



## Children's Research Network Conference 2019 "Children Should be Seen AND Heard"

### Book of Abstracts (A-Z by Author)

#### **The Importance of Listening: What Children Are Telling Us About Their Online Activity?**

**Philip Arneill, Louise O'Hagan**

**CyberSafeIreland ([www.cybersafeireland.org](http://www.cybersafeireland.org))**

CyberSafeIreland is a Irish-registered charity, established in 2015, which works to empower children, parents and teachers to navigate the online world in a safe and responsible manner through educational outreach, research and advocacy.

This presentation will present the key findings from our data - which we have collected from over 5,500 children in primary schools across the State (8-13 year olds) – and what it tells us about what children are *actually* doing online. As part of our schools outreach programme, children, parents and teachers fill out anonymous surveys giving us an holistic view of children's online behaviour, with a particular focus on social media, apps and online gaming. Additionally, we absorb and observe qualitative knowledge through classroom discussion and Q&A sessions.

The presentation will discuss our findings from the last school year, highlighting key areas of focus and ask what the implications are for education, parenting and the legislative agenda in the State around digital learning and literacy, as well as the regulation of tech companies and social media platforms.

#### **Children Believe What They See More Than What They Hear**

**Merve Ataman (1), Ayhan Aksu-Koç (2).**

**Trinity College Dublin (1), Bogazici University (2)**

Children build up knowledge from their observations, experiences, and communication with others. Since these pieces of information form the basis for generalization, it is important that they are reliable.

Reliability of information depends on its source and languages offer lexical and/or grammaticized means to indicate source. Previous research shows that children attend to these cues and treat direct-evidence as more reliable than indirect-evidence. However, there is no conclusive evidence on attributions of reliability with respect to different types of indirect-evidence. The present study investigated this question in Turkish where the indirect-evidence inflection (-mİş) indicates either inference from results of nonwitnessed change-of-state-events or information obtained from hearsay, depending on context. We hypothesized that children would evaluate inferences from observed resultant states as more reliable than hearsay information.

Forty-eight monolingual Turkish 4-year-olds, and 48 6-year-olds participated in the study. Children watched video-clips depicting results of change-of-state-events, and each was followed by two animated characters who expressed different judgements about the cause of the change: (1) based on inference from the observed result and (2) based on the verbal report of a third character. Children indicated whose judgement they thought was correct.

Results showed that 4- and 6-year-olds attributed higher reliability to inferential statements based on observed results than to statements based on hearsay,  $t(47) = 22.49, p < .001$ ; and  $t(47) = 22.87, p < .001$ , respectively, 6-year-olds doing so more than 4-year-olds,  $t(94) = -3.88, p < .001$ . Children think information inferred from partial observed evidence is more reliable than hearsay.

#### **Listening to minority voices: towards best practice in bilingual literacy assessment.**

**Emily Barnes**

**Phonetics and Speech Lab, Trinity College Dublin**

This paper addresses the responsibility we have as researchers or practitioners to act on what we see and hear, particularly in minority contexts. The context of the discussion is the right of Irish speakers to access appropriate literacy assessment and support services, on par with those available to their English-speaking peers.

Best practice indicates that bilingual children should be assessed for reading difficulties in both of their languages. Despite this, children in Irish-medium education are typically compared to norms for monolingual English speakers, and often assessed by educational psychologists with limited understanding of bilingualism.

The perspectives of five educational psychologists who work with children in gaelscoileanna and Gaeltacht schools are analysed. A structured interview examines how educational psychologists assess those in Irish-medium education, their perception of the efficacy of their practice, and the tools and skills they think would be necessary to deliver bilingual assessment.

The findings suggest that current methods of assessment are inadequate, particularly for those for whom Irish is a first language. This is the case despite the existence of the Official Languages Act, which mandates equal availability of service for Irish and English as the official languages of the state, as well as the Education Policy for the Gaeltacht which provides for the development of contextually appropriate assessments.

The message is that listening, hearing, protecting and planning do not suffice when they do not culminate in action.

### **'Are they going to do anything with this info?': Implementing children's perspective in policy**

**Dr Carol Barron**

**Dublin City University**

The National Children's Strategy (2000) is acknowledged as the first Governmental strategy which actively consulted with children and young people in Ireland on issues that affect them. In the following two decades, academics, NGO's, Government Departments amongst many others, have largely embraced the importance of eliciting the child and young persons 'voice' on matters that concern them. This has been supported by Article 12 of the UNCRC (1989) - the child's right to be consulted on matters affecting them; which is used to support the shift in conducting research *with* children as opposed to *on* children. During this same two decades, from an academic perspective; we have seen a proliferation of research text books telling us 'how to do' research *with* children (e.g Greig and Taylor 1999; Christensen and James 2000; Green and Hogan 2005, Groundwater-Smith et al 2014).

Yet, what about the second and equally important component of Article 12.... 'the views of the child being *given due weight*'. From an academic perspective, much less attention has focused on 'how to' implement children and young peoples 'voice' in county and national policies and strategies. Following a consultation process with 472 children and young people in the Summer of 2019, this paper examines alternative to the traditional 'written report' and journal articles, largely employed by academics as the 'end product' for research projects, to enhance the *implementation of children's 'voice'* within policy and strategy documents as opposed to simply eliciting it.

