**Athletics Ireland Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2016**

1. **Introduction**

Athletics Ireland has continued the work initialised by Dr Iggy Ó Muircheartaigh on Mental Health & Wellbeing as part of our continued association with the HSE Sporting Alliance and the National Office for Suicide Prevention. Kieron Stout, National Children’s Officer now represents Athletics Ireland on this committee. *YourMentalHealth*.*ie* is promoted by Athletics Ireland as the primary place to learn about mental health and how to support yourself and others as part of the #littlethings campaign.

1. **Athletics Ireland Mental Health & Wellbeing support strategy**

***Our purpose;***

To promote and signpost mental health and wellbeing services to young people, athletes, sports leaders and parents involved in athletics.

***Our audience;***

1. Children, young people & athletes
2. Coaches & leaders
3. Parents & guardians

***Their requirements;***

1. Signposting of support services
2. Training and education
3. Critical incident support

***Children, young people and athletes;***

* Sign-posting of support services
* Anti-bullying, Cyberbullying and wellness awareness workshops – Athletics Ireland
* Resilience & coping workshops – Jigsaw

***Coaches, leaders and parents***

* Sign-posting of support services,
* Wellness awareness workshops – Athletics Ireland
* Lifeskills training from Aware – online courses
* Critical incidentsupport

1. **Support initiatives & training**

**Consequences of Social Media & well-being workshop for young people**

In 2015 AAI launched a new workshop for young people. This workshop is about the consequences of sharing personal information on social media, the rights that young people have and most importantly where they can go to get help. Since 2015 over 150 young people and volunteers have attended our consequences & wellbeing workshop

**Children’s anti-bullying workshop**

In 2016 AAI launched an anti-bullying workshop for children and piloted this programme in Dunboyne AC to two groups of children 11/12 years and mid-teens. After a month the pilot programme was reviewed and it was acknowledged that it had measurable and notable success in increasing the awareness of bullying and reducing the instances at the club. Supporting posters designed by the children where produced to be displayed at the club.

**Mental health and Wellbeing web resource**

In 2015 AAI developed a webpage signposting support services for 25 mental health and wellbeing organisations from Aware to the Samaritans. On one single page anybody in need of support can find a description of the service and how to make contact. This wellbeing resource page is available on the Athletics Ireland website at <http://www.athleticsireland.ie/juvenile/child-welfare/mental-health-wellbeing-in-athletics>

Kieron Stout has completed First Aid in mental Health training with the HSC in Northern Ireland and Safetalk and Asist Suicide First Aid training with the HSE in Ireland. He has also completed Ambassador training in the Child Exploitation and Online Protection with the National Crime Agency in the UK on the threats of social media and cyberbullying.