



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

2023

Child Safeguarding Policy

First Fortnight

Developed

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FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

Table of Contents

	Page
1. Introduction	
1.1 Statement of Policy	4
1.2 Purpose of this Policy	5
1.3 Application and Scope of Policy	5
1.4 Guiding Principles	5
1.5 Statement of Risk	6
2. Glossary of Terms and Definitions	7
3. Roles and Responsibilities	7
3.1 General Roles and Responsibilities	7
3.2 Designated Liaison Person and Deputy	8
3.3 Mandated Persons	8
3.4 Relevant Person	8
4. Procedures: First Fortnight: Safe Practices for Working with Children and Young People	
4.1 Management of Activities	9
4.2 Health & Safety	9
4.3 Accidents & Incidents	9
4.4 Procedure for Safe Recruitment and Selection	10
4.5 Code of Behaviour for Staff, Volunteers and Contractors	10
4.6 Training and Support Programmes	13
4.7 Communication with Parents/Guardians and Public re Child Safe-Guarding Statement & Procedures	14
4.8 Supervision of Staff/Volunteers/Contractors	14
4.9 Events Outside DLP working hours	14
5. Recognising Child Abuse and Neglect	
5.1 Reasonable Grounds for Concern	14
5.2 Risk factors in Child Protection	15
5.3 Summary of Types of Abuse/Neglect	16-17
6. Responding to and Reporting Child Protection and Welfare Concerns	17
6.1 Procedure for reporting child protection concerns	19
6.2 Procedures for dealing with disclosures of abuse from a child	19
6.3 Confidentiality Statement	21
6.4 First Fortnight Reporting Procedure – Step-by-Step Outline	22
6.5 Statement on the Involvement of Children, Young people and Primary Care- Givers	23
6.6 Retrospective Disclosures & Allegations Procedure for Adults	24
6.7 Procedure for the Management and Recording of Allegations against Staff/ Volunteers/persons contracted to work on behalf of First Fortnight	



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

7. Appendices

Appendix 1:	Tusla guidelines for supporting a child in the situation of a disclosure	25
Appendix 2:	Tusla Standard Form for Reporting Child Protection and/or Welfare Concern	26
Appendix 3:	Retrospective Abuse Report Form (RARF)	32
Appendix 4:	Declaration: Agreement with external venue or organisation	37
Appendix 5:	Declaration Form: Suitability to work with Children	39
Appendix 6:	Incident Report Template	40
Appendix 7:	Declaration: Child Safeguarding Policy	41
Appendix 8:	Diagram: Procedure for the management of Child Protection issues	42
Appendix 9:	First Fortnight Child Safeguarding Statement	47



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

The following document is informed by Children First guidance and legislation. It accompanies First Fortnights Child Safeguarding Statement and outlines First Fortnights Child Safeguarding Policy, Procedure and associated Implementation Guidance.

1. Introduction

First Fortnight is a diverse organisation delivering impact to a large group of people by challenging mental health prejudice through arts and cultural action. Specifically, this includes two distinct branches of service provision i.e.:

- 1) **Advocacy**, which includes the First Fortnight Festival. This offers family friendly mental health themed art and cultural events during the First Fortnight Festival in January across the country of Ireland working with artists, other art and mental health organisations and venues. Events cater for a wide range of ages across the lifespan.
- 2) **Creative Therapy Provision**, which includes the First Fortnight Centre for Creative Therapies for adults and Centre for Creative Therapies for Children and Young People. Both Creative Therapy services provide creative psychotherapy to children and adults with experiences of homelessness or who are at risk of homelessness.

1.1 Statement of Policy

It is the policy of First Fortnight that all children and young people are kept safe and protected while engaging with our services and that their safety and welfare is of paramount importance regardless of all other considerations. First Fortnight is committed to ensuring that all safeguarding policies, practices and procedures reflect our statutory responsibilities and that they are in line with best practice requirements. We fully comply with the obligations under Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection of children and fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child safeguarding matters.

First Fortnight actively promotes safe practice to minimise the possibility of harm happening to children and to protect workers and volunteers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect. We fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealings with child safety matters. We believe the safeguarding of children is everyone's responsibility. Our guiding principles are for Board Members, staff, volunteers, those providing contracted services on our behalf, and the children and young people their families and carers and guardians accessing our services.



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

First Fortnight is committed to the protection and safeguarding of children. *We have a Risk Assessment Procedure and a series of procedures, policies and a Code of Behaviour to ensure the safest possible environment for children.*

1.2 Purpose of this Policy

The Child and Family Agency (Tusla) guidelines on protecting children place a clear duty on all services providers to protect children from abuse. In line with this First Fortnight is responsible to report any suspicions of physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect to the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) or the Gardaí

This policy should be read in conjunction with First Fortnights Garda Vetting Policy

1.3 Application and Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all First Fortnight staff, the Board, and anyone working on behalf of, or undertaking work for, or volunteering for First Fortnight. It also includes people from other organisations / agencies providing services to First Fortnight while they are on the premises.

This policy covers allegations including:

- the commitment of a criminal offence against, or related to, a child, young person or vulnerable adult while charged with the provision of services for First Fortnight
- failure to work collaboratively with First Fortnight, the HSE and the Gardaí in situations where an issue about the safeguarding of a child, young person or vulnerable adult with whom they are working is being investigated;
- behaviour towards a child, young person or vulnerable adult in a way that suggests they are unsuitable to work with them e.g. aggressive, violent behaviour;
- the commitment of violence or abuse, or the failure to ensure that a vulnerable person is protected from the impact of such violence or abuse;

All staff must be familiar with the policy and procedures for the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. All concerns must be reported to the Designated Liaison Person.

1.4 Guiding Principles

The guiding principles that underpin First Fortnights Child Safeguarding Policy are as follows:

- The safety and welfare of children is everyone's responsibility.
- The best interests of the child is paramount.
- Early intervention is vital.
- Where conflict arises, the child's welfare must come first.



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

- Children have a right to be heard, listened to and to be taken seriously. Taking account of their age and understanding, they should be consulted and involved in all matters and decisions that may affect their lives.
- All children must be treated equally in line with the Equal Status Acts 2000 and 2012 and have the right to be protected from harm and discrimination.
- Parents / guardians have a right to respect and should be consulted and involved in matters that concern their children.
- Effective prevention and detection of child abuse or neglect requires clarity of responsibility and training of staff involved in the provision of services for children.
- Every staff member and volunteer working with children must be aware of their own role.
- All staff have a responsibility to ensure that concerns they may have regarding a child's safeguarding are reported without delay.

1.5 Statement of Risk

First Fortnight's Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line 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*. In addition to the procedures listed in our risk assessment, the following procedures support our intention to safeguard children and vulnerable adults while they are availing of our services:

2. Code of Behaviour for Staff and Volunteers
3. Procedure for the management of allegations of abuse or misconduct against workers/volunteers of a child availing of our service.
4. Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers who are suitable to work with children, including Garda Vetting where appropriate.
5. Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information
6. Information to support workers in identifying the occurrence of harm.
7. Procedure for the reporting of child safeguarding or welfare concerns to TUSLA.
8. Procedure for maintaining a list of the persons (if any) in the relevant service who are mandated persons.
9. Procedure for appointing a Relevant Person.
10. Policy statement on the involvement of primary carers
11. Accident/incident Procedure
12. Confidentiality Statement



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

2. Glossary of Terms and Definitions

Definitions of Abuse

There are four main categories of abuse as outlined in Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children.

1. **Physical Abuse:** Where it is known or suspected that that injury was deliberately inflicted
2. **Emotional Abuse:** This refers to adverse effects on the behaviour and emotional development of a child caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection or exposure to ongoing domestic violence.
3. **Sexual Abuse:** The use of children by others for sexual gratification. This can take many forms such as rape and other sexual assaults, allowing children to view sexual acts or to be exposed to, or involved in, pornography, exhibitionism and other perverse activities.
4. **Neglect:** The persistent or severe neglect of a child whether willful or unintentional which results in serious impairment of the child's health, development or welfare.

