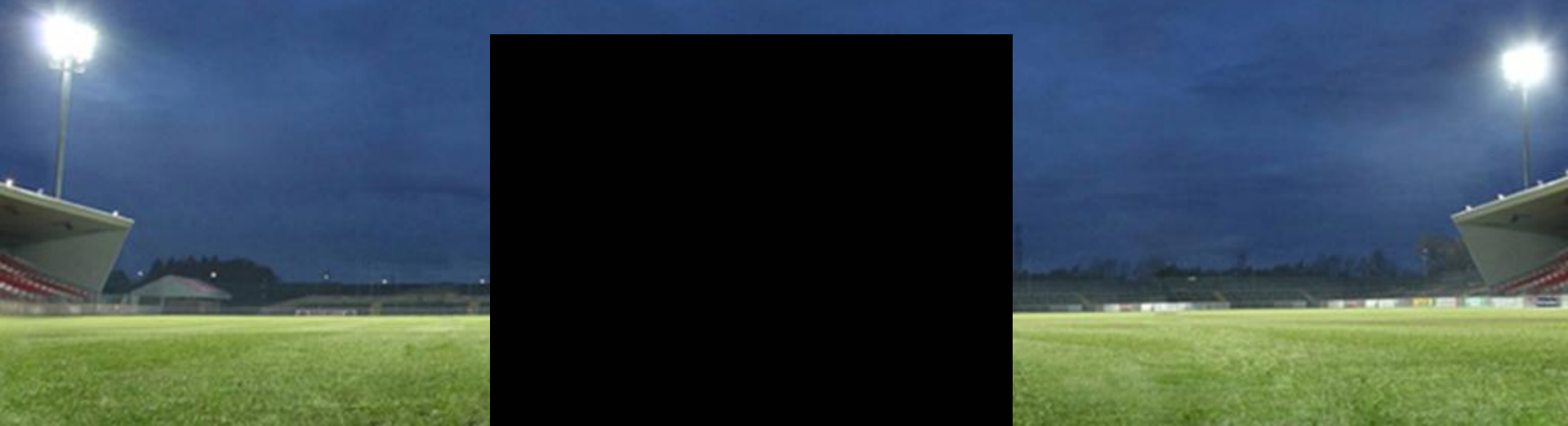
GAA players v Irish population

Reported	GAA Players (TCD Research)	General Public (SLAN Survey)
Binge-drinking at least once a week	53%	40%
Fighting while under the influence	31.5%	15%
Exceeded recommended 21 units of alcohol per week	30%	15%
Suffered alcohol related harm in last 12 months	87%	49%

