



Bodywhys Child Safeguarding Statement

Document Name	Child Safeguarding Statement
Version reference	2.0
Document owner	CEO
Governance Code Principle	
Approved by and date	Bodywhys Board of Directors 16/09/26
Next review date	September 2028, or earlier following a material change

About Bodywhys

Founded in 1995, Bodywhys – The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland - is the national voluntary organisation supporting people affected by eating disorders and their families. Bodywhys provides a range of non-judgemental listening, information and support services, as well as school talks, training, literature, podcasts and webinars. Other aspects of our work include developing professional resources and collaborating with social media companies to respond to harmful online content and working with the mainstream media to create awareness about eating disorders. Bodywhys develops evidence-based programmes to promote positive body image and social media literacy in children and adolescents and provide relevant supports and guidance for parents and education professionals. Bodywhys is the support partner to the HSE's National Clinical Programme for Eating Disorders (NCP-ED).

About this statement

The Board of Directors are responsible for ensuring that this statement is approved and adhered to.

This Child Safeguarding Statement applies to Bodywhys staff and volunteers and has been developed with the aim of ensuring, as far as practicable, that children availing of the support services we provide are safe from 'harm' as defined in the Children First Act 2015. This Statement will be reviewed in accordance with Children First requirements and updated where there are changes in legislation, national guidance, services or identified safeguarding risks.

We commit to ensuring that when and where child protection issues become apparent that Bodywhys staff and volunteers will respond swiftly, professionally, and appropriately. We will ensure that all staff and volunteers are vetted and checked in accordance with the law, that our recruitment processes follow best practice, and that staff and volunteers receive clear child protection-related training and information.

The Child Safeguarding Statement and associated child safeguarding procedures are developed collaboratively by the Designated Liaison Person, the CEO and the

Communications, Research and Policy Manager. Responsibility for implementation rests across the organisation in accordance with individual roles and relevant policies and procedures.

Guiding Principles to safeguard children from harm

1. Our priority is to ensure the welfare and safety of every child and young person who avail of our support services.
2. Our guiding principles and procedures to safeguard children and young people are underscored by national policy and legislation. We will review our guiding principles and child safeguarding mechanisms and processes every two years, or sooner where there is a material change in legislation, national guidance, services or safeguarding risks.
3. All children and young people have an equal right to access a service grounded in respect for them as individuals and which encourages them to reach their potential, regardless of their background.
4. We are committed to upholding the rights of every child and young person who accesses our services, including the rights to be listened to, heard and kept safe and protected from harm.
5. We are committed to ensuring that every child is protected from harm, irrespective of race, ethnicity, ability and sexual orientation.
6. Our guiding principles apply to everyone in our organisation.
7. All staff and volunteers must conduct themselves in a way that reflects the principles of our organisation.

Bodywhys will adopt safe care practices that minimise the possibility of harm, injury, abuse or neglect to a child accessing our services, and which encourages safe practice from staff.

Safeguarding applies equally to children and young people accessing Bodywhys services in person, online, or through other forms of digital communication. We will take appropriate steps to identify and manage risks arising from online and digital activity.

Risk assessment

Our risk assessment considers any potential harm to a child while accessing or participating in Bodywhys services, including risks arising through online and digital services.

Below is a list of the areas of risk identified and the list of procedures to manage risks. All risks identified below are as defined in the Children First Act, 2015. Risk of harm, as defined in the Act, such as in relation to a child: (a) assault, ill-treatment or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously impacts or is likely to seriously affect a child's health, development or welfare, or (b) sexual abuse of a child.

