



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Parents who listen, protect



Parents who listen, protect

A handbook on building good communication in families and communities.

Published by the HSE as part of a national initiative on child protection.

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Being a parent is the most important job a person will ever do. There are many different types of parents, and none are perfect, but they all have one thing in common – they want the best for their children.

In any family and community, it is important that adults and children listen to each other and talk to each other daily. Children rely on the adults in their life to guide, teach and protect them. We must make sure that the children we care about – our sons, daughters, nephews, nieces, grandchildren, neighbours and friends – feel sure that if they have a problem they have someone they trust who can help them.

This handbook offers parents, families and communities some practical hints and tips on how to talk to and listen to children. It outlines how to keep the lines of communication open throughout a child's life. A family or community that always listens to children ensures children can grow, learn, make mistakes and above all ensures their safety.

Parents, and communities, who listen to children, protect children.



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Chapter 1

Positive parenting



Positive parenting means bringing out the best in your child, by listening and understanding, praising and encouraging their efforts, noticing and rewarding good behaviour and doing things together that you both enjoy. It also means that all the important adults in a child's life should work together in the child's best interest.

This starts from the earliest days of your relationship with your child. It is often easy to point out where a child is going wrong and forget to notice the things that go right. If we do this, we end up giving a child lots of attention for negative behaviour, rather than for the good behaviour we want them to develop.

Your attention and praise is one of the biggest motivators for children. Praising good behaviour will influence your child's behaviour in a positive way. It will also make your child feel happy, loved, wanted and secure and these feelings will help them to develop life-long confidence and self-esteem.

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Principles of positive parenting

There are a few simple principles that can help parents to be positive and to get more from their relationship with their children.

- Children need to feel secure, loved and valued. That is what gives them good self-esteem and confidence. If your child behaves well, tell them! They will want that praise again, and learn that good behaviour earns it.
- When you need to, be firm, but always remember to be consistent. Giving in, changing your mind, or not following through can confuse a child, and imply that there are no consequences to bad behaviour.
- Work as a team. Parents and other adults need to work together and be consistent. Parents and carers should agree in advance what approach to take to rules and decisions.
- Listen to and talk to your child – it's good to talk! A child should know that they can express their feelings, good and bad, in a safe loving environment. This also helps develop important language skills which lead to expressing their frustrations, their successes and help in their school work.
- Do things together with your child that you both enjoy – have fun!

Am I a good parent?

Every parent has times when they feel that things are really difficult or that they need help in their parenting. We all have worries: Am I doing a good job as a parent? Am I making mistakes? Are there any changes in their behaviour? Is my child trying to tell me something?

Every parent asks questions like these, and they show that we care about the quality of our parenting. One easy way to help you answer these questions is to be involved in your child's life from the beginning.

- Talk to them and listen to them;
- Sit down with the family around the table for meals as often as possible, and talk about your day;
- Instead of offering solutions to problems, encourage your child to come up with solutions they think will work;
- Read to your child at night, they love the attention and closeness that it brings, and it is often a time where a child will confide their thoughts;
- Have fun with your child, play with your child;
- Encourage friendships and outside interests;
- Help them think through choices;
- Listen carefully to your child's point of view.

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If you are concerned about your parenting skills or you'd like to learn more, you can get support from a range of organisations. See the back of this handbook for contact information.

Chapter 2

Early years



Your baby's personality

Each baby has their own particular personality. They develop at their own pace and each one is different. Some are active, some are shy or slow to warm-up. Some are easy-going, some are more difficult and cry a lot.

Parents also have different styles. It's all right to look for help to try to understand your baby. It's part of being a good parent.

The emotional relationship between you and your baby is powerful and it has a huge impact on your baby's development. Your special bond in the early years helps your child to learn to overcome difficulties and upsets, to take healthy risks and to cope with the unexpected.

To develop good emotional health in very young children:

Start communicating!

Reach out to your baby with hugs, kisses, smiles, eye contact and talk to your baby. Use everyday situations to teach your child new words, people's names, colours, etc.