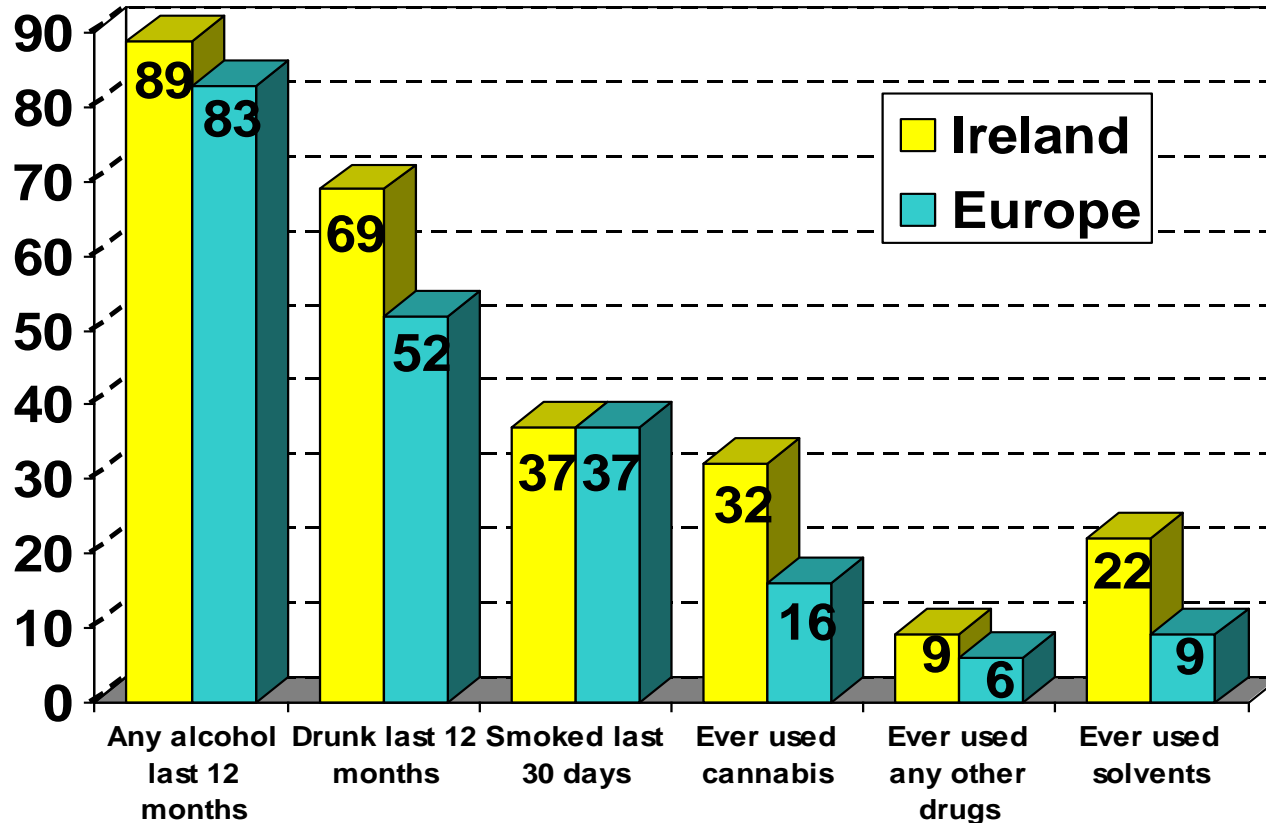


Why coaches matters

- Coaches rank alongside parents and teachers as most significant role models in young people's lives
- Personal skills delivered on the training field mirror those espoused in best-practise drug and alcohol education models
- Coaches in unique position to identify those with potential problems
- Trust between players and enables action to be taken



Irish 16 year-olds European comparison



Why participation in the GAA helps

Risk and Protective Factors

Protective Factors	Risk Factors
Positive outlook	Early use of tobacco, alcohol and other substances
Self confidence and positive self belief	Mental health problems
Good communication skills	Aggression/impulsivity
Appropriate Boundaries/supervision	Risk taking
Assertiveness	Easily influences by peers
Strong sense of community	No sense of belonging to or pride in community
Opportunities to socialize in a safe environment	Lack of facilities and amenities



Players use of Alcohol & Other Drugs - GAA Coaches survey (2009)

- Surveyed 500 GAA coaches - 347 responded
- 64% reported alcohol as most problematic drug
- 26% reported they had to deal directly with problems related to their players' alcohol and/or drug use
- Only 6% felt confident in handling such situations; 47% felt 'unsure' or 'not confident' to deal with a player who had a problem
- 84% stated they would attend specific training for coaches on how to deal with problems caused by alcohol or other drugs

'Team Problems Caused by Alcohol and other drugs for GAA Coaches'
(Murphy & Gottsche, 2009)



Performance Coaching

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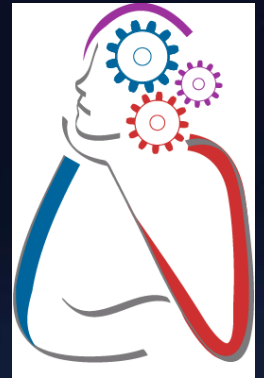


Objectives

- A Pressured Mindset
- Skills to cope with Pressure
- Social Identity
- Environmental Issues
- Communicating with our Players



A Pressured Mindset



What does this Mindset look like??



Skills to cope with Pressure:

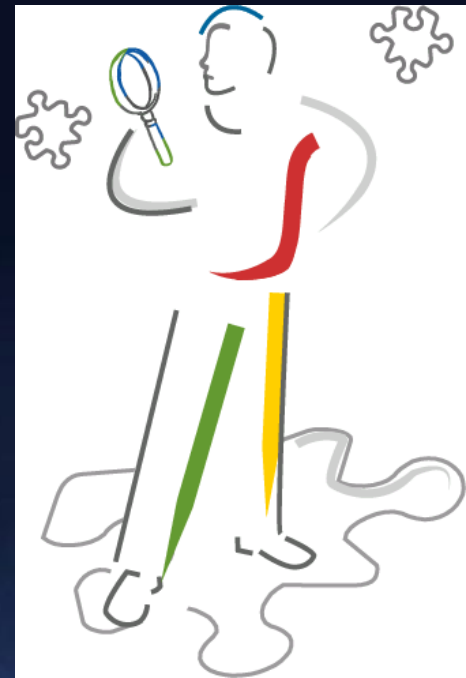
- Listening
- Communicating
- Ask the questions
- Buddy System
- Influence of advice from Coaches



Social Identity

❖ What impact do others have on players?

❖ How do we as coaches, parents, teachers help to deal with this??





Environmental Issues

- What beliefs do we have from living in a certain environment?
- What are the consequences of having these beliefs?
- How do we remove these beliefs?



Examples



So what are we doing?

Youth Player Education

- Sligo pilot project with Foroige
- 2 clubs' U16 panels
- 8 week drugs and alcohol education programme
- Training the trainers in facilitation



So what are we doing?

Coach training and education

- Brief Intervention training for coaches using the SAOR Model

- S – Support
- A – Ask and Assess
- O – Offer assistance
- R – Refer



Go Raibh Maith Agaibh

