

CARI Annual Report 2016

The Road to Recovery



Helpline

The Beginning:

Providing guidance and support to families from disclosure and throughout

Forensic Accompaniment

Accompaniment and aftercare to their forensic exam

Therapy

Healing the family

Healing children, and their families, from Child Sexual Abuse'

Court Accompaniment

Preparation, accompaniment and support throughout the criminal trial



CONTENTS

- 01 2016 – How did we do? Chair and CEO Report
- 03 The Road to Recovery. Let the Journey Begin...
- 06 CARI Helpline 2016
- 10 CASS Forensic Accompaniment
- 14 Therapy
- 20 CASS Court Accompaniment
- 24 Legislative progress for children in 2016
- 26 Funding
- 28 Statement of Accounts

2016 – How did we do? Chair and CEO Report

Strategic planning and reviewing

In 2016 CARI staff and Board commenced the process of reviewing the direction and priorities of the organisation in a time of significant change in child services in the aftermath of the formation of TUSLA, the Child and Family Agency. This represented a major challenge and opportunity and throughout 2016 it became clear that our assessment of the scale of needs of victims of CSA and our approach to responding to their needs were divergent. Framing a strategic plan in that environment was very difficult.

Strategic review within CARI meant revisiting our original aims and objective and seeing how they stood the test of time and involved the re-examination of our mission and philosophy. While we found some minor amendments or additions needed to be made and refinements articulated we broadly re-affirmed our vision of supporting children and families and communities affected by sexual abuse and ensuring that children who are affected by child sexual abuse receive therapy, counselling and assistance to aid their recovery process and reduce the often-traumatic impact of their experiences

2016 Mission statement reflects broader range of support services CARI now offers

We have redefined and updated our mission statement to reflect the broader range of support services we now offer. Our mission, as of 2017 is to ensure that every child in Ireland who may need our services, wherever they live, is aware of CARI and able to take advantage of the information advice therapy, accompaniment and other support services we provide. We re-affirmed our commitment to the systemic way of working with CSA and hence the importance of working with families, schools and the wider communities affected.

Incidence of CSA in Ireland– Tusla statistics

TUSLA's 2015 figures tell us they received 2,940 new allegations of CSA that year. We know from other national and international studies that most abuse is not disclosed in childhood and some not at all. The

impact of sexual abuse can range from no apparent effects to very severe. Every experience of abuse is individual and every individual child and family's response equally so.

Sexual abuse may distort the child's sense of self, their relationship with others, their view of the world and reality, and their development. This can manifest itself in a range of ways such as the child becoming depressed, isolating him/her self, misusing substances, refusing school, self-harming, developing eating disorders, becoming promiscuous or having relationship difficulties. The long-term effects of CSA have been correlated with higher levels of depression, guilt, shame, eating disorders, somatic concerns, anxiety, dissociative patterns, repression, denial, sexual problems, and relationship problems, addiction and mental health issues in adult life.

CARI aims to be there from beginning

CARI aims to be with the child and family every step of this difficult journey from disclosure and forensic examination through each milestone and every difficult event where our advice or support via our helpline or Crisis appointment, or through accompaniment to forensic exam can help reduce the traumatic impact of these journeys through therapy and court. CARI has noted it can take five years on average from the event to court.

CARI's therapy model and the wider debate on therapeutic support

Recent research confirms that Outcomes in general for children who have been sexually abused are more optimistic for those who have parental support (Everson, Hunter, Runyon, Edelsohn, & Coulter, 1989; Trickett, 1997). Other researchers have found support for concurrent intervention with abused children and their non-abusing parents, in groups or individual sessions, with concurrent parent-child sessions (Cohen, Deblinger, Mannarino, & Steer, 2004; Putnam, 2003; Ramchandani & Jones, 2003; Reeker et al., 1997).

It is strongly recommended that any adult person commencing therapy should have at least one supportive ally for the best outcomes and to enable



them to stay with a process that will revisit trauma and will often seem worse before it is better. In the case of a child the adult supportive role needs to be able to hold the child between sessions and to do so needs to have their own questions answered and be helped to play this role. We aim to continue to offer this model that we have developed over the years and to use objective measurement tools to prove its efficacy. We will remain open to developing research on this topic and will continue to ensure our managers and therapist remain abreast of latest research and findings.

2016 saw significant increase in therapy and accompaniment output

While the strategic reviewing took place in the background the frontline work increased apace and there was marked growth in output in therapy services and in accompaniments provided. There was a 20% increase in therapy appointments offered. Accompaniments increased despite the closure of CASATS Galway for a period early in the year due to funding issues but was compensated for by the opening of a new service accompanying children under 14 presenting for forensic examination at the Sexual Assault and Treatment Unit at the Rotunda in Dublin.

The increase and diversification in the accompaniment work load was supported by a major re-structuring in CARI and led to the appointment of a management level post and two additional assistant team leaders.

Interagency Working

In 2016 CARI continued to attend the National, Western and Dublin North Regional Steering group meetings. CARI, along with the Assessment units in the two Dublin Children's Hospitals continued to campaign for increased protection for children's counselling notes and were successful in getting some amendments included in legislation but these protections fell far short of the full privilege which we sought. CARI serves on the Executive of NOTA (National Organisation for the Treatment of Abusers) and attends a Clinical Issues Discussion Group with other NGOs in the field of sexual abuse prevention and treatment and CARI is a member of the AACI (Association of Agency Based Counselling Services in Ireland) and inputs relevant data into that association's central database.

Chairman's thanks to CEO and Incoming and outgoing Board members

Long serving Board member Mr Richard Treacy finally resigned from the Board of CARI after serving over twenty years and having relinquished the Chair the year before. CARI addressed finally the gender imbalance on the board and in 2016 welcomed a third female Board member and Clinical Psychologist Ms Isolde Blau. Mr Colm O Brian resigned from the board to concentrate on his new business and the Chairman publicly here records his thanks to each and every member of the Board for their voluntary commitment and support.

CEO and Staff team at heart of CARI's achievements.

The Chairman also puts on record his thanks to the CEO Mary Flaherty for the steady hand on the tiller of CARI and she in turn acknowledges the commitment and contribution of staff, CE trainees and volunteers in delivering the range of CARI services.

Inspiration

Finally, we wish to acknowledge the child clients of CARI and the inspirations they provide to us. Their resilience in the face of their difficulties continues to inspire us to work with them to heal lives affected but not destroyed by the traumatic impact of CSA. We were honoured to work with over 125 children in 2016 and continue to campaign for more timely services for those who wait far too long for the therapeutic support they have sought.

Mr Noel Hughes, Chairman.

Ms Mary Flaherty, CEO



The Road to Recovery, our work in 2016

Introduction

CARI stands in a unique position on a child's road to recovery from child sexual abuse. Our clinical services place us alongside children and their families at the very beginning of their journey and throughout.

Our National Helpline is often the first port of call for families who have discovered that their child may have been sexually abused. It is here that parents, caregivers and professionals can seek advice and guidance around the process of therapeutic intervention. In addition, it is also where people can find a non-judgemental empathic listening space for the worries and concerns that come with this trauma.

One of the first processes that some children who disclose sexual abuse go through is to receive a forensic examination. CARI provides 24 hours on-call forensic accompaniment at both the Galway CASATS (children aged 14 and under) and Rotunda SATU (children aged 15 and under). Here children and families will be met with one of our fully trained volunteers who will accompany them for the time that they are at the unit and then link them into our forensic aftercare service. Our aftercare service will continue to provide emotional support to families who need it after the examination is over.

Our therapy service provides therapy to children aged 18 and under who have been affected by sexual abuse. We also provide therapy for children aged 12 and under who present with sexualised behaviour. Our therapy is client led and therefore will last for as long as the child needs it. We work in tandem with parents and caregivers as we believe that the family system needs help and support to recover from child sexual abuse.

For some children, the abuse that they suffer will be investigated and eventually prosecuted within the Irish Criminal Justice System. CARI provide the only child dedicated court accompaniment service for children who will eventually give State evidence for the crimes committed against them. We are very privileged to be able to provide such a consistent and continued support for children throughout their vital road to recovery.

Our clinical work in 2016

2016 saw CARI support a total of 239 children and 472 adults across its Therapy and Child Accompaniment Support Service. CARI made and received 3326 in calls throughout our clinical services. Our Court and Forensic Accompaniment had 193 accompaniments and our therapy service provided 115 Advice Appointments to adults in need of immediate support in both Dublin and Limerick.

Our Helpline work tells us that the initial reach out for help when child sexual abuse occurs is from mothers. We know first-hand that different family members react differently to the news that their loved one may have been hurt in this way. We would encourage all family members to reach out during what can be a very difficult time to seek the right support. The road to recovery can be a difficult one to navigate. We know from having to refer nearly half of our helpline callers back to our helpline that many people benefit from continued support and guidance at the beginning stages.

In 2016, we had an additional 20% of families availing of our aftercare support through our forensic accompaniment service. Receiving a forensic examination and having families linked in with the appropriate supports early helps many families begin their healing process. Most children that CARI accompanied at the CASATS unit in 2016 were aged between 3 and 12. This is the only 24 hours, dedicated service of its kind in Ireland that can address the forensic needs of children so young. Despite uncertainty for the continued sustainability of the CASATS unit in the earlier part of this year CARI were delighted to see developments led to a secure standing for this vital service. Children who are victims of sexual violence are entitled, and should have access to the same forensic, medical and psychological support that their adult counterparts currently have access to.

With 31% of all families that CARI provided forensic accompaniment for in 2016 coming from the Galway region, it is clear that when a service of this kind is accessible to children and families, it is availed of. We are also very proud to be able to further expand our accompaniment and aftercare service for children aged 15 and under who attend the adult SATU at the



Rotunda Hospital. This will ensure that children will receive continued support after their forensic exam into the appropriate support service for their age.

The forensic exam can also act as the beginning of criminal proceedings for some families. In 2016 our court accompaniment service provided support for 252 children and families through the Criminal Justice System. Our court accompaniment has grown from strength to strength throughout the years, with this being our busiest year ever. This is due to increased referrals from relevant stakeholders, State bodies and other victim support agencies, as well as increased support from the Commission for Victims of Crime. We would like to thank all of those who have linked child witnesses in with us. We continue to work tirelessly to inform the right people about our service so that children are linked in and supported.

The criminal trial can be a very difficult space to negotiate both emotionally and practically. This is particularly so in cases where the defendant is a family member, which was the case with 50% of the children we supported this year. The decisions that are made from a criminal trial have long lasting effects across the board. Where both victim and defendant are from the one family it is even more so the case. Meeting the needs of children during this difficult and sometimes conflicting time, requires our staff to have full and comprehensive training of the dynamics of child sexual abuse and its effects on the whole family system.