Create a stable environment

Babies find routines comforting. Try to develop regular times for feeding and nap times, and outings.

Be consistent

Babies can become confused and upset if your actions are unpredictable. You may laugh when they spill their milk one day, and get angry if it happens the next. Though you know this is just about your mood at that time, if it happens often, it can be confusing for your baby.

Above all, have fun playing with your baby or young child!

How to handle difficult days

Becoming a parent is exciting and joyful, and most cherish the memories of the earliest days of their child's life. At the same time, it is an incredibly demanding time, emotionally and physically. Parents can feel under pressure to be able to deal with everything that arises in caring for a baby.

Crying is the way all babies make sure that their basic needs are met – they may be hungry, thirsty, cold, need a nappy change or just some company. Crying is not your fault or your baby's fault.

Parents or carers can sometimes become very frustrated when a baby will not stop crying due to colic, illness or feeding difficulties. On average, a baby will cry for at least two hours every day. One in ten babies cry much more than this average and many parents experience a great deal of difficulty managing this.

Ways to cope with a crying baby:

- Gently hug and cuddle your child – using a baby-carrier so that they're close to your body may help soothe them;
- Use eye contact, smiling and talking to communicate with your baby;
- Take your baby for a walk or a drive to help them sleep;
- If necessary, make sure baby is safe and walk out of the room for a short time, ensuring that you are nearby;
- Count to ten and allow yourself to calm down;
- Ask someone else you trust to take over for a while;
- Contact your public health nurse or community mother for advice;
- Never slap or shake your baby.

Remember: Communicate with your child using eye contact, smiling, cuddling and talking. This will develop your understanding and responsiveness to your baby's needs when they have difficulties.

Taming tantrums

Very young children are often not able to express themselves as much as they want to and their frustration may come out as a tantrum. Tantrums often happen in

busy, public places, which can be highly embarrassing and add to parents' stress.

Dealing with temper tantrums

- Keep calm. Getting angry and shouting at your child will only make things worse.
- Your child could be tired or hungry so rest or food might help. Or they might just need some attention or comfort.
- Try to find a distraction. Finding something else interesting to do or look at can help. If you're in a busy or noisy place try to go somewhere quieter.
- If none of the above work; try to see things from your child's point of view and understand what they actually want. Try offering them a limited choice, as this gives your child a sense of control and can be more effective than simply saying "no". Always try to offer a positive way out.
- If you do say "no" don't be tempted to give in later to calm them down. If you give in your child will repeat the tantrums as a means of getting their own way.
- If you're at home you can try safely ignoring the tantrum by going into another room. Encourage your child to cool down on their own and talk more calmly about what they want.
- After the tantrum, praise your child for settling down. Even though they may no longer be angry they may still be upset, so give them a cuddle and make it clear that you still love them no matter what.

You can reduce the likelihood of a tantrum by planning ahead:

- Avoid your child becoming hungry, overtired or bored. Bring snacks, drinks, small toys and books on trips.
- Make sure your child is getting enough personal attention and affection.
- You could discuss the rules of where you are going in advance.
- Make sure your time together is quality time together especially if you work for most of the day.
- Keep shopping trips and outings as short as possible. Praise good behaviour.
- Try to plan a regular method that you'll use to deal with tantrums when they do happen.

Remember, temper tantrums are normal and do not usually lead to serious problems. As your child gets older they will learn to deal more calmly with the stresses of everyday life.

Who looks after your baby?

There will be times when someone else has to look after your child. This could be a babysitter for a few hours while you go out or a full-time childminder. When you leave your child in the care of someone else you're relying on that person to ensure your child is safe and well.

Babysitters

Babysitters do not need qualifications or a certificate to look after children. There is no recommended minimum age for babysitters. Generally 16 is considered an appropriate age

for a babysitter. Parents should use common sense to make a decision based on their knowledge of the babysitter and their maturity. Often a reliable babysitter will have a good reputation locally and can be recommended by a friend or neighbour. Tell the babysitter all about your child's routine and their likes and dislikes. Tell the babysitter about your rules, such as not smacking and not shouting.

