



2022

Annual Report

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OPENING MESSAGE

My Project family support services achieved a solid return to normality throughout 2022 by steadily increasing the provision of therapeutic interventions within My project and by resuming group programmes in person. The team and service users welcomed a return to our customary personal approach to service provision following the impact the Corona Virus Protocols had on our delivery of supports over the previous number of years.

Young people, children and their families were profoundly impacted by issues associated with the corona virus. Schools and workplaces closed, learning moved online, and parents worked from home. Isolation from friends, extended family members and the community, together with an increased reliance on technology for communication and limited time spent outdoors engaging in enjoyable activities led to a significant increase in individuals and families seeking supports.

2022 was a year of significant change within the team at My Project... Minding You. Una Kenny, Project Manager for over 8 years left the service to take up a new role and a new challenge. I, previously a Project Worker with MyP, stepped into the Leadership role on an acting basis from July to September and formally took on the role of Project Manager in September 2022. Our team of Project Workers was restored to a full complement of four at the beginning of December 2022, with Jess Kelly coming onboard. There are great plans ahead for My Project in 2023 as we strive to collaborate with other support agencies, to serve and to grow our supports in the most effective and sustainable way.

I am bringing over 20 years of experience in social care and community services to my new Leadership role at My Project. I appreciate the confidence vested in me and the support I receive from the MyP team and the Board of Management. It is my pleasure to be part of such a dedicated, skilled and caring team. I look forward to leading the team in 2023, to working towards growing our service and to supporting more families within our community as we move forward.

Nuala McKenna

Project Manager

OUR PURPOSE

My Project... Minding You (MyP) is a family support service located within the community in the Monkstown / Mounttown area of Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin. We provide supports to children, young people and their families with the focus on promoting increased personal development and coping capacity together with relational, emotional and social skills. As a team, we endeavour to support positive change in the lives of children, young people and their families who experience life challenges and may be struggling due to social, economic and relational disadvantage.

Negative experiences in early childhood can and do have a long-term adverse impact on natural development and can compromise an individual's ability to cope with challenges and stress in later life. Research has proven that early interventions and committed responses to the individual needs of children and young people, together with effective guidance and supports for parents and guardians, can offer the opportunity for a family to function more successfully as a collective and for the individuals within that family to thrive.

We are committed to listening, understanding, and responding to individual needs within the family unit. By working together and adopting a collaborative approach, we can develop appropriate and effective responses to meet those needs.

MyP advocates strongly for children, young people and families in our community through our engagement with other local support services and our association with statutory bodies.

OUR FUNDERS

Our primary funders, Tusla and the HSE (through DLR Drug & Alcohol Task Force) continue to provide the core funding for the services provided to families in the community by My Project. Tusla funding comes through the Prevention, Partnership and Family Support Programme (PPFS) This is a comprehensive, collaborative programme of early intervention and preventative work. The programme aims to prevent risks arising and / or to address already occurring risks that may have escalated for children and young people through supporting, collaborating, building on strengths, increasing coping mechanisms and promoting sustainable capacity towards overall recovery.

Our funding from the HSE comes through the DLR DATF and enables MyP to provide interventions and supports around Hidden Harm, where children have been impacted by parental drug or alcohol use. A child or young person may face challenges in their growth and development as a result of compromised parenting, challenges that can greatly impede their physical, intellectual, social and emotional development. A 'whole family' approach is vital in assessing the needs within the family, with a focus on building individual strengths, increasing capacity and helping to build / rebuild relationships within the family.

This funding also provides for the MyP team to support young people who show specific risks of current or potential substance misuse. One to one or small group processes aim to connect, inform and educate and allow the team to work with young people to build capacity around harm reduction and to support towards recovery.

In addition, we received grant funding from Dun Laoghaire County Council Grant scheme which provided the means for us to create an additional comfortable and confidential space for families within MyP. This extra space has provided greater flexibility and capacity within the service.

