



**About Respond! Housing Association:**

Respond! Housing Association is Ireland's leading not for profit housing association. We seek to create a positive future for people by alleviating poverty and creating vibrant, socially integrated communities. We do this by providing access to education, childcare, community development programmes, housing and other supports.

In more than 30 childcare centres throughout Ireland, Respond! Housing Association provides childcare services to almost 1000 children. These services range from full day childcare to morning, afternoon, pre-school and after-school services and are available to Respond! Housing Association residents and members of the wider community.

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# Making our Communities safe for Children

Respond! Child Protection Policy





**Respond! Housing Association** is committed to promoting the highest standards of child protection in line with 'Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children' (2011). To achieve this we have recently developed our child protection policy '**Making Our Communities Safe for Children**'.

This policy is now being implemented within the organisation and being promoted on all of our family estates. Copies of the policy are available in each Respond! Housing Association Community Building or are available from our Resident Support Workers. We are seeking the support of our residents in promoting this policy on all of our estates.

## Making our Communities safe for Children

### Our Child Protection policy aims to:

- Promote the protection of children and young people within the organisation and on our estates.
- Develop greater awareness of child welfare issues amongst our staff, volunteers and residents.
- Provide clear guidelines for staff and volunteers on behaviour that protects children, staff and volunteers.



### Our Child Protection Policy sets out:

- What might be a child protection or welfare concern?
- Steps to be followed by staff if they become aware of a child welfare concern. All staff are obliged to pass on any child welfare concerns to the Respond! Housing Association Designated Liaison Person (DLP). The DLP will then determine if the concern warrants referral to the HSE.
- Procedures to be followed if allegations are made against Respond! Housing Association staff or volunteers.
- Respond! Housing Association internal child protection responsibilities and structures.
- Good practice guidelines for working with children and young people.
- Contact details for local HSE Children and Family Services.
- Other useful resource materials.

In keeping with our Child Protection Policy Respond! Housing Association staff will be promoting good practice in working with children on our estates. This will include:

- Ensuring that volunteers working with children are Garda vetted.
- Sourcing child protection training for residents and volunteers as appropriate.
- Requiring parental consent forms for children's participation in activities such as trips, outings, workshops etc.
- Carrying out Risk Assessments for any estate event or activity that involves children or young people. This is already standard practice and is an important planning tool for any event or activity.

**Respond! Housing Association welcomes any comments or suggestions on how we can make our estates a safe and positive environment for children.**

**We look forward to working with our residents to achieve this.**