Make sure you feel completely comfortable about your babysitter before you leave your child in their care. Tell your child who will be looking after them, where you are going and how long for. Ask your child how things went afterwards.

Childminders, playgroups and crèches

As a parent you are often the best judge of whether a childcare service will meet your child's needs. When you leave your child in the care of others, you might want to check that:

- Their needs are being met and respected;
- Their cultural background is recognised;
- They will be happy there;
- The atmosphere feels right;
- A regular group of children attends so your child can make friends;
- Mealtimes are relaxed and fun;
- The outside area is well planned and spacious;
- Activities are varied and carefully planned and facilitate learning through play.

Ensure that your child is left in secure premises and that well-trained and experienced staff are caring for your child. You will also want the opportunity to get involved and know what your child is doing day to day.

Take references or make enquiries from others who have used a particular childcare service. Check the staff's qualifications. Visit the crèche and look for confident, happy, busy and relaxed children. Check how you will be informed about your child's progress and in case of emergency how you will be contacted. Contact the pre-school inspection team at your HSE Local Health Office to check the crèche's inspection reports.

You can also make contact with the Childminding Advisory Officer, based either in your HSE Local Health Office or your local County Council Childcare Committee.

Potential problems

Sometimes, children are not always able to tell you if something is wrong, so if a child suddenly does not want to go to the child minder or day care provider, don't ignore this. It may be nothing, but keep an eye out for changes in their moods, behaviour and physical appearances and try to establish why these changes have occurred. Agree to discuss, from the beginning, all accidents and incidents.

Speak promptly to the person in charge about any concerns you have about your child. If you have serious concerns about your child's safety, remove your child immediately.

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Encouraging good behaviour

Every child misbehaves sometimes, and every family will have different rules and ideas about good and bad behaviour. Each family also uses different ways of teaching good behaviour or dealing with problems.

By stepping back a little and thinking about how we talk to and act around our children, it can become much easier to get them to behave well.

Most children misbehave to get your attention. When you're busy, it's easy not to notice a well behaved child who is amusing themselves, drawing or watching TV. It's not so easy to ignore a wild tantrum! Praising your children when they behave well is an ideal way to encourage good behaviour.

Use rewards and go out of your way to praise good behaviour like cleaning their room or speaking politely. Rewards can be a hug, a kiss or simply saying "thank you" or "well done"!

Speaking to children in a positive way helps to build their self esteem. Try not to slip into habits like name-calling – "why are you so bold, don't be stupid". Set a good example in the way you act. Don't use negative language, such as "don't do that", and changing it to "Why don't you do this instead".

Finally, be consistent. Children react well to routine, and to having a really good idea of what to expect at home. If you say something will happen, you need to make sure it happens. This applies equally to promises and threats!

For example:

If you regularly break promises to a child, like a promise of an outing or a treat, that child will learn that you are not trustworthy. Even though there are often good reasons for plans to change, children will not understand those reasons too often.

Equally, if a child misbehaves, and you punish them with, for example, no TV for a week, you need to stick to it. If you don't stick to it, your child will learn that they don't get punished for bad behaviour, and you will see that behaviour again.

So, when you decide on a punishment, stick to it, and choose something that is fair, reasonable, and that you can and will see through.

Chapter 3

School days



Friends and foes

School days are a time when the influence of other children is very important and fitting in is seen as essential. If children are viewed as different for any reason, they can be picked on and bullied. It is good to be alert to the possibility of bullying and to make sure that you know the tell-tale signs. Bullies who continually harm other children need support and help as well. They may have experienced difficulties of their own at home, which may have led to their actions. Reporting concerns may help them to get help as well.

Bullying is a frightening experience. It can isolate and damage a child or young person's self confidence. Some ongoing bullying can have negative long-term effects on children, leading to depression and even suicidal thoughts and actions.

