



Communications Strategy and Policy

Vision of Strategy and Policy: To Position Parentline to be the leading national parent support organisation in Ireland.

Mission of Strategy and Policy: That Parentline is known by and available to all parents, guardians, and professionals as a confidential, non-judgemental, source of support, information, and guidance. Parentline will encourage diversity in our organisation to reflect the changes in Irish society, through our recruitment process, training, advertising, and Board membership.

Parentline Media and Press Communicator

The CEO of Parentline is the official and only person to represent and speak for Parentline in all media, both written, and broadcast. The CEO is the public face of Parentline and is fully informed and familiar with the Parentline Mission and Vision. In the event of a crisis, and where the CEO is not available the Chair may communicate to the stakeholders and wider public.

Target Audience

Parentline communicates with and to parents primarily, but also carers and professionals dealing with children. We also communicate to Parentline volunteers, members of Parentline, stakeholders, our funders and other interested organisations.

Parentline Services and Supports

Parentline is a national helpline providing information, support and guidance in confidence to parents and carers of children of all ages and any and all issues.

Additionally, Parentline provides the national helpline for postnatal depression (PND).

Parentline also facilitates the Non-Violent Resistance (NVR) Programme for parents dealing with child to parent violence.

Parentline offers online, directly accessible, evidence-based parenting programmes in partnership with Parents Plus.

Regular group Zoom programmes are also provided to support parents dealing with anxiety. These are delivered by our SPACE (Supporting Parenting of Anxious Childhood Emotions) trained facilitators.

How we communicate

Parentline communicates to its members and volunteers by email, by post, by text, notices in the office, by Zoom, direct contact and at the AGM.

Parentline also offers “opt in” What’s App groups for helpline volunteer peer support, NVR peer support and for trainee volunteers. There are regulations covering any communication or messaging by participants on the what’s app groups. These are that : (a) the groups must not be used as a platform to air any views/grievances concerning a parent or caller; (b) the groups must not be used as a political platform for airing opinions on politics or current affairs; (c) the groups should ideally only be used for peer support in relation to calls taken or made and queries on parenting issues or concerns; (d) the groups can be used for information sharing in relation to the service provided by Parentline and signposting to other services and organisations of relevance; (e) the groups can also be used to update any information in relation to Parentline related issues and events, both work and social, as well as news on upcoming talks and sessions and webinars both from Parentline and other organisations of relevance to Parentline.

The CEO communicates with our funders directly, online via Zoom or Teams, via email, via their portals and they are provided with financial accounts, insurance and tax certificates, annual reports, strategic plan, and anonymised statistical information on our calls.

The CEO engages with the media on updates and news on any and all aspect of parenting, PND, NVR, SPACE and any issues that crop up on the helplines or in the helpline statistical information. The CEO communicates with the traditional media via direct interviews, e mails, Zoom calls, phone calls and providing written material.

Parentline communicates to the public and its target audience by using flyers, posters, leaflets, stickers and other promotional material.

Parentline also advertises in the written media and radio and television. The CEO strives to maintain a very good relationship with journalists, broadcasters and media personnel.

Social Media

Parentline uses Instagram (@parentline_ireland) and Twitter (@ParentlineIre) to raise awareness of the service, highlight particular issues around parenting and alert and generate interest in Parentline.

Messaging is clear and concise, using Parentline branding when possible.

Support is given to other like-minded charities and individuals.

Parentline recognises all current and future social media platforms as being increasingly popular methods of communication to further connect the organisation with parents, carers, families and the wider community.

Social media platforms help Parentline promote its service offering and to reach a wider audience and a younger demographic.

In all of its social media messaging, Parentline remains entirely nonpartisan, non-political and impartial.

Website

Parentline has a comprehensive website www.parentline.ie which provides an array of information to the public, including information on all of the services and programmes offered by Parentline. These services and supports are there to work with and assist the Parentline vision of being the leading national support organisation for parents in Ireland. Parentline is fully compliant with all governance obligations and as such the Parentline website also includes annual reports, financial accounts, Parentline strategic plan, the risk register and other relevant policies.

Branding

All written communication from Parentline uses the Parentline Branding and the charity number. Printed material further uses Parentline branding, the funders branding (where relevant) and Parentline contact details.

Social media platforms further display the Parentline logo, charity number and contact details.

Communication in a crisis

A crisis is any situation concerning a charity that is threatening or could threaten to harm people or property, seriously interrupt the work of the charity, significantly damage the charity's reputation and/or negatively impact the financial viability of the charity.

The CEO is the spokesperson in the event of any and all crises. The Chair may step in if absolutely necessary. The CEO or Chair may provide a holding statement if necessary, to give time to consider the best course of action.

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