Please refer to appendix 1 for expanded details i.e. glossary of terms and definitions of abuse and section 4.3 for details regarding the types of abuse/neglect

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 General Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff are responsible to have read and understand their roles and responsibilities with regard to child safeguarding, as outlined in this policy. To this end they are required to sign the declaration form in Appendix 8 confirming this.

This Policy forms part of the induction process for all new staff and volunteers. The Designated Liaison Person will provide consultation and assistance to staff who have a child safeguarding concern.

First Fortnight is required to have an appropriate and secure filing system in place to maintain all documentation related to child safeguarding concerns in line with the requirements outlined in this Policy. The Designated Liaison Person is required to maintain records of all child safeguarding reports made to Tusla and/or An Garda Síochána in an appropriate and secure filing system in accordance with Data Protection.

3.2 Designated Liaison Person and Deputy

Designated Liaison Person (DLP) – a resource to any staff member who has a child protection concern. DLPs are responsible for ensuring that reporting procedures are followed correctly and promptly and act as a liaison person with other agencies (see Children First: National Guidance). **As of June 19th, 2023 the Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is the Creative Arts Therapist, Adrienne Cassidy**



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DDLDP)- a secondary resource to any staff member who has a child protection concern. **As of June 19th, 2023 the Deputy Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Creative Arts Therapist, Eithne Mc Adam**

3.3 Mandated Persons

A Mandated person is defined in the Children First Act 2015, as a person who has a statutory obligation to report concerns which reach a particular threshold to Tusla and to cooperate with Tusla in the assessment of mandated reports.

Schedule 2 of the Children First Act 2015 specifies the classes of persons as mandated persons. This enables First Fortnight to maintain a list of the relevant mandated persons, this is regularly updated upon employment of new staff and the annual checking and updating of this Safeguarding Statement.

First Fortnight recognises the following as **mandated persons (as of 15th June 2023)**:

Creative Therapists	Eithne McAdam Adrienne Cassidy Jessica Sinclair Nicola Kealey	0892545569 0867777222 0862117207 0872791071
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3.4 Relevant Person

Procedure for appointing a relevant person.

First Fortnight takes great consideration when appointing a designated liaison person in keeping with best practice in child safeguarding. This person will be the resource person for any staff member, volunteer or person contracted to work on behalf of First Fortnight who has child safeguarding concerns and will liaise with outside agencies. The designated liaison person selected will always be knowledgeable about child safeguarding and/or will be provided with any training considered necessary to fulfil this role.

4. First Fortnight: Safe Practices for Working with Children and Young People

4.1 Management of Activities and Supporting Policies

First Fortnight is committed to ensuring that all activities and events carried out by them or on their behalf are provided in line with best practice. To support this First Fortnight has developed and implemented a range of policies and procedures. These include policies guiding the Recruitment and Selection process, Health and Safety and Child Safeguarding requirements, GDPR and Data Protection requirements, management of Risks and Reporting of Incidents, Management of complaints and Garda Vetting. For more details please refer to the associated policy.



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

4.2 Health and safety

In order to ensure that they are working in line with best practice in relation to Health and Safety staff and volunteers are required to:

- Ensure that children are not left unattended or unsupervised;
- Manage any dangerous materials;
- Provide a safe environment;
- Be aware of accident procedure and follow accordingly.

If in doubt, staff and volunteers are required to consult their line manager, Designated Liaison Person, Health and Safety Officer or First Fortnight staff.

4.3 Accidents & Incidents

Accident Procedure

- External organisations with whom our organisation has dealings are required to provide proof that they have public liability insurance;
- First-aid boxes are available and regularly re-stocked;
- The location of the first-aid box(es) are required to be made known to staff, volunteers and persons contracted to work on behalf of First Fortnight;
- Availability of first-aid is in accordance with First Fortnights Health and Safety guidelines. The location of accident/incident books will be made known to staff members, volunteers and persons contracted to work on behalf of First Fortnight;
- Children will be advised of any risks of dangerous material;
- A record of details of risky equipment will be kept. First Fortnight will proactively take steps to minimise risk;
- First Fortnight is cognisant of their responsibility for first-aid on off-site trips.

The location of First Fortnight's Office First Aid Box is under sink in the kitchen.



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

4.4 Procedure for Safe Recruitment and Selection

Procedure for the safe recruitment and selection of workers and volunteers:

First Fortnight will ensure that staff and volunteers are carefully selected, trained and supervised and will provide a safe environment for all children, by observing the following principles:

- Roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined for every job (paid or voluntary);
- Posts will be advertised widely/ through relevant channels e.g. creative therapist roles through I.A.C.A.T.;
- First Fortnight will endeavour to select the most suitably qualified/skilled personnel;
- Candidates will be asked to sign a declaration form (see Appendix 5);
- Staff will be selected by a panel of at least two (or more) representatives through an interview process;
- No person who would be deemed to constitute a 'risk' will be employed;
- Some of the exclusions would include:
 - any child-related convictions;
 - refusal to sign application form and declaration form;
 - insufficient documentary evidence of identification;
 - concealing information on one's suitability to working with children;
- There will be a relevant probationary period;
- All staff will be required to consent to Garda clearance, and where available and necessary in accordance with official policies, this will be sought.
- References will be sought from previous employers.

4.5 Code of Behaviour for Staff, Volunteers and Contractors

The Code of Behaviour sets out the acceptable standards of behaviour expected of all staff and volunteers working on behalf of First Fortnight when working with children and vulnerable adults. This Code of Behaviour can be categorised under the following headings:

- Openness and Transparency;
- Best Practice;
- Inappropriate Behaviour;
- Physical Contact;
- Health and Safety.

Openness and Transparency

When communicating with a child or vulnerable person, including during telephone conversations, staff and volunteers are required to work in an open, observed location, maintaining an appropriate distance, physically and professionally.



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

The following outlines the core principles that guide all work on behalf of First Fortnight with children and vulnerable adults:

- That the interests of each child or vulnerable person must be put first;
- All children must be treated equally and with dignity and respect.
- Staff and volunteers must be aware at all times of the effects that their words and actions might have, and the meaning that might be placed on them.
- All contact must be arranged within the timeframes of the service provision.

To support this all staff and volunteers are required to avoid:

- Situations in which they are left alone with a child or vulnerable adult.
- Acting in any way that might make a child or vulnerable person uncomfortable.
- Going beyond the remit of their role - i.e.: being drawn into personal conversations.
- Meeting or engaging in any form of contact outside of service hours.
- Any physical contact.
- Any use of inappropriate language, any toleration of inappropriate language uttered by any party in the presence of or by children or vulnerable persons.
- Exchanging personal contact information.
- Allowing any allegation concerning child or vulnerable adult welfare to go unreported.
- Ever promising that information shared by a child or vulnerable adult will be kept confidential.

Best Practice working with children:

First Fortnight is committed to ensuring best practice is upheld in the implementation of its services. To this end First Fortnight:

- Believes that all children have the right to be heard, listened to, and taken seriously;
- Strives to Involve children in decision-making, as appropriate;
- Is committed to ensure that children and vulnerable adults are involved in all matters and decisions that affect their lives where appropriate, with due regard to their age and level of understanding.