### **Teaching Students to Collaborate: The Impact of Skills Training on Student Engagement in Collaborative Learning**

**Edmond Behan**

**Maynooth University**

Abstract: Research has shown that collaborative learning can result in social and cognitive gains for students. However, such findings are deemed contentious by studies that report significant collaborative inhibition, owing in no small part to students' lack of preparedness for collaboration.

In an Irish context, there is a paucity of research into the impact of skills training on student engagement. The need for greater understanding on this issue is given added urgency in light of policy developments which urge teachers to facilitate collaborative learning with their students.

The objective of my action research study is, therefore, to understand the impact on student engagement of teaching collaboration skills before students participate in collaborative learning activities.

Informed by an interpretive paradigm, the study uses a mixed-methods approach and employs data gathering techniques such as questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, student reflective diaries and researcher field notes. Following inductive analysis of the data sets, the study found that skills training may have a positive impact on students' subsequent engagement in collaborative learning. However, the nature and extent of that impact is mediated by factors such as students' attitudes

towards collaborative learning, the perceived value of the collaborative task, students' perceptions of group efficacy in addition to students' perception of the value of their own voice and that of other students in the group. One key recommendation which emerges from the research conclusions is that teachers, during direct instruction, should strive to endow value in the voice of every student, since student perception of that value may impact on the quality of their subsequent participation in collaborative learning.

**When there are no words: Using consultation models to listen the needs of sexually abused and maltreated children.**

**Leanne Gregory, Niamh Bergin**

**Our Lady's Children's Hospital Crumlin**

St Louise's Unit provides assessment and therapy services for children and young people where CSA is a concern. The multidisciplinary, multiagency professional's consultation model was introduced in 2016, and adapted to a more systematic approach in 2018. Some children and young people referred to St Louise's Unit for assessment and/or therapy, have other complexities in their lives such as concerns of other types of abuse, living in care and other health concerns. Therefore introducing additional specialist CSA services to the child's life, may in fact add to these complexities.

The interdisciplinary team came together for the Children's Health Ireland Quality Improvement and Patient Safety Programme in 2018. A retrospective chart review of referrals to St Louise's Unit was carried out and data from referrals from June 2018 to March 2019 further reviewed.

Consultation appointments were offered on 2 Wednesday afternoons per month. Interdisciplinary representation from St Louise's Unit, Laurels Clinic, Tusla, An Garda Síochána, support services and other agencies involved in the child/young person's life, all met in St Louise's Unit for a 2 hour meeting. The outcomes were 50% of referrals were discharged, 43% forwarded for assessment and 7% referred for therapy in St Louise's Unit.

This structured consultation service has led to collaborative working both within the unit and with other professionals involved in the child/young person's life where CSA is a concern. In 20 cases reviewed, the service supported professionals already involved in the complexities of the child/young person's life, with least intrusion for the child/young person.

**Using Homemade Object Elicitation in Interviews**

**Ian Blackwell**

**Plymouth Marjon University, UK**

My PhD research is a qualitative ethnographic study of four community-based dads' groups in southern England. Two groups take place indoors supported by local Children's Centres; two groups focus on Forest School-type activities. A total of 52 semi-structured interviews were undertaken: with fathers who attend these groups (n=25), their children (n=8), the child's mother (n=7; all co-resident), and dads' group leaders and staff (n=12). My PhD focus is on the *in vivo* term "dadness" and I am exploring how "dadness identities" are formed, enacted, modified and affirmed through co-relational interactions with the child, with the child's mother, with the group leaders and with other fathers who attend the groups.

For my semi-structured interviews I used a novel method which I have termed 'Homemade Object Elicitation'. This approach invites participating fathers and children to bring objects they had made at the dads' group to the interview. Within social science research the objects that have been used as elicitation stimuli in research to date have been dominated by manufactured/ shop-bought items. This article considers the benefits and potential of using objects created by participants as an inclusive and creative elicitation research method, particularly with children. Termed 'Handmade-Object Elicitation' [HOE], the method engages and sustains children and adults in the interview process, generates richer conversations and unearths insights that previous OE methods may not. I argue that handmade objects, because they are strongly imbued with a collective making process are, consequently, more bound to memory-making and meaning-making processes, and, therefore, HOE has considerable potential as a valuable qualitative research method.

**Exploring children's experiences of staying in hospital from the perspectives of children and children's nurses.**

**Dr Sonya Clarke and Professor Joanne Hughes**

**Queen's University Belfast**

*Max 250 words*

Children's needs differ to those of adults – requiring robust empirical evidence underpinning their healthcare as individual rights holder. This Northern Ireland study seeks the less sought voice of the younger child and children's nurse. Thus advising and informing those who design and provide health care services and children's nursing education.

A child research advisory group (CRAG) of 5 school children was developed and assisted in all stages in relation to child participants e.g. research questions and a cartoon computer programme. A qualitative approach was adopted using semi structured interview and thematic analysis. Participants include hospitalised children (n=18, 6-12 years) and children's nurses (n=8).