Further funding was awarded to MyP through the Healthy Ireland Funding Scheme to support the implementation of health and wellbeing programmes in community settings. MyP received this funding over a 3-year period from 2019 to 2022 to upskill team members in programmes such as Circles of Security, Seasons of Growth, PEEP training and Working Things Out. This funding also facilitated the cost of hiring external spaces to facilitate the delivery of

our programmes. We are very grateful to have received this funding stream that was supported by Pobal and DLRCoCo and we would welcome the extension of the HI scheme in future years.

We remain enormously grateful to all of our funders as we continue to provide a vital service for families in our community. However, the pressure on families caused by ever increasing living costs puts an ever-growing demand on our services which means that we need additional funding to continue to meet the needs of our target community and to fulfil our very valuable mission.

Over 1,200 1:1 sessions in 2022

**93 Children, Young People,
Parents & Guardians
participated in individual one to
one sessions**

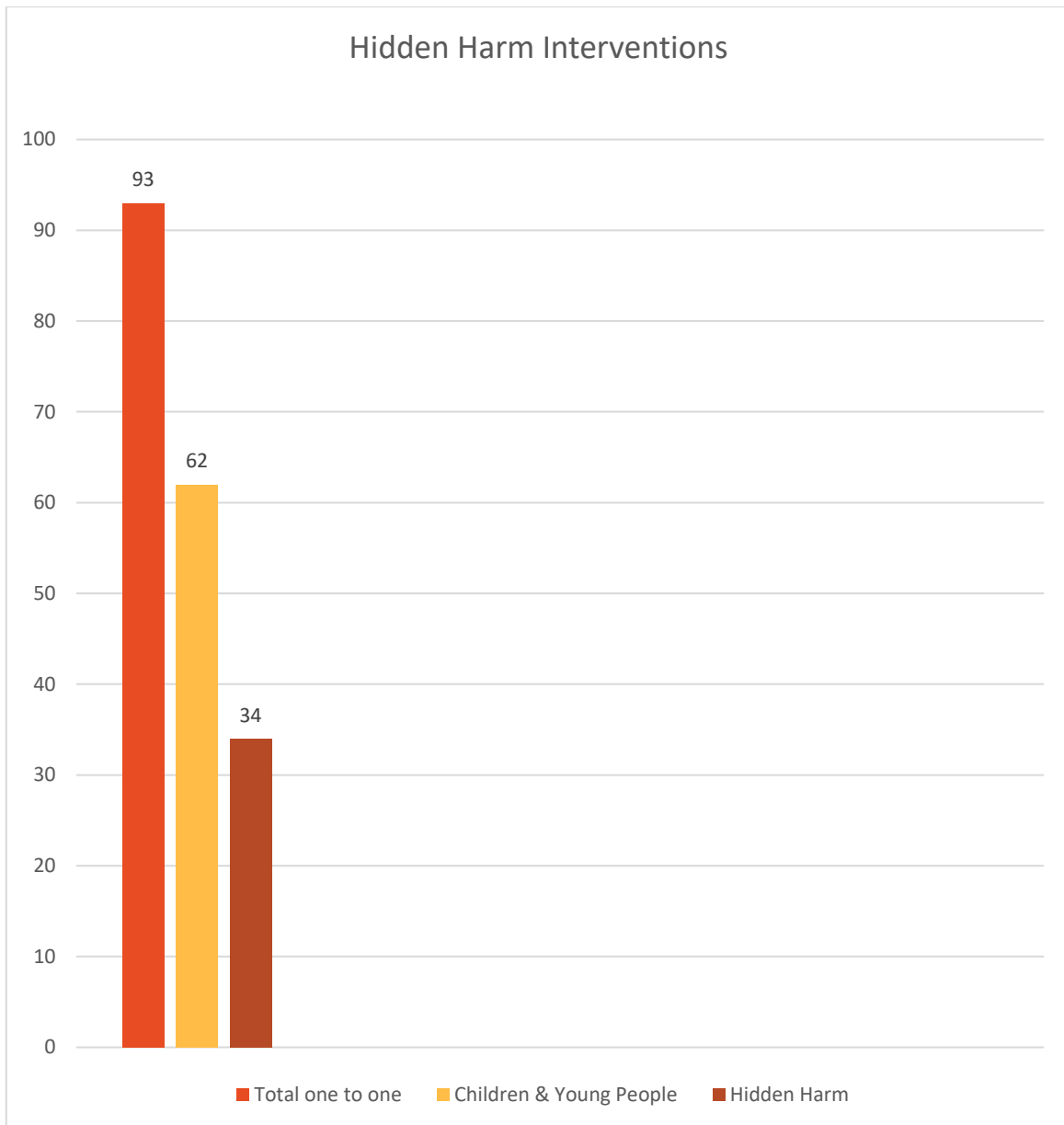
**32 Parents & Babies participated
in First Friends Early Parenting
Education Group**