To support this all staff and volunteers are required to:

- Treat all children equally;
- Listen to and respect children;
- Provide encouragement, support and praise (regardless of level of ability);
- Use appropriate language (physical and verbal);
- Promote an atmosphere of trust, fun and encouragement;
- Offer constructive criticism when needed;
- Treat all children as individuals;
- Respect each child's personal space;



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

- Use age-appropriate teaching aids and materials;
- Be cognisant of a child's limitations, e.g. due to a medical condition;
- Respect differences, e.g. ability, culture, gender, religion, race and sexual orientation;
- Register each child/vulnerable adult, (i.e. details including name, address, phone, special requirements, attendance, emergency contact);
- Be inclusive of all children regardless of any special needs;
- Plan and be sufficiently prepared, both mentally and physically for the requirements of their roles, i.e. via training, CPD etc.;
- Avoid facilitating sessions/events/activities without sufficient controls in place, i.e. having an appropriate child to adult ratio. In cases where this may not be possible /practicable they must ensure that staff/volunteers are in an open environment with the full knowledge and consent of primary carers;
- Avoid giving lifts to children/young people. In cases where this cannot be avoided, they are required to make sure that primary carers are informed and give consent to this;
- Maintain awareness around language and comments made.
- Lead by example;
- Observe an appropriate dress code and behaviour;
- Make primary carers, children, visitors and facilitators aware of the Child Safeguarding Statement and procedures.

With regard to the reporting of child safeguarding concerns all staff and volunteers are required to:

- Report any concerns to the Designated Liaison Person and follow reporting procedures;
- Encourage children to report any bullying, concerns or worries and to be aware of the anti-bullying policy.
- Report and record any incidents and accidents;
- Keep primary carers informed of any issues that concern their children;
- Respond proactively and in a timely manner in relation to concerns.

When working in group settings/situations all staff and volunteers are required to :

- Discuss boundaries regarding behaviour and related sanctions, as appropriate, with children and their primary carers;
- Agree a group 'contract' before beginning group sessions;
- Encourage feedback from the group.

Notes:

- Parents/guardians should be consulted and involved unless to do so would create a risk to the child.
- First Fortnight is required to have emergency/incident procedures in place and make all staff aware of these procedures;



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

In order to support the implementation of best practice First Fortnight undertakes to:

- Provide appropriate training for staff and volunteers;
- Evaluate their work practices on a regular basis;
- Update and review policies and procedures regularly;

Behaviour

First Fortnight regards the following behaviour to be inappropriate and must be avoided:

- Spending excessive amounts of time alone with children;
- Allowing or using offensive or sexually suggestive physical and/or verbal language.
- Singling out children for unfair favouritism, criticism, ridicule, or unwelcome focus/attention;
- Allowing/engaging in inappropriate touching of any form;
- Hitting or physically chastising children;
- Socialising inappropriately with children, e.g., outside of structured organisational activities.

Physical contact

In the course of their role staff and volunteers are required to avoid physical contact with children. This includes avoiding horseplay or inappropriate touch.

Where physical contact between a staff member, volunteer or person contracted to work on behalf of First Fortnight and a child or young person may be necessary the person must:

- Seek consent of children in relation to any physical contact (except in an emergency or a dangerous situation).
- Check with children about their level of comfort when doing touch exercises.

4.6 Training and Support Programmes

Procedure for provision of and access to child safeguarding training and information, including the identification of the occurrence of harm.

All First Fortnight staff, volunteers and contractors working on their behalf are required at a minimum to have completed the Tusla online training module:

<https://www.tusla.ie/children-first/children-first-e-learning-programme/>

The training covers:

- Recognising and reporting child abuse;
- The role of mandated persons;
- The responsibilities of organisations working with children to safeguard children;

Staff are encouraged to attend additional child safeguarding training appropriate to their roles and to notify their respective supervisor/line manager of any training opportunities



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

they would like to avail of. Those with additional duties such as role of DLP must take any additional, necessary training.

All staff and volunteers will undergo induction to their roles. This training will include an introduction to First Fortnights guiding principles and safeguarding procedures. All training provided will be consistent with Children First, National Guidance for the protection and welfare of children, the Children First Act 2015 and this guide.

Training record will gather and retain a record of training information for all staff. In addition, a signed receipt of all workers/volunteers/contract workers who have been given a copy of First Fortnights guiding principles and child safeguarding procedures will be kept.

4.7 Communication with Parents/Guardians and Public re Child Safe-Guarding Statement & Procedures

Parents and guardians will be made aware that a copy of First Fortnights Child Safeguarding Statement can be made available to them on request. Relevant and appropriate information is communicated to parents/guardians and children/young people to support enhanced working relationships. Children, young people, parents and guardians will be made aware of First Fortnights complaint process and the process should they be. Dissatisfied with the service being provided.

4.8 Supervision of Staff/Volunteers/Contractors

In addition to the code of behaviour all staff and volunteers are required to actively engage in regular supervision and annual appraisal as a core element of their work. This includes ongoing review of work and professional development.

4.9 Events Outside DLP working hours

It is important that the DLP is accessible to staff. In cases where activities or events are organised outside the DLP's working hours an agreed procedure will be in place to ensure that workers know what to do if they have any child protection or welfare concerns.

5. Recognising Child Abuse and Neglect

5.1 Reasonable Grounds for Concern

The following excerpt from Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children (4.3.2 - p.38) shows what would constitute reasonable grounds for concern:

- (i) specific indication from the child or young person that s/he has been abused;
- (ii) an account by a person who saw the child/young person being abused;



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

- (iii) evidence, such as an injury or behaviour, which is consistent with abuse and unlikely to be caused another way;
- (iv) an injury or behaviour which is consistent both with abuse and with an innocent explanation but where there are corroborative indicators supporting the concern that it may be a case of abuse [an example of this would be a pattern of injuries, an implausible explanation, other indications of abuse, dysfunctional behaviour];
- (v) consistent indication, over a period of time, that a child or young person is suffering from emotional or physical neglect.

Questions that staff can consider when concerned about a child's welfare:

- Is the child behaving normally for his or her age and stage of development?
- Does the child present a change in behaviour?
- For how long has this behaviour been observed?
- How often does it occur and where?
- Has something happened that could explain the child's behaviour?
- Is the child showing signs of distress? If so, describe (e.g.: behavioural, emotional, physical signs).
- Is the child suffering?
- Does the behaviour restrict the child socially?
- Does the behaviour interfere with the child's development?
- What effect, if any does it have on others (e.g.: other children)?
- What are the child's parent(s) views if known?

[Source: Barnardos (2010), Barnardo's Ireland Child Protection Information Pack]

5.2 Risk factors in Child Protection

Risk factors are identified in terms of occasions where staff and/or volunteers do not adhere to First Fortnight Best Practice Guidelines regarding how they should safely interact with children and vulnerable adults. The following risk areas are identified:

- Situations in which they are left alone with a child or vulnerable adult.
- Acting in any way that might make a child or vulnerable person uncomfortable.
- Going beyond the remit of their role - i.e.: being drawn into personal conversations.
- Meeting or engaging in any form of contact outside of service hours.
- Any physical contact.
- Any use of inappropriate language, any toleration of inappropriate language uttered by any party in the presence of or by children or vulnerable persons.
- Exchanging personal contact information.
- Allowing any allegation concerning child or vulnerable adult welfare to go unreported.
- Ever promising that information shared by a child or vulnerable adult will be kept confidential.



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

5.3 Summary of Types of Abuse/Neglect

Definitions of Abuse

There are four main categories of abuse as outlined in Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children. The following is a synopsis of the information contained in that document. For the full definitions please refer to Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children 1993 (pp.32-34).

Page 31 of Children First provides guidelines on definitions and recognition of child abuse:

1. Neglect:

Neglect can be defined as being where the child suffers significant harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, medical care.

The threshold of significant harm is reached when the child's needs are neglected to the extent that his or her well-being and/or development are severely affected."

2. Emotional abuse:

Emotional abuse usually happens where there is a relationship between a carer and a child rather than as a specific incident or incidents.

"Unless other forms of abuse are present, it is rarely manifested in terms of physical signs or symptoms."

Rather, it can manifest in the child's behaviour or physical functioning. Examples of these include 'anxious' attachment, unhappiness, low self-esteem, educational and developmental underachievement and uncooperative or hostile behaviour.