The core driving force through all our work is the belief that it's not just the child, but the family system that needs healing when a child becomes a victim of sexual abuse. Our therapy department made available over 2,500 appointments for children and families this year. This is a 43% increase on last year. A distinguishing element to providing therapy and support to children is that no child can be supported in isolation. Our therapeutic model is set up so that whilst our child client is in his or her therapy session, their parents/caregivers receive their own parental support session. Working in this parallel way allows for the family to heal. In 2016 CARI gave 886 therapy sessions to our child clients and 868 parental support sessions to our client's families.

CARI is the only support service in Ireland that provides services to children and their families at the beginning and all the way through to the end of criminal proceedings. This unique position allowed us to gather statistics that tell us that this journey takes on average 5 years from between the crime taking place to the end of the criminal proceedings.

It is our view that a 5-year time span out of a child's life is too long. This excessive amount of time can lead to the secondary victimisation of our already extremely vulnerable.

Work with external bodies

The Garda Síochána Inspectorate

In addition to our direct clinical work with our clients we also were in an important position to feed back our experience to Government and relevant oversight bodies. In 2012, the Garda Inspectorate published a report titled 'Responding to Child Sexual Abuse'.

This report was directed by the then Minister for Justice and Law Reform, Mr Dermot Ahern, as a result of the publication of the Commission of Investigation – Report into the Catholic Archdiocese of Dublin July 2009. This report had found clear indications of failings on the part of the Garda Síochána in certain historical child sexual abuse cases.

The Garda Síochána Inspectorate was directed to conduct a comprehensive review of police practices for handling these very sensitive and important cases to ensure future occurrences did not happen.

As part of its review the Garda Síochána Inspectorate met with statutory and non-statutory bodies that interact with An Garda Síochána in relation to child sexual abuse, CARI was one such body. As part of the Garda Inspectorates follow up on its 2012 report it met with CARI again this year for feedback, we were delighted to once more be invited to speak on behalf of our clients and their experiences within the Criminal Justice System.

Victims' Rights Alliance

We were delighted to be able to continue our involvement with The Victims' Rights Alliance this year. The VRA is an alliance of victim support and human rights organisations whose aim is to ensure the Victims' Rights Directive is implemented in Ireland within the proposed time frame, with all victims of crime in mind. CARI continues to work with the VRA and its members to ensure that children, who are automatically protected as vulnerable under the EU Directive, continue to be represented in the Directive's transposition.

Visit to the Rowan Centre

It is essential that CARI continue to strive toward best practice in its work with children. We were honoured to be part of a multi-agency visit to the Rowan Centre, which is situated in Antrim, Northern Ireland. The Rowan is the regional Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) for Northern Ireland. This centre delivers a range of support and services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to children, young people, women and men who have suffered from sexual abuse, assault or rape. Services include forensic medical examinations by a special trained doctor and other medical support appropriate to the needs of a victim, emotional

support which includes support in making a report to the Police as well as a referral on to counselling and/or other appropriate support services available to victims.

To be able to house the medical and emotional needs of children, young people and adults alike successfully in the one location is a huge step in the right direction when responding to the needs of victims of sexual violence.

Eve Farrelly

CARI 2016 Annual Report coordinator





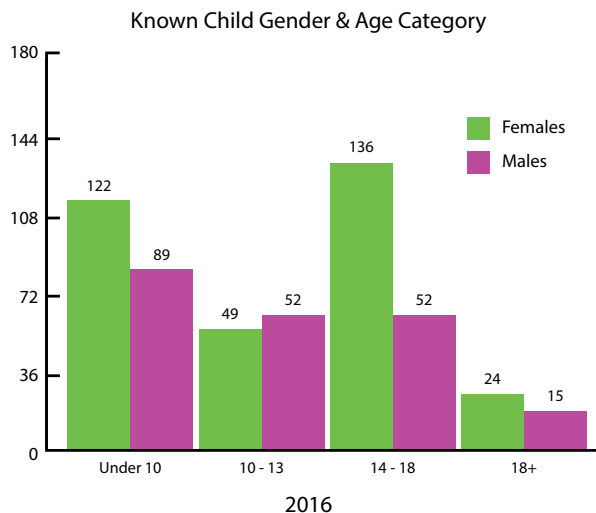
The CARI Helpline is a specialised, confidential, national service delivered to provide information and advice to individuals and professionals with a concern about child sexual abuse or sexualised behaviour. The line is open from Monday – Friday 9.30 – 5.30. From disclosure to support, our Helpline is often the first point of contact for many parents and professionals; some looking for practical advice and others looking to be listened to on a deeper level. This can be where the Helpline acts as a support but also as a gateway to the many services in CARI.

Helpline statistics for 2016

Known Child Gender and Age

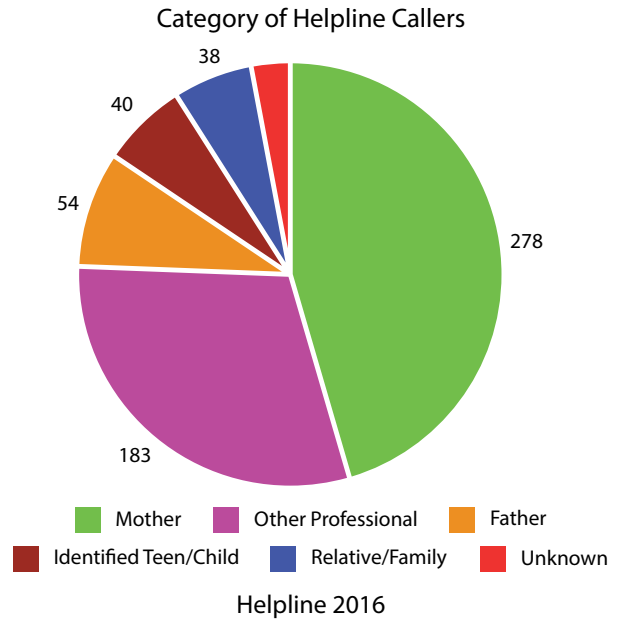
CARI Helpline took calls from people presenting with concerns. Our calls came from 331 females and 208 males. Our statistics show the following gender and age cohorts who are at higher risk:

- Females under 10
- Females 14 – 18
- Females 18+
- Males 10 – 13



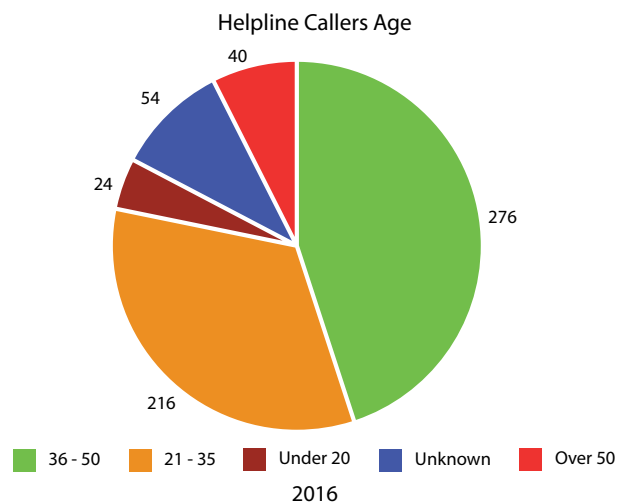
Categories of Helpline Callers

It is interesting to note from the pie chart below that 54 calls to our service were made by fathers in comparison to the 278 calls made by Mothers. Mothers seem more likely to seek out services for their children who have experienced both intrafamilial and extrafamilial abuse. This is followed closely by other professionals including social workers, counsellors, teachers and principals. CARI Helpline also took 40 calls from identified teens attempting to access support for themselves.



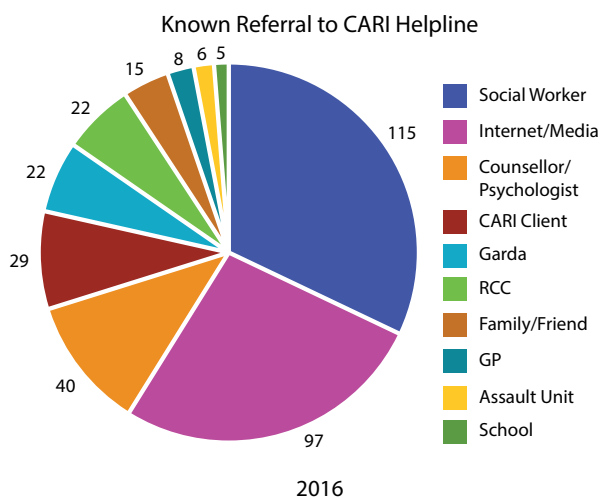
Age of Helpline Callers

The below pie chart shows that 276 callers to our Helpline fell within the age category of 36 – 50 years of age while 216 callers fell within the 21 – 35 age category.



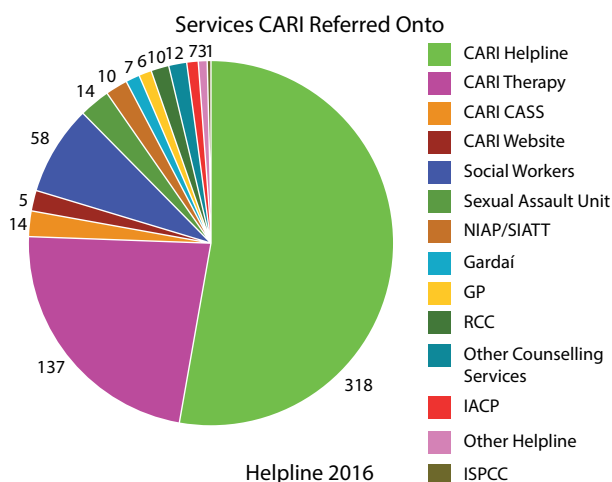
Referrals to the Helpline

The breakdown of referrals to the Helpline show that the efforts put into interagency communication is working effectively. Social Workers, An Garda Síochána, and other counselling/psychological services working together show how the child protection community is appropriately referring children and families to our service, as and when appropriate.



Referrals made by the Helpline

The below chart shows where callers to our Helpline were referred onto in 2016. Of all calls made, 318 were referred back to our Helpline. This is indicative of over half our callers needing more than one telephone support to address the issue of Child Sexual Abuse and sexualised behaviour within their families. Of the 137 calls that were forwarded onto our therapy department, some consisted of therapy referrals and others were to provide crisis appointments. In addition, our internal referral system saw a number of callers to our Helpline go on to be supported by our Child Accompaniment Support Service.



Helpline as a gateway

CARI Helpline has always been the gateway through which clients can access CARI services. In addition, it is also an informative space where clients can be directed towards other statutory/ non-statutory services.

Our Helpline operators give confidential access to support, information and advice for families, professionals and anyone affected by child sexual abuse. A disclosure of abuse can have far reaching effects for the individual, their extended family, the wider community and the multi-disciplinary team of professionals steering them on their path to recovery. Our operators are often the first person that callers have shared their trauma with.