- Bullying is the repeated abuse of a child by one or several people;
- Bullying can happen anywhere but often it happens in or on the way to school;
- Bullying can take many forms, from verbal/emotional abuse to harassment and physical attack;
- Bullies are not always older than the child they harm.

If your child tells you about a friend or any other child who is being bullied – listen carefully and take this seriously. That child may not be able to say for themselves what is happening.

Children may not always be able to tell you if something is wrong. Note changes in their moods, behaviour and physical appearances. Your child may have injuries with no reasonable explanation for them.

Children should be told to refuse to put up with bullying, to walk away, tell an adult or friend and avoid fighting.

Listen and reassure your child that you are there for them. Talk to your child about their school day. Teach your child to respect others from a young age. Teach your child that prejudice and bullying are unacceptable behaviours.

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Mobile phones may also be used to bully young people. Abusive phone calls like silent “breather” calls, swearing, shouting and making threats should always be taken seriously, as making these calls is illegal. Phone companies can trace many calls to a specific number, but tracing calls from a pay-as-you-go phone is a lot harder. You should always complain to the Gardaí and your child’s mobile phone company.

- Text messages can also be used to bully. Bullies will find ways to hide their numbers from the person receiving the message. They may use another person’s phone to avoid being found out.
- Children should be told to tell someone if they are receiving bullying calls or texts.
- It’s a good idea to keep such texts, or make a note of the time and date and content of the message. Phone companies can use this information to help trace who sent them.
- Often the bullies just send abusive messages to get a reaction. If their messages are ignored, there’s a good chance they’ll get bored and stop.
- It’s important to report and stop bullies as early as possible.

Fun and games – playing safe

Parents and carers have a right and a responsibility to ensure that children are safe at all times. All organisations providing supervised activities, sports clubs and youth clubs have a responsibility to provide a safe environment for your child. Many activities are supported by volunteers who generously give their time to provide regular activities for your child. However, whether or not workers are paid, you have the right to expect the same standards from all organisations.

Organisations should have a code of conduct. They should tell you where to go and what to do if you or your child has any worries. You may feel reluctant to voice your concerns in case you are wrong or worried about the impact on your child, but if you are concerned you must take action:

- Speak to other parents;
- Speak to the leader in charge;
- If you are not confident that they are the right person, talk to someone more senior;
- If you are unhappy about the response you receive, remove your child.

A good organisation will welcome questions about their activities and the safety of their surroundings. All organisations should have a child protection policy, including a statement on, and guidelines about, keeping children safe.

You may want to check:

- Have the staff and volunteers gone through a proper recruitment process?
- Have references been checked?
- Is there a written code of behaviour?
- How does the organisation manage staff and volunteers?
- Does the organisation have a health and safety policy?
- Does the leader have First Aid qualifications?
- Has the premises a Fire Certificate?
- What are the arrangements when children go on outings?

Remember, listen to your children and ask questions about the activities they take part in. Children have a right to have fun and be safe.

Making it safe to surf

Children are using the internet more and more often, and going online can be a safe way to learn and have fun. There is however a lot of information on the internet that is not suitable for children, and even risks of contact with dangerous people. So, it's sensible to teach children how to use the web safely, and for you to take precautions to keep yourself informed and them safe.

Install parental controls to prevent your child accessing inappropriate websites and chat rooms. Learn all you can about the Internet. Set ground rules about the amount of time your children can spend online. Place your household PC in a room where other people are present, not in a far off bedroom. Make sure your children know not to give out their name, address or any other personal information online. Also they should never arrange to meet a new friend made on the Internet unaccompanied.

Watch out for possible signs of exploitation or abuse. Some of these signs are often completely innocent, but look out for changes in your child's mood or behaviour, sleep disturbances or bedwetting, unexplained marks, problems at school, going missing or self-harm, asking about sexual experiences and terminology or evidence of pornographic material.