**2 Meitheal Processes MYP
participated in during the year**

**31 Children participated in
Roots of Empathy Programme**

**8 Young people participated in
Substance Misuse
Aftercare Programme**

**4 Parents / Guardians
participated in
NVR Parent Programme**



- 93 Parents, Children, Young People participated in one-to-one sessions
- 62 Children & Young People participated in one-to-one sessions*
- 34 Children & young people who participated in one-to-one sessions were experiencing the effects of hidden harm, substance misuse within the family (55%)

**Not included: Children & Young People who engaged in MyP group programmes*

OUR VISION

Our vision is for a community where children, young people and families can realise their full potential, are equipped to overcome personal challenges and have the opportunity to belong and contribute to a prosperous and inclusive society.

OUR MISSION

Our mission, through diverse programmes, is to encourage the formation of positive relationships, promote personal development and cultivate the emotional wellbeing of our clients, thereby enabling them to realise their full potential and enjoy a purposeful place in the community. This support is provided in a caring, friendly and safe environment.

OUR VALUES

Respect for all service users and those in the wider community. This is our key value that guides everything that we do. Our services seek to empower individuals to enhance their lives while treating them with dignity at all times.

Integrity honesty and highest ethical behaviour and standards when we engage with our stakeholders in an open and transparent manner, respecting their privacy and observing complete confidentiality at all times.

Compassion striving to ensure that in all our interventions, we demonstrate empathy whilst listening in a non-judgemental way.

Collaboration cooperatively working in partnership with all stakeholders including families and support agencies to achieve positive outcomes for children and young people.

Advocacy supporting and encouraging children and young people to find and develop their own voice and open mind by seeking to understand their needs through clear and effective communication.

Individual support to children, young people and families

At MyP we work with families through building connections and fostering positive relationships together with the application of processes based on family systems, developmental principles and attachment theories. We engage with families attending our service through cognitive and behavioural approaches, creative intervention, relational supports, practical, emotional and social supports, therapy and more.

The team at MyP have a considerable range of experience and are well skilled to initiate supports and programmes that meet the needs of individuals and their families. One to one sessions and group programme take place within our service at MyP but may also happen outdoors or in alternative locations.

We have found that being flexible with our working styles and building positive relationships with children, young people and their parents forms a solid foundation for effective engagement resulting in an increase in opportunities for valuable change. All of our supports are based on the needs of the individual and are discussed and agreed with that person and their family. In 2022, 93 children, young people, parents and guardians accessed individual support at MyP with a total of 170 people accessing supports through either individual support or group-based programmes over the course of the year.

Central to our intervention process is active engagement and dedicated encouragement towards growth of positive regard for self, relationships and the community. Personal awareness, development and the cultivation of healthier emotional wellbeing promotes the potential for more positive relationships within the family and within the wider community.

