Limavady gets behind Football for Peace

FOOTBALL for Peace Ireland, a joint venture between the Irish Football Association (IFA), the Football Association of Ireland (FAI), and Inishowen Rural Development (IRDL), was launched in Limavady and Derry (Northern Ireland), and Inishowen (Republic of Ireland). This programme is based on a successful pilot programme, known as the Gateway Soccer scheme, was carried out by Justice Associates, which was extremely positive about the perceived affect of Football 4 Peace on both the children and coaches involved in terms of their personal and social development. There was a clear and measurable change in the views and attitudes of the participants as evidenced in the Pre and Post Programme Student Surveys. The model of using a football coaching programme as an aid to reconciliation as well as sports development networks has been thoroughly validated. We recognise the potential of Football for Peace as a model that could be more widely used.

The Football 4 Peace programme has gained international reputation with its ground-breaking work in using sport as a tool for developing conflict prevention and peaceful co-existence in the Middle East. It is a large scale, grass roots project which brings young Arab and Jewish people together to experience a values-based football programme in Israel. The University of Brighton and the British Council have been instrumental in taking the Football4Peace programme through its development. This coaching manual is an adapted version of the one used with great success in Israel and has been devised at the University of Brighton.

In conjunction with the partnership of the University of Ulster and the Letterkenny Institute of Technology who are developing partnerships that will aid in the sustaining of the programme. This will strengthen the Football for Peace model in a senior academic roll of the North West regions of Ireland and co inside the developing partnership of the Northern Irish F.A. and the Republic of Ireland F.A.

Also speaking at the launch, Raymond Kennedy, President of the IFA said: “Football 4 Peace Ireland is an innovative and challenging project which celebrates respect for diversity through the medium of football. The IFA is delighted to support this project moving forward as it supports and compliments our commitment to the promotion of Football For All.

“We believe the Value Based Coaching involved in the Football 4 Peace Ireland programme is a fun, safe and inclusive way of promoting respect for difference amongst young people in a meaningful and sustainable way”.

Speaking as CEO for the FAI John Delaney said: “Football is a powerful tool for uniting people all over the world and I am delighted and proud to be working closely with our colleagues in the IFA on the Football 4 Peace Ireland project. Football is the largest participation sport in Ireland, north and south and we believe firmly in using it as a tool to break down barriers and prejudice based on gender, religion and social or ethnic background.

“The importance of coaching in this process cannot be underestimated and the Football 4 Peace programme’s value based coaching is fundamental in helping our young people learn respect and understanding while enjoying our game.

I wish all involved in this exciting and important project every success for the future”.

An extensive evaluation of
President of the IFA, Raymond Kennedy receiving some coaching skills from FAI members, at The Football 4 Peace launch in Redcastle Donegal WK48053NBT.

Damien McColgan Project Manager Football 4 Peace, with children from Rossmar School Limavady, including IFA Grass Roots Development Officer Joe Doherty, and Ollie Mullan Sports Development Officer Limavady Borough Council. wk48051NBT.

President of the Irish Football Association Raymond Kennedy who attended the launch of a cross border Football for Peace Coaching Programme, with children from Rossmar School including teacher Bill Quigley Sports Development Officer, and Moira Clarence Classroom Assistant. wk48049NBT.
Raymond Kennedy, President of the IFA, with School Children attending a cross border launch of football 4 peace. A coaching Programme for Conflict Prevention and Peaceful Co-existing, held at The Carlton Hotel Greencastle Co Donegal. w/480082/vBT.