

## Gambling, Alcohol & Drug Education Package – Smoke Free Club



Club	St Mary's GAA
County	Donegal
Location	Convoy
Rural/ Urban	Rural
Codes	Football & Ladies Football
Membership (2016)	527

### Case study- St Mary's GAA proud sponsors of fresh air

#### Plan

#### Supporting Document: GAA Smoke free Policy [INSERT HERE]

St Mary's were inspired by St John's Volunteers in Wexford who were the first club in Ireland to completely ban smoking in the club grounds back in 2014. Executive members in St Marys decided to go completely smoke- free after a proposal by Lorena Barron, the Children's Officer and member of

the Healthy Club project team. The mother-of-two, whose daughter Ellie is captain of the Donegal U14 ladies gaelic team, said

*"I just didn't think it was fair that I could be watching a game and someone could light up a cigarette beside me and send smoke over the dug-outs," she said. "We want to encourage a healthy lifestyle and this is one way of doing that. It's not about being anti-smoker either. Smokers will have to go outside the gate and I'm hoping it will discourage others, especially our younger members, from taking up the habit and perhaps help some to give up smoking altogether."*

The step by step guide to becoming a smoke free club is outlined below.

### **Partners**

*Within the club:*

- Club Executive
- Members of the Health Club Project group
- Parents
- Coaches
- Players

*Outside the club:*

- County Board & County Health & Wellbeing Committee
- Local national school
- GAA Community & Health department
- HSE Smoking Cessation Officer in Donegal
- Donegal Football Team's GP and medic
- Ambassadors: Ireland's Fittest Family .....
- Local newspapers
- Local print company

The partnership with the local national school was very effective and the model has been replicated in numerous clubs since. Each class was asked to enter the smoke free poster competition and the winners were announced at the smoke free launch in the club. It was a really effective way of engaging the children and getting them on board.

### **Activity**

Promoting the countdown to becoming a smoke free club around the parish was an important step. The club did this through various communication channels; word of mouth, group texts, emails, social media, club website, club notes and local newspapers. The club promoted the launch date and encouraged everyone in the community to attend and support the healthier smoke free club environment.

The team secured smoke free signage and the club is now the picture of the health decorated with plenty of signage and posters from the local national school. The scoreboard was even transformed with smoke- free messages.

Sean Dunnion, County Chairman joined Conor Mc Dermot, Club Chairman at St Marys to officially launch the club's smoke- free grounds by cutting the green ribbon.

Guest speakers on the day included: Ciaran Mc Loughlin, Chairman of the National Health & Wellbeing Committee, Aoife O'Brien, GAA National Healthy Club Coordinator, Fiona Boyle, HSE Smoking Cessation Officer in Donegal and Charlie Mc Manus, GP and medic to Donegal men's team.



## **The Club**

St Mary's were the first club in Ulster to go completely smoke free and received considerable media coverage (both locally and nationally) and health sector praise for their leadership. To date 50% of Healthy Clubs across the 32 counties are now completely smoke free and leading the way for tobacco free Ireland. The club's case study was promoted on GAA.ie website and has inspired other clubs to follow suit.

## **Benefits for clubs going smoke free:**

- Set a positive example in the community
- Considerable media coverage

- Increased awareness about the dangers of smoking for the younger members
- Strong partnership with the local national schools
- Reduce the impact of tobacco & second-hand smoke (SHS) on sports performance
- Protecting children and young people from tobacco
- Praise from parents
- Cleaner and safer GAA club grounds

National Healthy Club Coordinator, Aoife O'Brien says *"we want to set a positive example for all our members and de-normalise any association between the GAA and tobacco usage. We want to protect our members, visitors and volunteers from the dangers of tobacco and second- hand smoke exposure and reduce the initiation of smoking amongst young people in particular"*.

## Smoke Free Action Plan Sample

<b>Goal/Aim:</b>		To create a smoke free environment to protect the health of all individuals involved with the club by keeping them safe from all tobacco related harm.				
<b>Tasks</b>		<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Responsibility &amp; Timeline</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Target</b>	
	Contact the Executive to discuss adopting the GAA's Smoke Free Policy	– GAA's Smoke Free Policy	Healthy Club Team	September	The committee in agreement	
A.	Use the GAA's Smoke Free Clubs Presentation to highlight benefits	– GAA Smoke free presentation	Healthy Club Team	September	The committee in agreement	
B.	Adopt/adapt the GAA's Smoke Free Policy to suit your club	– GAA's Smoke free Policy	Healthy Club Team & Club Chair	November	Policy adopted	
C.	Decide on smoking working group (consider local partners)	– Volunteers	Healthy Club Team	November	At least 2 dedicated members	
D.	Consider a countdown to going tobacco free	– Countdown graphic/date on social media	Healthy Club Team & Club PRO	November	Visible on Club's social media channels	
E.	Make contact with local relevant partners (Ash Ireland/Quit.ie/www.want2stop/local health promotion officer/certain skillsets/professionals in the community)	– Leaflets – Booklets etc.	Smoke free Working group	November	Support and advice from partners	
F.	Access & erect smoke- free signage for your club	– Outdoor Signage	Smoke free Working group	December	Signage to be visible at club entrance, pitch side, changing rooms etc	
G.	Discuss the potential for holding smoking cessation talks in the club/ Distributing quit resources/materials	– Trained officers with certain skills & material – Resources from Quit.ie/www.wanttostop	A.N other	December	Support for smokers in the club and community	
H.	Contact local pharmacies/ gyms for support if possible	– Smoking medications – Consultations	A.N Other	December	Discounted resources for smokers	
I.	Link in with local schools- smoke free poster competition	– Medal/prize for winners	A.N Other	January	Agreement with school principal(s)	