"The threshold of significant harm is reached when interaction is predominantly abusive and become typical of the relationship between the child and the parent/ carer." (Children First p.32)

Examples of emotional abuse in children include:

- Imposition of negative attributes on children, expressed by persistent criticism, sarcasm, hostility or blaming;
- Emotional unavailability by the child's parent/carers;
- Unresponsiveness, inconsistent or inappropriate expectations of the child;
- Premature imposition of responsibility on the child;
- Unrealistic or inappropriate expectations of the child's capacity to understand something or to behave and control him/herself in a certain way;
- Under or over-protection of the child;
- Use of unreasonably harsh discipline;
- Exposure to domestic violence.



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

3. Physical abuse:

Physical abuse is any form of non-accidental injury or injury which results from wilful or neglectful failure to protect a child. Examples of physical injury include the following:

- Shaking;
- Use of excessive force in handling;
- Deliberate poisoning;
- Suffocation;
- Allowing or creating a substantial risk of significant physical harm to a child.

4. Sexual abuse:

Sexual abuse involves the use of a child for gratification or sexual arousal by a person for themselves or others.

Examples of sexual abuse include:

- Exposure of the sexual organs or any sexual act intentionally performed in the presence of a child;
- Intentional touching or molesting of the body of a child whether by a person or object for the purpose of sexual arousal or gratification;
- Masturbation in the presence of the child or involvement of the child in an act of masturbation;
- Sexual intercourse with a child whether oral, vaginal or anal;
- Sexual exploitation of a child may also include showing sexually explicit material to children which is often a feature of the 'grooming' process by perpetrators of abuse;
- Consensual sexual activity involving an adult and an under-age person.

6. Responding to and Reporting Child Protection and Welfare Concerns

6.1 Procedure for reporting child protection and welfare concerns

The above excerpt from *Children First: National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children* (4.1) outlines what would constitute reasonable grounds for concern.

Staff will record the following information in relation to children :

- Suspicions;
- Concerns;
- Worrying observations;
- Behavioural changes;
- Actions and outcomes.

Records will be stored securely and confidentiality and will be maintained where appropriate (in line with the confidentiality statement).



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

Reporting procedures

The following procedure outlines the key stages and considerations that need to be taken into account in relation to reporting a child safeguarding concern. The key stages include:

- **Recognising** a concern.
- **Responding** to any immediate safety needs of the child. This includes consulting with your line manager/Designated Liaison Person to determine what actions may need to be considered in relation to the concern. Where further advice is required, it is important that an informal consultation is held with The Child and Family Agency (Tusla).
- **Reporting:** Where there are reasonable grounds for concern, or where there is a legal requirement to report as a Mandated Person it is important that a report is made to Tusla, without delay.
- **Informing** the family, unless there is good reason not to do so.
- **Recording** the incident in line with the Record Keeping Policy and Data Protection requirements.
- **Assisting** Tusla, where requested, with its assessment of a concern.
- **Continue to Monitor** no further action required.

The following outlines the core points considered in relation to addressing Child Safeguarding concerns.

- The reporting procedure will be made known and accessible to all staff members, volunteers and persons contracted to work on behalf of First Fortnight;
- The person who expresses the concern will be involved and kept informed;
- Actions and outcomes will be noted;
- Record all details, including the observations, date, time, location, context and people involved in the concern or disclosure and the facts (i.e. in an incident book/log). Information recorded should be factual. Any opinions should be supported by facts;
- Inform the Designated Person or his or her deputy, if unavailable;
- The most appropriate person will discuss the concern or consult with primary carers. Parents, carers or responsible adults should be made aware that a report will be sent to the child and family agency unless it is likely to put the child/young person at further risk;
 - The Designated Person may contact the Child and Family Agency (Tusla) for an informal consultation prior to making a report;
 - Information will be shared on a strictly 'need to know' basis (see Confidentiality statement);
 - If there are reasonable grounds for concern, after going through the details with the concerned party who raised the issue, the Designated Person will contact the appropriate statutory authority using the standard reporting form available from the Child and Family Agency. (See Appendix 2 for sample form.) Reports to the Duty Social Worker can be made verbally initially and then followed by the standard reporting form. Reports should be made to the Child and Family Agency or the Gardaí without delay;



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

- If the Designated Person or Deputy Designated Person is not available, contact the Child and Family Agency directly;
- In case of emergencies outside of the Child and Family Agency hours, contact the Gardaí. In situations that threaten the immediate safety of a child/ young person, it may be necessary to contact the Gardaí in any Garda station
- A copy of the report form should be kept and stored securely by the Designated Person.
- In the case of adults disclosing historical abuse in their childhood that has not been previously reported, the report should be made to the area where the alleged perpetrator resides if known.

The details outlined in First Fortnights Child Safeguarding Statement and the following procedures must be brought to the attention of all engaged and contracted to work with, for or on behalf of First Fortnight.

6.2 Procedures for dealing with disclosures of abuse from a child

The following outlines the process which must be followed by a staff members, volunteers and persons contracted to work on behalf of First Fortnight should they be faced with a disclosure in the course of their work/volunteering

- Stay calm, listen to the child, allow him / her enough time to say what s/he needs to say;
- Don't use leading questions or prompt details or cross-examine the child;
- Reassure the child but do not promise to keep anything secret;
- Don't make the child repeat the details unnecessarily;
- Explain to the child what will happen next (explanation should be age-appropriate).
- Record as soon as possible the exact words used by the child.

Important: The responsibility for the assessment and investigation of allegations of abuse and neglect rests with the Child and Family Agency and An Garda Síochána.

6.3 Confidentiality Statement

We in First Fortnight are committed to ensuring peoples' rights to confidentiality. However, in relation to child safeguarding and welfare we undertake that:

- Information will only be forwarded on a 'need to know' basis in order to safeguard the child;
- Giving such information to others for the protection of a child is not a breach of confidentiality;



- We cannot guarantee total confidentiality where the best interests of the child are at risk;

FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

- Primary carers and children have a right to know if personal information is being shared and/or a report is being made to the Child and Family Agency, unless doing so could put the child/young person at further risk;
- Images of a child will not be used for any reason without the consent of the parent/carer (however, we cannot guarantee that cameras/videos will not be used at public performances);
- Where image or information of a child is to be used in promotion purposes in our publicity materials, on our website or in connection with First Fortnight events, only first names will be used and specific information avoided;
- Procedures will also be put in place for the recording and storing of information in line with First Fortnights Data Protection policy.



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

6.4 First Fortnight Reporting Procedure – Step-by-Step Outline

As a staff member, volunteer or person contracted to work on behalf of First Fortnight, you **recognise** a child Protection or Welfare Concern

Respond to any immediate safety needs

Consult with your line manager or most appropriate senior staff member, where necessary, to determine if there are **reasonable grounds** to report a concern to **Tusla** (Mandated Persons should then determine if the concern meets the threshold of harm for a mandated report). An **informal consultation** may be held at any time in the reporting process with a **Tusla Social Work Contact Point**. Always **inform** your line manager of any concerns, reports and related actions taken.

Decision to Report

Where there is **immediate** and **serious risk**, ensure the safety of the child and contact the **Tusla Social Work Contact Point** by phone. If Tusla is unavailable, contact an Garda Síochána.

Complete the appropriate report form onto Tusla's reporting portal at www.tusla.ie. Reports may be sent by registered post or in person only where online accessibility is not possible.

Tusla provide an **out-of-hours** service between **6 pm** and **6 am** every night and between **9 am** and **5 pm** on **Saturdays, Sundays** or **Bank holidays**. This may be accessed through a restricted professional help line number available to your service, or through an Garda Síochána. Mandated persons only may contact the out-of-hours service on 0818 776 315.

Decision not to Report

Both the staff member and line manager should be in agreement where a concern does not meet with **reasonable grounds** to be reported to Tusla. If there is disagreement, further consultation may be sought from Tusla and/or a report should be made reasonably and in good faith to a **Tusla Social Work Contact Point**. The line manager should be informed if a report is sent to Tusla.