Helpline operators also support adults coming to terms with their own experiences in their childhood. This call is potentially the first time that someone will talk about their own past experiences and how they feel about it. The Helpline operator will hold them in the space until they are ready to receive the information for the next step on their path to recovery.

Helpline meeting the needs of its callers

One of the primary roles of the operator is to guide the caller towards the correct services available to them. This is an important resource for parents. By explaining the role of other services, we can answer or address any fears or worries that a person may have around accessing support. So, the operator must have an advanced knowledge of other child protection services and the role these services play.

Helpline understanding the obstacles to accessing support

Shock can play a significant role in how a parent hears a child's story. Accessing support for families at this early stage is extremely important. Our Helpline has identified some factors/obstacles that may affect how a child and their family deals with a disclosure. Some examples include;

- A family history of abuse
- Parental fear of thinking they will lose control to the relevant authorities, for example, "the social worker will take my child away"
- The child's story is told in a fractured way and does not at first make sense to the person hearing it

- A fear of family breakdown
- The child after telling sees the impact on the family and retracts their story.
- Fear of people knowing what happened
- Fear that telling will only make it worse

The Helpline operator's biggest task is to understand that these concerns are very significant for the callers to our service. A parent may need to make more than one phone call to the Helpline to try and make sense of the information they have, alongside the obstacles they may face.

Two examples of calls to our Helpline in 2016

Below are two examples of calls that our Helpline supported in 2016. These cases are anonymised, however they represent some of the common concerns that people have raised with us.

Father who raised concerns about his child in his partners home:

David who is the father of a 10-year-old girl rang our Helpline very upset. David explained that his ex-wife was accusing his step son of abusing his daughter and he doesn't believe it happened. He stated that it's tearing his family apart and is impacting on his new relationship with his current partner. He believes his ex-wife is jealous and doing this maliciously.

In the telling of his story David described his 10yr old daughter as intelligent and beautiful. She stays with him and his new family every second weekend and during holiday breaks. He did, however, explain that she has begun to have nightmares and is refusing to go to school some days. This behaviour, David describes, as being very out of character.

David continued to phone our Helpline over a period of four weeks. His ex-wife was also supported on the Helpline. She had linked in with the social work department and their daughter is awaiting an assessment.

This process took over 4 weeks from David's initial call to his last; however, at the time of referral for assessment David still struggled to believe that his daughter had been sexually abused. His obstacle had been the break down in relationship between him and his ex-wife.

Foster Care Social Worker seeking therapeutic intervention for sexualised behaviour:

Ann who is a foster care social worker, based in Dublin, rang regarding two children aged 7 and 8 that were in foster care at the time of the call. Both children had disclosed sexual abuse at the hands of their maternal grandfather. Their assessment was found to be inconclusive as the children were unable to clarify their experiences. Both children were attending the same local school.

Ann explained that at the time of the call another student in the boy's class disclosed to the school teacher that the young boy had encouraged him and other children in the class to play 'the sex game' and he was confused by this. The teacher informed the foster parents who explained that they had also seen him displaying sexualised behaviours but did not realise he would do this outside of the home. When Ann was told about this she called the Helpline looking for some clarification around behaviours and hoping to receive therapy for the children.

Ann went on to explain that we had a very long waiting list and she was concerned that these children who had been through so much in their short life needed an immediate response. CARI was unable to provide an immediate therapeutic intervention for the children however we set up a space for the foster parents to attend for an advice appointment to help them manage the current behaviours of the children. Due to the waiting list Ann did not refer them for therapy.

The obstacle to this foster family was the CARI waiting list which has increased due to funding and cutbacks. This means that often children do not get the recommended urgent response that they need.



Quote from a caller to our helpline, October 2016

'I made a call to your helpline to ask a question about part of a process that I am going through. It was not an easy question, and the answer was less easy. It was answered in a calm, matter of fact, non-judgement, gentle, reassuring way, for which I was grateful for at the time and still am.'

I am still on this journey but wanted to let you know, I very much appreciated your time that day, thank you.'



Forensic Accompaniment in the Child and Adolescent Sexual Assault Treatment Service (CASATS) - Galway

CASATS (Child & Adolescent Sexual Assault Treatment Service) provides an integrated forensic medical service for children and their families/ carers involved. This service addresses the forensic needs of children, male and female, from 14 years and under, who are victims of rape, sexual assault or suspected child sexual abuse.

Since 2014 CARI volunteers have provided accompaniment to children and their families who attend the CASATS forensic unit. This is done through a 24-hour rota throughout the whole year. In addition to our on-site accompaniment service we also offer and provide aftercare support to any adult involved in supporting a child through the CASATS process. This service aims to support the parents/carers after their child has attended a forensic examination. This is a client led service and as such lasts for as long, or as short, as the family needs.

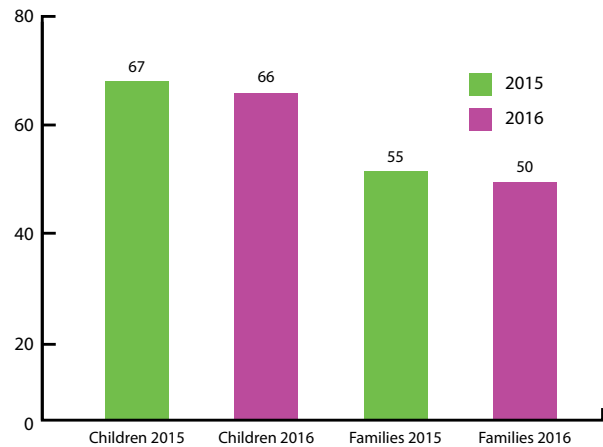
Children and families supported

In 2016 an average of 6 children attended the unit per month; consistent with 2015 statistics. In addition, 84% of adults who were supporting children through the process availed of the CARI aftercare support; this is a 20% increase from 2015.

In 2016, CARI supported a total of 66 children during their forensic examination in the CASATS unit in Galway. All the children were supported and accompanied by a CASS Forensic Accompaniment Officer through their time at the unit.

The graph below demonstrates a comparison between 2015 and 2016 figures of children and families who attended the CASATS unit in Galway. There was a slight reduction in figures observed in comparison to 2015. This may be due to the temporary closures experienced by the unit in early January 2016 and again in March; thus, the 2016 statistics reflect approximately 11 months, not a full year.

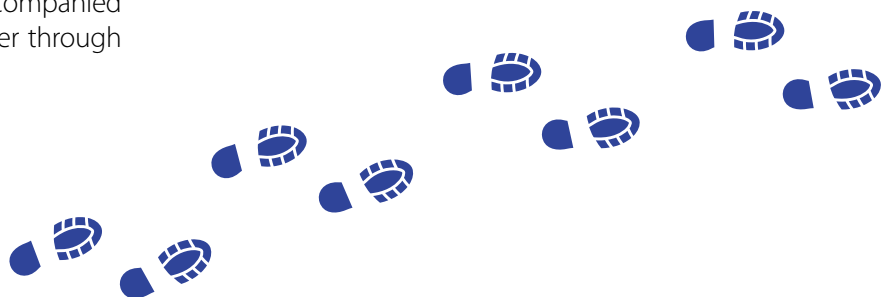
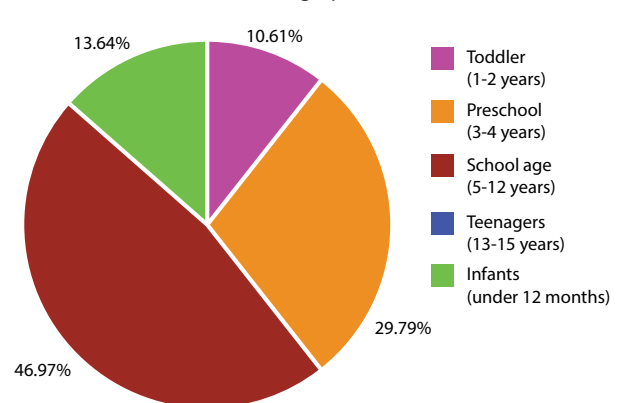
Children & Families Supported in CASATS Galway 2015 and 2016



Age Range of Children Who Received a Forensic Exam

The pie chart below demonstrates, in 2016, that 47% of school aged children (5-12 years) were the most frequent group to attend for a forensic examination. Notably, of this 47% most of those children were aged 7. Children of preschool age (3-4 years) made up 29% of children attended. These demographic statistics are reflective of those reported in 2015 suggesting a continued trend.

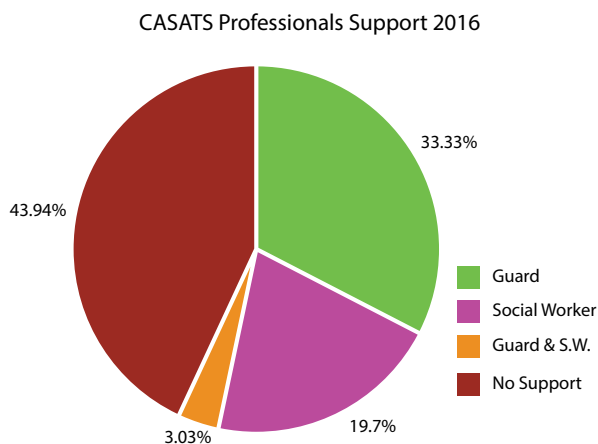
CASATS Unit - Demographic of Clients 2016



Age Range	Number
Infant (Under 12 months)	0
Toddler (1-2 years)	7
Preschool (3-4 years)	19
School age (5-12 years)	31
Teenagers (13-15 year)	9
Total	66

Professional Support in attendance with the families to the CASATS

The pie chart below represents professionals who accompanied families during the forensic examination. An Garda Síochána and Tusla Social Workers have consistently been the two class of professionals who accompany the family to the unit and sometimes both may attend. However, CARI noted that in 2016 there was an increase in families who attended the unit with no professional supports..



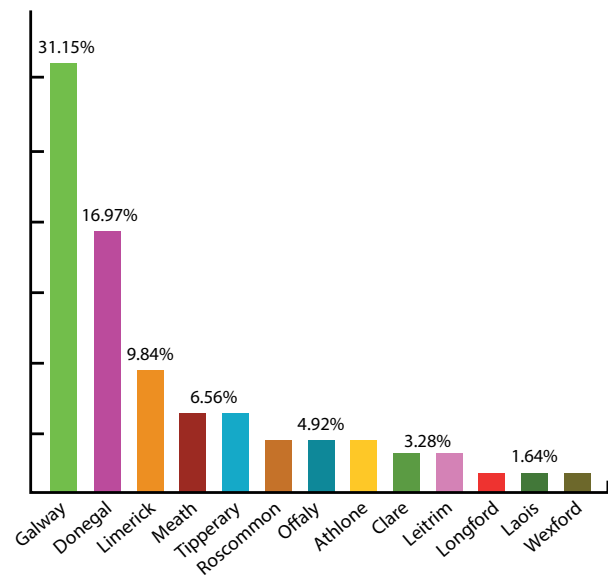
In most cases children will have already been in contact with other professionals; such as, An Garda Síochána, Tusla, Care Support Workers or G.P's. CARI recorded that around 44% of families who attended the forensic unit in 2016, arrived alone, with no other professional. CARI and CASATS recognise that it is common for non-acute cases, i.e. where forensic sampling is not needed, for a family to come on their own. An Garda Síochána or Tusla Social Workers may not be involved at this stage of the investigation until a purely medical query has been excluded.

