

YOUTH-FRIENDLY  
**CHILD**  
SAFEGUARDING  
POLICY





## What is the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI)?

The National Youth Council of Ireland represents voluntary youth organisations in Ireland. We bring all our experience together to act on issues that affect young people.



## About this document

This is a summary of our 'Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures'.

We have written it with the help of young people involved in NYCI programmes and the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA).

If you are a young person involved with NYCI, this document is for you and your family.

It lets you know:

- what to expect from NYCI
- where to get help and support if you need it.

If you have a question about it or need help reading it, please talk to the NYCI staff member organising your event/activity or contact our Designated Liaison Persons below.

Title	Name	Phone	Email
Designated Liaison Person	Siobhán Laffey	086 412 0425	siobhan@nyci.ie
Deputy Designated Liaison Person	Alison Fox	086 108 3093	alison@nyci.ie

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Registered charity no.: CHY 6823  
Company no.: 58814

NYCI complies with the Charities Regulator's Governance

Code in Ireland.

# How does NYCI engage with young people?

Here are some examples of young people and how they work with our organisation.

## LGBTI+ inclusion

Amy was nominated by NYCI to attend the government's consultation with young people on the LGBTI+ Inclusion Strategy.

## European Youth Forum

Luke and Alice are the voice of NYCI, representing issues affecting young people in Ireland at the European Youth Forum.

## EU parliament

JJ joined a group of young people involved in the Young Voices youth group for a residential session at the EU Parliament. The session trained those taking part about how to:

- strengthen democracy
- promote youth participation in the European elections.

## European Economic and Social Committee's Youth Assembly

Farah went to Brussels to represent NYCI on the first European Economic and Social Committee's Youth Assembly 'Your Europe Your Say' event. At the assembly, she campaigned about the need to include youth in decisions about Europe.

## Global Youth Work Young Person's Committee

Our Global Youth Work Young Person's Committee (GYWYPC) hosted a consultation event for young people across Ireland. The event allowed young people share their vision for the world, which will be shared at the UN Summit of the Future.

## Online campaigns about youth work

Ryan shared his story about the impact of youth work for an online video as part of a campaign to promote the value of youth work.



## Climate change (COP29 delegation)

Betty was appointed by NYCI to be a climate youth delegate. She was then selected to join the Irish delegation to COP.

## SPARK Youth Arts Festival Showcase

Alan took part in NYCI's SPARK Youth Arts Festival Showcase. He shared a short film he created with other young people in his youth project.

## Youth circus project

Selene took part in a youth circus project with other young people from her youth club. It was funded by NYCI's Artist and Youth Work Residency Grant Scheme.



# What is child safeguarding?

Child safeguarding is about:

- keeping children and young people safe
- protecting children and young people from harm
- promoting the welfare and wellbeing of children and young people.

Any organisation or group that works with children or young people must

have systems in place to keep children and young people safe. They must know what they will do if they are worried about a child or young person.

We've written about this in our Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. It tells our staff and collaborators how they should treat children and young people and behave around them. It also explains what they should do if they are worried about the safety or welfare of any child or young person.

## Child safeguarding and the law

Ireland has laws to make sure children and young people are kept safe from harm. The '[Children First Act 2015](#)' and '[Children First National Guidance 2017\(PDF\)](#)' state how we are responsible for keeping children and young people safe.

### We must contact Tusla or the Gardaí if we are worried

By law, we must create a Child Safeguarding Statement. It must tell everyone how we work safely with young people and that we have a Child Safeguarding Policy. The law also says that we need to tell Tusla or the Gardaí if we are worried about the safety of a young person so that they can get help. Tusla is the state Child and Family Agency.

Please read our [Child Safeguarding Statement online](#).

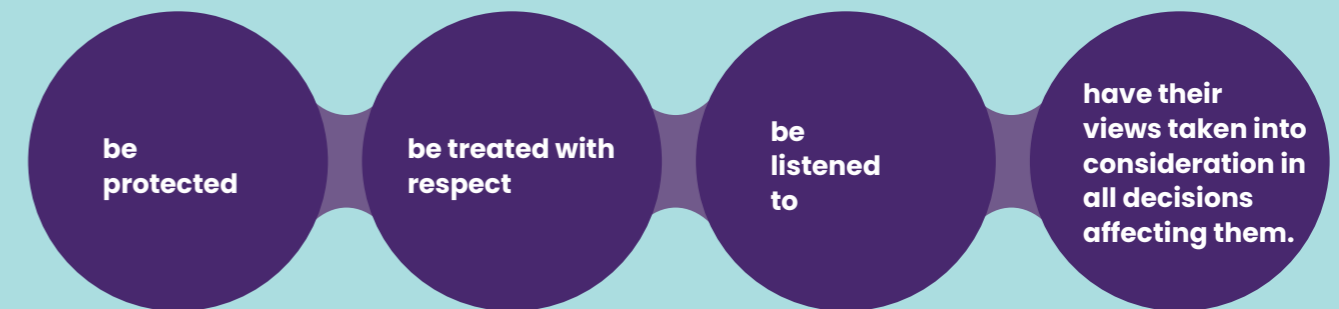
### UN rights of the child

The 'UN Convention on the Rights of the Child' (UNCRC) is an important list of rights that apply to everyone aged under 18.

You can find out more about your rights under the UNCRC on the [Ombudsman for Children's website](#).

## We are committed to safeguarding children

The safety and wellbeing of young people is always our top priority. We believe that all children have the right to:



We believe that it is everyone's responsibility to safeguard children and young people and protect them from harm. We take this seriously and we are committed to carrying out our responsibilities.