Tensions are used to represent the relationship between variables where the different elements in the relationship are held in tension, such that a change in one impacts upon the other e.g. tensions from children were between the '*child as a person in hospital and 'the role of people'*' and '*the things children consider important*'. Tensions derived from children's nurses were between '*the role of the children's nurse and the impact on their health and well-being*', '*job pressures and the ability to care for the child in hospital*' and '*the hospital environment and the ability to care for the child when in hospital*'. Similarities were environment, lack of time to care, effects of nurse led interventions and the valued role of play - differences concerned parenting.

The development and work of the CRAG and use of 'tensions' to more effectively present the complexity of the findings are unique to this study.

**Parents' experiences of accessing respite care for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at the acute and primary care interface: A systematic review.**

**Emma Cooke**

**Trinity College Dublin**

Background: Population prevalence estimates by the World Health Organisation suggest that 1 in 160 children worldwide has an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Accessing respite care services for children with ASD can often be a daunting and exhaustive process, with parents sometimes forced to access acute hospital services as an initial point of contact for respite care or in a crisis situation. To gain an in-depth understanding of accessing respite care for children with ASD, a systematic review of the evidence on parent's experiences of accessing respite care for children with ASD at the acute and primary interface was undertaken.

Methods: Pubmed, Embase, CINAHL and PsycINFO were systematically searched based on predetermined inclusion criteria. A meta-aggregative approach was used during data synthesis.

Results: Database searching elicited 430 records of which 291 studies remained after removal of duplicates. Seven studies met the inclusion criteria and were selected for the review.

Conclusion: In the absence of appropriate services and defined pathways to support services such as respite care, overwhelmed parents, schools, and community providers may not be in a position to meet the specific needs of children with ASD and their families which may be contributing to a direct increase in hospitalizations. This review discovered several barriers to respite care, all of which could be addressed in future service provision and research. Knowledge of parental experiences in caring for a child with ASD is vital in addressing the need and type of respite care required for children with ASD.

**'Our Voice: a story of identity and belonging through creativity and the arts'**

**Aoife Dare, Lisa Downes, 'Our Voice' youth group**

**Irish Refugee Council and St. Andrew's Resource Centre**

'Our Voice' is a creative arts youth integration project run by IRC and St. Andrew's in 2018. Over the course of 6 months, young people from a variety of backgrounds including aged out minors, young refugees, young asylum seekers, ethnic minority young people and Irish born young people came together to get to know each other, share their stories and find their voice. The project culminated in a one week arts residential

which took place on Sherkin Island in July 2018. Using a variety of creative processes, the group explored the themes of identity, belonging and voice. They wrote and recorded a song and made a film of their shared experience.

The video of this song will be shown (approx. 3 minutes long) together with a brief overview of the project. Some of the young people involved in the project will be invited to give the presentation.

**Improving the Assessment of Neurodevelopmental Outcomes using the Bayley Scales of Infant and Toddler Development**

**Chelo Del Rosario, Elizabeth Nixon, Jean Quigley, Eleanor Molloy**

**Trinity College Dublin**

Our understanding of children's development requires that we have adequate tools that enable them to express their full range of competencies.

The Bayley Scales of Infant Development – Third Edition (Bayley-III; Bayley, 2006) is one of the most widely used standardised tools for the assessment of neurodevelopment in early childhood. The test is commonly used to identify developmental delay in clinical groups and children at-risk by comparing the abilities of the child to a normative age-matched sample of children. The gold-standard status of the tool has been attributed to the quality of standardisation, alongside its comparative, as well as predictive abilities against other common assessments of development.

However, the test has also been reported to yield inflated scores and to underestimate levels of developmental delay (Anderson et al, 2010), primarily as a function of error in administration, reporting and scoring, and the misclassification of age. Examples of such errors include over-scoring, miscalculations of scores and data entry errors (Costantini et al, 2015; Veldhuizen et al, 2015).

This presentation aims to review the use of the Bayley-III assessment tool and to discuss techniques in order to improve the efficiency and accuracy of its administration, including advice for administrators of the tool and for prospective families who may undertake the assessment.

**Getting the Young Person Across the Line: The Experiences and Perspectives of Educational Professionals and Parents on School Refusal.**

**Roisin Devenney and Catriona O'Toole**

**Maynooth University (NUI)**

For many young people, attending school can be a positive experience in an environment that can offer rich opportunities for social, personal and academic engagement. However, the school environment can also be a source of social difficulties, emotional distress and overwhelming pressure for young people (Place et al., 2000). In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the financial and long-term burden of school absenteeism, particularly in relation to a decline in educational prospects resulting in an over reliance on social welfare services, social related difficulties, mental health difficulties in later life and unemployment (Ekstrand, 2015, Pellegrini, 2007). Despite the importance of raising awareness of school refusal, research has largely ignored the 'missing voices' (Baker & Bishop, 2015) of young people and the potential impact of the label of school refusal. The current research project therefore adopts a critical approach in examining the experiences of educational professionals in working with young people, as well as the experiences of parents and young people themselves on the issues surrounding school refusal. Using a mixed method design, the findings of a survey in second level schools in Ireland (N=106), follow up interviews with Principals, teachers and outside agencies (N=17) and interviews with parents (N=10) were analysed. This presentation will outline key findings which highlight the social, psychological, emotional and physical impact of school refusal on the young person's wellbeing as well as the challenges experienced by professionals and parents in addressing the impact of these issues.

