



Parentline

Three Year Strategic Plan 2023-2026

Overview

Parentline is a national, confidential helpline that offers support, information and guidance on all aspects of being a parent and any parenting issues. Parentline operates in a dynamic environment where its services are expanding and in growing demand. The core Helpline service has grown beyond expectations in 2022 with actual helpline calls (5,857) 12.5% higher than predicted (5,200). The majority of our service users are parents of teenagers...but we have an opportunity to reach more parents, in particular parents of younger children (13.5% of callers who were age profiled in 2022 were under 40 years) and dads (17% of callers were male). By 2026 our plan is that more parents, particularly younger parents, dads and a more diverse community of parents and guardians will be aware of Parentline and have access to its growing service portfolio.

In order to achieve this Parentline will promote its brand, services and website (not all queries require a phone conversation) and ensure that the clients receive a service level they would recommend to a friend, with support and information which helps them to deal with any parenting related issues they have, in a non-judgmental, caring and empathetic environment.

Growth of Parentline will be managed to maintain a high quality service. Services may include strategic partnerships with other organisations e.g. Parents Plus and other related agencies. A new Board sub-committee will be set up to evaluate strategic partnership ideas and opportunities.

All activity in this plan will be subject to Tusla and HSE funding which Parentline relies upon to provide a core service. Additionally, Parentline engages in fundraising activity which is required to cover annual shortfalls in running costs and to pay for additional training and promotion. Moving forward, an increase in funding will be sought to cover cost increases in providing the core service. Donations will be encouraged as a method of raising additional discretionary income. Staffing will have to increase to full time administrative support, at least, to deliver this plan.

Governance of the strategic plan will be overseen by the Board on an annual basis to ensure it is performing to defined KPI's. An annual review will be presented to the Board by the Strategic Sub Committee in April of each year.

Vision 2023/26:

The new Vision for Parentline 2023 captures our ambition for parents.

Our vision is that *no* parent feels alone or unsupported.

Mission Statement:

Our mission statement, as per our constitution, is as follows:

“The main object for which Parentline is established is the advancement of community welfare by providing free, confidential and non-judgemental guidance and support to the parenting community, including, but not limited to, parents, guardians, teachers and social workers, and to advance the education of the parenting community.”

Strategic Priorities

The priorities in this plan will provide parameters and guidance to the Board in making decisions, particularly around discretionary spend.

Strategic Priorities 2023-26

1. Reach all parents who need support by
 - a. growing awareness of Parentline, its services and its website particularly targeting millennial parents and dads
 - b. increasing channels of distribution and availability of its services e.g. growing digital presence
2. Ensure the service, delivered primarily through trained volunteers, and the information we provide is of consistently high quality, up to date and easy to access.
3. Raise adequate funds to support growth and service development
4. Measure success using KPI's (key performance indicators)

Strategic Objectives

Feeding into the priorities, the following is a list of Parentline's strategic objectives which are guidelines for operations. All operational activities are under the control and management of the CEO, subject to Board approval.

Strategic Objectives

Reaching Parents – we are here and can help in many ways...

1. Expand and improve service offering e.g. SPACE trained facilitators to add to current portfolio of
 - **Helpline**
 - **NVR programme (one to one)**
 - **Group NVR Programmes**
 - **Coaching**
 - **Parenting Courses (in conjunction with Parents Plus)**
 - **Signposting service**
 - **Informational Website**
 - **Post NVR refresher sessions**
 - **National Helpline for Post Natal Depression**
 - **Webinars**
2. Grow brand awareness in particular among millennial parents (age 25-40yrs) by targeting our media to this digital generation e.g. increase use of social media. This will require additional internal staff time and expertise.
3. Expand use of logo "It's ok to ask for help" to get a message across e.g. Dads struggle too. It's ok to ask for help.
4. Promote website (not all parents require a conversation) to increase traffic to it, featuring it more prominently on all print and promotional material and signposting to it/referring to it on helpline calls. Add and update content regularly.
5. Targeted PR - Engage with Employee Wellness Programmes in large organisations. Promote through Parents Associations e.g. via digital poster. And in Anti-natal clinics.
6. Increase links (including digital/website) with agencies we sign post to e.g. Barnardos, Jigsaw, One Family, Pieta, ADHD Ireland, Parents Plus, A Lust for Life etc.
7. Set up a Sub Committee at Board Level to look at strategic partnership opportunities, if any, for product and service enhancement.
8. Leverage PR opportunities - Aileen is already an ambassador. Explore other ambassador opportunities ... Look at producing video clips of ambassadors/volunteers/service users in our social media.