First Friends – Parent and baby group



Our two First Friends Parent and Baby Groups were facilitated in two locations, Mounttown and Shankill. As professionals come to better understand the importance of developmental opportunities in the 0-to-3-year age group, we find that demand for the groups continues to grow with parents and guardians making enquiries on their own behalf together with referrals from GP's, PHN's, maternity professionals and community-based referrers. Our weekly parent & baby groups (0-2years) use the PEEP Learning Together Programme that supports parents in building positive healthy relationships with their children through play and other fun learning activities.

Our programmes build on everyday opportunities within the group sessions that promote early education, learning and development through play and interactions and further encourage parents to tap into this toolkit within their home environment. With a focus on bonding and attachment, the groups provide support for parents experiencing a variety of difficulties such as parenting alone, parents accessing mental health services, parenting babies with additional needs, isolated parents with little to no family support, parents with low income, parents who were dealing with substance misuse and parents who had experience of domestic violence.

Feedback from a number of parents who participated in the group sessions included an increase in confidence in their parenting role and an improvement in their relationship with their child. Feeling supported by the group facilitators and a parent peer group enabled attendees to develop positive coping strategies and boosted their confidence in their ability to execute the parenting role. Some parents who attend the groups benefitted from one-to-one supports with MyP team members during the year and a number were supported to link in with other services where required.

My Project, Southside Partnership, Barnardo's, Springboard Loughlinstown, Ballyogan Family Resource Centre and TUSLA CFSN continued to work together throughout 2022 by providing facilitation and management experience to co-ordinate this important early intervention programme. There are plans to sustain and grow this essential programme into the future with a view to bringing better health, wellbeing and developmental outcomes to an increased number of children and their families within the DLR community.

Meitheal



Meitheal is an old Irish term that describes how neighbours would come together to assist in the saving of crops or other tasks. The Meitheal approach to family support was developed to help children requiring support from more than one service. MyP is a Meitheal Hub and has worked alongside Tusla to facilitate the Meitheal process with families throughout 2022 by offering a facilitation space for in-person interactions, by leading the process and providing support and advocacy for members of the family, and ultimately addressing the needs of the child and the family.

When asked for feedback on their experience of the process, a parent who attended in 2022 said the Meitheal was: "Talking to really nice people and getting lots of ideas to help me with my child."

Roots of Empathy



The Roots of Empathy Programme was founded in Canada by Mary Gordon over 25 years ago with a mission to build caring, peaceful and civil societies through the development of empathy in children and adults. Mary's vision is to increase empathy, reduce aggression and bullying and to change the world, child by child. The programme is based on the evidence that empathy can be taught and learned, and that empathy is foundational to helping children navigate relationships, form connections and be inclusive of others.

MyP facilitated the Roots of Empathy Programme over 26 weeks duration in a Primary School local to our service. The programme covered themes such as Traits, Communication, Emotions, Crying and Safety. A volunteer parent and baby visited the classroom regularly throughout the programme for the children to witness the necessity and the power of a secure attachment relationship between baby and parent – the first and most powerful model of empathy.

Feedback from children in third class who took part in the 2022 programme:

“Roots of Empathy can teach the world that everyone is the same but looks different.”

“Roots of Empathy can teach the world to be kind to babies.”

“Roots of Empathy can teach the world to be grateful.”

Aftercare Group for Young People - Substance Misuse



Our aftercare group was run in collaboration with Dun Laoghaire Rathdown Community Addiction Team (DLR CAT) and Youth Drug & Alcohol Service (YoDA), Located in Sandyford, weekly sessions provided support to young people in early recovery, helping to prevent relapse, promote routine and guidance to individuals as they work towards life goals.

Group sessions included individual and group work, using the community reinforcement and pro social approach together with a variety of recovery resources to help young people build on their strengths and foster mechanisms to manage regulation and to cope with triggers, challenges, stress and cravings that they experience in their recovery journey.

