



## Coronavirus (Covid-19)

### Statement from Children's Group Link - Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March

In light of the emerging and developing Covid-19 crisis, the Board, staff and advisors of Children's Group Link have met today (Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March) to consider how our organisation should respond to this unique and serious public health crisis together with the impact on our service provision, particularly our young people.

In acknowledging our obligation to act responsibly and in accordance with guidelines set out by relevant Government Departments; the Board accepts that, for a period of time, our service provision will need to be curtailed in order to protect the health & well-being of our staff, members, volunteers, their families and the wider public which must take priority over everything else.

Our Board is also mindful that the young people whom we work with and advocate for – who already have their educational and social routines disrupted, will be anxious and stressed at the current situation.

In trying to balance the need for appropriate & preventative responses to the current crisis and our sense of responsibility & duty to all our members, staff and volunteers – the Board has approved the following proportionate set of actions which will take effect immediately and remain in place until **Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> March** at which point a review will take place and further decisions made based on the most current information available and guidelines from relevant agencies.

We are aware that the situation is constantly changing and in the interim further measures may be required to be implemented.

#### **Effective immediately:**

1. All large group activities (including the Pobal Project & New Frontiers group) will be suspended.
2. All regular, scheduled programmes will be suspended.
3. Our centre will open daily Monday – Friday from 11am – 5pm and Saturday 12noon – 3pm. Please note that we are closed on **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> & Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March**
4. During these opening times staff will be available to meet young people (one-to-one or in pairs) who wish to attend for support or just need to chat or chill. Young people can contact us directly on 087-2510333 or through Facebook to arrange scheduled visits so that they are not all arriving at the same time.
5. Young people can also contact one of our youth workers out of hours on the same number or through Facebook.

6. Our youth workers will be engaging in street work to meet young people in their spaces. Our Facebook page will provide details of the areas to be visited and times.
7. As our premises has many different rooms, we can facilitate several one-to-one or small group sessions (5 or less) simultaneously which will include study groups, issue-based initiatives and general supports.  
**Note: The aim is to offer access and supports to young people whilst taking into account the guidelines and protocols as advised.**

**The following public health measures will be applied at our premises for all staff, volunteers, members and visitors effective immediately.**

- Any individual displaying flu like symptoms is asked not to attend activities or enter the premises.
- Clear advice and protocol notices will be posted at entrances to the building.
- Parents and members of the public are asked to call to the premises in emergencies only. All other queries should be directed to our staff on 051-855036 between the aforementioned opening hours.
- Every individual entering the premises will be required to wash their hands immediately on entering the premises and should do so again when exiting.
- Staff will be asked to increase hygiene cleansing measures to include regular disinfection of commonly used surfaces and utensils.
- Rooms that are used will be sanitized by staff before and after use and these infection controls will be recorded in individual rooms.
- Staff, visitors and members will be required to maintain appropriate distancing (2mtrs) for all activities, meetings etc.

**Conclusion:**

The Board trusts that staff, parents, young people and the general public will understand our need to take appropriate, proportionate & restrictive measures at this very important time. We hope that parents and our young people support our attempts to maintain some level of service provision and the Board commits to re-establishing full programme schedules as soon as is possible and safe.

Signed on behalf of the Board

*Mark Fenton Chair.*

*Brendan Halligan CEO*