**General Data Protection Regulation –its Impact on the Child's Right to be Seen and Heard**

**Sheila Donovan**

**NUI Galway**

Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child supports the right of the child to express his/her views in matters affecting him/her and provides that these views be given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

With the exponential growth in the use of social media, debates regarding the privacy of social network users have emerged as a matter of concern. The recognition of the vulnerabilities of minors as social network users resulted in the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2016. The GDPR, appoints parents as gatekeepers of their teenagers' online activity with the express purpose of safeguarding minors. Heralded as a, beacon of hope for children's safety, it has resulted in 'silenced' teenagers.

Furthermore, recital 18 of the GDPR in its exemption of 'household and personal activities' from the constraints of regulation has failed to acknowledge the manner in which some of these same parents/custodians who by their online practice of 'Sharenting' (defined as 'the parental online posting of images and data of children') and Vlogging are, in fact, denying children their rights to privacy and their freedom of speech. This paper will address the issue of 'sharenting' and the implications for children and their parents. It will also address the manner in which children's current online safety measures may curtail the child's right to be heard and seen. It calls for legislative protection of the child's right to be seen and heard in the digital world.

Key words: *Autonomy, Voice, Digital Privacy, Parental Control, Self-determination*

### **Building Social Capital through meaningful engagement between young people and An Garda Síochana**

**Caroline Duignan, Marie Feeney, Ellen Conroy, Rory Keane, Gda. Barry Maguire and Gda. Karen Treacy**

**Galway Children and Young People's Services Committee and FORUM Connemara, CLG**

This presentation will introduce a workshop which highlights the impact of using Lundy's Model of Participation of giving young people a space and voice to raise issues that concern them relating to their local area. It will also stress the importance of following up on consultations with children and young people by bringing issues raised by them forward to be addressed. It will include the findings of a relationship building programme between young people and An Garda Síochana in one of the largest policing districts in the country by area in County Galway, the outcome of which was an increased sense of empathy on both sides, and in the community overall. A video of the activities developed to improve relationships between young people and Gardaí will be shown and the presentation will be made by a young person involved in the programme, a member of An Garda Síochana, the Co-ordinator of Forum Adolescent Support Project and Co-ordinator of the Children and Young People's Services Committee. This work formed part of a successful application for an Investing in Children Award in 2018 and was the first of its kind in Ireland, presented to four agencies for their collaborative work with local young people. The model of work presented could be replicated in any area of the Country. An academic paper related to this work is currently being written.

### **110% - A Hundred and Ten Percent**

**Ahmed, Rashmi, Abiola, Valerie, Esther, Amel Yacef, Jessica Farnan, Kate O'Connell, Luke Page**

**YES for Refugees and Migrants (CDETB)**

'Inequality can be an uncomfortable conversation'.

'Racism is a reality – so let's stop ignoring it'

'Why do I always have to work 110%?'

110% gives voice to the lived experience of children and young people from a variety of migrant backgrounds in relation to employment, education, and living in Ireland.

Unapologetically and with refreshing honesty the young people speak out about issues such as racism, stereotyping, diversity within diversity and societal expectations through spoken word pieces and re-enactments.

The video is accompanied by a poster, which outlines the complex and manifold layers of disadvantage and discrimination young migrants experience.

The project was funded through DCYA's Youth Employability Programme 2016 and was an initiative of CDETB's Youth and Education Service for Refugees and Migrants.

**Barnardos Glór na nÓg – Involving Seldom Heard Voices in Policy work**

**Naomi Feely**

**Barnardos**

**Background**

One of the national goals of Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures' is that children are connected, respected and contributing. As such, it is important that children and young people have their voice heard in the prioritisation of investment for national and local initiatives intended to improve child outcomes. Existing initiatives, such as Dáil na nÓg, aim to build a culture of participation among children and young people. However, often the voices of 'seldom heard' children are not represented.

**Objectives**

In line with Barnardos participatory approach, Glór na nÓg was established to include children's voices and opinions in our Budget 2019 campaign. Glór na nÓg aimed to develop a method of participation that was bespoke to our policy work.

**Methods**

The project engaged children and young people through participatory workshops. Various engagement methods were used including an ice-breaker game, listening games and decision making tasks. Children were introduced to concepts such as leadership, decision making and resource allocation.

**Findings**

A process evaluation gathered meaningful quantitative and qualitative data from all participants – the children, policy team and project workers. All participants were able to have input into iterative change during the four workshops.

**Key Outputs**

Outputs from the project included campaign materials – video and poster – capturing the views of children and young people on what they would do if they were in charge of Ireland's money. The content was featured in media coverage in the run up to the Budget and in Barnardos online social media commentary on the day.

**The Happy and Healthy Volcano: a CYPSC Consultation and PhD research study in Roscommon.**

**Marie Gibbons**

**Tusla and Roscommon CYPSC**

Child participation and child consultation is increasingly recognised as a critical component in the planning and development of policies and services for children and young people. Yet there is a notable lack of consideration on the impacts of very young children's participation on decision-making processes or policy development at strategic level and there is little evidence that the views of preschool children are accurately represented by policy makers.