PARTNERSHIPS

We represent the families we work with through our collaboration with the following:

- Children & Young People's Services Committee (CYPSC) / Prevention, Partnership & Family Support Programme (PPFS Tusla) subgroup
- CYPSC Physical & Mental Health sub-group
- CYPSC Parental Support sub-group
- Youth at Risk sub-group
- SAVE (Southside Addressing Violence Effectively)
- Hub Managers (DSE / Wicklow area)
- DLR Drug & Alcohol Task Force (DATF) Treatment & Rehab sub-group
- DLR DATF Youth substance prevention subgroup
- DLR DATF Family Support subgroup
- NVR Promotion / Mentor Working Group

MyP values collaboration and working in partnership with other organisations who are working with and on behalf of families in the community. We work closely with other Family Support Services, Tusla Child & Family Agency, Drug & Alcohol Support Services, Mental Health Services, Primary Care Supports, Community GP's, Primary Schools and Secondary Schools. Collaboration allows us to reach more families through a co-ordinated approach to the needs of the family, co-facilitation on programmes and sharing the time commitments required for programmes such as First Friends and Substance Aftercare Group.

Most subgroup meetings were conducted face to face again throughout the year instead of having to be held online as in the previous year. In-person meetings bring a different, improved connection among services and a more personal and comprehensive forum for our continuing partnerships. All services report an increase in the number of families seeking supports post covid with the unfortunate result that lengthy waiting lists are an emerging feature. Mental health challenges for young people, school avoidance, self

isolation, relationship breakdown, increased conflict and violence within the home became common presentations to the service post pandemic.

MyP remains actively involved in collaborating with other services with a focus on joint programme delivery and continued support and advocacy for families accessing much needed services.

OUR PEOPLE

The Team at My Project

Nuala McKenna – Manager

Clare Shine – Administrator

Marie Sheridan – Project Worker

Jane O’Doherty – Project Worker

Eoin McNulty – Project Worker

Jess Kelly – Project Worker

Our team share a wealth of experience and skills, with qualifications in a range of disciplines including social science, social care, early childcare and education, youth and community development, addiction, holistic psychotherapy, theraplay, training and education, finance and administration.

The MyP team demonstrate energy and enthusiasm in their work with children, young people and their parents who are experiencing challenges and are in need of support. We are collaborative in our approach and supportive of each other as we endeavour, as a team, to provide the best possible support and care to the families in our care.

We had some team changes in 2022 with Una Kenny resigning her post as Manager in June after many years at My Project and moving to a new management position in Barnardos. We wish Una well in her new role and know that her knowledge, skill and experience will be of enormous benefit to her new team. We are delighted that Nuala McKenna has taken on the important role of Project Manager. Nuala’s dedication experience and passion for the role have already had a positive impact on the service.

Jess Kelly joined our team in December 2022 with a background in social care and community addiction services. Jess is settling quickly into the MyP team and has brought our team back to it’s full quota. We are all looking forward to working together in a new way.

The team at MyP have been impacted by the staffing changes that occurred in 2022. Unsurprisingly, each and every one has remained constant and committed to providing high quality, effective supports to the families that are strengthened by our service.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN 2022

- **Non Violent Resistance Parenting Programme**

NVR teaches parents new and effective ways to respond to their children who may behave in a challenging or aggressive way. We teach parents and guardians to develop a safe, calm and authoritative presence. As parents change their reactions to the children's behaviours, children's behaviours change in response.

- **Gestalt Therapy Training**

An integrative and holistic approach to psychotherapy, Gestalt Theatre is firmly grounded in the conceptual framework and philosophy of Gestalt Therapy into which it brings the best practices and principles from drama therapy, applied theatre improvisation and the theatre of the experience.

- **Roots of Empathy Programme**

This programme is aimed at children in primary school where children learn about empathy and their own feelings through interactions with a baby. The programme supports a reduction in aggression and bullying. It increases caring, sharing, kindness and inclusion, and it promotes well-being, and positive mental health.

- **Somatic Experience Therapy**

Somatic therapy is a holistic approach that aims to treat the mind and body by focusing on physical sensations and movements.

