

# Youth Work Ireland Child Safeguarding Statement



Youth Work Ireland

## 1. Service Being Provided

Youth Work Ireland is a Federal service that supports the delivery of youth work to young people both directly & indirectly through its Member Youth Services (MYS).

## 2. Nature of Services & Principles to Safeguard Children

- We are a Federal Organisation made up of 21 Local MYS who provide youth work services to young people. National Office seeks to ensure that its MYS offer services that are based on the principles of Children First legislation & practice (CFL&P). We ensure that all our MYS comply with current Safeguarding Legislation & Practice & have procedures & processes in place.
- We are a conduit for funding for youth work to its MYS, we are therefore obligated to ensure compliance with legislation & sound practice.
- We support, deliver & develop programmes to support the delivery of youth work. All programmes must be compliant with legislation & include the principles of (CFL&P).
- We run national events which engage young people in consultations on youth issues, youth practice & youth work. All such events are run in compliance with (CFL&P).
- We have a National Youth Advisory Group made of young people who work to ensure the voices of young people are heard within the national organisation.
- We organise a range of event for young people to take part in through their region or organisation. All events are planned, organised & run in compliance with (CFL&P).
- In partnership with the Dept. of Children & Youth Affairs (DCYA) & Foróige we deliver the national participation contract in compliance with (CFL&P).
- National office supports its members on matters pertaining to safeguarding & child protection by acting as a Garda Vetting conduit, working on;
  - The Youth Work Sector Implementation Group (& other working groups)
  - Monitoring Child Protection Awareness Programme (CPAP) training, organising & supporting other training & informing (CPAP Trainers, Designated Liaison Person (DLP) Training, Board briefing, Mandated Persons Briefings).
  - Supporting the work of our Board's Safe guarding Sub Group, developing shared organisational policy, procedures & guidelines & providing support for MYS.
- We are involved in a number of bodies nationally & internationally that support young people's participation. All such work is carried out in line with (CFL&P).
- Through our development work, we develop projects with the corporate sector & others supporting volunteering & youth work. These projects are varied in scope and nature, all are safeguard-proofed in the development phase to ensure that all our work is compliant with (CFL&P).
- We are looking at rolling out a Youth Card initiative, and as with all our projects this will be assessed for any safeguarding risks to young people inherent in the project.

## 3. Our Principles to Safeguard

We are committed to the principles laid out in Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017. These are:

- The safety and welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.
- The best interests of the child should be paramount.
- Early intervention is key to getting better outcomes. Where required to make a mandated report or to report a concern; we will do so following Tusla's reporting guidelines.
- Children have a right to be heard, listened to and taken seriously. While considering their age and understanding, they should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions that may affect their lives (see Youth Work Ireland's Participation policy).
- Parents and/or carers have a right to respect and should be consulted and involved in matters that concern their family engagement with our services. This should be based on informed consent.
- A proper balance must be struck between protecting children and respecting their rights and needs, and the rights of their parents/carers and families.
- Child protection is a multiagency, multidisciplinary activity. Agencies and professionals must work together in the interests of the children.
- Our commitment to ensuring young people are kept safe from harm is a central part of our organisational values and will be reflected in all key documents, plans, programmes and activities.

## 4. Risk Assessment

**RISK IDENTIFIED:** A member of the organisation fails to report an issue or concern of harm.

**Procedures Put in Place to Manage Identified Risk:**

- Safeguarding Statement has been circulated to all staff.
- Mandated reporters have been identified and made aware of and briefed on their mandatory reporting and assisting obligations.
- Safeguarding is a standing item for staff induction, staff meetings and staff supervision.
- The Designated Liaison Person (DLA) is clearly identified to all staff and volunteers.
- Reporting and safeguarding issues are reiterated to staff and volunteers at all external events.
- Safeguarding is a standing item at Board meetings.
- Plans, projects and programmes are safeguard-proofed to ensure compliance with Children First legislation and practice, and to identify any risk to young people.
- Staff disciplinary and volunteer code of behaviour are updated to include failure to report a concern or harm, as set out in the appropriate reporting procedures.
- All staff and volunteers undertake agreed briefing and trainings as per our procedures and guidelines including the E-Learning module.