Consulting with children on their priorities is a critical feature of the work of CYPSCs and accordingly a series of consultation sessions with very young children on their health and well-being needs was facilitated by CYPSC in Roscommon. The sessions were conducted as part of the broader ongoing consultations that seek to engage key stakeholders concerned with the health and well-being of young children as part of public decision making processes. The consultations have also informed the development of the Early Years' Health and Wellbeing Plan by Roscommon CYPSC for its administrative area. The consultation process, which was embedded into the methodology of the author's PhD study, involved 120 children aged 3 ½ to 4 years of age, in 6 preschools in Roscommon on the theme of their health and well-being. The study explores the perspectives of these young children, the early years' practitioners in the settings and planners and decision-makers who have a key role in co-ordinating services for children and families in the context of Roscommon CYPSC.

<b>Don't Babytalk Me! Are Parents Oversimplifying Language to Children with Down Syndrome?</b>
<b>Desiree Grafton-Clarke, Elizabeth Nixon, Eleanor Molloy, Jean Quigley</b>
<b>Trinity College Dublin, Infant and Child Research Lab, School of Psychology Children's Health Ireland</b>
<p>Caregiver speech is critical for the development of communication skills in young children. Parents of typically developing children closely attune the complexity of their language input to match the language abilities of their children. However, very little research has examined the characteristics of caregiver speech in the context of neurodevelopmental disorders such as Down Syndrome (DS). It is hypothesized that parents will adjust their verbal input when experiencing uncertainties concerning their child's language abilities, which may interfere with this natural and dynamic attunement. As a consequence, parents may limit and/or oversimplify their language input beyond what is necessary, unintentionally limiting opportunities for children with DS to develop their language abilities. Given that children with DS often have particular difficulties with expressive language, our aim was to assess whether variability observed in caregiver speech contributes to individual differences in language outcomes in this understudied population.</p> <p>Thirty-two parent-child dyads recruited from Ireland's first dedicated DS clinic were video recorded while engaging in free-play and structured-play. The diversity, complexity and quantity of parental language will be examined by transcribing recordings obtained during these play-interactions. Speech of parents of children with DS and parents of age-matched typically developing children will be compared. Preliminary data has revealed significant individual variability in the communication abilities of children (aged 10 months - 5 years) with DS as assessed with standardized developmental scales/tools. Differences in parenting behaviours are emerging that may contribute to this variability, including the complexity and quantity of child-directed speech.</p>

<b>Empowering pupil voice in the individual education planning process: Focus on the 'Empowerment Process Model'</b>
<b>Dr Claire Griffin</b>
<b>Mary Immaculate College, Limerick</b>
<p>Recent years have witnessed a strong national commitment to the participation of children and young people in decision-making that affects their lives. From an educational viewpoint, this spans a range of settings including early education, schools, and the wider formal and non-formal education systems. This focus has also extended to include the voices of seldom-heard and vulnerable children and young people, including those with disabilities or Special Educational Needs (SEN).</p> <p>This paper seeks to focus on the position of the voice of the child with SEN in Irish educational policy and practice, with particular focus on the individual education planning (IEP) process. Key policy documents in this domain will be reviewed and critiqued, including the <i>Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act</i>, the <i>Guidelines on the Individual Education Plan Process, Circular 30/2014</i> and the <i>Guidelines for Primary Schools: Supporting Pupils with SEN in Mainstream Schools</i>.</p> <p>Thereafter, a range of applied national research will be considered, highlighting the juncture that continues to exist between policy and practice in many educational settings. Based on such findings, the rationale for including the voice of the child in the IEP process will be explored through the lens of 'empowerment'. Particular focus will be placed on the 'Empowerment Process Model' (Bennett Cattaneo &amp; Chapman, 2010), in addition to other relevant psychological theories and frameworks. In particular, the positive implications of empowering the child will be highlighted, with due regard for child internal factors and the social context. Finally, implications for practice will be forwarded, with the aim of increasing the position of the voice of the child with SEN in his/her educational planning.</p>

<b>The Purposeful Engagement of Children in Research- The possibilities offered when children become co-researchers and not just objects of research.</b>
<b>Dr Maurice Harmon</b>
<b>Mary Immaculate College, Limerick</b>
The voice of the children in research has become a significant educational endeavour in Europe and in the wider international context. While much of the research is focused on adult interpretations of what children

say, it raises the question, where and how is the voice of children explored and represented in its own right. This paper highlights the importance of the voice of children as active participants in developing society. Internationally, it is widely recognised that children not only have their own views (Mc Kenna, Ipgrave, and Jackson 2008; O'Grady 2006; Ipgrave 2004; Schweitzer 2004) but that voices must be heard and respected (UN 1989). Arguing that children should not be seen merely as objects of research but as active participants, as co-researchers therein, it will offer a rights based approach to research with children, emanating from the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child, art 12 (UN,1989). It explores Lundy's (2007) framework for research with children, ensuring all children's views are valued and respected. The paper will conclude by considering implications emerging from recent research in the Irish context, of a purposeful engagement with children, that became co-researchers exploring religion, beliefs and values in their society and offers recommendations for reflection to the various stakeholders for policy and practice going forward.

