

## Mental Fitness Packages

### Stress Control Package



*Participants from the How Are You Today programme delivered in Colmcilles GAA club*

### Case study- How Are You today programme St Colmcilles GAA, Meath

Club	St Colmcilles GAA Club
County	Meath
Location	Bettystown/Laytown area
Rural/ Urban	Rural
Codes	Football & Ladies Football, Hurling
Membership (2016)	1781

Promotional Video: [https://www.facebook.com/pg/rtetoday/videos/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/rtetoday/videos/?ref=page_internal)

### Plan

**Supporting Document: GAA Mental Health Charter [INSERT HERE]**

Members of the St. Comcilles Healthy Club project team developed the “How are you feeling today” programme in 2013 with the help of Genio Trust, to give their community a focal point while at the

same time providing personal development skills through initiatives such as mindfulness classes, health and nutrition classes, dance classes, card games and facilitating a men's shed on their grounds.

The area had seen a rapid influx of people over the last number of years, increasing *'from 3,000 to 20,000 in the last 10 years and still going'* according to a member of St Colmcille's GAA Healthy Club team. However the infrastructure needed to accommodate such a growth in population had lagged behind and the community had become disjointed with no *'central point'*. The HCP Committee felt *'...that within the community we felt we weren't as much of a factor as we would like to be'*.

## Partners

*Within the club:* Club Executive and certain members of the club with specific skill sets and roles e.g. personal trainer, parents, fluent Gaelic speaker etc. Each class had a specific coordinator whose details are advertised on the website and club notes.

*Outside the club:* Genio Trust <https://www.genio.ie/>, Mindfulness Practitioner, Meath Local Sports Partnership, Men's Shed Ireland <http://menssheds.ie/>, Louth Meath Education. These external partners provided the expertise and resources required for the classes.

## Activity

Classes included Mindfulness and Relaxation, Nutrition, Ballroom Dancing, Men's Shed, Card Games, Caife agus Chat and Computer Classes. All classes were free and open to everyone in the community and one of the most popular, mindfulness, which is still going strong today, attracts 30- 40 regular adults on a weekly basis. However, many more have come and gone and benefitted from the classes.

The majority of attendees were not members of St. Colmcilles club and had no previous connection to the club. At least 80% of all participants felt that the initiative had a good/excellent impact on their awareness, knowledge and skills around maintaining health and wellbeing,

*"I feel my life has changed, for years I suffered with panic and anxiety and now with my class every Tuesday, which I would never miss, I have found coping skills."*

*'I'm retired I had a lot of problems with depression so to get involved helped me enormously', and 'it just changed my life for the better it gave me a different outlook'.*

The programme was funded it was free for participants to attend and this may have been one of the critical factors in getting the programme off the ground. It is something to keep in mind when planning other programmes advises one of the HCP team members.

The club has a designated section on the website as well as a newsletter for Healthy Club updates and "How are you today" programme information. They also use the club's social media platforms to promote initiatives [http://www.cilles.com/?page\\_id=11055](http://www.cilles.com/?page_id=11055)

## The Club

As well as the many benefits the programme has brought to participants and the wider community, the club is also seeing benefits as participants have become more engaged in club activities with 92% joining other club social activities and 82% had continued or increased support for club fundraising.

The fact the programme was aimed at community development meant that *'the club opened up not just to GAA people but opened up to everyone'*. As one member of the HCP team explained *'The objective is that the people of the community see the club as their community. That we are St. Colmcille's community GAA football club right but we are not just about football we are about the community. We are part of community and we want the community to be part of us'*. This evidently translated back to participants:

*'...once I heard it was for the community and for people I thought it was a wonderful thing'.*

*'...you didn't have to be a full GAA player. I joined the photographic club at the start here and then I started to play cards'.*