When there is an absence of such professionals, CARI's Accompaniment support can be particularly crucial, to assist and support the child and his or her family.

Geographical Location of Clients Who Attended CASATS Unit

Currently the Child and Adolescent Sexual Assault Treatment Service in Galway is the only sexual assault treatment unit in Ireland; providing a 24 hours service for young people aged 14 years and under. Children who are victims of acute or historic sexual assault are referred to the CASATS unit from counties: Galway, Donegal, Limerick, North Tipperary, Meath, West Meath, Roscommon, Offaly, Clare, Leitrim, Laois, Longford, Wexford and Louth. As can be seen from the chart below most of the families who attended the unit were from Galway making up 31.2% of all attendance with Donegal coming second at 19.6%.

Geographical location of clients who attend the CASATS unit in Galway



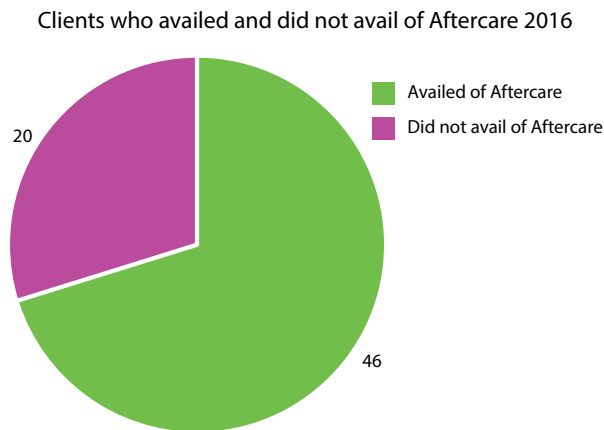
The percentages presented here highlight the importance of having a dedicated service that is accessible for children and their families. These figures suggest when this vital service is available it is utilised by those who need it. It is noted that nearly 20% of children travelled from Donegal to the CASATS unit. Travelling from Donegal to Galway can take as long as 5 hours, adding the journey back on top of it. For those attending the unit, this can compound the stress and trauma they have experienced, highlighting the need for more local services.

CASS Forensic Aftercare Services

CARI's Forensic Aftercare Service is offered to any adult/s involved in supporting a child through the CASATS process. Aftercare phone support is a service

that families can avail of, free of charge, that provides a client led empathic, supportive space. CARI prides itself on a continuously growing unique and extended service; validated by the positive feedback families who have attended the centre have given.

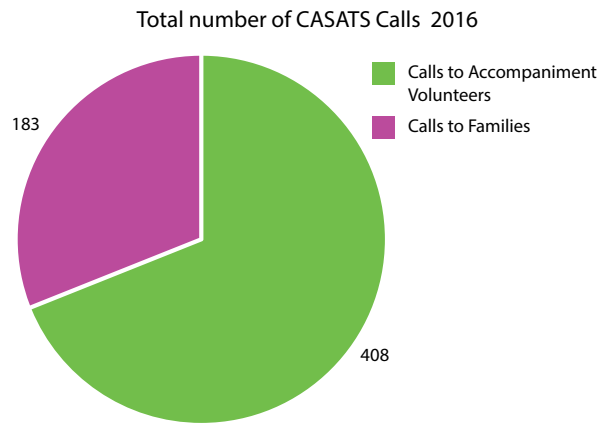
The pie chart below demonstrates the percentage of clients who availed of aftercare. In 2016 there was a 20% increase of families availing of the aftercare services, despite the reduced number of family attendance. This highlights the importance of the multi-disciplinary approach of the forensic examination process; enabling families to have their needs met, forensically and psychologically, with ease.



A care worker's role is to contact the families who wish to avail of the aftercare service and their aim is to support the families of the child. Aftercare support helps families from feeling isolated and permits a space for a parent or carer to clarify any common questions; for example, what they need to do next? or what other supports are available? etc. From our experience of working with families we understand there are some common themes that occur post examination such as anger, sadness, guilt or shame.

Forensic Debrief and Support Calls

The pie chart below demonstrates the total number of volunteer debriefing and aftercare support calls to families. Debriefing calls are a vital process for our volunteer's self-care and work ethic. This debrief process, allows the volunteer to avail of a space to explore their experiences of the accompaniment and any issues or difficulties that they may have encountered. Debriefing also eases a family's transition from the unit into our aftercare.



CASATS temporary closure 2016

CASATS had a turbulent start to 2016, closing for several days in the early New Year until concerns regarding essential Medical Indemnity for the Forensic Physicians were fully clarified. A further closure throughout March arose, until issues ensuring the continuity of a safe, high quality, patient centred and sustainable service was achieved. This brought Child and Adolescent Sexual Assault Treatment Services into a shared governance with the Saolta Acute Hospitals Group as well as Adult SATU services. Measures were taken to ensure safeguarding the immediate health needs for any child and family affected by the closure throughout. The closure of this service highlighted how essential such a service is locally, regionally and nationally to the care of children experiencing child sexual abuse.

Service grows in the Eastern Region with CASS Forensic Accompaniment at the SATU Rotunda Dublin

CARI were delighted to expand their CASS Forensic Accompaniment service to Dublin's Sexual Assault Treatment Unit (SATU) in the Rotunda Hospital. After a detailed recruitment drive and full training CARI now provides a 24hour Accompaniment service to young people aged 15 and under who attend the Unit for a forensic examination who have been harmed by sexual abuse, recently or historically. This service went live in August of this year, which is modelled on the existing work provided to families attending the CASATS unit in Galway, including the aftercare service.

We would like to thank all the staff at the SATU Rotunda and the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre for all their support and help to us in delivering this vital service.

We would also like to thank the Dublin and Galway volunteers who have unselfishly given their time and professional dedication to such a vital and needed role. Our service would not exist without CARI volunteers.

Families who avail of aftercare support have continuously expressed to us their positive experiences of non-judgmental support and kindness that they received from our volunteers.

Funder Thank You

CARI could not do this work without the constant and strong support of the Commission for the

Support of Victims of Crime (CSVC). Their support has allowed us to expand our Child Accompaniment Support Services (CASS).

CARI would also like to thank the Manuela Riedo Foundation Ireland, who has given CARI support since 2014.

Due to the continued support of both the Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime and the Manuela Riedo Foundation Ireland we have been able to continue the service of 24-hour on-site accompaniment, as well as follow on aftercare, in both the CASATS Galway and SATU Rotunda.

Quotes from people supported at the Galway CASATS in 2016

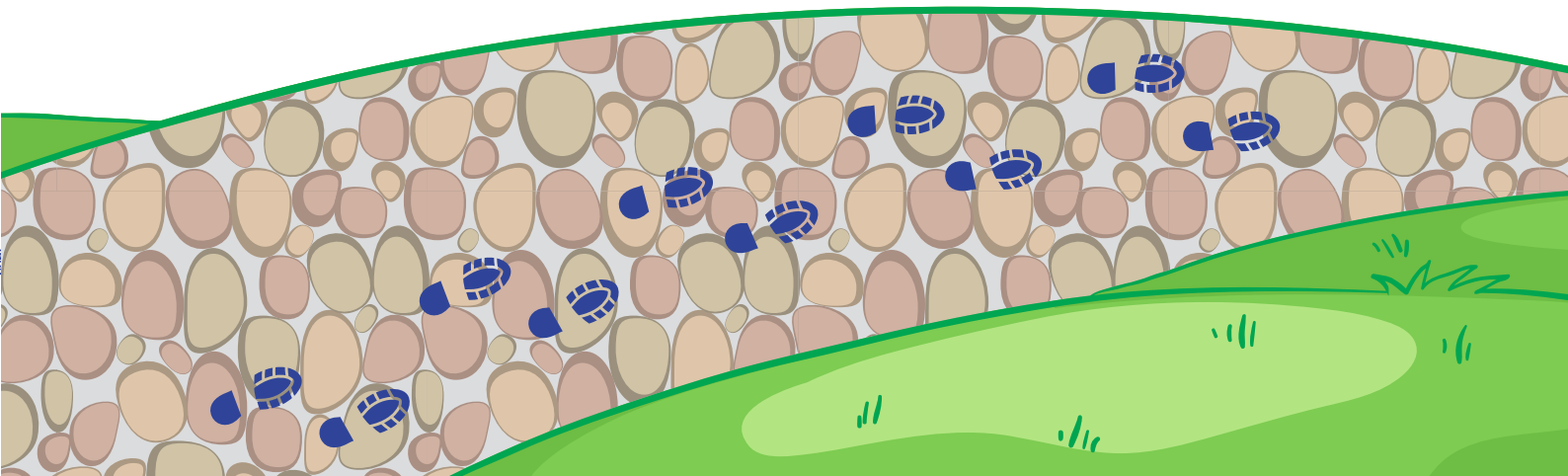


Mothers quote "Initially we didn't know where to go or what to do –you really helped, this is such a vital service"

Fathers quote "Found the Doctors lovely and Philomena, the CARI volunteer was wonderful and very helpful"



Some of our volunteers in Galway and Dublin





Therapeutic work with children who have experienced child sexual abuse is often multifaceted and involves many different aspects and features. Children's therapeutic needs can often be complex due to their trauma history. Children with this level of trauma need a supportive parent or carer in order for them to feel safe enough to process their trauma. CARI provides support and appropriate psycho-educational work to the parents/carers in the child's life.

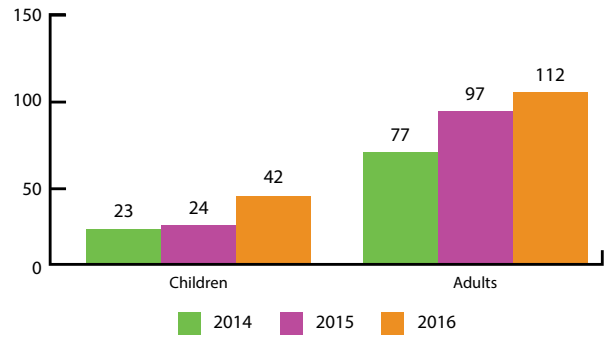
Therapy Statistics 2016

As seen in the across graphs there has been a significant increase in our therapy provided in 2016. The National statistics show over 43.9% of an increase in therapy appointments offered to families over the last three years. Our Dublin centre has seen a 55% increase in their adult appointments whilst our Limerick centre has increased their adult appointments by 45% and substantially increased their children's therapy appointments by 82%.