**'I can only be properly myself when I'm with her': Early adolescent intra-ethnic immigrant friendships as a safe space for the expression and acceptance of multiple identities.**

**Dr Rachel Hoare**

**Trinity College Dublin**

This presentation reports on a study which explores the intra-ethnic immigrant (IEI) friendship experiences of fifteen 11-12 year olds with non-Irish heritage in Ireland, with a special focus on the ways in which such friendships can provide a safe space for these young people to express their identities and experience acceptance (be seen and heard). Creative focus groups and journaling, incorporating activities with an evidence base in expressive arts psychotherapy literature and practice, were used in the spirit of facilitating a greater depth of expression through different sensory pathways.

Within the primary focus of exploring the ways in which the participants expressed, negotiated and validated identities within their IEI friendships, the data revealed identity enactments linked to both heritage and Irish reference groups, some of which were transacted through sporting and creative arts alliances. Themes of loyalty and trust, parental endorsement of IEI friendships and experiences of deep relational intensity were also prevalent in the data.

This presentation will focus on the different ways in which the participants experienced IEI friendships as providing a safe space and enabling context in which they could be seen and heard. It will also look at the ways in which the participative creative approach opened up different pathways of participant expression. Finally, it will propose that the results and approach have important implications for all professionals who are interested in understanding and supporting the needs of young people with diverse cultural heritage.

**Shaping Ourselves and Our Children**

**Mary Holmes**

**Lifestart Foundation**

Shaping Ourselves and Our Children is the first of its kind here on the island of Ireland. The Lifestart Foundation and partners have developed a new programme on child development and diversity. Diversity is growing in Ireland both in the traditional sense and in the different family forms that have emerged, for example over 1:10 people living in Ireland were born elsewhere. Types of families are also changing with increasing numbers of 'blended' families. There is a significant opportunity to strive to understand and embrace diversity, share our experiences, have fun and learn from each other.

This innovative programme supports those in a parenting role to understand child development and how life experiences can shape a child's self-esteem, empathy and confidence, not just at home but in their school, community and life in general.

SOOC provides participants with an opportunity to explore: the hopes and fears they have for their children and their future; how the home environment prepares children for living in their community and wider society; how child self-esteem and confidence is developed; communication skills – what parents say, what children hear; learning through play; and respect for diversity and our changing communities.

Lessons learnt from SOOC can inform practice and policy on the potential positive outcomes of proactively sharing information with carers in the earliest years about children's development and diversity. SOOC is

proving to be effective as it is giving parents and grandparents the skills to reinforce positive messages about development and diversity in the home learning environment.

### **Conducting research with children who have lived with domestic violence: challenges and opportunities**

**Stephanie Holt & Carolina Overlien**

**Trinity College Dublin/ Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies**

Located firmly within the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Istanbul Convention, this paper considers the challenges and opportunities to including children and young people in conversations and decisions that are made about their lives in the context of domestic violence. Drawing on the authors' research with children in Ireland, Norway and Sweden, this paper argues that we *need* children's knowledge about their own lives in order to inform best practice, and also fundamentally that children have a *right* to make their voices heard in matters that concern them. However a number of ethical challenges may prevent the child from participating in research, such as an adult-driven consent process and the understanding that research may re-traumatise children. Drawing on own research with children, we argue that when children and young people are engaged with in a meaningful and respectful manner, through innovative methods, their competence to participate in the discussion about their experiences: their past as well as their future is confirmed.

We further argue that research needs to start from a position that accepts the uniqueness of *each* child and their lived experiences, committing to practice that values and prioritises the right of children to participate in research, which is, after all, about them. Engaging with children in this manner is not only a challenge, but also an opportunity to inform research practice, policy development and future research agendas.

### **Facilitating the voice of migrant children: IMMERSE**

**Horgan, Deirdre; Martin, Shirley; O'Riordan, Jacqui; Maier, Reana**

**University College Cork**

Integration Mapping of Refugee and Migrant Children (IMMERSE) is a four-year Horizon2020 European Research Project that aims to measure the socio-educational integration of migrant and refugee children in Europe. The project involves researchers in six countries, Ireland Belgium, Germany, Spain, Italy, and Greece, gathering data from relevant stakeholders, particularly migrant and refugee children aged 6-18 years. The outputs include a dashboard of 30 integration indicators, a survey of thousands of children in the partner countries, online data and a resource hub with examples of best practice for educators, researchers and policy-makers interested in educational integration, along with policy recommendations for schools. This paper reports on the role of the Children' Research Advisory Group (CRAG), comprised of 10-15 migrant and refugee children resident in Ireland, which provided input into themes for the qualitative data collection in Phase 1 and in future phases will pilot and provide feedback on data collection methods and instruments, as well as contributing to data analysis.

Topics discussed include capacity building, designing the methods, and data analysis with Children's Research Advisory Groups. The benefits of CRAG's including both improved research instruments and outputs as a result of collaboration with children and the benefits for the children themselves will be examined. Finally, some problematic issues with CRAG's relating to tokenism and the financial time costs involved will be explored.

