

# CASE STUDY

## Helping the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) Determine How To Further Improve Its Cúl Camps Programme

### *Introduction*



The GAA is Ireland's largest sporting organisation and is celebrated as one of the great amateur sporting associations in the world. Founded in 1884, the GAA has grown to have over half a million members and has become a major influence in Irish sporting and cultural life with its deep reach into communities throughout the whole of Ireland and also among the Irish diaspora.

### *The Challenge*



For many years the GAA has run summer camps – Cúl Camps – for children. The camps involve children in a variety of outdoor sports and games and are designed to foster friendships as well as improving physical and psychological well-being.

They have proven to be very popular and are considered to provide excellent value for money. However, the GAA wanted to ensure that the Cúl Camps continue to evolve to:

- widen participation in Gaelic games
- deepen the connections between the GAA and its constituent local clubs
- provide an even richer experience for the children

The GAA had its own ideas on the direction forward. But how could the GAA ensure that the future direction was also influenced by two other groups of important stakeholders – camp attendees and their parents?

### *The Solution*



The GAA asked SurveyGuru to get the opinions of the parents of the attending children.

SurveyGuru designed and carried out an online survey of the nearly 65,000 parents of the roughly 145,000 attending children.

The survey was designed to probe the parents' opinions on all aspects of the Cúl Camps – the entire customer experience – how their kids felt about all the elements of the camps but also the parents' opinions regarding, booking, timing, child welfare, supervision, facilities, etc.



## The Solution

Before the survey was sent out it was road-tested to ensure it covered all the bases, was as brief as possible, and was devoid of ambiguity.

SurveyGuru then worked with the GAA on the timing and content of the invitations sent to parents asking them to participate. The survey results received were highly accurate – the margin of error was less than 1%. (In contrast, political opinion polls typically have a margin of error of 3% or greater).

Once data collection was complete, an analysis of the data was carried out. The results of this detailed analysis were then interpreted and provided to the GAA together with a list of prioritised recommendations.

## The Benefits



This was not an academic exercise. This was not a tick-a-box exercise. The GAA genuinely wanted to know both what it could and should do differently. With the project complete, the GAA now has those answers and has already begun to refine the Cúl Camps based on the survey's results. These changes will be evident in future Cúl Camps.

“We want to drive ever greater participation by young people in our national sports in a fun and healthy way. To help achieve that we needed to do a comprehensive evaluation of our Cúl Camps so that our evolving strategy would reflect the grassroots opinions of parents. We hadn't dealt with Brendan from SurveyGuru before so we weren't sure if he would “get” that this wasn't your typical clinically-motivated exercise. Would he understand that we genuinely and humbly wanted to get our fingers on the pulse of parents all over Ireland? His understanding of the brief became apparent through patient phone-calls and meetings. His constructive suggestions helped improve that brief and built our trust in him. I won't bore you with how the process worked. Suffice it to say that we got what we wanted. We found out what parents thought. What they wanted. What their children's opinions were. Brendan ensured that we got enough results to be confident in their accuracy. If you want an unvarnished and accurate evaluation then Brendan will do it for you. If you ask him to examine something then be prepared to take the results on the chin. He'll make recommendations rooted in hard data. And he'll make them for your benefit. If you want flattery though, then you need to look elsewhere!”

**Charlie Harrison, National Cúl Camps coordinator, GAA**