Chapter 4

Your teenager



Drugs and alcohol

Drug use can take many forms, from alcohol to hard drugs, solvents and misuse of prescription drugs. Children need to be aware of the risks of using drugs, alcohol and volatile substances (e.g. solvents). More young people experience problems caused by too much drinking rather than through drug use. If you find out that your child has taken drugs or alcohol, it can be frightening because of the potential effects. This can be due to your lack of knowledge about drugs and not feeling confident about talking about them. Most young people who experiment with drugs do not go on to use them on a permanent basis.

It is important to discuss drug and alcohol use early. This does not encourage your child to use drugs and alcohol. Avoiding talking about this will not protect your child.

Children will be aware of drugs and alcohol in some way before they leave primary school. It is likely that at this early stage, children will be more responsive to being told about the risks of drug and alcohol misuse. Make sure you tell your children about the risks and explain how they become more vulnerable if they do not stay with people they trust. Accurate information and support will help them decide what to do. It does not guarantee non-use but will increase the chance of an informed choice.

Young people may use drugs and alcohol because they are curious about substances, they want to break the rules, they want to escape reality, they think they need them to cope with difficult situations or feelings, because they enjoy them or because their friends do it.

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There may be a change in relationships with family and friends, or a change in performance at school. In general terms if your child's appearance, behaviour or financial situation changes dramatically, you should include drug and alcohol use in your list of "I wonder if..." questions.

Talk to your child if you are worried. Use every opportunity to discuss drug use, for example, when drugs are mentioned in a television programme. You can give accurate information regarding the risks of drug use at an early age. Ensure that you are informed about drug use and the effects of different types of drugs.

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Drug and alcohol misuse by the adults in a household can seriously affect the care and well being of children and it may encourage them to behave the same way.

Sex

Magazines, newspapers, advertisements and TV programmes regularly use sex and sexuality in their story lines. Children and young people learn about sex from their family, from the media and each other. What gets passed on in the playground may not be accurate or what parents want them to hear!

All these messages may lead young people into situations they don't know how to deal with. Adolescence is often seen as a time of heightened conflict between parents and children. This is a particularly important time to maintain communication with your children even though this may not always be easy.

Good communication with your children helps reduce risk taking behaviour. You might feel concerned that by discussing sex and relationships, particularly at an early age, you will encourage your children to start having sex when they're very young. But research has proved that the opposite is true.

Teenagers from families who talk frankly about sex wait until they are older before they start having sex and they are more likely to use contraceptives. All young people need information about sex, sexually transmitted infections,

HIV/Aids, pregnancy and contraception to help them make informed choices.

If you feel uncomfortable or unsure about talking about sex with your children don't let this put you off. Sex education shouldn't be a one-off talk but a gradual process of communication. If your children grow up knowing it's okay to discuss sex and their feelings with you, then they're much more likely to come to you for support when they need it.

Giving your children support, information and help to feel good about themselves can lessen the chances of rushing into sexual relationships too early, or unwanted pregnancy.

Young people will not always tell you if there is something that is worrying them. Good communication with your children is very important. You need to be attentive to their needs and let them know that you are there and be prepared to listen.

It is important that your child knows where to get reliable information on birth control and prevention of sexually transmitted infections.

Talk to your children about relationships and sexuality. If you think your teenager is sexually active it is important to talk to them about practising safe sex.

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It is important that your child has the knowledge and skills that will help them build self esteem and strong relationships while postponing sexual activity.

Worried about a child?

All parents experience difficulties at various times that can be helped by other family members or close friends. If someone you know is having difficulties, you could offer the following:

- A listening ear;
- Ideas to cope with problems;
- Encouragement to get some help;
- Practical support (childcare/shopping).

There may be times when a child may be at risk of abuse and professional support needs to be provided. How would you want other people to act if your child was being harmed? Would you want them to mind their own business or report their worry to a professional who could help?

When we suspect, witness or are told of a child that is being hurt we can react in many different ways. We may feel guilt, anger, disbelief or denial. Some of these reactions can prevent help getting to a family who need it.