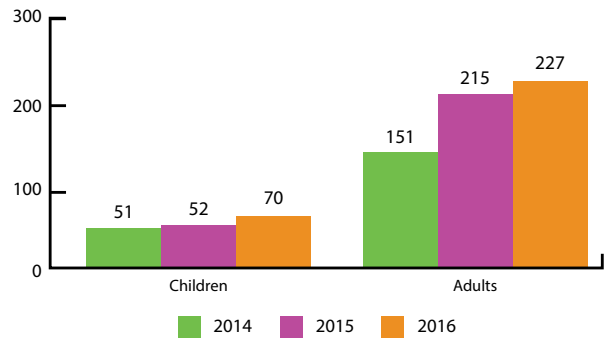
The increase in therapy hours included 422 extra adult appointments. This increase is largely due to additional therapists in both Limerick and Dublin as well as funding from Hedge Fund Ireland enabling two extra therapy days per week in Limerick.

The importance of the 422 extra adult appointments cannot be underestimated. This work is paramount as it enables parents/carers to support the child or children. As the significant adults in the child's life their reactions and responses will impact on the child's recovery. If the significant adults in the child's life are unable to cope, this deprives the child of the critical support they need.

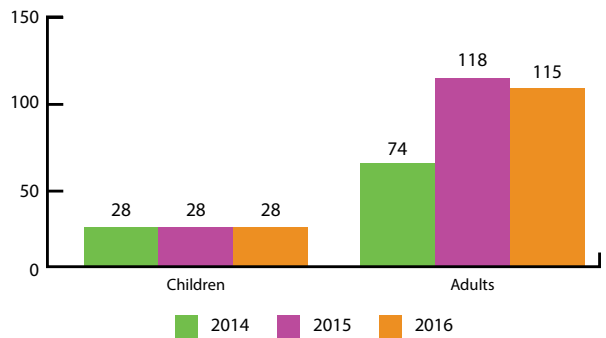
Attendance of Children and Adults in Limerick



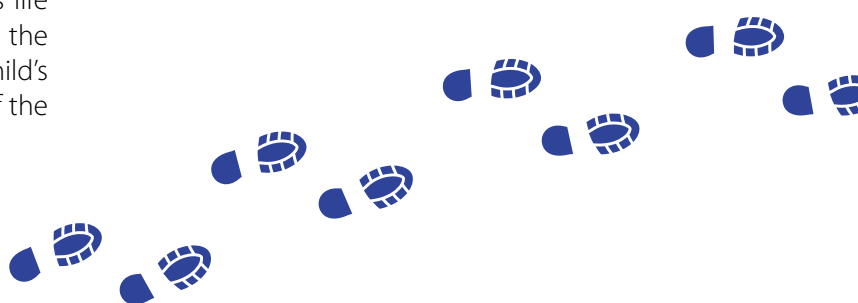
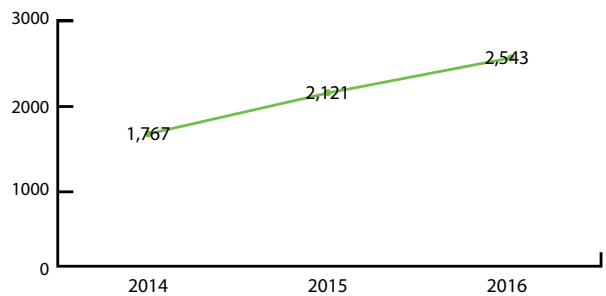
National Children and Adults Attended



Attendance of Children and Adults in Dublin



National Therapy Appointments Offered to Families

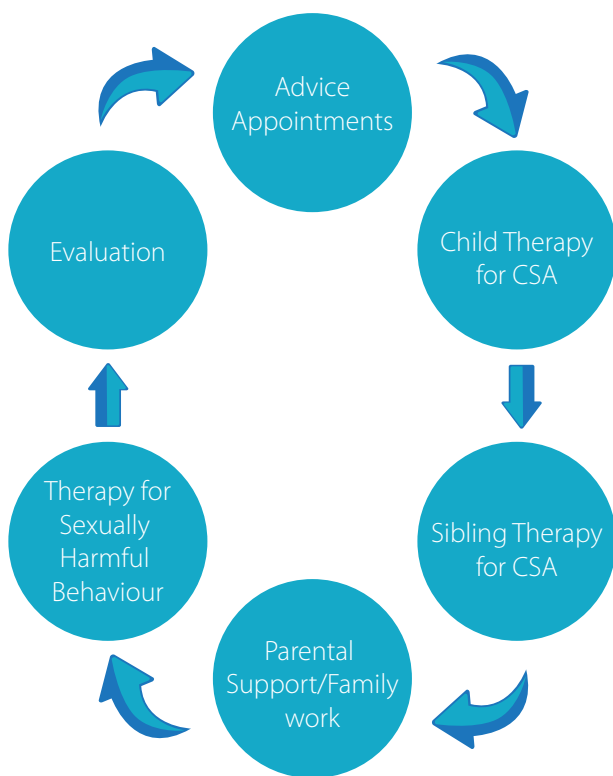


The increase of therapy appointments with children enables them to move forward with their lives. We see from our work that trauma levels reduce when the child and the family are supported. Parents/carers reported significant improvements in the children that attended CARI for therapy, including;



Children have the amazing capacity to recover. Below are the various therapeutic interventions that we provide here at CARI;

What do we do



Advice Appointments

CARI offers initial advice appointments to any person with concerns in relation to child sexual abuse. The purpose of the advice appointments is to provide a space for clients to explore their concerns.

CARI believes that an effective therapeutic response to children and their families cannot be made unless

action has been taken to protect the child/children who have been abused or who are at risk of abuse. These advice appointments are an effective way of supporting parents/carers or concerned adults in crisis.

The aims of advice appointments are:



Therapy for children directly affected by sexual abuse

CARI provides child centred therapy for children and adolescents who have been affected by sexual abuse. Therapeutic intervention may take place in a variety of ways, depending on the needs of the child and family. These interventions may include: individual work with the child, individual work with the parent/carer, dyad/triad or family sessions. Each case is worked with individually and the most suitable approach for that child is used. The primary role of therapy is to provide a safe environment in which healing from trauma can be facilitated. The developmental needs of the child are always considered and the intervention is developed using age-appropriate language and activities. Therapy with children is facilitated using a variety of mediums, e.g. talk, play, art, drama and sand play. In the safety of the therapy sessions, these mediums allow the child to symbolically express some of their fears and feelings about the abuse they have experienced. It enables them to process and make sense of the abusive experiences.

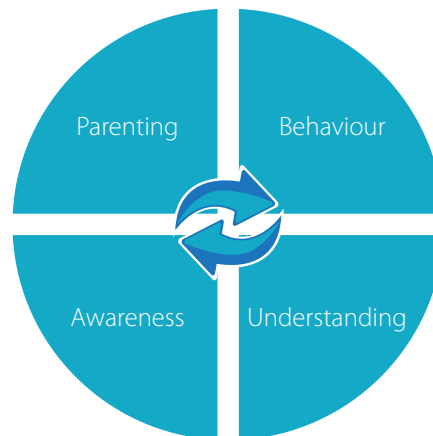
Siblings affected by sexual abuse

Work with siblings focuses on how the disruption of family life has impacted upon them and their family. Parents often try to protect siblings from knowledge of the abuse. However, these children are often very aware of the changes that the abuse has brought about in their family, e.g. behavioural difficulties in brothers or sisters, parental distress, parental conflict and sometimes separation. They need explanations, appropriate to their age and understanding, for these changes. Without these explanations children will come to misunderstandings often born out of confusion, mixed messages and self-blame. Therapeutic work with siblings allows them the opportunity to express their feelings and to sort out some of the confusion they have experienced. If the perpetrator of the abuse is a family member or someone close and trusted, children need the opportunity to re-assess this relationship. How it has been lost or changed, recognising possible ongoing bonds and the need to be kept safe. In some cases support for siblings is delivered by the parents, with the parents being supported by CARI, in other cases, the parents may not be able to take on this role. When parents are not in a position to adopt this role, a decision will be made as to whether CARI should provide direct therapeutic support to the siblings.

Therapeutic support for parents/ carers

CARI works with the non-abusing parents and carers of a child referred to our service. Work with parents/ carers focuses on how to best support and protect the child who has been sexually abused and their siblings. Parents/carers can find themselves in an incredibly difficult situation. Learning that a child may have been sexually abused can be devastating. Learning who has abused the child can also be overwhelming. It may be a member of the family or someone close to the family which can cause conflicting loyalties. Parents/carers need to ask questions, express their fears, worries and feelings and explore myths and realities around child sexual abuse in order to lessen their bewilderment and make the trauma to their child and family somewhat more manageable.

The work with parents/carers involves exploring:



Parenting

- Positive parenting
- Setting positive boundaries on behaviour

Behaviour

- Exploring difficult behaviour
- Managing behaviour that may increase since disclosure

Awareness

- Exploring responses to disclosures
- Promoting ways of protecting children

Understanding

- Understanding the child's experience
- Exploring empathy and reassurance

Parents/carers may need the opportunity to explore their own issues and feelings in terms of how this impacts upon their relationship with the child/children. They may experience feelings of grief, self-blame, horror, anger, injustice, disgust, guilt and betrayal. They may need space to explore their own experiences with the alleged offender. Parents/carers may need to explore the changes brought about in their own life by this abuse. Parents are sometimes unable to support or respond to their children because of their own history of victimization. Parents who have their own experience of CSA often need huge support to respond appropriately to their children. Their own experiences of CSA may leave them disempowered.

and frozen and they may be unable to see their child because of their own history. They may have personal issues from their own childhood experiences, addiction, marital discord, separation, relationship difficulties all of which may impact on the child. Where appropriate CARI may refer adult clients to other specialist services, such as addiction treatment centres, eating disorder clinics, relationship counselling, adult abuse centres, etc. While it is essential that parents/carers are a stable support for their child it is equally important that parents/carers receive strong support for themselves.

In the cases where a child is living within a residential setting, it is important that the needs of the residential support network are addressed through ongoing consultation or supervision.

While CARI sees the child as the primary client of our work, we believe that it is important to work with the child's family, parents/carers and siblings in order to effect any real change for the child. CARI will involve, where appropriate, extended family members who are in a position to assist in the child's recovery either by directly supporting a child or as a supportive ally to a parent/carer. If a child is in the care of Tusla, CARI will work with the foster parents, residential care staff and social workers responsible for the child. In some cases, we provide therapeutic support to the parent even if their child is unable to attend our service. CARI views the child as the primary client; thus the focus of the work with parents remains concentrated on the care of the child.