Where ever possible, service users/parents or guardians should be **informed** of any child protection or welfare concerns, or where report is being made to Tusla or an Garda Síochána, unless to do so would create a risk of harm, or impair Tusla or an Garda Síochána's ability to assess investigate a concern. Always consult your line manager in this situation.

Keep up-to-date **records** of the concern, including contact with the child, parents/guardians, any consultants consultations, decisions and reports, and store in accordance with HSE Child Protection and Welfare Policy.

Assist Tusla where requested

Continue to monitor situation/no further action required



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

6.5 Statement on the Involvement of Children, Young people and Primary Care-Givers

First Fortnight are committed to being open with all primary carers.

In this regard we undertake to:

- Advise primary carers of our child safeguarding policy;
- Inform primary carers and schools of all activities and potential activities;
- Issue contact/consent forms where relevant;
- Comply with health and safety practices;
- Operate child-centred policies in accordance with best practice;
- Adhere to our recruitment guidelines;
- Ensure as far as possible that the activities are age-appropriate;
- Encourage and facilitate the involvement of parent(s), guardian(s), carer(s) or responsible adult(s), where appropriate.

If we have concerns about the welfare of the child, we will:

- Respond to the needs of the child;
- Inform the primary carers on an on-going basis unless this action puts the child at further risk;
- Where there are child safeguarding and welfare concerns we are obliged to pass these on to the Duty Social Worker and, in an emergency, the Gardaí;
- In the event of a complaint against a member of staff, we will immediately ensure the safety of the child/young person and inform primary carers as appropriate.

As a child-centred organisation, we are committed to putting the interest of the child first.

To that end we will:

- Contact local Health Service Executive (Child and Family Agency) and Gardaí where there is a child safeguarding welfare concern (using Tusla Report Form, see Appendix 2);
- Encourage primary carers to work in partnership with us under the guidelines set out by our organisation to ensure the safety of their children;
- Have a designated contact person available for consultation with primary carers in the case of any concern over a child or vulnerable adult's welfare.

6.6 Retrospective Disclosures & Allegations Procedure for Adults

Retrospective abuse (otherwise known as historic/al abuse) refers to abuse that an adult experienced that took place during their childhood. Where retrospective abuse comes to the attention of a staff member, volunteer or contractor working on behalf of First Fortnight, the person who receives the disclosure must contact the Designated Liaison Person to complete and forward a Retrospective Abuse Report Form (RARF) to Tusla.



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

A Retrospective Abuse Report Form (RARF) will be completed by the following people:

- An adult disclosing childhood abuse
- Creative therapists (staff or panel), staff member, volunteer or person contracted to work on behalf of First Fortnight involved in
 - services dealing with adults and/or children who are attending counselling, psychotherapy, and or any type of emotional wellbeing or support services.
 - mental health or other relevant services
- Mandated persons under the Children First Act 2015, as specified in Schedule 2 of the Act.
- Designated Liaison Persons

The following Guidance notes and process has been developed to assist when completing the RARF:

- It is important to include as much information and detail as is known to you on the form. This will assist Tusla and the Social Work Department in
 - screening the report
 - assessing the level of risk
 - assigning a priority status to the case (when necessary)
- If the information requested is not known this can be indicated by putting a line through the question.
- Following receipt of the RARF it is usual that a social worker will respond to discuss the report. Tusla aims to work in partnership with adult complainants, persons subject to abuse allegations, parents and others.
- **Note:** If making this report in confidence, it is important to note that Tusla cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality for the following reasons:
 - A Court could order the information be disclosed.
 - Under the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003, the Information Commissioner may order that information be disclosed.
 - Any individual against whom allegations of abuse are made has a right to a fair procedure. at times this right may need to be secondary to the protection of children at risk. The right to fair procedure applies equally to adults, adolescents and children who have allegations made against them.

In making a 'bona fide report', staff, volunteers and persons working on behalf of First Fortnight are protected under the Protection for Persons Reporting Child Abuse Act, 1998. Consideration must also be given to responsibilities under the Criminal Justice (Withholding of Information on Offences against Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012, which are in addition to any reporting requirements under the Children First Act 2015 or Children First: National Guidance.

A copy of the Retrospective Abuse Report Form can be accessed in appendix 3 or from the Tusla website at <http://www.tusla.ie/children-first/publications-and-forms/>



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

6.7 Procedure for the Management and Recording of Allegations against Staff/ Volunteers/persons contracted to work on behalf of First Fortnight

In the event of an allegation being made against any member of First Fortnight staff, or against a First Fortnight Volunteer or Contractor, the following person should be contacted:

1. **In respect of a child:** Adrienne Cassidy will deal with issues related to the child.
2. **In respect of a member of staff/volunteer against whom the allegation is made:** Patricia Bourke will deal issues related to them.
3. **In respect of the Designated Liaison Person:** In such situations the Deputy Designated Person should be contacted.

First Fortnight is committed to ensuring that when addressing any allegation, that the first priority will be to ensure that no child is exposed to unnecessary risk. Should any allegation be made the following reporting procedures will be followed.

- Both the primary carers and the child will be informed of actions planned and taken.
- The child will be dealt with in an age-appropriate manner.
- The staff member will be informed as soon as possible of the nature of the allegation. In such circumstances the staff member will be given the opportunity to respond.
- The chairperson/CEO will be informed as soon as possible, (within 24 hours)
- After consultation, the chairperson/CEO will advise the person against whom the allegation is made and agreed procedures will be followed.

Any action following an allegation of abuse against an employee will be taken in consultation with the HSE Child and Family Agency (Tusla) and the Gardaí;

Note: First Fortnight's Complaint Policy, which is in line with the HSE protocol in relation to therapeutic service provision, can be accessed on our website. *(include link here)*



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

Appendix 1: Tusla guidelines for supporting a child in the situation of a disclosure:

The following outlines TUSLA's recommended guidelines for supporting a child in the situation of a disclosure:

- Be as calm and natural as possible.
- Do not panic – you have been approached because you are considered a trusted adult.
- Be aware that disclosures can be very difficult for a child.
- Remember that a child may initially test your reactions and may only fully open up over a period of time.
- Listen to what the child has to say. Give them time and opportunity to tell as much as they are able and wish to.
- Do not pressure the child. Allow him or her to disclose at their own pace and in their own words.
- Conceal any signs of disgust, anger or belief.
- Accept what the child has to say – false disclosures are very rare.
- It is important to differentiate between the person who carried out the abuse and the abuse itself. The child may love or strongly like the alleged abuser while also disliking what was done to them. It is important therefore to avoid expressing judgement on or anger towards the alleged perpetrator while talking with the child.
- It may be necessary to reassure the child that your feelings towards him or her have not been affected in a negative way as a result of what they have disclosed.
- Questions should be supportive and for the purposes of clarification only.
- Avoid leading questions, such as asking where a specific person carried out the abuse. Also avoid asking about intimate details or suggesting that something else may have happened. Such questions and suggestions could complicate the official investigation.
- Do not promise to keep secrets.
- At the earliest opportunity tell the child that you acknowledge that they have come to you because they trust you.
- Explain that you will be sharing this information only with people who understand this area and who can help. There are secrets that are not helpful and should not be kept because they make matters worse and do not protect children from further hurt.
- At the earliest opportunity record, in a factual manner, what the child has said in as far as possible the exact words used by the child.
- Inform your supervisor/manager immediately and agree measures to protect the child while you report the matter directly to the HSE.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality.
- Follow the procedures outlined below (Section 4.4) for child protection issues.

[Source: TUSLA Child Protection and Welfare Handbook, 2011]



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

APPENDIX 2: Tusla Standard Form For Reporting Child Protection and/or Welfare Concern

Use block letters when filling out this form.
Fields marked with an * are mandatory.