### **Voicing Inclusion – Pursuing learner voice research with learners on the autism spectrum in Irish mainstream education**

**Finbar Horgan**

**School of Inclusive and Special Education, Institute of Education, Dublin City University (DCU)**

The aim of this presentation will be to explore the potential role of pursuing learner voice research with young people on the autism spectrum in mainstream education provision in Ireland. Research on the efficacy of inclusive education provision has largely been focused on the perspective of adult stakeholders. Relatively few studies have directly explored the voices of autistic children and young people and their experience of inclusion. The existing research, albeit sparse, has highlighted that approaches to inclusive education within mainstream settings may provide significant challenges for many learners on the autism

spectrum. Findings from research in this area have indicated that this group are at a much greater risk of social isolation, negative social interactions, bullying and absenteeism/exclusion when compared to their typically developing peers. The students themselves are often an overlooked resource for addressing such issues despite it being their right, as human beings, to have their views heard and given due weight. There is however, substantial evidence internationally to suggest that learner voice research engagement has the potential to empower young people to participate meaningfully and collaborate in improving their educational experience. Indeed, existing research in Ireland has shown that learner voice approaches that elicited the perspectives of young people with complex needs encouraged them to engage in opportunities to transform their educational experience. Given the relative lack of research on how learner voice research might contribute to meeting the needs of students with autism, this presentation will explore potential approaches to including the voices of such learners in planning inclusive educational provision.

**Mothers' and Fathers' Child-Directed Speech during Structured and Free Play**

Linda Kelly, Elizabeth Nixon, & Jean Quigley

Infant and Child Research Lab, Trinity College Dublin

Child-directed speech (CDS), the patterns of speech that adult caregivers produce when interacting with children, scaffolds children's language learning and attunes to their communicative abilities. The purpose of this study was to compare mothers' and fathers' CDS during interaction with their two-year-old children and to explore child and parent characteristics which contribute to variance in parental CDS. Another goal was to investigate the context specificity of parental CDS in order to discern whether certain naturally occurring interactive contexts promote child opportunities for learning and engagement over others. 80 two-year-olds (41 females;  $M = 24.06$  months,  $SD = 1.39$ ) and their biological mothers ( $M = 35.03$  years,  $SD = 4.14$ ) and fathers ( $M = 36.5$  years,  $SD = 5.06$ ) took part in the study. Mother-child and father-child dyads engaged in a free play and structured play condition. Transcripts of these interactions were analysed in order to measure parents' vocabulary diversity, language complexity, and balance in conversational turn-taking between parent and child. Child language and cognitive development were assessed using standardised measures. Results indicated that mothers used more diverse vocabulary than fathers', and that both mothers and fathers produced more vocabulary during free play compared to structured play. Greater balance in conversational turn-taking, providing more opportunities for the child to speak, was also observed during free play. In addition, only child cognitive ability emerged as an important factor contributing to variance in parent-child conversational balance, suggesting that children play a key role in shaping parents' behaviours and, as such, are active in their own development.

**Conversations about Vision Impairment: A Parent's Perspective when Talking to Their Child with Sight Loss**

Caroline Lane

NCBI Working for People with Sight Loss

There is a growing expectation of parents to be open and honest with their children, particularly when discussing difficult topics including having a disability. Parents are encouraged to provide age-appropriate answers to enhance awareness, understanding and effectively promote positive inclusion. Parents of children with sight loss are tasked with educating their children about their vision whilst also sheltering them from any potential negative impact. This qualitative study is the first of its kind to capture the experiences of parents in Ireland when communicating with their children about their sight loss. The main research question focuses on the types of conversations occurring, how they arise, what is discussed and the outcomes. The study is also concerned with the type of information, guidance and support available to parents when talking to their child about their vision. Thirteen participants took part in interviews with open-ended questions in order to produce rich narratives for analysis and learning. The findings confirm the complex nature of low vision and the unique challenges for parents when talking about sight loss. Specifically in describing visual function, discussing impact and further deterioration and managing the risk of upset. The lack of information and support was a common theme; however, the scarcity of information was particularly concerning for parents of children with acquired conditions.

**The Right of the Donor-Conceived Child to be Heard in the Context of Access to Genetic Information**

**Donna Lyons**

**School of Law, Trinity College Dublin**

*Abstract omitted upon author's request*

**Children's Voices in the Outdoors in Preschool**

**Anna Rose Maguire Codd**

**Maynooth University**

National and international research stresses the essential role that early years' outdoor play affords, given children's extended periods of time in preschool. However, barriers exist: access, inadequate provision of appropriate clothing, parental preferences, practitioner reluctance, safety, academic focus, and climate. Furthermore, the social, cultural, and political context may also influence manifestation from policy to practice. Thus, viewed through the lens of different stakeholders, the conceptualisation of outdoor play shapes how it is enacted, and consequently experienced.

My research brings together the perspectives of children, parents and educators, to explore how the outdoors shapes interactions and relationships in the early years' setting. It identifies a gap in the field of research insofar as the triad of voices of children, educators and parents aim to contribute to knowledge and understanding of the role of the outdoors in early years' care and education. An ethnographic case study in a private rural setting, involving 19 children, aged 3 to 5 years, their educators and parents and participant observations was conducted. Preliminary findings indicated children's connections with 'real work', connections with family and home, bodily movement and exhilaration were important, while 'something different', (interactions, interactions, feelings), were common themes from parents and educators.

Adopting Gallagher's (2018) concept of embodiment which integrates the dynamics of interactions among the body, brain and environment and the concept of relational pedagogy (Brooker, 2007; Papatheodorou and Moyles, 2009) provided a new filter through which to view the role of the outdoors in early years' settings.