Family work

The impact of child sexual abuse goes beyond the victim affecting everyone who lives with and cares for the child. Family members will react differently, some may be supportive, protective and understanding and others may be angry, distant or pretend nothing has happened. The occurrence of abuse and its subsequent discovery have a significant effect upon the dynamics of the relationships within the family. Children must cope with, and adapt to, a period of possible chaos and turmoil as part of a family system. Individual therapy with a child who has experienced child sexual abuse needs to also respond to the family. The family system as well as the therapeutic approach may need to shift and adapt according to the various needs presented in a unique and individualised way.

Many of the children CARI work with have complicated trauma and have experienced victimization in other ways including neglect, physical and emotional abuse. The work involves addressing these issues before it is safe enough for a child to address the issues of CSA. Sometimes the families are extremely vulnerable and the work often begins with parents before seeing the child. Unless we respond to the child's network then it will never be safe enough for the child to do therapy. The work with parents is imperative and the work with the family system is vital so that issues in relation to the CSA can be addressed.

Our experience in CARI is that individual therapy doesn't respond from a systems perspective and the complexity of many of these cases needs the therapy to adapt to the needs of the child and family in order for effective change to happen for the child.

Children who exhibit sexually harmful behaviour

CARI works with children who exhibit sexually harmful behaviour up to and including 12-year olds. Children who exhibit these behaviours must not be confused with adults who sexually offend. Most children who exhibit sexually harmful behaviour are acting out their hurt and angry feelings in an inappropriate and chaotic way.

Contraindications to therapy

In some cases, it may be decided that therapy is not appropriate at that time and may not be in the best interests of the child. The following are some of the reasons that therapy may not be appropriate:

- The child is at ongoing risk of sexual, physical or emotional abuse.
- Ongoing contact with alleged offender.
- Ongoing Garda investigation and the authorities advise against the child attending.
- There is a lack of commitment to engaging and/or attending by the parent(s)/carer(s).
- There is active alcohol or substance abuse within the family.

- There are active serious mental health issues for the primary carer(s).
- There is serious instability in family circumstances e.g. homelessness, the child is running away, frequent changes with care placements.
- The child does not want to attend.
- There is serious conflict between the parent(s)/ carer(s).
- The child does not have a supportive ally outside of therapy.

Source of Referrals

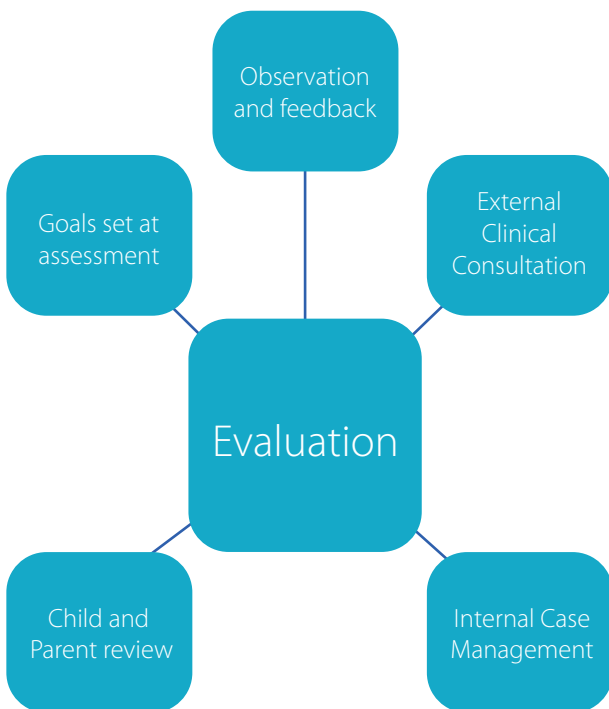
- Parents
- Social workers/Voluntary agencies
- General practitioners/Nurses/Hospitals/ Public Health Nurses
- An Garda Síochána/Legal profession
- Teachers
- Psychologists, Counsellors, Psychotherapists

Referrals to CARI

Any professional with concerns regarding children who may have been affected by sexual abuse, have sexually harmful behaviours may refer the family to CARI to further explore and respond to the situation.

Evaluation

The effectiveness of the therapeutic intervention is evaluated on an ongoing basis by:



Evaluating Referrals

When a referral is made in relation to a child, we complete a therapeutic assessment to explore whether therapy is appropriate at this time. A therapist meets with parents/carers to gather information to complete our intake process. The decision is then made as to whether therapy is suitable for the child at this stage, or if a different intervention is more suitable. Therapy cannot provide a protective function; protection must always come before therapy. It may be necessary to defer work with the child until it is considered safe enough for the therapy to begin. This may involve waiting for child protective measures to be implemented or living arrangements to be stabilised.

Quotes from our Therapeutic Clients



"From my first appointment, there was a light at the end of the tunnel".

"Before CARI I felt nobody knew how to help us"

"You've helped our lives"

"I will never forget your support and being told to trust my instinct"

"Because of CARI I know this time in their life won't define them in the future and I can hope they will grow up to be two happy and well-rounded adults thanks to the invaluable support we received from our special friends in CARI"

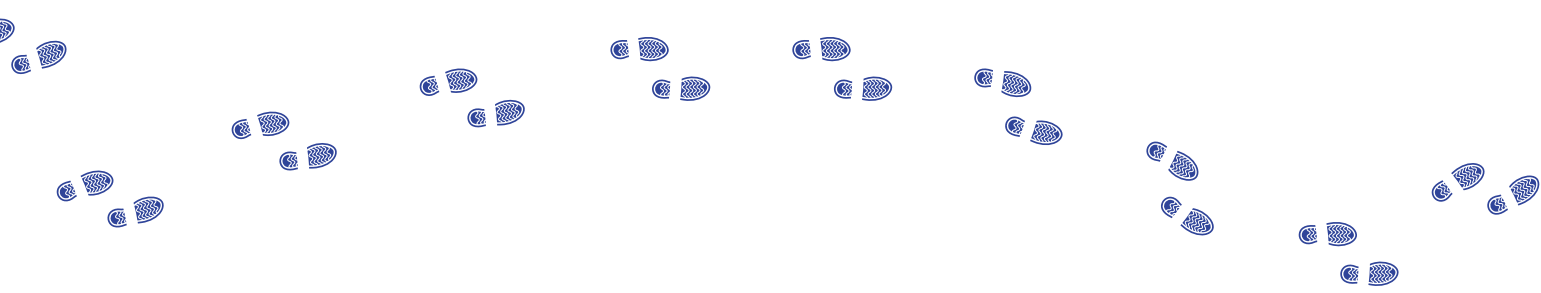
"CARI has been a great help to all our family and we really appreciate their help and support".

"Thank you all so very much for all the time and effort you have invested in us as a family".

"Thank you CARI for helping me"

Conclusion

Therapeutic services for children suffering child sexual abuse remains hugely under resourced and this puts significant demand on our service as a result. CARI covers a wide geographical area and families are travelling long distances for the service. This is not sustainable for families and causes huge disruption in the family life. CARI provided an outreach service to Cork (2 days, 2 therapists), Galway (1 day, 2 therapists) and Tralee (1 day, 2 therapists) but had to close these services because of lack of funding. At the time of closure, these services had long waiting lists despite increasing the therapy hours offered.





Our Court Accompaniment service has three main elements that provides support for children and their families/carers.

Pre-trial preparation

Pre-trial preparation is the first strand of our court support service. Going to court can be a very stressful time for a child and their families. In our experience, some of these anxieties can be relieved through a visit to the court house. Not knowing what to expect can cause a lot of anxiety. Our pre-trial meeting is very beneficial to our clients as it includes a visit to the courthouse where their trial will be held. A tour around the victim support area, including the video link room where the child will give their evidence and a visit to an empty courtroom, is done at this stage. All of this allows families to put a frame around their upcoming trial. Clients can also meet their accompaniment officer, giving the young person space to ask questions and have more control over their experience.

Trial accompaniment

Trial accompaniment is the second strand of our court support service. The child and their support network are accompanied throughout the trial. We provide emotional and practical support as well as explaining legal terminology and processes to them; staying with and facilitating them in what they may need for the duration of the trial.

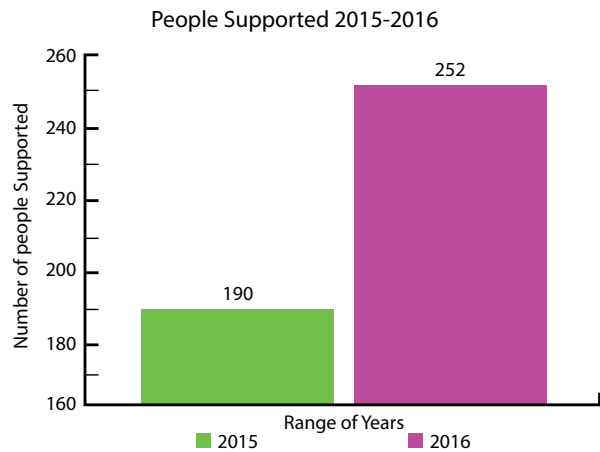
Post-trial support

We also provide post- trial support where needed. This differs from family to family as some have waited a considerable length of time to come to court. When the legal process is over some families may wish to close the door on this episode of their life. Sometimes we find that the court process can bring up some emotional trauma for clients as it may be the first time they have spoken about their

experience. We would make sure they are linked in to appropriate services that can provide ongoing support. We would stay linked in with all relevant professionals, such as, An Garda Síochána, social workers, psychologists and therapists.

People Supported

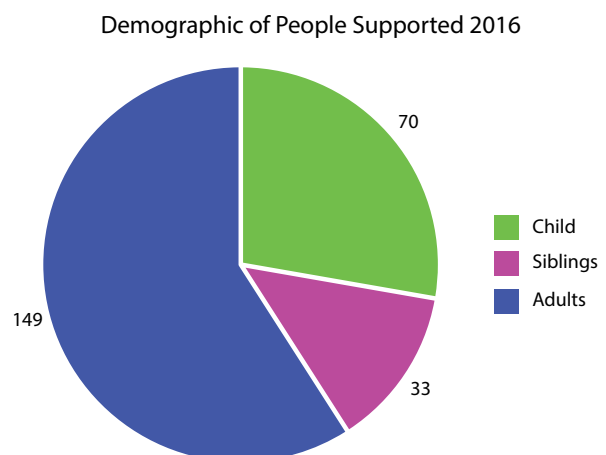
Our court accompaniment service provided support for 252 children and family members/supports through the Irish Judicial System in 2016, increasing on previous years, as the graph below illustrates.



In addition, to this we provided accompaniment to 15 siblings/child witnesses testifying in the same case as an added injured party or witness. In these instances, our service would provide more than one accompaniment officer to insure seamless support for the children and the family.