1. Tusla Area (this is where the child resides)*	
---	--

2. Date of Report*	
---------------------------	--

3. Details of Child

First Name*		Surname*	
Male*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address*		Date of Birth*	
		Estimated Age*	
		School Name	
		School Address	
Eircode			

4. Details of Concerns*

Please complete the following section with as much detail about the specific child protection or welfare concern or allegation as possible. Include dates, times, incident details and names of anyone who observed any incident. Please include the parents and child's view, if known. Please attach additional sheets, if necessary

Please see '***Tusla Children First – A Guide for the Reporting of Child Protection and Welfare Concerns***' for additional assistance on the steps to consider in making a report to Tusla

5. Type of Concern

Child Welfare Concern	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Emotional Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neglect	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual Abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

6. Details of Reporter

First Name		Surname	
Address If reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	

Is this a Mandated Report made under Sec 14, Children First Act 2015?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mandated Person's Type				

7. Details of Other Persons Where a Joint Report is Being Made

First Name		Surname	
Address If reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	

First Name		Surname	
Address If reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	

8. Parents Aware of Report

Are the child's parents/carers aware that this concern is being reported to Tusla?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If the parent/carer does not know, please indicate reasons:				



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

9. Relationships

Details of Mother			
First Name		Surname	
Address		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
		Email Address	
Eircode			

Is the Mother a Legal Guardian?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
----------------------------------	-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

Details of Father			
First Name		Surname	
Address		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
		Email Address	
Eircode			

Is the Father a Legal Guardian?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
----------------------------------	-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

10. Household Composition

First Name	Surname	Relationship	Date of Birth	Estimated Age	Additional Information e.g. school, occupation, other



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

11. Details of Person(s) Allegedly Causing Harm

First Name*		Surname*	
Male*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address		Date of Birth	
		Estimated Age	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	
Occupation		Organisation	
Position Held			

Relationship to Child	
Address at time of alleged incident	
If name unknown please indicate reason	

First Name*		Surname*	
Male*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address		Date of Birth	
		Estimated Age	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	
Occupation		Organisation	
Position Held			

Relationship to Child	
Address at time of alleged incident	
If name unknown please indicate reason	



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

12. Name and Address of Other Organisations, Personnel or Agencies Known to be Involved Currently or Previously with the Family

Profession	First Name	Surname	Address	Contact Number	Recent Contact e.g. 3/6/9 months ago
Social Worker					
Public Health Nurse					
GP					
Hospital					
School					
Gardaí					
Pre-school/ crèche					
Other					

13. Any Other Relevant Information, Including any Previous Contact with the Child or Family

--

Please ensure you have indicated if this is a mandated report in section 6.

Thank you for completing the report form.

In completing this report form you are providing details on yourself and on others. Details such as name, address and date of birth fall under the definition of 'Personal Data' in the Data Protection Acts, 1988 & 2003. Tusla has a responsibility under these Acts in its capacity as a Data Controller to, amongst other things, obtain and process this data fairly; keep it safe and secure; and to keep it for a specified lawful purpose. That purpose is to fulfil our statutory responsibility under the Child Care Act 1991 to promote the protection and welfare of children. Tusla may, during the course of the assessment of this report disclose such Personal Data to other agencies including An Garda Síochána. Further details about Tusla's responsibilities as a Data Controller and your rights as a Data Subject can be found on our website, www.tusla.ie. As you are providing Personal Data on others, you are a Data Processor. We ask that you only provide those details that are necessary for the report and that you keep this report and the Personal Data contained in it secure from unauthorised access, disclosure, destruction or accidental loss.



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

14. For Completion by Tusla Authorised Person on Receipt of Report

Report Received by					
First Name		Surname		Date	

Mandated Report Acknowledgement by					
First Name		Surname		Date Sent	

Authorised Person Signature*	
Date*	

Child Previously Known	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allocated Case No				

Retrospective Abuse Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS

(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

Use block letters when filling out this form.

Fields marked with an * are mandatory.

1. Tusla Area (this is where the person subject to allegations of abuse resides (PSAA))*	
---	--

2. Date of report*	
---------------------------	--

3. Date information was received by reporter*	
--	--

4. Reporter details if third party*

First name		Surname	
Address If reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position held	
		Mobile no.	
		Telephone no.	
Eircode		Email address	

Reporter's relationship to adult complainant	
---	--

Is this a mandated report made under Sec 14, Children First Act 2015?*	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
---	-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

Mandated person's type	
-------------------------------	--

5. Details of other persons where a joint report is being made

First Name		Surname	
Address If reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	

First Name		Surname	
Address If reporting in a professional capacity, please use your professional address		Organisation	
		Position Held	
		Mobile No.	
		Telephone No.	
Eircode		Email Address	

Retrospective Abuse Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

6. Details of person disclosing abuse (adult complainant)*

First name		Surname			
Address		Female	<input type="checkbox"/>	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Date of birth			
		Estimated age			
		Previous address, if known			
Telephone No.					
Eircode					

7. Type of abuse being reported*

Emotional abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neglect	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Details and description of alleged abuse*

Date of alleged abuse		Period of alleged abuse	
Location of alleged abuse		Reason for report at this time	

Further detail (include, if known, age of adult complainant at time of abuse, age of PSAA at time of abuse). Please attach additional sheets if necessary.

9. Details of person subject to allegations of abuse (PSAA)

First name*		Surname*	
Male*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female*	<input type="checkbox"/>
Address		Date of birth	
		Estimated age	
		Mobile no.	
		Telephone no.	
Eircode		Email address	
Occupation			

Retrospective Abuse Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

10. Details of PSAA's social and employment status

--

11. PSAA household composition

First name	Surname	Relationship	Date of birth	Estimated age	Additional information, e.g. school, occupation, etc.

12. Does the PSAA have contact with children?*

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

If Yes, please complete information below. If No, proceed to 11.

Details of child			
First name		Surname	
Address		Mobile no.	
		Telephone no.	
		Email address	
		Date of birth	
Eircode		Age	
Parent/carers' names		Parent/carers' names	
Relationship to adult complainant		Relationship to PSAA	
Frequency of contact, if known			
Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unknown		<input type="checkbox"/>	

Please attach additional sheets for additional children, if necessary.

13. Based on information known at this time, is the PSAA known to the Tusla Social Work Department?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

If yes, please provide detail:

--

14. Based on information known at this time, is the adult complainant known to the Tusla Social Work Department?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

If yes, please provide detail:

--

Retrospective Abuse Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

15. Based on information known at this time, has a report been made to An Garda Síochána?		Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Garda name:		Telephone no.			
Garda district:		Email:			
Address:		PULSE ID number:			
		Date notification made:			
Eircode		Date report made			

16. Is the PSAA aware of this report?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please provide further details:				

17. Any additional information	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Please provide any further information that will assist Tusla in assessing and prioritising this report:				

In completing this report form you are providing details on yourself and on others. Details such as name, address and date of birth fall under the definition of 'Personal Data' in the Data Protection Acts, 1988 & 2003. Tusla has a responsibility under these Acts in its capacity as a Data Controller to, amongst other things, obtain and process this data fairly; keep it safe and secure; and to keep it for a specified lawful purpose. That purpose is to fulfil our statutory responsibility under the Child Care Act 1991 to promote the protection and welfare of children. Tusla may, during the course of the assessment of this report disclose such Personal Data to other agencies including An Garda Síochána. Further details about Tusla's responsibilities as a Data Controller and your rights as a Data Subject can be found on our website, www.tusla.ie. As you are providing Personal Data on others, you are a Data Processor. We ask that you only provide those details that are necessary for the report and that you keep this report and the Personal Data contained in it secure from unauthorised access, disclosure, destruction or accidental loss.

Please ensure you have indicated if this is a mandated report in section 2.

Thank you for completing the report form.

18. For completion by Tusla authorised person on receipt of report

Report received by					
First name		Surname		Date	
Mandated report acknowledgement by					
First name		Surname		Date sent	

Retrospective Abuse Report Form

MANDATED PERSONS AND NON MANDATED PERSONS
(Children First Act 2015 & Children First National Guidance)

Authorised person signature*				
Date*				
Child previously known			Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
			No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allocated case no				



APPENDIX 4: Declaration: Agreement with external venue or organisation

The following declaration must be completed by external venues and organisations running children/family events or therapeutic interventions as part of First Fortnights' provision e.g. Festival and creative therapy provision.

