



# Safeguarding Development Newsletter

(July 2022 – Issue 19)



## Continuing To Journey Together

## **Safeguarding Network – 7 May.**

Up to 25 participants took part in the virtual gathering from across the Province. A varied programme included keynote speakers and the launch of Safeguarding resources: Guidance for Recruiting Volunteers & Guidance for Volunteers Visiting the Homes of Vulnerable Adults & Families; two Safeguarding Posters & a new Information Leaflet for Young People. The annual Progress Report was explained, and a commitment given to produce materials to support the OSA Safeguarding Weekend 24/25 Sept. 2022.

**Keynote Speakers** were Mary Tallon (Safeguarding Co-ordinator for Franciscans, Capuchins, Dominicans & Missionaries of the Sacred Heart) & Chris Lawson (Director of Dominican Summer Camp for Young People)

Safeguarding was regarded as everyone's responsibility. All were encouraged to be open to involving young people in ministry, offering positive and life-giving opportunities. A chance for young people to take on leadership roles within the church and across ministries was considered most important. Conversations about God and faith were described as happening naturally within the camp community and the varied programme of activities. Mary and Chris's words of encouragement were: "Let's give it a go!"

### **Guidance for Recruiting Volunteers**

The Prior/PP is responsible for volunteer recruitment and training. Others such as the Ministry Co-Ordinator and/or a Local Safeguarding Group member(s) can assist in the recruitment process. Those

conducting recruitment must be familiar with and follow the recruitment procedures as set-out in the guidance. What to do in respect of those involved in general ministries and those seeking to work with children were outlined with supporting diagrams and a checklist of tasks. Completing a formal process ensures each step is followed (e.g. Application Form; interview or 'thorough chat' takes place) and records are kept.

### **Guidance for Volunteers Visiting the Homes of Vulnerable Adults & Families**

We know that volunteer church ministry can and does happen in selected locations outside the Church building. Informed by the OSA Vulnerable Adults Policy (Dec. 2021), these guidelines are to assist any Church volunteer ministering in a family home or in the home of an adult who may be vulnerable.

Such ministry might include Baptism Team, Bereavement Team or Eucharistic Ministers. This work can only take place with the knowledge and approval of the Ministry Co-ordinator and the Prior or the Parish Priest as is the case in some Church locations.

Key questions are addressed, among others:

*How do I prepare?*

*What if there are children present?*

*How do I respect confidentiality?*

*What if a concern arises regarding a person's welfare?*

*Do I keep any notes or records of the visit?*

*Who should be informed of the visit?*

## Communicating the Safeguarding Message

New posters will hopefully brighten up a space or two in each church location and communicate positive messages.



Safeguarding is at the heart of our communities and ministries where we work together and minding each other.



## Information Leaflet for Young People

As well as providing basic information suited to the 13 – 16 yrs. age group this leaflet combines images from the previous two posters. Older adolescents may also find it useful. However, it is not intended for primary school children. Local Safeguarding Groups will know best how to use and distribute the leaflet.

The key message is: *Your safety matters to us. Our friars, volunteers and staff have made a commitment to treat every person with respect and dignity*

Different categories of abuse are explained. Readers are provided with a range of contexts in which abuse does and can happen. Some helpful advice is given by way of 'Things to do' if you have to face any of these situations. Underlying all of this is the important message: *Abuse is NEVER your fault.* So this is about raising awareness and letting people know: *Help is at hand, if needed.* Four sets of contact details are listed.



All resources are available on the OSA Website - Safeguarding page.

## NBSCCCI Conference – 11/12 May

### *Theology of Safeguarding*

The National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland recently held its first annual conference post-COVID.

In the preceding 12 months or so, individual contributors presented short thought-provoking videos on the topic. Dr. Jessie Rogers (Dean of Theology at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth) also spoke at the conference. Her video recording (and others) is available at <https://safeguarding.ie/national-conference-2022> and in which she states (See June 2021):

*“An unintended consequence of taking seriously the safeguarding of children in the Church has been to further marginalise them within the life of the people of God. It can seem easier to just exclude children from a space or an activity than to put in place all the safeguarding protocols required. This moves the Church in the opposite direction from the journey that Jesus in the gospels requires us to take. A good theology of safeguarding must enter a deep conversation with a theology of childhood and also, I will argue, a robust theology of power.*

*The stories of Jesus and the children in the gospels present a beautiful image of openness and inclusion. But they also point to something very fundamental about what it means to be a community in whom the risen Christ dwells. I will look briefly at three episodes in Mark's gospel – to begin to form an answer to the question: How can the Church take seriously Jesus's action of putting a child in their midst and telling the disciples to welcome children as a way of welcoming Jesus?”*

## Safeguarding Development Group

Between 31 Aug. 2021 and 14 June 2022 the SDG meet 7 times via Zoom. Here is a selection of points noted at the last meeting:

- ✚ A new cycle of training delivery is expected to be a significant piece of work in the Autumn period as informed by detailed information to be contained in completed Progress Reports '21 – '22.
  - ✚ Draft resources prepared for the OSA Safeguarding W/End (24/25 Sept. 2022), including Fr. Kieran O'Mahony's excellent 'Scriptural Notes, were unanimously endorsed and approved for circulation in the first week of September, along with a new pop-up poster.
  - ✚ Most encouraging was the “very positive” nature of the initial NBSCCCI feedback on the recent Child Safeguarding Review (Feb. 2022) reflecting great leadership and teamwork all round. Full draft report awaited.
  - ✚ While a sad occasion, deep appreciation was expressed to Pauline Uí Dhuibhir (Chair & Ballyboden), Joan Donovan (Drogheda) & Geraldine Carey Van Dam (Limerick) who ended their 6-year SDG membership. BUÍOCHAS.
  - ✚ The news of Debbie Callanan (LSG Cork) agreeing to join the SDG from September was heartily received. Hopefully, there will be more to follow in her willing footsteps.
- End.**