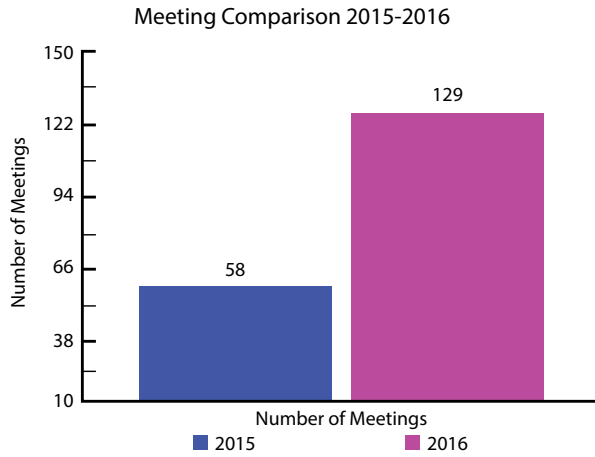
Demographic of clients

As indicated in the pie chart below, we supported 70 children, 33 siblings and 149 adults. The siblings supported were siblings of the witnesses who turned up on the day to provide support to their brother/sister. The adults supported included parents, carers, other family members and professionals linked in with the family.

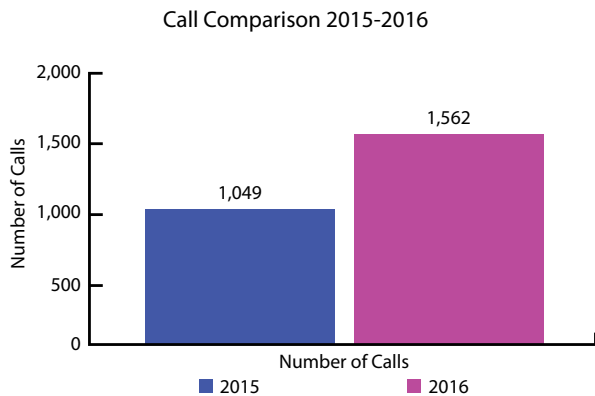


Calls & Meetings

In 2016 there were 129 meetings which comprised of pre-trial, accompaniment to court and professional based meetings. This number is a significant increase from previous years, the comparison is illustrated below in the bar chart.

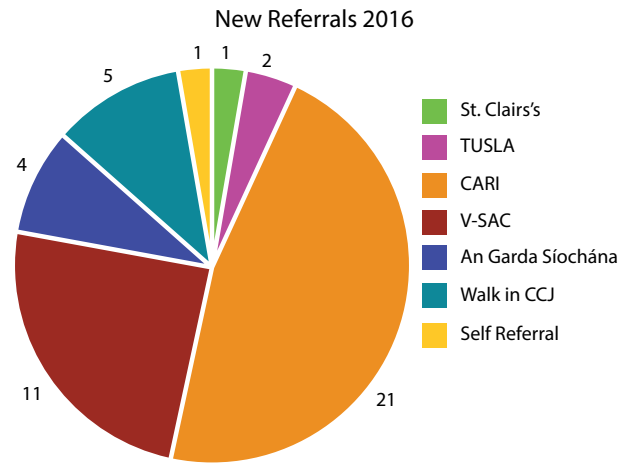


In 2016, there were 1562 calls. This is the highest figure to date for our court accompaniment support service as the below bar chart illustrates.



Case Components & Activity

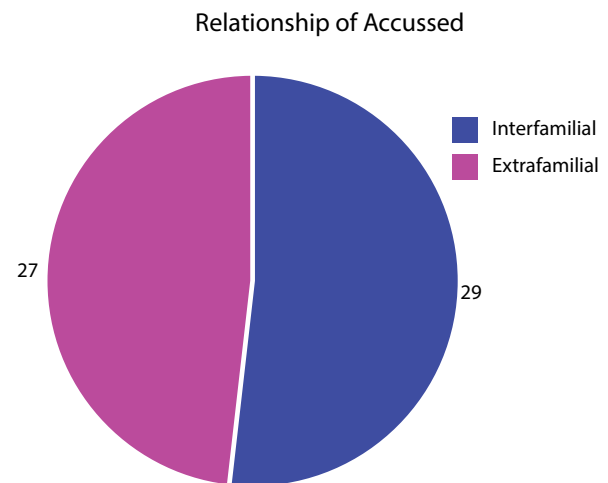
We worked on 70 different cases in 2016; of those 70 children supported, 14 were male and 56 were female. This is inclusive of cases which had sibling witnesses and cases carried over from previous years. The pie chart below shows where each of the 38 new referrals came in from in 2016.



It is noteworthy that five of the cases we supported in 2016 were what we call 'walk-ins'. Walk-ins are cases that have been obtained through the Arraignments at the Criminal Courts of Justice. Exemplifying that five families, with child witnesses showed up at court with no support service and were then linked in with CARI on the same day.

Relationship of the accused to the victim/witness

As the below pie chart shows, the relationship between the accused and our clients is almost equal between intrafamilial and extrafamilial.



Verdicts

As illustrated in the below pie chart, of the children that were supported by CARI in 2016 25 defendants were tried; of the 25:

7 were found guilty

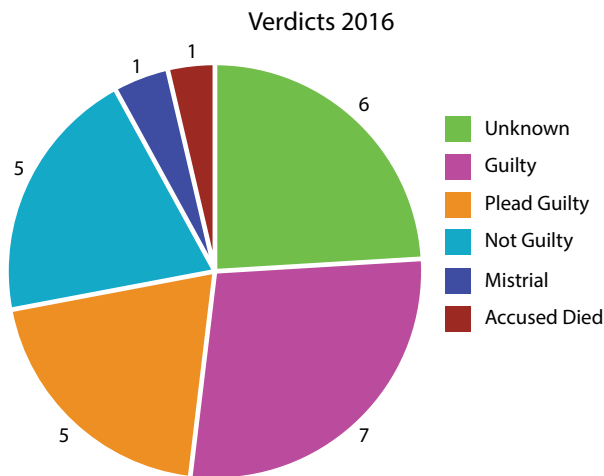
5 plead guilty

5 were found not guilty

6 is unknown

1 was a mistrial and,

1 defendant died.



Some examples of verdicts that took place in 2016

There are many different verdicts that can arise from a criminal court trial. The anonymised cases below illustrate some of the verdicts from 2016.

David – Plead Guilty

David was a young boy that was supported by us during the criminal trial which occurred in 2016. David was aged 9 at the time of the alleged sexual abuse. The defendant in this case was intrafamilial and charges included both Rape and Sexual Assault. The trial was delayed once for three months. The defendant in question pleaded guilty to all charges. David did not have to give witness testimony as a result, he was aged 13 when the Criminal Justice journey ended.

Carol – Found Guilty

Carol was a young girl that was supported by us during the criminal trial which occurred in 2016. Carol was aged 11 at the time of the alleged sexual abuse. The defendant in this case was intrafamilial and charges included Rape. When the trial eventually

got to court it was delayed for a further five months. The defendant in question pleaded not guilty to all charges. Carol had to give evidence through videolink. He was then Found Guilty by a jury. Carol was 15 when the Criminal Justice journey ended.

Sarah – Found Not Guilty

Sarah was a girl who was supported by us during the criminal trial which occurred in 2016. Sarah was aged 14 at the time of the alleged sexual abuse. The defendant in this case was extrafamilial and charges included Rape and Sexual Assault. The defendant in question pleaded not guilty to all charges. Sarah had to give evidence through videolink. He was then found Not Guilty.

Duration of the path from event to the end of criminal proceedings

The length of time that the criminal proceeding takes to complete is important to know. Of the cases that closed in 2016 we took 23 cases and analysed their dateline.

In the 23 cases that were analysed, the average age of the child at the time they experienced the abuse was 11 years old. The average age for the client when they contacted CARI was 15 years old. The average age for the client when their trial was finished was 16 years old.

What our records show is that children on average spend 5 years from between the crime taking place to the end of the criminal proceedings. It is our view that a 5-year time span out of a child's life is too long. This excessive amount of time can lead to the secondary victimisation of our already extremely vulnerable.

Funder thank you

The court accompaniment service could not have provided its support in such increased numbers without the strong and consistent support of the Commission for Victims of Crime. We would like to especially thank all of those working in the CSVIC for their continued faith and support in our work.

CARI would like to thank the Manuela Riedo Foundation Ireland, who has given CARI support since 2014. We would also like to thank all of those who referred onto our service in 2016 including St Clares, Tusla, the Child and Family Agency, An Garda Síochána and V-SAC (Victims Support at Court).

Legislative progress for children in 2016

There have been some legislative developments for children. Two of the main legislative developments were that of the Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Bill 2016 and The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Bill 2015

Criminal Justice (Victims of Crime) Bill 2016

The Criminal Justice (Victims of crime) Bill 2016 was introduced by Minister Frances Fitzgerald in 2015 and ordered to its second stage in 2016. The main purpose of the Bill is to transpose into Irish law a Directive 2012/29/EU establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime.

This Bill broadens the rights of victims to include access to relevant information concerning the progress of any investigation and court proceedings. Other information includes the rules of the Irish Prison Service regarding release and temporary release. This Bill prescribes that each victim will be individually assessed so that special measures necessary to protect him or her from secondary and repeat victimisation, intimidation or retaliation can be put in place during the investigation and court process.

CARI welcomes Part 3 of the Bill which outlines Special Measures for Child Victims.

Under this new legislation a child is presumed to have protection needs and any assessment carried out shall take into account the best interest of the child. The Bill defines several special measures during investigations and criminal trials.

Special measures during investigations may involve advice on personal safety, including safety and barring orders, applications to remand the alleged offender in custody or seek conditions on bail. The Bill also stipulates that, where possible, interviews to be carried out in appropriate premises. Interviews should be conducted by specially trained persons and in the case of sexual or gender based violence by a person of the same sex as the victim, where possible.

Another important special measure concerning court proceedings will ensure that the vulnerability

of child victims is recognised. Where a specific need to protect a victim is identified, the court may exclude the public from proceedings and restrict questioning regarding the victim's private life.

Victims have the right to have professional accompaniment during the investigation and court procedure, including:

- the first contact with relevant authorities,
- making a criminal complaint at the Garda station,
- at the forensic medical examination,
- at any interview or at court proceedings where the child is required to be present.

In Ireland, CARI is the only organisation providing a professional child accompaniment support service for children (under 18) and their families through criminal proceedings nationwide.

We are privileged to be able to support children and their families through this time. CARI hopes that the Irish State legislature progresses with this important Bill through to domestic legislation in a timely manner that will afford children, for the first time, legislative rights as a victim.

The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Bill 2015

The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Bill 2015 was published on 23 September 2015. This Bill proposes various reforms of the law aimed at protecting children from offences such as sexual exploitation, child pornography and online grooming. This is an extensive piece of proposed legislation that covers a wide range of sexual offences.