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with 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.

First Fortnight Festival and Therapeutic Provision: Declaration Form

Working and being active in First Fortnights festival family events and therapeutic services can involve access to children and as an organisation committed to the welfare and protection of children, we require all external venues/venue providers or organisations producing an event/s or intervention that are featured within the First Fortnight Festival or therapeutic provision to fill out this declaration form.

Venue/Organisation Name:		
Contact Name:		
Role		
Contact Email and Telephone		

1. We confirm that we have a Child Safeguarding Statement that has been developed in line with and underpins our work:

- Children First Act 2015, Children First:
- National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017),
- Tusla's Child Safeguarding: A Guide for Policy, Procedure and Practice.

Yes ☐ No ☐

2. We confirm that our Child Safeguarding Statement and procedures are the primary ones to be used during this event/intervention.

Yes ☐ No ☐

3. We confirm all of our staff are aware of and are trained in our Child safeguarding related procedures.

Yes ☐ No ☐

4. We confirm any external agent or artist or facilitator brought in on a paid or voluntary service to deliver any aspect of any event featured under the First Fortnight banner is aware of and are trained in our Child safeguarding related procedures.

Yes ☐ No ☐



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

5. We confirm all relevant staff, contractor, artist, facilitators, volunteers etc. involved in the delivery of any event featured under the First Fortnight banner are Garda Vetted.

Yes ☐ No ☐

We confirm if any concern is noted during the provision/ event, our DLP will be the primary DLP.

Yes ☐ No ☐



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

APPENDIX 5: Declaration Form: Suitability to work with Children

This declaration and personal statement must be completed by all staff, volunteers, artists and all other persons contracted to work on behalf of First Fortnight

Our Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line with 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.

Confidential

Working and being active in the First Fortnight festival family events and therapy service can involve access to children and as an organisation committed to the welfare and protection of children, we require all employees, volunteers, contracted therapists, artists and other personnel working with children to fill out this declaration form.

Surname

Forename

Date of Birth

Place of Birth

Any name previously known as

PART 1/2

Have you ever been convicted of a criminal offence or been the subject of a Caution or of a Bound Over Order?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please state below the nature and date(s) of the offence(s):

Nature of offence Date of offence

_____	_____
_____	_____



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

I, _____ state that there is no reason why I would be unsuitable to work with children.

I hereby authorise First Fortnight to carry out a Garda Vetting check on my name and will fill in any forms required for this task when they are available.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

PART 2/2

I confirm that I have read Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children (2017).

Yes ☐ No ☐

I confirm that I underwent TUSLA's Children First E-learning programme. If yes, please provide evidence and supporting documentation stating date of TUSLA's e-training and results from online self-assessment.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I confirm that I am aware of and have read the First Fortnight's Children Safe Guarding Statement and Procedures

Yes ☐ No ☐

I confirm that I am aware what procedures are in place regarding reporting child abuse and concern for the safety and welfare of a child.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I confirm that I am aware who First Fortnight's mandated person is to contact TUSLA under the Children First Act 2015.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I confirm that I am aware of who First Fortnight's Designated Liaison Person is.

Yes ☐ No ☐

Signed: _____ Date: _____



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

Appendix 6: Incident Report Template

Incident Report Form

Event Name: _____

Name of FF staff member or volunteer completing form: _____

Contact email: _____

Date of incident: _____

Location of incident: _____

Time of incident: _____

Description of incident: (include specific location at venue)

Name of person/s involved in incident: _____

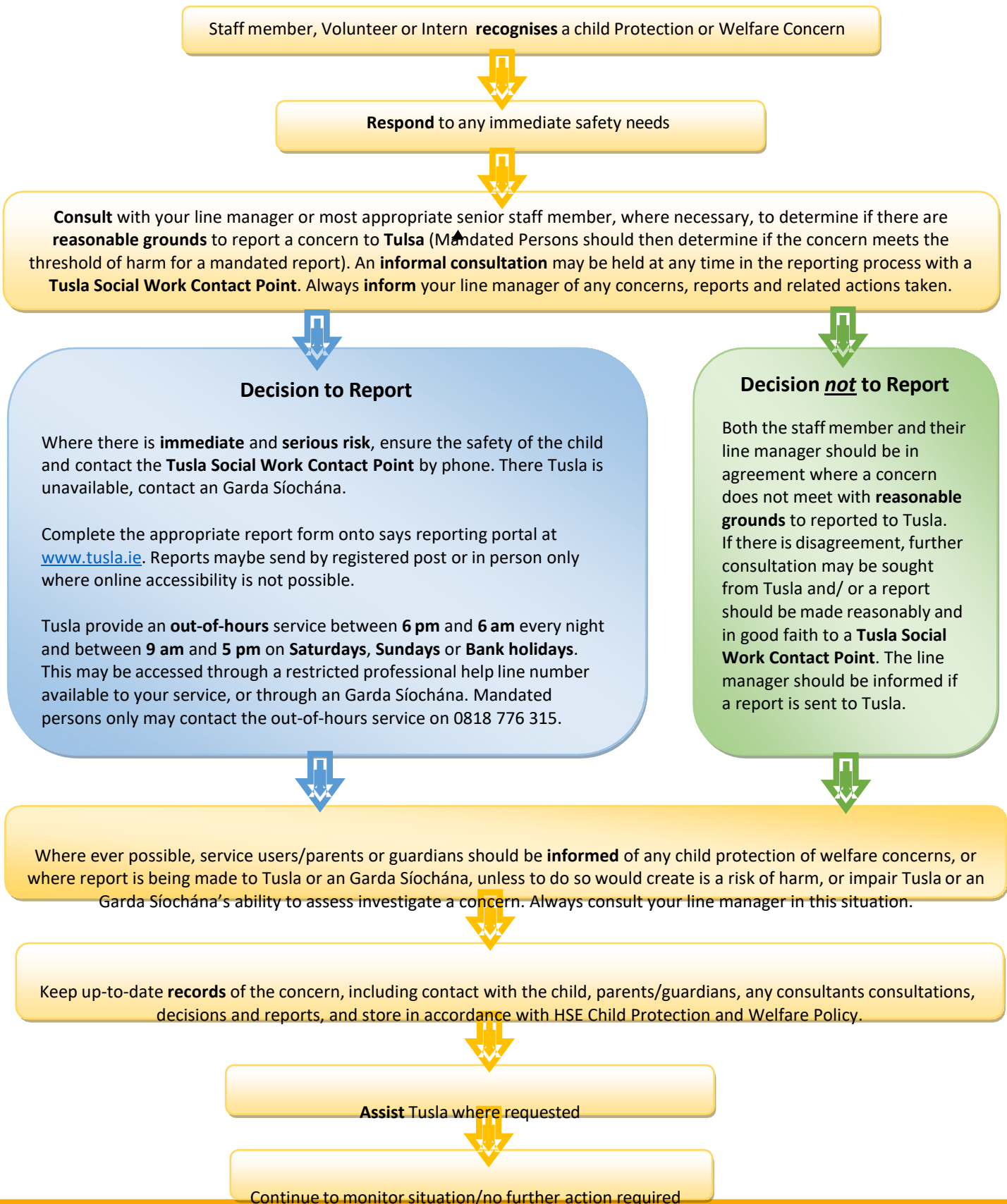
Contact details of person/s involved in incident (if known): _____

Description of medical or other attention required as a result of incident: (including any first aid assistance given at the time of incident, and by whom)



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

Appendix 7: Diagram: Procedure for the management of Child Protection issues





FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

Appendix 8: First Fortnight Child Safeguarding Statement

Child Safeguarding Statement

1. First Fortnights Child Safeguarding Statement has been developed in line 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 statement accompanies the Child Safeguarding Procedure and Guidance which sets out the details pertaining to the practical application of the policy.
2. **First Fortnight includes:**
 - First Fortnight Festival
 - First Fortnight Centre for Creative Therapies for adults and
 - First Fortnight Centre for Creative Therapies for Children and Young People
3. The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) is Adrienne Cassidy

The Deputy Designated Liaison Person (Deputy DLP) is Eithne Mc Adam
4. **Nature of service and principles to safeguard children from harm**

First Fortnight is a diverse organisation delivering impact to a large group of people by challenging mental health prejudice through arts and cultural action. Specifically this includes two distinct branches of service provision i.e.