Many people do not tell because they fear:

- Children will be at further risk of harm;
- They believe that nothing will be done;
- They believe that the child would be taken away;
- They worry that the family may find out who reported them;
- Telling may ruin family relationships.

In reality, it is best that action is taken early to protect the child and stop things getting worse. Long-term abuse is much more likely to cause problems for a child as they get older. Even if you think an incident is just a one-off, other professional agencies may already have concerns about the child. Your information could be very important. All agencies will treat information received on a confidential basis.

- Protecting children is everybody's business;
- Adults have a responsibility to report abuse;
- Consider offering some support if you are worried;
- If in doubt, share your concerns about children;
- Reporting concerns rarely leads to a child being removed from the care of parents;
- Act now – long-term abuse is damaging for children.

There are many possible signs of abuse, ranging from physical injury to changes in behaviour. Alternatively, you may witness an incident or a child may tell you that they are being harmed.

If you are concerned about a child's welfare or safety you can contact your HSE Local Health Office and speak to the social work team, or the Gardaí. Contact details are provided at the back of this handbook.

Concerned about suicide?

Every parent has heard reports in the media about suicide in young people, and Ireland experiences a number of suicides in young people each year.

Working to create a family where parents listen and children feel they can share problems is worthwhile. Most people who feel suicidal don't really want to die, they just want to end the emotional pain that they are feeling. This is true of young people too. These are some of the signs which may indicate that someone is having thoughts of suicide:

- Engaging in deliberate self-harm;
- Talking about suicide ("I wish I was dead" or "I wish I would just never wake up");
- Becoming isolated;
- Drug and alcohol abuse;
- Sudden changes in mood and behaviour;
- Marked changes in social, school or sports performance/interests.

Some factors which can increase the risk of a suicide might include a recent bereavement or break up of a relationship or family.

If you know someone who you think might be thinking of suicide, show you care by offering support, for example say something like: “I’m worried about you and I want to help.”

Don’t shy away from the subject, if you are concerned that someone is acutely suicidal find out by asking them if they have plans to harm themselves.

Get help or encourage them to get help, for example by saying “I will stay with you until you can get help.” There are a wide range of supports and services that can help in a crisis, including:

- The local GP or family doctor;
- GP out-of-hours co-operative services;
- Accident and emergency departments of general hospitals;
- Voluntary support services such as Samaritans and AWARE.

* Based on ‘*Concerned about Suicide*’ a leaflet produced by HSE Resource Officers for Suicide Prevention and the Suicide Awareness Coordinators for Northern Ireland.

Concerned about deliberate self harm?

Deliberate self harm is when someone injures or harms themselves on purpose. It can involve overdosing, self poisoning, hitting, and cutting, burning oneself or self strangulation. It can also include taking illegal drugs and drinking too much alcohol. Self harm is always a sign of something being seriously wrong.

Self-harm is most commonly triggered by an argument with a parent or close friend. When the young person has experienced abuse, neglect or rejection, they are more likely to harm themselves. Young people who are depressed, or have an eating disorder, are at greater risk. So too are people who take illegal drugs or excessive amounts of alcohol.

How can I get help?

Anyone who is self harming is struggling to cope and needs help. The person feels so ashamed, guilty or bad that they can't face talking about it. There may be clues, such as refusing to wear short sleeves or to take off clothing for sports. Parents can help by recognising signs of distress, and finding some way of talking with the young person about how they are feeling, listening to their worries and problems, and taking them seriously.

Make sure that the young person knows they have someone they can talk to and get support from, when they need it. Otherwise, there is a risk they will harm themselves instead. As a parent, you may be too upset or angry to be able to give the help that's needed. Get advice from your GP.

* Based on '*Deliberate Self Harm in Young People*' a leaflet developed by the Regional Suicide Resource Office, HSE South and the National Office for Suicide Prevention.

