



**Donegal**  
Rape Crisis Centre

## Child Safeguarding Statement

Established in 1997, the Donegal Sexual Abuse & Rape Crisis Centre (DSA&RCC) is a voluntary organisation providing free support and counselling to all genders and gender identities 12-years-of-age and over in Donegal and the bordering counties. We have a team of fully accredited counsellors / psychotherapists who have the knowledge, skills and aptitude in providing holistic support to survivors of sexual violence. In promoting a client-focused service we provide outreach in a number of locations throughout Donegal. A highly trained team of volunteers provide psychological support to persons/families/friends who have experienced sexual violence and who attend the Donegal Sexual Assault Treatment Unit, GP practices, Gardaí and Hospital. In addition, we support clients and their families/friends through the criminal justice system. As part of this work we endeavour to ensure that children who access our service are safe from harm in a protected and comfortable environment.

This statement has been developed not only to safeguard children and young people in our service, but also families, friends, staff and volunteers engaged in the DSA&RCC. This Child Safeguarding Statement is based on and adheres to the following guidance and policy documents.

- Children First: National Guidance for the protection and Welfare of Children (2017).
- Guidance of Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement (2017).
- Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice: 2nd Edition (2019).

As an organisation we:

- Recognise that the protection and welfare of children is paramount.
- Comply fully with our statutory obligation under the Children First Act [2015] and other relevant legislation relating to the protection and welfare of children.
- Adhere to data protection and confidentiality requirements in managing child protection concerns.
- As mandated persons, co-operate with the relevant statutory agencies in relation to child protection issues.
- Implement safe practices within the organisation to minimise harm happening to children and minimise risk to staff and volunteers in taking unnecessary risks in working with children.

The Safeguarding Statement applies to:

- All staff and volunteers working within the DSA&RCC



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- Students on placement within the organisation
- Board members
- Children under 18-years-of-age attending the service.

The Child Safeguarding Statement applies when working within the offices of the DSA&RCC and when representing the organisation in any other setting.

### Risk Assessment

We have carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while availing of our services. Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures for managing these risks.

Risk Identified		Procedure in place to Manage risk Identified
1)	DSA&RCC staff and volunteers lack of knowledge regarding the organisation's Child protection and welfare policies and procedures.	Child Protection policy, Staff handbook, staff and volunteer induction programme, Tusla on-line Child Protection training and certification.
2)	Children 12 – 18 years of age unaware of child protection practices and procedures.	Child Safeguarding Statement visible within the centre. Child Safeguarding statement on the DSA&RCC website.
3)	Lack of knowledge of staff and volunteers on how to respond to and manage an allegation of abuse by a child 12 – 18 years of age.	Staff induction programme, Tusla on-line Child Protection training, Child Protection Policy.
4)	Risk of harm due to inadequate recruitment procedures	Recruitment Policy and Garda vetting.
5)	Lack of knowledge of staff and volunteers in how to behave with clients 12 – 18-years-of-age.	Code of Conduct Staff induction programme, Tusla Child Protection training, Child Protection Policy

### Procedures

Our Child Safeguarding statement has been developed aligned with the requirement under the Children First Act [2015], Children First National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (DCYA, 2017), Guidance of Developing a Child Safeguarding Statement (Tusla, 2017), Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice: 2nd Edition (Tusla, 2019).

In addition to the procedures listed within the Risk Assessment, the following policies and procedures support the commitment to safeguarding children while they are clients of the service.



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- The roles and responsibilities of the DSA&RCC Manager in managing child protection and welfare concerns within the DSA&RCC
- Managing Allegations of Abuse Against Staff and volunteers
- Guidance for Safe Recruitment, Selection and Retention for Staff and Volunteers
- Procedure for Reporting Child Protection and Welfare Concerns
- Procedure for maintaining a list of personnel in the DSA&RCC who are mandated persons
- Roles and responsibilities of DSA&RCC Managers
- Working with Teenagers policy

### Implementation

The DSA&RCC recognise that implementation is an on-going process. Our organisation is committed to the implementation of the Child Safeguarding statement and the legislative framework, guidance, policies and procedures that support it.

All DSA&RCC staff, volunteers and Board members must read this Child Safeguarding Statement and sign to confirm that she/he is aware of the contents of this document as per DSA&RCC induction process.

This Child Safeguarding Statement is to be reviewed biannually or updated according to changes in legislation and/or supporting national policies and procedures.