 - 3) Advocacy, which includes the First Fortnight Festival, which offers family friendly mental health themed art and cultural events during the First Fortnight Festival in January across the country of Ireland working with artists, other art and mental health organisations and venues. Events cater for a wide range of ages across the lifespan.
 - 4) Creative Therapy Provision, which includes the First Fortnight Centre for Creative Therapies for adults and Centre for Creative Therapies for Children and Young People. Both Creative Therapy services provide creative psychotherapy to children and adults with experiences of homelessness or who are at risk of homelessness.

It is the policy of First Fortnight that all children and young people are kept safe and protected while engaging with our services and that their safety and welfare is of paramount importance regardless of all other considerations. First Fortnight is committed to ensuring that all safeguarding policies, practices and procedures reflect our statutory responsibilities and that they are in line with best practice requirements. We fully comply with the obligations under Children First Act 2015 and other relevant legislation relating to the protection of children and fully co-operate with the relevant statutory authorities in relation to child safeguarding matters.



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

First Fortnight actively promotes safe practice to minimise the possibility of harm happening to children and protect workers and volunteers from the necessity to take unnecessary risks that may leave themselves open to accusations of abuse or neglect.

We fully respect confidentiality requirements in dealings with child safe matters.

We believe the safeguarding of children is everyone's responsibility; Our guiding principles are for Board Members, staff, volunteers and the children and young people their families and carers and guardians accessing our services.

First Fortnight are committed to the protection and safeguarding of children and have a Risk Assessment and a number of procedures, policies and a Code of Behaviour to ensure the safest possible environment for children.

Specifically First Fortnight aims to ensure that children and young people engaging in their services:

- have an enjoyable, supportive and enriching experience of art , culture, music and/or creative therapeutic interventions
- experience a positive impact on their mental health as a result of their engagement

Fundamental to this is mutual respect between First Fortnight and children / young people. First Fortnight works towards this by:

- recognising the rights of children and young people and treating them with dignity and respect;
- promoting the mental health, welfare and development of children and young people and protecting them from harm;
- adopting a consistent and clear recruitment process for staff and volunteers

In order to ensure the safeguarding of children and young people First Fortnight will:

- ensure that all staff and volunteers complete appropriate training in relation to child safeguarding practices and procedures
- refer all child safeguarding concerns to the First Fortnight Designated Liaison Person;
- ensure all appropriate action is taken should concerns/incidents arise
- ensure that all records of safeguarding concerns/incidents are accurate and securely retained in line with best practice e.g. confidentiality
- that the Designated Liaison Person, in consultation with the CEO & Garda Vetting Committee will refer concerns to the relevant social Worker in Tusla and/or to An Garda Síochána as appropriate

5. 4. Risk Assessment

We in First Fortnight define harm in relation to children as assault, ill treatment or neglect and sexual abuse of the child and carry out risk assessments to minimise the risk 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.



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

	Risk identified	Procedure in place to manage identified risk
1	Inappropriate behaviour towards a child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of Child Safeguarding Statement • Ensure that all paid staff interacting with children complete the Tusla Online Training. • Have in place a Staff handbook which sets out a code of behaviour for all staff. • Have a volunteer policy and induction in place which sets out the acceptable code of behaviour and child safeguarding requirements for volunteers. • Ensure that supervision is in place at all events with parental consent or parent/guardian regarding attendance
2	Physical contact	
3	Using outside services to deliver festival events	<p>First Fortnight :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requests a copy of the services child safeguarding statement to ensure that services have a clear code/practice in place for their staff and team. • Have a contract in place with external service/s which sets out the agreed conduct, necessary garda vetting and protocol which sets the requirement that all FF volunteers and staff contacts both our DLP and their own DLP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • should any concern arise • if they are contacted by child or vulnerable adult
4	Specific individuals assigned to supervise or hired to deliver services for festival or FFCCT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garda vetting will be required • Tusla Online Training at minimum required • First Fortnight will also provide information relating to our safeguarding statement, reporting and other procedures.
5	Ensuring children and young people are protected from bullying behaviour while attending our services and events organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An anti-bullying procedure has been developed and shared with children and their parents
5	Use or dissemination of children's images or information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all staff and volunteers adhere to social/media procedures including consent sought for the taking and use of images and video. • Photographers/videographers etc. cannot take photographs/video footage of children without a signed consent form from a parent or guardian.
6	Child or concerned adult: how or to whom to report an issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure reporting procedures are accessible and easily available
7	Allegations against Staff/Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our priority is to child safeguarding. In respect of the person against whom the allegation is made the CEO and DLP will deal with issues related to the staff member as outlined in our policy statement, complaints policy, volunteer policy and staff manual. • <i>Procedure for addressing allegations? Is there a policy in place?</i>



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

6. Implementation

First Fortnight recognises that implementation is an on-going process. we are committed to the implementation of this Child Safeguarding Statement and the procedures that supports our intention to keep children safe from harm while availing of our services. This includes a procedure which outlines the process for the reporting of allegations or suspicions of child abuse; All participants and family/care givers/guardians are informed about child safeguarding policy and procedures and posters/leaflets are displayed in all our services. All staff and volunteers are required to sign off on having read & understood the Safeguarding policy and relevant procedures.

First Fortnight is committed to ongoing evaluation and review of our policies and practices, and undertakes to review this Child Safeguarding Statement on April 1st annually, or as soon as practicable in the event of changes to relevant legislation or practice. This statement forms part of the wider First Fortnight Child Safeguarding policy.

Date Developed: 19th June 2023 Next review Date: 19th June 2024

Signed: _____
(First Fortnight)

015986263 (info@firstfortnight.ie)

Designated Person:

Designated Liaison Person for First Fortnight and will:

- Act as the resource person for any staff member or volunteer to contact should an issue or concern about any aspect of a child's or young person's safety and welfare arise.
- Be responsible for ensuring that reporting procedures within First Fortnight are followed, so that child welfare and protection concerns are referred promptly to Tusla.
- Support and advise staff about policy and procedures in relation to child safeguarding and ensure that the relevant procedures are followed.
- Liaise with the Health Service Executive or Gardaí where appropriate.

Adrienne Cassidy has been designated as Designated Liaison Person can be contacted at First Fortnight Office, 12 South Earl St, Dublin 8, adrienne@firstfortnight.ie, 01 5986263/ 0867777222.

Eithne McAdam has been designated as Deputy Designated Liaison Person and can be contacted at First Fortnight Office, 12 South Earl St, Dublin 8, eithne@firstfortnight.ie, 01 5986263/ 0892545569



FIRST FORTNIGHT
THE ART OF MENTAL HEALTH

Appendix 9: Declaration: Child Safeguarding Policy

All staff, volunteers and persons contracted/working on behalf of First Fortnight are required to complete/sign the following form to confirm that they have read and understand the requirements as outlined in this policy. This declaration must be completed and returned in advance of engaging in any First Fortnight activity.

Declaration	
<p>In signing this form, I confirm that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I understand my responsibilities to safeguard children.• I have read and understand First Fortnights Child Safeguarding Policy and Statement• I understand that I must notify my line manager immediately of anything that affects my suitability to work within First Fortnight. This includes any cautions, warnings, convictions, orders or other determinations made in respect of me that would render me disqualified from working with children.	
Signed	
Print Name	
Role	
Date	