## Everyone at NYCI's must follow safeguarding procedures

Everyone must follow our Child Safeguarding Policy. This includes those who:



It also includes all Board members, and students on placement or work experience. This means that everyone in NYCI signs up and agrees to follow the procedures and guidelines in our policy.

## Who is responsible for child safeguarding at NYCI?

In every youth organisation there is somebody who is responsible for keeping you safe or taking action if you are unsafe. If any of our staff are worried about you, they must tell one of our two designated liaison persons.

We have a:



Their job is to listen. They won't judge you and they will know how to help.

### Contact details

Title	Name	Phone	Email
Designated Liaison Person	Siobhán Laffey	086 412 0425	siobhan@nyci.ie
Deputy Designated Liaison Person	Alison Fox	086 108 3093	alison@nyci.ie

We treat all information about safeguarding issues confidentially. This means that only the people that need-to-know information about you are told. We don't share your information with everyone.

### Sharing information with Tusla, An Garda Síochána and parents/guardians

However, if any of our staff are concerned about a young person's welfare or safety, they cannot promise to keep secrets. They must share this kind of information with Tusla or An Garda Síochána – and sometimes with parents or guardians.

Tusla is the state Child and Family Agency. They help children, young people and families every day. No matter what is going on in your life, Tusla will know how to help. Their job is to keep children and young people safe.

Remember it is the job of everyone who works at NYCI to keep you safe. This means you can talk to any adult in our organisation that you trust and feel comfortable with.



## Understanding types of harm and abuse

Sometimes young people don't have a safe place to live or are being hurt by someone in their life. There are different ways that harm and abuse can happen.

### Physical abuse

Physical abuse is when an adult hurts a child or young person on purpose, by for example, hitting them or letting someone else hit them.

### Neglect

Neglect is when a child or young person isn't being looked after properly. This means they may:

- not have enough to eat
- not have a safe home
- be left alone too much.

### Emotional abuse

Emotional abuse is when an adult:

- says or does things to deliberately make a child or young person feel bad about themselves
- isn't caring or supportive
- makes a child or young person feel unsafe and unhappy.

### Sexual Abuse

Sometimes abuse can be sexual which means an adult, or another young person uses a child or young person for sexual purposes like:

- inappropriately touching them
- asking for intimate pictures
- forcing them to have sex.

When you understand the different types of abuse, it can help you figure out what could be a problem and why you might need to talk to someone. You can find more information on the [Tusla website for children and young people](#).

### CHANGING FUTURES>>>

If you aren't sure if what happened or is happening to you fits under one of these categories of abuse, please talk to us and we will help you.

# How does NYCI keep young people safe?

There are many things we do to protect children and young people from harm. These are summarised below.



## Recruitment

Before we allow staff to join our organisation and work with young people, we make sure they have the right:

- experience
- qualifications
- temperament
- attitude.

## Staff training

We teach staff about:

- our organisation
- how we work
- what we expect of them when they work with young people.

## Records

We check our records often to make sure everyone is up to date with training and garda vetting.

## Communication

Staff will make sure you and your parents or guardians are clear about how staff will communicate with all of you.

## Garda vetting

We check with the Gardaí to see if all staff have any criminal convictions that should stop them from working with young people.

## Code of Behaviour

We make sure all staff receive our Code of Behaviour and that they follow it.

## Training

We make sure our staff and contractors have the right training so they can work safely with young people.

## Staff responsibility

We make sure all our staff know they are responsible for keeping young people safe and that they must tell us if they are worried about the safety of a young person.

## Zero tolerance

We have a zero-tolerance approach to:

- bullying
- all forms of discrimination.

# How we avoid risks

When planning an event or activity for young people, these are some of the things we think about to make sure everyone is safe.

## Plan ahead

We think about the chance of something bad happening and we agree a plan to try and make sure it doesn't.

## Consent

We get consent from your parents or guardians.

## Have adults to help

We make sure there are enough adults present to keep everyone safe.

## Transport

We'll talk to you about safe transport options to and from the event or activity.

## Proper sleeping arrangements

If it's an overnight trip, we'll make sure there are proper sleeping arrangements for everyone.

## Permission before taking pictures

We'll always ask for your permission to take photos and let you know where we plan to share them.

# Where can I get more information about NYCI and safeguarding?

You can find out more about NYCI's approach to Child Safeguarding [on our website](#).

On the website, you can download our **Child Safeguarding Statement** and the full copy of the **Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures**. This gives you more details on our procedures. You can also read our **Code of Behaviour** to see how staff are expected to behave when they work with young people.

NYCI's Youth-Friendly Child Safeguarding Policy



## Talk to us

If something happens that makes you feel unsafe or uncomfortable or you think another young person is in an unsafe situation, please do not be afraid to ask for help – it is always good to speak up.

### We must protect you

If you suffer any kind of harm, or you tell us about abuse that happened in the past, NYCI staff must act to protect you from harm. It doesn't matter if this abuse is done by:

- a staff member
- an adult in your life
- another young person.

### Let us know if you have a concern

Please let us know if something happens where you or your parents or guardians are unhappy with:

- a situation or an event organised by NYCI
- the way you were treated by NYCI staff
- the way you were treated by another young person.

You can tell the staff member in charge of the event or activity, or you can contact one of our designated liaison persons.

### Contact details of NYCI's Designated Liaison Persons

Title	Name	Phone	Email
Designated Liaison Person	Siobhán Laffey	086 412 0425	siobhan@nyci.ie
Deputy Designated Liaison Person	Alison Fox	086 108 3093	alison@nyci.ie

Thanks for reading this policy.  
We hope you find this information helpful.



# YOUTH WORK CHANGES LIVES

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