

	<b>LLC003b Child Safeguarding Statement</b>	Version: 09/2024
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### Important Information

- In compliance with the Children First Act, 2015 all agencies who offer a service to minors are required to have a child safeguarding statement.
- Under the Children First Act, 2015 Living Life Counselling is mandated and has a statutory obligation to report a concern or allegation of physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect both current and retrospective to Tusla, the child and family agency.

### Child Safeguarding Statement

#### 1. Living Life Counselling provides supportive services to adults and minors ages 5-17 years of age

Living Life Counselling is a registered charity providing counselling and supportive services to adults and minors aged 5–17 years of age. We are committed to best practice which involves the safety and protection of children from harm. Information contained in our Child Protection Policy provides direction for staff and volunteers when working with parents, children and vulnerable adults.

#### 2. Commitment to safeguard children from harm

- Our Service is committed to safeguarding minors who attend our service and to providing a safe environment where the welfare of a child or young person is paramount.
- We are committed to upholding the rights of every child and young person who attends our service, including the rights to be kept safe and protected from harm, listened to, and heard.
- Our policy and procedures to safeguard children and young people reflect national policy and legislation and are underpinned by Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, the Tusla Children First - Child Safeguarding Guide 2017, and the Children First Act 2015.
- Our policy declaration applies to all staff, volunteers, committee/ board members. All committee board members, staff and volunteers are required to adhere and abide by the policies, procedures and guidance encompassed by this policy declaration and our child safeguarding policy and accompanying procedures.
- We will review our child safeguarding statement and accompanying child safeguarding policies and procedures every 2 years or sooner if necessary, due to service issues or changes in legislation or national policy.

### Designated Liaison Person for Child Protection

<b>DLP:</b> <i>Anne O Connor, Clinical Manager</i> <i>Living Life Counselling 012866729</i>	<b>Deputy:</b> <i>Rebecca Mullen, Centre Manager</i> <i>Living Life Counselling 012866729</i>
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### 3. Risk assessment

In accordance with the Children First Act 2015, Living Life has carried out an assessment of any potential for harm to a child while attending the service. A written assessment setting out the areas of risk identified and the service procedures for managing those risks is summarised below:

<b>Risk Identified</b>	<b>Policies and/or Procedures in place to manage Risk</b>
<b>Physical Safety</b>	Living Life has identified and highlighted any potential risks to physical safety within the building as part of its health and safety assessment which includes fire, safety, adequate lighting and glass in the door of the playroom.
<b>Potential concerns in relation to a minor attending the service</b>	Where mental health providers are involved with the young person, written clarification is sought to ensure safety to partake in counselling
<b>Engagement between counsellor and minor</b>	The following measures are in place to protect the young person/vulnerable adult against the potential of abuse: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Garda Vetting for all volunteer counsellors</li><li>● Ensuring all volunteer counsellors have adequate training, insurance, association membership of a professional body, and supervision</li><li>● Counsellors comply with the code of ethics of their professional body, and the Vision, Mission and Values of Living Life Counselling</li><li>● Consent from both parents/legal guardians is sought prior to commencement of counselling (client agreement)</li><li>● Parent/Guardian is required to accompany the minor to and from the building and to remain present in the building during counselling</li></ul>

#### **4. LLC003 Child and Vulnerable Adult Policies, Procedures and Practice**

As required by the Children First Act, 2015, Children First National Guidance for Protection and Welfare of Children 2017, and Tusla's Child Safeguarding. From Monday June 27th 2022 Tusla introduced a new procedure called the Child Abuse Substantiation Procedure (CASP). It is for use by social workers who carry out what is called a "substantiation assessment", to conclude if child abuse has happened or not. We conduct these assessments solely for the purpose of protecting children who could be at risk of abuse today. It will be used to assess current and retrospective allegations of child abuse. The CASP will replace the current "Policy and Procedures for Responding to Allegations of Abuse and Neglect", which has been in use since 2014.

A guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice the following safeguarding policies, procedures, and measures are in place:

- A Designated Liaison Person and Deputy have been appointed (see table above)
- Child Protection and Welfare Reporting Procedures (LLC003a Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Procedures)
- LLC007 Data Protection Policy, LLC007b Data Protection Procedure Clients, and Confidentiality Agreement
- Policy for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse or Neglect Against Employees (LLC003a Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Procedures)
- A current list of all mandated persons, volunteer counsellors and staff, is held on our database.
- Procedure for Managing Child Protection Records located in LLC003(a) Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection Procedures
- LLC016 Recruitment Policy and LLC016(a & b) Recruitment Procedures for Staff and Volunteers
- LLC010(a) Garda Vetting Policy and Procedure
- LLC016 Recruitment Policy and LLC016b Recruitment Policy for Volunteers, which includes procedures to inform new staff about the LLC003b Child Safeguarding Statement and accompanying safeguarding policies and procedures.
- All staff to complete the Tusla eLearning module – *Introduction to Children First* and relevant staff attend Children First Child Protection Training.
- Staff have access to regular Supervision and Support in line with the service policy.
- LLC006(a) Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Policy for Managing Accidents and Incidents-LLC012(a) Health and Safety Policy and Procedure

## 5. Implementation and Review

- We recognise that implementation is an ongoing process. Our service is committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the accompanying child safeguarding policies and procedures that support our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our service.
- This Statement will be reviewed every 2 years or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which the statement refers.
- This statement will be published on the Living Life Counselling website and displayed in each centre. All staff, volunteers and any other persons involved with the service will be made aware of it. On request it is accessible to parents and guardians. A copy of this Statement will be made available to Tusla if requested.

Signed: Rebecca Mullen Date: 09/2024  
Rebecca Mullen, Centre Manager

Signed: Anne O'Connor Date: 09/2024  
Anne O'Connor, Clinical Manager

Version Control Table *Minor changes would be a .1 change, Major would be a 1.0 change				
Version	Author	Date	Changes	Approved by
1.0	Rebecca Mullen	1/9/23	Addition of Version Control Table	Gov&Comp SubC
1.1	Linda O'Reilly	01/24	Pg2 – Deputy Designated Liaison Person for Child Protection changed to Rebecca Mullen, Centre Manager. Pg 4 Signatory changed to Rebecca Mullen, Centre Manager	Ethics SubC
1.2	Rebecca Mullen	09/24	Logo Watermarked. Version Control Updated. Added Clinical Manager Signatory area to pg 4	BoD