**RISK IDENTIFIED:** An allegation, complaint or report of abuse is made against a volunteer, staff member or other third party engaged.

**Procedures put in place to manage identified risk:**

- A clear procedure for raising concern and complaint against staff and/or volunteers is in place.
- A clear procedure is in place for the reporting and management investigation of allegations against any member of staff /volunteer.
- Staff and volunteer codes of conduct are in place and either informed as part of staff induction, or as part of the initial briefing and training for volunteers. Regional

staff and volunteers will have been through their local compulsory briefings and trainings.

- All staff and volunteers are subject to our recruitment and selection process.
- All staff and volunteers are subject to an initial and repeat Garda Vetting through the National Vetting Bureau prior to commencement of any duties/role with organisation.
- A procedure is in place for dealing with complaints made against third party such as contractors and or others engaged with Youth work Ireland.
- Youth Work Ireland has a Memorandum of Understanding in place with key partners.
- It is the policy of Youth Work Ireland to support investigations by An Garda Síochána and/or Tusla as requested.
- Youth Work Ireland's Service Level Agreement (SLA), Constitution and compliance function include and reference safeguarding and child protection.
- Youth work Ireland's compliance function carries out an annual safeguarding and child protection audit.

**RISK IDENTIFIED:** Allegation, report or observation of peer abuse of peers.

**Procedures put in place to manage identified risk:**

- A clear procedure is in place for reporting all issues of harm or concern by all staff and volunteers as appropriate.
- There is a clear procedure for raising complaints.
- A clear policy and procedure on anti-bullying is in place.
- All volunteers and staff are trained in line with Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017.
- All events are adequately planned staffed and supervised.
- All groups and activities will have a set of agreed ground rules that have been discussed and agreed with young people.
- Staff and volunteer training covers dealing with bullying and discriminatory behaviour.
- All venues are checked, and risk assessed with actions identified in the planning and delivery of any events.

**RISK IDENTIFIED:** Activities, programmes and events may create a level of additional risk due to the nature of the event:

**Procedures put in place to manage identified risk:**

- All activities, events and programmes are planned to include a full risk assessment.
- All participants provide informed consent to activities.
- All staff are briefed and will have undertaken appropriate induction, briefing and training.
- Bona Fides of third party providers are checked, including qualifications and vetting.
- All off site events are subject to a pre-visit check and are risk assessed.
- Programmes are either in house or from a bona fide source that has an evidence base in practice and are both age and young person proofed.
- Staff and volunteers are bound by the code of conduct and internal policies and procedures and are expected to act within their duties in Loco Parentis.
- Controls identified through the risk assessment are put in place.
- All planning is young person centred and is cognisant of the group and community that is taking part.

**RISK IDENTIFIED:** Possibility of abuse through online activity:

**Procedures put in place to manage identified risk:**

**All the above applies to online activities, and to instances of abuse causing harm or concern. In addition, Youth Work Ireland:**

- Monitors online activity.
- Has produced and delivers online guidelines, supports and training for young people, volunteers and staff.
- Any activity that is unacceptable or reportable that occurs in an online or other media format will be dealt within the appropriate way and through the relevant procedures.

## 5. Procedures

Our Child Safe Guarding Statement has been developed in line with requirements in the Children First Act 2015, The Children First: National Guidelines and Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice.

In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard young people while they are availing of our service:


- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers and volunteers of a child availing of our services.
- Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers to work with children and young people.
- Procedure for provision of, and access to, child safeguarding training and information including the identification of the occurrence of harm.
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection and/or welfare concerns to Tusla.
- Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons who are mandated persons within Youth Work Ireland.
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

**ALL PROCEDURES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST**

## 6. Implementation

Youth Work Ireland recognises that the implementation of safeguarding and child protection is an ongoing process. We are committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep young people and children safe from harm while availing of our services.

This Child Safeguarding Statement will be reviewed 10th March 2020, or if there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.

Signed:   
President of Youth Work Ireland  
Date: 8th March 2018

Signed:   
CEO Youth Work Ireland  
Date: 8th March 2018

National Youth Federation t/a Youth Work Ireland  
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For queries, please contact Paul Galton  
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Relevant Person under the Children First Act 2015



An Roinn Leanaí agus Gnóthaí Óige  
Department of Children and Youth Affairs

