

ispcc

Strategy
2021-2024

Here for every child



"As we look forward into the 2020s, we have to be honest that Ireland's children are not doing so well. You could even say that childhood is in crisis."

John Church, Chief Executive

LEVELS OF SELF-ESTEEM

42.4%

of 10-17 yr olds are feeling not happy with the way they are
(HBSC survey 2018)

Over

100,000

contacts answered annually

Childline 24-Hour
Support Line

3,914

children on CAMHS
waiting list

(HSE, Feb 2022)

Over

73,000

referrals 2021 (+4.7%)

Tusla Child Protection
and welfare services

40%

of adolescents reported
experiencing levels of
depression outside the
normal range

49%

reported levels of
anxiety outside the
normal range

My World Survey 2. The National Study of Youth Mental
Health Ireland (UCD School of Psychology and Jigsaw)

"When my mam drinks, I lock myself in my bedroom."

"I really miss my dad, he was my best friend."

"I don't like myself, I don't have a good personality or a good body."

"I just feel so alone, like no one understands me."

"Sometimes it all feels so overwhelming, I cannot breathe."

"I don't know how to explain how down I'm feeling."

"I get shaky and can't breathe and it takes me ages to calm down again."

"I eat and eat and afterwards I feel horrible and I make myself sick."

"I'm scared he is going to break up with me or tell people things about me if I don't do what he wants."

"I'm stressed about the future."

Conversations with children and young people,
Childline 24-Hour Support

Foreword

The numbers of children experiencing anxiety and depression are accelerating. These trends were there even before the Covid-19 pandemic, which just made things worse, disrupting children's education and social lives, and causing more children to feel lonely and isolated.

Childhood is changing as society and the world around us changes, with different and more complex pressures on children than their parents or carers might have experienced. A quarter of children don't feel they have someone they can turn to when they are worried about something.

This all points to us needing to reflect on how well we've done by our children, as a society and as the ISPC, and how we can do by better by them.

ISPC has always been there for every child. For 35 years, Childline has been there to listen and support any child when they needed it or felt they had no-one else to turn to – not just for extreme cases of harm or abuse, but whatever was on their mind.

But it is clear that not every child, or even every adult, has known or understood that. So, as childhood has changed, we too have had to change to meet the evolving needs of children and to remain relevant.

We need to be more accessible to more children, in different way and provide additional and innovative services and supports online.

And we need to let more children know they can reach out and depend on our support, whatever they want to talk about or way they choose to engage. However, helping children and young people be more resilient as they experience life's ups and down is just as vital. All our services and supports are focused on supporting children to develop their coping competencies.



ISPC is evolving and this strategy lays out the why and the how. It is a privilege every day to be there for children and young people growing up in Ireland.

Thank you for your continued support.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Church', written over a light blue background.

John Church, Chief Executive



This is ISPCC

ISPCC is dedicated to **enhancing the lives of children and young people**; they are at the heart of everything we do. We do this by providing a suite of relevant services, all under the Childline brand. Childline has added a range of online services to its well-known support line which now provides a 24-hour listening service through phone and webchat.

Our child-centered services, programmes and supports are **focused on strengthening resilience** and developing coping competencies. By listening to, supporting and empowering children and young people, we strive to ensure they are better equipped to face life's ups and downs and reach their full potential.

We speak out and advocate for meaningful change that will enhance their lives today and leave a legacy of improved childhood experiences for future generations of children and young people.



Our Purpose

ISPCC is for children. We are here to build a nation of resilient children.



Our Vision

That every child has the skills to cope with life's ups and downs.



Our Mission

That every child who wants to connect with us, can, when and how they want to.



Our ISPCC Spirit

Is to place children at the heart of everything we do.

Our Behaviours are to act with C.O.P.E.



Courage

Challenging the status quo in the best interest of children.



Openness

Be guided by strong ethical principles.



Passion

Be determined to enhance children's lives.



Empathy

Listen with a non-judgmental ear.

Why we do what we do

Growing up is hard for today's children, and more complicated. Levels of anxiety and depression among children are increasing. More are reporting to have self-harmed and less are reporting that they are happy the way they are.*

We like to imagine childhood as precious and carefree and want it to be so for the children around us. Children today have different pressures, particularly online and with social media.

There are increased pressures and social expectations affecting self-esteem and challenges such as online bullying and grooming. Some children face more challenging situations, even violence and abuse. Many others experience distress from day-to-day worries or trouble at home.

The global pandemic, climate change and uncertain economic times have compounded the challenges even more. One in four children feel that they have no-one to turn to for support. It is crucial that children and young people can readily access services and supports whenever they need, whatever they may be experiencing or worried about.

Our Vision for Childhood

We believe in and value every child, and value their hopes for their future. We want to see children thrive and be better equipped to deal with what life throws at them. We want to see children become more resilient, cope with pressures better and enable them to live their best possible lives.

We believe every child needs someone to turn to for support when they need it.