With respect to children the Bill deals with offences such as:

- the sexual exploitation of children
- engaging a child in prostitution
- contributing economically to the sexual exploitation of a child
- or causing a child to watch sexual activity

This Bill also addresses the sexual exploitation of children carried out using information and communication technology (ICT). CARI feels that this is an important piece of legislation that reflects the times children are now living in.

Another issue which this legislation addresses which also reflects the current climate, is online grooming. Up until now in Ireland, only the effects of grooming were criminalized. However, the introduction of the new bill will see the act of grooming to be a criminal offence.

This Bill contains a new proviso regarding the use of a victims counselling or therapy notes as evidence in a criminal trial. This process will be subject to a disclosure application which will need to be made to the court. Any disclosure application will be subject to a hearing to determine whether the content of the records should be disclosed. The court shall consider, among other factors, how necessary these records will be for the accused to defend him or herself.

Upon reaching a decision the court provides reasons for ordering or refusing the disclosure of counselling records. If the court decides that the counselling notes should be provided, this may be conditional including the redaction of certain information in the records.

Time will tell

CARI hopes that this legislation will provide children with greater protection by criminalizing a wider range of sexual offences. We also hope the structure that this Bill has developed for the disclosure of therapy notes does not serve to further traumatize the victim, or deter families from seeking therapeutic intervention for their children.

Given the trauma associated with sexual offences and the difficulties which victims have coming forward, it is important that the courts take a child friendly approach for young victims to give evidence.

Time will tell if the legislative protections for children will indeed serve the protection needs of children in this ever-changing world of technology. The impact, however, is yet to be seen and whether legislative developments that cater to the protective needs of children within criminal proceedings will fully address the current gaps.

Advice on legislation

Submission to the Department of Justice and Equality regarding Data protection safeguards

for children ('digital age of consent')

During 2016 the Department of Justice and Equality set up consultations to explore positions regarding the statutory age of consent threshold ("age of digital consent") to be applied in Ireland in the case of information society services offered directly to children, as required by General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). In considering our view we looked to balance the right to privacy and autonomy online versus the right to protection from online activities that could become tangible, real world risks. Several issues were considered by CARI including child development as well as potential commercialization, cyberbullying and the sexual exploitation of children.

CARI incorporated the effects of social media from a developmental perspective. How can children aged between 8-11 years cope with many social media followers for example? We also needed to examine the real and idealized self which is created on social media and the direct impact this has on any young person's sense of who they are. Especially children who are currently forming their identity.

Other factors considered by CARI was the increasing incidents of cyber bullying, teen sexual assault and the role social media plays in relation to this. A balance should be maintained between participation and protection and the potential dangers that amending the age of consent to 16 may incur for children. The following recommendations were submitted to the Department of Justice and Equality:

1. Older children should have more autonomy, transparency and individual control over their personal data. They should also be aware of how their data could be used for example, geo-location tracking and data profiling.
2. Social media companies should take a more active role to promote safe online activity by funding educational and awareness campaigns as well as engaging with any relevant organisations and stakeholders.
3. A balance should be struck between the right to participation in Social Media and the need for protection for children on the internet if amending the age of consent to 16.
4. That the statutory age of consent threshold ('digital age of consent') should be set at fifteen.



Funding

All the work done at CARI is only possible thanks to our donors, funders and supporters and we are deeply grateful to all who support the important work we do for children families and groups affected by child sexual abuse.

Statutory Funder - Tusla

We are grateful to TUSLA, our main statutory partner, for funding for both our Dublin and Limerick centres, core funding for Dublin and funding via the Family Support Agency stream for Limerick.

Statutory Funder – Commission for the Support of victims of Crime (CSvC)

We acknowledge the growing partnership with the CSVC for funding for our expanding Child Accompaniment Services (CASS) supporting child witnesses in court or children attending for forensic examination.

Private Trusts- Help for Children Ireland

In 2016, we received increased support from Help for Children Ireland. HFC is a global foundation supported by the generosity of **Hedge Funds Care** and **Private Equity Cares**, Help For Children provides grants to the most effective and efficient child abuse prevention and treatment interventions in seven countries, making the world a safer place for children.

2016 was the second full year of the funds operations in Ireland and CARI was delighted to have been selected as a beneficiary again this year. This grant allowed us recruit additional therapy hours in limerick where our waiting lists are the longest and as a result we treated more children, shortened waiting times and ensured that the worst impacts of children sexual abuse have been mitigated for 12 additional children and twenty additional families in 2016. CARI would also like to thank the Manuela Riedo Foundation Ireland, who has given CARI support since 2014.

Statutory Funder - DSPCE Schemes

CARI benefits hugely from hosting two CE schemes, one in Dublin and one in Limerick. Trainees on these schemes support many of our services and provide most of the staffing in fundraising departments.

These schemes allow us to punch above our weight. See Appendix to Accounts.

Charity of the year -Limerick 95fm 95 Stop Tour for Limerick Kids

Over €110,000 was raised in 2016 with a huge input by Limerick's Live 95FM our excellent Charity partners and people from all over Limerick City and county. This was our biggest Fundraiser with the funds being divided between CARI, the Children's Ark and the Neo-Natal Unit to provide much needed support equipment and children's services. Live 95FM have been wonderful facilitators of this 95 Stop Tour for Limerick Kids for several years and we extend our sincere thanks to Joe Nash CEO Fergal Deegan Marketing and Sales Manager and Nichola Quinn Tour Co-ordinator and the entire team. Mary Madden, Helen Coote and the CARI in house fundraising team devoted time and commitment to this the flagship event in the CARI Fundraising calendar.

Individual donors and Sponsors

CARI would like to thank all our volunteers and supporters for their continuous support

Many have taken up challenges in running, walking, cycling and skydiving and all support our work directly and vitally. Others host our Easter and Christmas Hamper raffles, coffee mornings, and other community events. Our regular mailshot donors and ongoing donors provide much needed regular income and allows us to plan some developments with greater security.

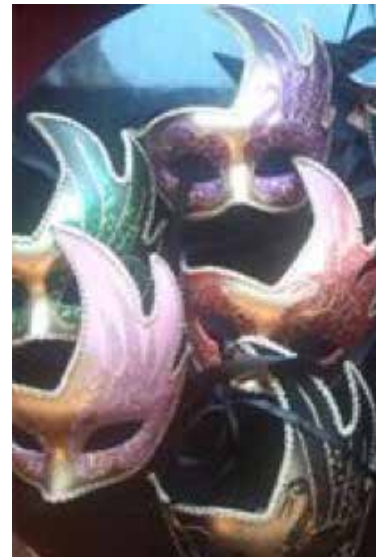
Our two main fundraising lunches hosted by our patron Miriam Ahern and supported by Roz Flanagan and our in- house team under the leadership of Patricia Townsend were as successful in 2016 as in previous years. Alan Hughes again gave most generously of his time, M&S and Carmel Breheny are generous sponsors of these two events. We are deeply indebted.

Huge thank you to Fiona Rafferty and Lillies Bordello for making our inaugural Masquerade Party such a success.

Trish Townsend Dublin

Mary Madden Limerick

THANK YOU



Statement of Accounts

For the year end 31st December 2016

	2016	2015
Income		
Donations Grants and services	€483,534	€464,076
Fundraising Events	€201,952	€158,774
Total	€685,486	€622,850
Expenditure		
National Expenditure	€649,854	€592,852
Deficit/surplus on Ordinary Activities	€35,632	€73,192
Balance Sheet As at 31st December 2016		
Fixed Assets		
Tangible Assets	€1,120,000	€1,120,000
Current Assets		
Bank	€150,781	€157,627
Debtors & Prepayments		€4,045
Total	€150,781	€161,672
Current Liabilities		
Creditors (Amount failing due within 1 year)	€(96,728)	€(86,934)
Net Current Assets/Liabilities	€54,053	€74,738
Total Assets less Liabilities	€1,174,053	€1,194,738
Creditor (Amount failing due after more than 1 year)	€(508,204)	€(564,521)
Revenue & Reserves		
Accumulated Surplus	€665,849	€630,217
Grants		
Statutory		
TUSLA 1 Core Grant	€216,798	€216,498
TUSLA 2 (formerly Family Support Agency)	€106,800	€97,900
Dept of Social Protection	€4,282	€6,430
Commission for Support of Victims of Crime	€60,000	€18,700
Total	€387,800	€339,528
Non-Statutory		
Manuela Reido Foundation	€10,715	
Help for Children - Prevent and Treat Child Abuse	€17,000	€11,000

Note to Accounts

CARI'S capacity is greatly enhanced by the support of two CE schemes which effectively double our income. The income and expenditure below related to CARI and four other community projects for whom we supply management and supervision of CE trainees.

The schemes have different accounting periods and are each separately audited. Below is some information from the closest relevant accounting period.

CE Scheme Statement of Account 2016

Dublin to 30 Oct 2016	2016	2015
Income	€285,789	€318,168
Expenditure	€353,505	€340,935
Limerick to 16 Oct 2016		
Income	€294,299	€335,430
Expenditure	€315,264	€368,292

Company Solicitors

Benville Robinson Solicitors,
Riverview House,
Seapoint Road,
Bray,
Co. Wicklow

Auditors

Knowles O'Dowd Carrig'
Chartered Accountants & Registered Auditors,
36 Fitzwilliam Square W,
Dublin 2

Registered Office

110 Lower Drumcondra Road,
Drumcondra,
Dublin 9
Company Number Registered Number: 148760
Charity Number: 9491/20023751

Board Members

- Richard P. Treacy
- Ronan Boylan
- Noel Hughes
- Colm O'Brien
- John Quinn
- Pauline Beegan
- Mona O'Brien
- John Crawley
- Isolde Blau

Helpline

The Beginning:
Providing guidance and support to families from disclosure and throughout

50% of callers returning to our helpline for support.

2,543 therapy appointments made available for children and families.

115 Advice Appointments to adults in need of immediate support in both Dublin and Limerick.

193 child forensic and court accompaniments.

Forensic Accompaniment

Accompaniment and aftercare to their forensic exam



3,326 calls throughout all our clinical services

1,754 therapy and parental support sessions given to children and their families.

Therapy

Healing the family

Healing children, and their families, from Child Sexual Abuse'

711 children and adults supported through therapy and accompaniment.

5 years from crime to court-average for children.

Court Accompaniment

Preparation, accompaniment and support throughout the criminal trial

CARI National and Dublin Office

110 Lower Drumcondra Road
Drumcondra
Dublin 9

Tel +353 1 830 8529

Email info@cari.ie

Website www.cari.ie

CARI (Limerick Office)

Ennis Road
Limerick

CARI Therapy Department (Limerick)

Tel +353 61 582224

Email monicamurphy@cari.ie

CARI Fundraising (Limerick)

Tel +353 61 582200

Email fundraising.limerick@cari.ie

Website www.cari.ie

CARI National Helpline

1890 924 567

Email helpline@cari.ie