- **Holistic Psychotherapy**

Holistic psychotherapy, sometimes referred to as holistic therapy, is a type of psychotherapy (talk therapy) that considers and treats the whole person, including their mind, body, spirit, and emotions.

- **Parents under Pressure Programme**

The Parents under Pressure (**PuP**) programme supports parents and guardians facing multiple challenges. An individualised, therapeutic family support plan is developed

drawing from theoretical models of child development, attachment, and emotional regulation.

- **Seasons for Growth Programme**

Seasons for Growth is an early intervention grief education programme aimed at helping children, young people and adults through grief, brought about through loss or significant change in their lives.

- **Social & Therapeutic Horticultural Programme**

The Social and Therapeutic Horticulture Facilitator develops with the skills, understanding and practical experience of working with plants and gardens to assist in achieving positive cognitive and behavioural changes in children, young people and parents.

- **Sensory Attachment Integration**

Sensory Attachment Intervention (SAI) is an integrative approach to the treatment of children and adults who have suffered abuse or neglect. Those who have experienced trauma tend to operate in persistent fear mode and through SAI, are supported to establish regulation which in turn enables higher level sensory, emotional and cognitive functioning.

- **PEEP Antenatal Programme**

This Programme supports parents perinatally to reflect on their developing baby, tune in to their baby's feelings and behaviour and respond sensitively (known as reflective functioning). This helps parent-baby bonding and attachment and reduces the risk to the early parent–baby relationship, helping to prevent isolation, anxiety and low-level depression. Research indicates that these strong relationships enhance parents' confidence and self-esteem, as well as contributing to better outcomes for the child in terms of their cognitive development, the relationships they build and their resilience to cope if life gets tough.

- **Critical Incident Stress Management**

Critical Incident Stress Management, (CISM), is an intervention developed specifically for dealing with traumatic events. It is a highly structured process for helping those

involved in a critical incident to share their experiences, vent emotions, learn about stress reactions and symptoms and given referral for further help if required. It is sometimes referred to as 'psychological first aid'.

AIMS FOR 2023

- Supporting Children - Working with families in familiar ways and with new approaches in order to promote safe and nurturing homes where children can learn, grow and thrive with positive connection to their family, community and culture.
- Supporting Young People - Actively engaging with and encouraging young people to recognise their own strengths and capabilities, to build capacity to think autonomously, to manage challenges, make informed decisions, learn to be personally responsible and transition to a greater level of progressive independence.
- Supporting Parents & Guardians - Providing a safe and confidential environment within My Project where parents feel heard and understood. To support a parent in building on their strengths, building capacity within their parenting role to bring about more positive connections within their family and the community.
- Caring, Respectful Relationships – We are aware that building strong and positive relationships with families, other services, the wider community and all stakeholders are central to My Project providing helpful and effective support to those who need it. Our goal is to create and maintain healthy relationships, remain focussed on a collaborative approach to child and family support and to continue to contribute actively to the overall wellbeing of families in our community.

PROGRAMME PLANNING

TLC KIDZ (Collaboration: Barnardos)

The TLC Kidz Project is a community coordinated response for children and mothers in recovery from domestic violence and abuse. The TLC Kidz Project seeks to create a common vision and shared responsibility among services in supporting the recovery of children who have experienced domestic abuse.

NVR

The Non-Violent Resistance Programme is a response to child to parent conflict, violence and abuse. The process supports parents to change the ways in which they deal with aggressive and controlling behaviours with a focus on increasing positive communication and improving relationships within the household.

aCRA

The Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach is a behavioural treatment for young people engaged in substance misuse and it's associated difficulties. The process aims to increase positive aspects of the young persons life such as family, social aspects and activities that support recovery and to reduce the negative aspects such as substance use reinforcers that hinder recovery.

Theraplay

Theraplay is used for building and enhancing attachment, self-esteem, trust in others, and happy engagement. It is based on natural patterns of playful, healthy interaction and is personal, physical, and fun. Theraplay sessions focus on four essential qualities found in parent-child relationships Structure, Engagement, Nurture, and Challenge.

