

Overview of Covid-19 response to address needs of children by Tusla – Child and Family Agency, Ireland

Input for Webinar - *Covid-19 and Children's Rights: Intrafamily violence*

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Overview of the input

- Introduction and brief overview of Irish context
- Describe early stages of the Covid-19 response by Tusla – Child and Family Agency
- Highlight issues arising for children and families in the pandemic where there is domestic or intrafamilial violence
- Note later developments and some potential opportunities

Tusla response

- Crisis management structures established
- Prioritisation of three services – child protection; children in care; domestic, sexual and gender based violence (DSGBV)
- Assurance on continuity of funding to third party organisations
- Series of measures to maintain continuity of services for high risk children and families with DV
- Aligned with cross-governmental response to DSGBV

Concerns emerging

- Lack of visibility of younger children at risk when schools and early years services closed
- Usual safety routes and protective mechanisms for families closed off or more inaccessible
- Pressures of lockdown exacerbating situations
- Negative educational impact

Where are we now?

- Largely restored services – with adapted business-as-usual
- Increased attention to the issue of children impacted by violence at home
- Innovation and greater use of technology in provision of services
- Emerging models of shelter and safety for families – strengthened local partnerships
- Full impact of Covid-19 still not known – demands for services increase