Our services & supports

For Children & Young People

- **Childline 24-Hour Support Line**
- **Childline Therapeutic Support Services**
 - One-to-one support sessions for up to 6 months (online video conference, face to face, phone, hybrid)
 - Digital Mental Health and Wellbeing Programme – Space From Anxiety
- **Childline.ie**
 - Self-help resources and info

For Parents & Carers

- **ISPCC Support Line for parents/carers**
- **Childline Therapeutic Supports**
 - One-to-one support sessions for up to 6 months (online video conference, face to face, phone, hybrid)
 - Digital Mental Health Programmes: Supporting an Anxious Child/Teen
- **ISPCC.ie**
 - parental advice, info and resources
- **Non-Violent Resistance Training Programme**

For Communities

- **Smart Moves**
 - Schools Resilience programme
- **Shield**
 - Anti-Bullying Programme
- **Bouncing Forward**
 - Resilience-focused group work programme
- **Outreaches**

How we are changing

Since its foundation, ISPCC has relentlessly worked to achieve better outcomes for children and young people, through our policy work and the services and supports provided. For over three decades, Childline has listened to and supported thousands of children and has grown to a 24-hour support line available online and on the phone.

With greater need, changing communication preferences and technological advances, digital delivery of services and supports is central to our strategy. Providing greater accessibility and choice of services and supports for varying levels of need will benefit more children now and into the future.

To this end
we have identified
**6 Strategic
Priorities**





1. Expand Our National Reach

- We are committed to maintaining and improving our Childline 24-hour support line service to ensure we respond to every child reaching out for support in the way they feel most comfortable. We will expand the range of supports and information on Childline.ie.
- We will further develop the Childline Therapeutic Support Service along its face-to-face, virtual and hybrid model of service delivery, enhancing our ability to meet more children and families' needs.
- We will extend our presence in schools and clubs through our Smart Moves transitions and Shield programmes helping more children navigate the pressures and anxieties associated with progressing to secondary school.
- We will roll out our new guided Digital Mental Health and Wellbeing programmes, through the Silvercloud platform, providing accessible CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) -based interventions to children and young people with anxiety and parents of children and young people with anxiety.
- We will continue to develop new innovative services to meet additional needs and to increase accessibility for children, families and communities, delivered in a way and at a time that they are most comfortable with. Increasingly, this means the delivery of more services through digital channels.



2. Create Strong Brand Positioning

- We will develop a new visual identity for ISPCC and Childline which is more appealing to children and young people and which more accurately reflects our services, interventions and supports.
- We will work to create greater awareness and understanding of ISPCC and Childline services and supports, and the roles they play in contributing to better outcomes for children and young people growing up in Ireland.
- We will communicate that Childline has expanded beyond the 24-hour support line synonymous with Childline and encourage children and young people to reappraise Childline. All services and supports for children and young people will be promoted under the Childline name.
- Children and young people will guide our work and we will use insights from our services and engagements to inform the range of supports, programmes, resources and digital content we provide.
- We will enhance our ispcc.ie and childline.ie sites to provide additional supports, relevant resources and programmes that will ensure greater accessibility and means of supporting more children and young people, their families' and communities.



3. Build Financial Sustainability

- We will Invest in our fundraising strategy to ensure our sustainability and support our future growth.
- We will create and implement a new Digital Fundraising strategy.
- We will create a national fundraising campaign.
- We will invest in a donor stewardship programme and endeavour to create more purposeful fundraising activities that engage our current and future donors.



4. Develop a Responsive Organisation

- We will empower our people, building their leadership skills and developing our internal talent to grow and develop to be the best version of themselves to support the work we do for all children. To support and accelerate our strategic ambitions in fundraising and services, we will recruit new talent with skills and competencies aligned with ISPC core values and behaviours.
- We will foster a one team environment, encouraging cross-functional collaboration, and working together across locations to achieve the best outcomes for children.
- We will embed a high-performance culture across the ISPC through empowering and supporting our people. Through best practice supervision and building a feedback culture and provision of learning and development, we will achieve the highest performance standards to provide the best outcomes for children.
- We will continue to listen to our people, conducting annual employee and volunteer engagement surveys to monitor and maintain high levels of engagement across the ISPC.



5. Play a Major Role in Influencing Policy Landscape

- We will continue to influence Government and key stakeholders that an effective and efficient remedy be available to children and young people to keep them safe online.
- We will work to influence Government to initiate Youth Mental Health Pathfinder, or equivalent, to address gaps in youth mental health service delivery, including long waiting lists.
- We will make every effort to ensure that all forms of abuse and bullying of children and young people are addressed sufficiently in the next national framework for children and young people and any relevant constituent strategies.



6. Advance our Governance Model

- We will ensure ISPCC operates to the highest standards of governance. We will do this by full adoption of the Charities Regulatory Authority code of governance.
- We will seek to maintain the Triple Lock standard as operated by Charities Institute Ireland.
- We will continue to protect our children's data by full compliance with the GDPR legislation.
- We will continue to protect our systems, data and employees through deployment of continuous cyber-security measures and industry best practice standards.
- We will endeavour to operate under best practice financial management standards to ensure our funders monies are spent as cost-effectively and respectfully at all times.
- We will employ the best practice digital solutions to ensure we operate our services and practices as efficiently as possible.



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