Chapter 5

For more advice



We hope that you have found this handbook interesting and useful, and that some of the advice will help you to build stronger communications within your family. The topics discussed are just a sample of common issues that arise within families. The HSE has dedicated a special section of the HSE website to this child protection initiative, so if you would like to read more, visit www.hse.ie and click on the 'Parents who listen, protect' button.

We have included contact details for a range of children and family services on the following pages. More information about these and other health services can be accessed on www.hse.ie and by calling the HSE infoline 1850 24 1850.

HSE Child Protection and Welfare Services operate in every county. Social Work services operate during office hours, usually 9 to 5 each weekday. Urgent child protection concerns outside these hours should be reported immediately to the Garda Síochána.

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Child Protection and Welfare Services

Cavan, Drumalee Cross. Tel: 049 437 7305/306

Carlow, St. Dymphna's Hospital, Athy Road. Tel: 059 913 6587

Clare, River House, Gort Road, Ennis. Tel: 065 686 3907

Cork City, Georges Quay. Tel: 021 496 5511

Cork, North Goulds Hill Hse, Mallow. Tel: 022 21484

Cork, North Lee Social Work Department, Blackpool. Tel: 021 492 7000

Cork, South Lee, St. Finbarr's Hospital. Tel: 021 492 3001

Cork, West Cork, Coolnagarrane, Skibbereen. Tel: 028 40447

Donegal East, Links Business Centre, Buncrana. Tel: 074 932 0420

Donegal West, Killybegs Road, Donegal Town. Tel: 074 972 3540

Donegal, Pearse Road, Letterkenny. Tel: 074 912 3672/3770

Dublin North, Cromcastle Road, Coolock. Tel: 01 816 4200/44

Dublin North West, Wellmount Park, Finglas. Tel: 856 7704

Dublin North West, Rathdown Road. Tel: 01 882 5000

Dublin West, Cherry Orchard Hospital, Ballyfermot. Tel: 01 620 6387

Dublin North Central, 22 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1. Tel: 01 855 6871

