

IRFU Welcoming Clubs Programme



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Women's Sport in Ireland

The research tells us that there is a real need to encourage women to take part in sport since only one in 5 Irish women do more than 30 minutes of physical activity per day /5 days a week which is the recommendation of the World Health Council.

There is a need to encourage young women to be involved in sport since the numbers of teenagers is far lower than boys and the two main "drop out" times are 12/14 year olds (linked to being self-conscious, changing, participating with boys) and at exam time (pressure from parents)

Opportunities in Ireland

There is an obvious need to get women and girls more active for health reasons but there are growing opportunities in Ireland for representative rugby a) The introduction of Age Grade representative rugby at Provincial level b) the women's World Cup takes place in France in 2014 c) The 6 Nations occurs every season and d) The Road to Rio qualification process is underway culminating in the Olympics in 2016

Why do women want to play rugby?

In the background the success of the Irish team and Provincial teams has created a sport which is "high profile", "sexy" and which young people want to be associated with.

Primary School Children – parents encourage their children to play the game because of the respect associated with it, it teaches their children team work, it is challenging, in a safe environment and inclusive. It is also great fun to be involved with.

Teenagers – the girls are attracted for several reasons which include fun, fitness, social (meet the boys) it's different from the other traditionally female sports and the high profile of the professional game.

Adults – high performance athletes are attracted by the competitive opportunities as well as it being fun, the fitness aspect and the social outcomes.

How to retain the women in the game

The main aspect is to have an understanding of what their wants and needs are. The general needs are fun, fitness and the social, but for the performance athlete they need the coaching/Physio/ conditioning and above all they want to be respected & valued by their club as an equal member.