REAL U

REAL U covers topics that affect young people in their face to face and online relationships. REAL U provides a safe space to engage in discussion and join in a range of entertaining activities while building self awareness, knowledge and confidence.

TEAM TRAINING GOALS FOR 2023

aCRA

CRA

Narrative 4

NVR

Real U

Reflective Practice

Roots of Empathy

Theraplay

DIRECTORS REPORT

My Project Minding You (MyP) is a company limited by guarantee and governed by a constitution. The company has charitable status under sections 207 and 208 of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997.

MyP is overseen by a voluntary Board of Management. Together, the non-executive Directors provide a diverse range of knowledge and experience that effectively supports My Project. The Board held six meetings plus an AGM during 2022.

The Board of Management delegates the day to day running of the service to the Project Manager and the MyP team. The team at My Project comprises the Project Manager, Administration / Finance Support and four Project Workers.

No member of the Board received payment or reimbursement of expenses for 2022.

We sincerely thank all members of the board for giving of their time and expertise to guide the project in all matters of governance, finance, oversight and strategy. We appreciate their commitment and input as we look forward to their continued support and stewardship.

BOARD MEMBERS 2022

The Board of Directors during 2022 were:

Karen Gallagher	Resigned as Chair & Board Member	14 th June 2022
Jacky Flavin Tehan	Appointed to Board of Directors	2 nd Sept 2021
	Appointed Chairperson	14 th June 2022
Cathal O'Neil	Appointed to Board of Directors	2 nd Sept 2021
	Appointed Company Secretary	25 th Aug 2022
Barry Quinn	Director	
Andre Almeida	Appointed to Board of Directors	13 th Sept 2022
Leslie O'Hora	Appointed to Board	25 th Oct 2022

Board Observers

Aoife Dolan Tusla Representative

Sinead Roarke Tusla Representative

GOVERNANCE

My Project Minding You is fully compliant with the standards as defined in the Charities Governance Code. The board regularly reviews a Governance Checklist to ensure ongoing compliance is maintained.

Good Governance

MyP is committed to transparency in the way the service is operated. Management and the MyP Board of Management work closely together to ensure processes are in place to consistently monitor and evaluate how the charity operates. Governance processes are vital to the effective running of our service and also support us in safeguarding our service as we continue to meet the ongoing and emerging needs of families within the community.

ACCOUNT RECORDS

The Board of Management confirms that the accounting records of MYP comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2014.

A comprehensive financial controls policy is in place and detailed finance reports are prepared and circulated to the Board throughout the year.

Annual audited accounts are prepared and filed with the Companies Registration Office and with the Charities Regulator.

GOING CONCERN

Based on the results for the year, the year-end position and the approved 2023 budget, the Board of Directors believes that My Project has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future.

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

The directors who held office at the date of approval of this Directors' Report confirm that as far as they are each aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the Company's

auditor is unaware and each director has taken all the steps that he/she ought to have taken as a director to make himself/herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Company's auditor is aware of that information.

AUDITOR

Bourke & Co (Greg O'Shea), Chartered Accountants have expressed their willingness to remain in office.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The team at My Project work with children, young people and their parents / guardians, taking on a low to medium level of risk in core activities.

Our service has limited funding sources. A reliance on two main funders plus ad hoc applications for grant funding, raises the financial risk. Risks are reviewed on a regular basis, are reported and discussed with the Board of Management with steps being implemented to reduce identified risks.

The cost of living continued to rise in 2022. This presented further financial and budgeting challenges for the service as My Project operates to a very fixed budget each year. An increase in guaranteed, core funding would empower MyP to not only continue to respond effectively to the needs of families in the area but would allow us to expand our reach through the implementation of additional programmes, increasing accessibility to our supports for even more families within our community.

VETTING

All staff and Volunteers are Garda vetted. My project has a Child Protection Policy based on the Children First Act 2015 and pursues best practice recruitment policies and procedures.