Dublin North Central, Ballymun Health Centre. Tel: 01 842 0011

Dublin South East, Vergemount Hall, Clonskeagh. Tel: 01 268 0320

Dublin South City, Carnegie Ctr, 21 Lord Edward St. Tel: 01 648 6555

Dublin South West, Millbrook Lawn. Tel: 01 452 0666

Dun Laoghaire, Tivoli Road. Tel: 01 284 3579

Dun Laoghaire, 102 Patrick Street. Tel: 01 236 5120

Galway City, 25 Newcastle Road, Galway. Tel: 091 546366/370/325369

Galway, Health Centre, Vicar Street, Tuam. Tel: 093 24492

Galway, Health Centre, Loughrea. Tel: 091 847 820

Galway, Brackernagh, Ballinasloe. Tel: 090 964 6200

Galway, Health Centre, Oughterard. Tel: 091 552 200

Kerry, 28 Moyderwell, Tralee. Tel: 066 718 4500

Kerry, St. Margaret's Road, Killarney. Tel: 064 36030

Kildare West Wicklow, Fairgreen Street, Naas. Tel: 045 882 400

Kilkenny, 11 Patrick Street, Kilkenny. Tel: 056 778 4782

Laois, Child and Family Centre, Portlaoise. Tel: 057 869 2567

Leitrim, Leitrim Road, Carrick-on-Shannon. Tel: 071 965 0324

Limerick, St. Camillus Hospital. Tel: 061 483 711/996

Limerick, South Hill Health Centre. Tel: 061 209 985

Limerick, Ballynanty Health Centre. Tel: 061 457 100
Limerick, Newcastle West Health Centre. Tel: 069 66653
Limerick, Kilmallock Health Centre. Tel: 063 98192
Limerick, Roxtown Health Centre. Tel: 061 48301
Longford, Tivoli House, Dublin Road. Tel: 043 50584
Louth, Wilton House, Stapleton Place, Dundalk. Tel: 042 939 2200
Mayo, Ballina Health Centre, Mercy Road, Ballina. Tel: 096 21511
Mayo, Mountain View, Castlebar. Tel: 094 904 2283
Mayo, Aras Attracta, Swinford. Tel: 094 905 0133
Meath, Dunshaughlin Health Care Unit. Tel: 01 802 4102
Meath, Enterprise Centre, Navan. Tel: 046 909 7817
Meath, Commons Road, Navan. Tel: 046 907 3178
Meath, 25 Bruce Hill, Navan. Tel: 046 903 0616
Monaghan, Rooskey. Tel: 047 30426 or 30427
Offaly, O'Carroll Street, Tullamore. Tel: 057 932 2488
Roscommon, Abbey Street, Roscommon. Tel: 090 663 7014
Roscommon, Lanesboro Road, Roscommon. Tel: 090 663 7528
Roscommon, Health Centre, Boyle. Tel: 071 966 2087
Roscommon, Knockroe, Castlereagh. Tel: 090 663 7843
Sligo, Markievicz House, Barrack Street, Sligo. Tel: 071 915 5133
Sligo, Teach Laighne, Humbert Street, Tubbercurry. Tel: 071 912 0062
Tipperary North, Annbrook, Nenagh. Tel: 067 41934
Tipperary North, Parnell Street, Thurles. Tel: 0504 23211
Tipperary South, Western Road, Clonmel. Tel: 052 77303
Waterford, Cork Road, Waterford. Tel: 051 842 827
Waterford, St. Joseph's Hospital, Dungarvan. Tel: 058 20918/20/21
Wexford, Gorey Health Centre, Gorey. Tel: 053 943 0100
Wexford, Millpark Road, Enniscorthy. Tel: 053 923 3465
Wexford, Hospital Grounds, New Ross. Tel: 051 421 445
Wexford, Ely House, Ferrybank. Tel: 053 912 3522 Ext. 201
Westmeath, Athlone Health Centre, Coosan Road. Tel: 09064 83106
Westmeath, St. Loman's, Mullingar. Tel: 044 93 84450
Wicklow, Seafront, Wicklow Town. Tel: 0404 68400
Wicklow, The Civic Centre, Bray. Tel: 01 274 4100/4180
Wicklow, Delgany Health Centre, Delgany. Tel: 01 287 1482
Wicklow, West Wicklow, Fairgreen Street, Naas. Tel: 045 882 400

Helpful Organisations:

HSE infoline Provides information on all HSE services, including services for children and families. Lo-call: 1850 24 1850 www.hse.ie

Parentline A national confidential helpline for parents, guardians and carers in need of support. Lo-call: 1890 927 277 www.parentline.ie

Childline Gives support to young people through a freephone 24 hour listening service and through its website. Children can call Childline for a chat or to talk about problems, and all calls are free of charge and confidential. Freephone: 1800 666 666 www.childline.ie

ISPCC The Irish Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children provides the Childline service, where children can call with any worries and concerns. ISPCC also provides a range of services to support parents. Tel: 01 676 7960 www.ispcc.ie

Barnardos Provides services to respond to the needs of children and families, and also work to develop policy and service provision. Callsave: 1850 222 300 www.barnardos.ie

HSE National Counselling Service A professional, confidential counselling and psychotherapy service available free of charge for adults who experienced abuse as children. For more information or to make an appointment contact: Tel: 1800 235 234 www.hse-ncs.ie

Evening Telephone Counselling Service and Helpline

Wed and Thurs 6pm-10pm and Fri, Sat, Sun, 8pm-12 midnight
Freephone: 1800 235 235

Citizens Information Service For information about all public services in Ireland. Lo-call: 1890 777 121 www.citizensinformation.ie

Support and Services for One Parent Families

Treoir, Lo-call: 1890 252 084 www.treoir.ie

One Family, Lo-call: 1890 66 22 12 www.oneparent.ie

Samaritans is available 24 hours a day to provide confidential emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide.

Call save: 1850 60 90 90 www.samaritans.org



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

Health Service Executive

Lo-call: 1850 24 1850

www.hse.ie