Strengthening our people

Ensure a well-trained, motivated team of volunteers, NVR facilitators and partners. Encourage staff to upskill and increase staffing as required to support plans.

1. Annual intake and training of 7+ volunteers
2. Regular Training and Support sessions for current volunteers, including regular professional talks, Buddy Support Sessions – monthly on zoom, NVR facilitator reflective sessions, upskilling and training in other programs e.g. SPACE
3. Add feedback generation (annually) to current excellent internal communications – newsletter, email, whats app groups
4. Identify opportunities for in person engagement e.g. one purely social engagement in addition to the annual Margaret Aylward Centre Training Day.
5. Regular check in by Board to support CEO
6. Increase staffing hours as deemed appropriate to support increases in service delivery.

Enhancing quality of service

1. NVR Evaluations
2. Feedback generation from Helpline service users through the website
3. Linktree stats for instagram
4. Investigate new training programs to upskill
5. Identify team on the Board to report on evaluations and feedback

Raising Funds

Parentline's primary source of funding (Tusla/HSE grant) is required to deliver a core service, however it does not fully cover annual running costs and to date any shortfall has been covered by fundraising activities. Going forward, training and staffing required to support this plan will require additional support from Tusla and the HSE.

Fundraising and donations are also required to supplement this plan. In particular, additional fundraising income will be key to pay for the PR/promotional activity required (for example developing content and managing social media). Donations may be encouraged e.g. an "invitation to donate" link on the NVR feedback form. Both fundraising income and any donations received will be for specific goals set out in the plan.

Measurement and Performance

We will measure our progress annually under each of these strategic priorities using Key Performance Indicator's listed below.

Reaching more Parents

Calls	Grow Annual Helpline Calls +2% per annum from baseline of 5857 in 2022.* Encourage First Time Callers +5% per annum
Website	Grow monthly users from baseline of 1900 Dec 2022 + 3% per annum
Diversity	Grow male callers to 25% of total (from 17% 2022) Grow millennial parents to 25% of total (only 13.5% of callers under 40 years 2022).
Digital	Instagram - target 3000 followers by 2026

* Helpline calls and NVR calls are all included in this figure

Strengthening our People

Volunteers & Staff	Maintain a minimum of 50 Helpline Volunteers (assuming annual attrition of 10%) Rota – Achieve a minimum of one Helpline only volunteer on each rota Annual Recruitment into training +15% (to cover attrition) NVR Facilitators – Ensure a minimum of 25 to facilitate 200 programmes per annum Ongoing Training – maintain 8 sessions per annum Annual Survey of Volunteers and staff to measure wellbeing
Quality and Evaluation of Service	NVR Programme Evaluation – Achieve 100% “likely to recommend” Service User Feedback – Achieve 95% “would recommend” or higher

Funding

Tusla / HSE	Core Funding - estimate €101,000 pa (subject to change)
Fundraising Target	Achieve Annual Fundraising Base Target €20,000 – bearing in mind that it is not Parentline’s policy to become reliant on fundraising or donations to provide its core service.
Reserves Target	Maintain unrestricted reserves equivalent to the greater of the budgeted annual fundraising target <i>or</i> 6 months operating costs.
Donations Target	Offer opportunities to donate

2023-26 Strategic Plan – Formulation and Context

This Strategic Plan was formulated with reference to the following:

1. Review of the Strategic Plan 2020-25 by the new Strategic Planning Sub Committee (set up in October 2021).
2. Detailed SWOT analysis.
3. Feedback from surveys of all stakeholders in Parentline.
4. Recommendations from independent Board Evaluation Report.
5. Presentation of proposals to the Board, and Board discussion, at various intervals.

This Strategic Plan has been presented to, and approved by, the Board of Parentline on 14th March 2023.

Signed on behalf of the Board:

Date: _____

Michele Ridgway

Chair of Parentline

Date: _____

Terence Hayden

Company Secretary of Parentline

Signed on behalf of Management

Date: _____

Aileen Hickie

CEO of Parentline