	Risk identified	Procedures to manage risk
1	Risk of harm or abuse to a child or young person from a staff member or volunteer	Employee Handbook: People Policies Garda Vetting Policy Child Protection Policy and reporting process Complaints Policy Child protection training for staff and volunteers
2	Risk of harm or abuse to a child or young person as a result of staff or volunteers failing to respond to a child protection concern	Complaints Policy Child Protection Policy and reporting process Whistleblowing Policy

		Child protection training for staff and volunteers
3	Risk of harm or abuse to a child or young person at a Bodywhys school talk, event, conference, webinar or participation in the Youth Panel	Child protection training for staff and volunteers Child Protection Policy and reporting process Garda Vetting Policy Employee Handbook: People Policies Youth Development Policy
4	Risk of harm or abuse to a child or young person when engaging on a one-to-one basis with a staff member or volunteer	Child Protection Policy and reporting process Complaints Policy Child protection training for staff and volunteers
5	Risk of harm or abuse to a child or young person by their peers whilst engaging in activities organised by Bodywhys	Child Protection Policy and reporting process Complaints Policy Child protection training for staff and volunteers Garda Vetting Policy Anti-bullying policy Code of behaviour for staff and volunteers
6	Risk of harm or abuse to a child or young person through inappropriate contact by a staff member or volunteer	Complaints Policy Child Protection Policy and reporting process

		Child protection training for staff and volunteers Code of behaviour for staff and volunteers Garda Vetting Policy
7	Risk of harm or abuse to a child, or young person, through inappropriate use of social media, digital communications, digital images, audio/video content, AI or emerging digital technologies.	Communications Policy Complaints Policy Social Media Policy Podcast Policy AI policy
8	Risk of harm or abuse to a child or young person through support services: online support groups, virtual support group, helpline, email support and family support services	Complaints Policy Child Protection Policy and reporting process Garda Vetting Policy Volunteer Policy Helpline Policy Email Support Policy Virtual Support Policy Online Support Group Policy Family Support Policy

Procedures

This Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in accordance with requirements under the Children First Act 2015, Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017) and Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice. This includes the 2025 Addendum on Dealing with Adult Retrospective Disclosures of Childhood Abuse.

The following procedures support our intention to safeguard children as they engage with our services:

- Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against Bodywhys staff or volunteers of a child while availing of our service
- Procedure for the safe recruitment of staff and volunteers
- Procedure for provision of and delivery of child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm
- Procedure for the reporting of child protection or welfare concerns to Tusla
- Procedure for maintaining a list of designated liaison persons
- Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

All procedures listed are available on request. To request a copy of our procedures, please contact info@bodywhys.ie

Relevant person

The current Relevant Person, as required under the Children First Act, 2015 is Harriet Parsons, CEO. Postal Address: P.O. Box 105, Blackrock, Co. Dublin. Tel: 01 283 4963. Email: ceo@bodywhys.ie

Implementation

We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Our organisation is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while accessing our services. The Child Safeguarding Statement is displayed prominently in our office and on our website.

The board provides oversight of the Statement, with its implementation supported by the CEO, Designated Liaison Person, Communications, Research and Policy Manager and relevant staff and volunteers.

It will be reviewed every two years, or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers. Bodywhys will also review the Statement where there is a significant change to the services provided or where a safeguarding incident or emerging risk indicates that an earlier review is required.

Signed:

Provider of the Relevant Service under the Children First Act, 2015: Harriet Parsons, CEO, Bodywhys. Postal Address: P.O. Box 105, Blackrock, Co. Dublin. Tel: 01 283 4963. Email: ceo@bodywhys.ie

The Designated Liaison Person, as required under the Children First Act, 2015 is Kathy Downes, Bodywhys Support Services and Training Manager. Postal Address: P.O. Box 105, Blackrock, Co. Dublin. Tel: 01-2834963, 087 1335417. Email: kathy@bodywhys.ie
The Deputy Designated Liaison Person is Harriet Parsons, CEO.

Postal Address: P.O. Box 105, Blackrock, Co. Dublin

Helpline: 01-2107906

Office: 01-2834963

Email Support: alex@bodywhys.ie

Office email: info@bodywhys.ie

Website: www.bodywhys.ie

Think Bodywhys CLG, trading as Bodywhys – The Eating Disorders Association of Ireland, is a company limited by guarantee.

Registered Company Number 236310. Registered Office 18 Upper Mount Street, Dublin 2. Registered Charity Number 20034054. CHY number 11961.