

# PLAYER PATHWAY

PLAY TO STAY WITH THE GAA

- ADULT  
18+ YRS
- LATE TEENAGE  
16-17 YRS
- MID TEENAGE  
14-15 YRS
- EARLY TEENAGE  
12-13 YRS
- LATE GO GAMES  
10-11 YRS
- EARLY GO GAMES  
7-9 YRS
- NURSERY  
4-6 YRS

## THE COACH

- Variation. Coach open to trial & error
- Well organised/planned sessions
- Maximise all coaching resources to increase knowledge
- Guide children. Don't tell them
- Be a role model
- Set Fun GAA activities to be played between sessions involving adults

# AGE 4-6 FOOTBALL

## ENVIRONMENT

- FUN is number one priority
- Coach to player ratio 1:6
- Every child has their own ball.
- Discovery/Exploration
- Trial & Error
- Variation in Equipment using colours & different sizes

### TECHNICAL SKILLS

#### Kicking

Ground, Dribble, Stop, Bounce Kick, Kick from two hands.

#### Handling

Two hand catch, one hand catch, body catch, different sized balls, Two hand bounce, one hand bounce,

#### Pick Up

Hands Only, Hand & Toe in a stationary position. Striking, Rolling, Bowling, Throwing.

#### Movement

Use four steps, knee tap solo.

### TACTICAL PROWESS

#### Decision Making

2v1 Piggy in the middle  
3v1 Piggy in the middle (roll ball to pass only)

#### Target Games

Aim into or at a target to improve technique e.g. Knock the tower.

### PSYCHOLOGICAL COACHABILITY OF PLAYERS

Develop listening skills – Simon Says Game

**Running** Marching, running forwards, backwards & sideways shuffle.

#### Jumping/Landing

1 leg/both legs/variety of directions

**Agility** Chasing games, evasion games. Encourage sidestep & evasion. Balance Exercise – Stand on 1 leg, rope walks, 1 on 1 balance games.

#### Coordination

Hand Eye- cups and saucers  
Eye Foot-Dribble  
Eye Foot-Bean Bag Solo

#### Zones

Used in games for early development of positional sense.

Stops bunching

Small sided games only. 2v2, 4v4 Max.

Premium on all players getting touches. player development – Max 7v7

## THE PLAYER

- Only goes flat out – no sense of pace
- Is self-centred – will want their own ball
- Has little concern for team activities
- Physical & Physiological state of boys & girls is very similar
- Has limited sense of time & space
- Has a short attention span

### PHYSICAL FITNESS

### PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

Develop basic awareness of performance through outcomes e.g. Targets, scores,

### TEAM PLAY

## THE GAME

- Small sided games 2v2, 3v3, 4v4 MAX
- First touch soft football
- Each child has their own Water Bottle & Gum Shield
- Have a ball per child at all sessions.
- Child brings their own ball



**WARM UP ACTIVITY**

All players warm up together.

Any pulse raiser can be used here – Bulldog, Stuck in The Mud, Chasing Games.

Encourage players to run at speed in warm up.

**NURSERY FOOTBALL STATIONS MODEL**



**1 SKILL: EMPTY THE YARD**

Set up as diagram

Football split between both teams

On whistle players kick balls continuously into other team's yard

On 2nd Whistle – team with the least balls in the yard wins

Reset Footballs and play again

**2 GAME 3V3 END ZONE (TEAM PLAY)**

Outline pitch clearly with cones and clear end zone

Players run with ball & pass to each other by throwing/kicking the ball

Players score by getting the ball into end zone

Restart game with different player after each score



**3 FUN GAME – CHASE TAILS (SPEED)**

Outline playing area clearly with cones

Each player creates their tail by tucking bib at back

On coaches whistle players run around area for 45 seconds

Players try to take as many bibs of others as possible

At end of game, check for how many bibs players have got and any players who were not caught.

**4 SKILL: PIGGY IN THE MIDDLE (CATCHING)**

Set up three cones in a triangle shape

Player stands at each cone with one ball between 3.

1 player stands in the middle – Piggy in the middle

Players on cones pass the ball trying to maintain possession

Regression: Player in the middle is on his/her knees

**5 ABC ACTIVITY: ROB THE NEST (BALANCE)**

Set up three even teams as in diagram

Place bibs in centre of the grid

Players hop to centre on one leg and bring 1 bib back to their team.

Continue until all bibs are gone from the middle  
Ask players to change leg each time.

Regression: Hop on both legs or skip

**Key Principles**

- Total coaching time to be one hour
- Players to spend 8 minutes at each station
- A coach is assigned to manage time spent at each station.  
On his/her whistle all groups move on.
  - Each station has 1/2 coaches.
- Coach stays at station for whole session. Only players move between stations.
- Max number of players per station is 6. More players = More stations