**Sibling Perspectives of the Impact of Child Sexual Abuse Disclosure on Sibling and Family Relationship**

**Dr Rosaleen McElvaney, Rachael McDonnell Murray, Dr Simon Dunne**

**Dublin City University**

**Background:** Child sexual abuse (CSA) may have significant consequences for child siblings, however, limited research has been conducted on the impact of the abuse on sibling and family relationships following the disclosure and how this impact may continue over the lifespan through adulthood.

**Aim & Method:** This study sought to investigate sibling responses to disclosures of CSA among a group of adult siblings, and the impact on sibling and family relationships, both following disclosure and at the present time. An online survey was conducted allowing participants to fill in a questionnaire anonymously. Descriptive statistical analysis, and deductive thematic analysis were undertaken on a sub-set of participants who responded to open-ended questions (n=45).

**Results:** The findings highlight significant changes in family dynamics following disclosure. Three main themes were identified: intense sibling emotional reactions, reflecting how participants struggled to cope with their own emotional needs; strain and closeness in sibling relationships, capturing both a distancing from and moving towards closeness with the sibling following disclosure; and managing family dynamics, where the sibling participant took up a role of supporting family relationships, particularly those with parents.

**Conclusion and implications:** These results highlight the significant impact a CSA disclosure may have on family relationships. They also underscore the support needs of siblings and other family members, both in supporting the CSA victim and in coping with their own emotional needs.

**Associations among Co-Parenting, Parental Play and Toddlers' Socio-Emotional Competencies**

**Angana Nandy, Jean Quigley, Elizabeth Nixon**

**Trinity College Dublin**

A child's socio-emotional development is critically dependent on their early interactions with parents. However, little research so far has examined how family-level processes such as the co-parenting relationship relate to the quality of parent-child interactions and fewer studies have focussed on the toddler years when parents are the primary playmates. As such, the current study aims to answer the following research questions: (i) how are mothers' and fathers' co-parenting behaviours associated with toddlers' socio-emotional competencies and (ii) does parental play mediate or moderate the association between co-parenting behaviours and toddlers' socio-emotional competencies? 86 heterosexual married couples with children aged between 24 and 36 months were observed playing with their children for a total of 10 minutes in the laboratory setting at TCD. Co-parenting and parental play behaviours were coded macro and microanalytically. Children's socio-emotional competencies were assessed via parental report. Results indicated a direct positive association between higher co-parental cooperation and toddlers' socio-emotional competencies ( $r = .308, p < .05$ ). In addition, a direct association was found between maternal displeasure exhibited towards partners and toddlers' socio-emotional competencies but this was found to be moderated by maternal play behaviours. Further analysis indicated that the negative relation between maternal co-parental displeasure and toddlers' socio-emotional competencies held for mothers who exhibited moderate ( $t = -2.40, p < .05$ ) to high ( $t = -3.62, p < .01$ ) playful behaviours but not for mothers exhibiting low playful behaviours ( $t = .35, p = .72$ ). This study provides a new perspective on co-parenting dynamics and urges future research to consider family dynamics beyond the marital relationship when studying child development.

**Are foster children seen and heard in the adoption process?**

**Mary Neligan**

**PhD Candidate, UCC**

The Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Dr Zappone signed the Adoption (Amendment) Act, 2017 into law in October, 2017; its primary purpose to give effect to Article 42A of the Constitution. Article 42A underpins a fundamental shift in our law, policy and practice regarding children where their recognition in the adoption process is now from someone who has a right to be heard. Section 9, (3) of the Act requires the views of any child who is capable of forming his or her own views to be taken into account in adoption proceeding (Adoption (Amendment) Act, 2017).

Adoption is a complex legal process which involves the permanent legal transfer of children from one set of parents and one family to another. This presentation is about adoption from foster care which occurs when foster carers want to make a lifelong commitment to their foster child and it is considered to be in the child's best interest to be adopted.

The above mentioned legislation and my work as a social worker with children in the area of adoption triggered my curiosity about what it is like for children and adolescents to be involved in the adoption process. Are children involved in these processes to the extent that they are heard? Are their perspectives and interests included and considered? Are children given adequate information so that they can make informed choices about their circumstances and options? An important aspect of this study is how can children's best interests be served if children's views are not sought, heard or considered?

**Designated Liaison Persons in Irish Primary Schools; The potential impact on children's lives and safety.**

**Dr Margaret Nohilly and Dr Mia Treacy**

**Mary Immaculate College of Education**

Outside of the home, children and young people spend the majority of the time in school. While many children leave and return to safe and protective home environments, for other children their childhood is destroyed by abusive behaviour; be it sexual, physical, emotional or neglect. Indeed this abuse happens both within and outside of the family home, but generally the perpetrator is known to the child. Given the amount of time that children spend in school, and the trusting relationships that are built with teachers and school personnel, it is understandable that concerns and disclosures in relation to child protection will be uncovered in the school environment. Given recent changes in legislation in Ireland, all teachers now have mandatory responsibilities in reporting child abuse to the Child and Family Agency (CFA) (Government of Ireland, 2015). The Designated Liaison Person (DLP) appointed by the Board of Management of each school has overall responsibility for child protection. This paper reviews the supports and challenges reported by

DLP's in their role. Findings of a survey completed with primary school DLP's are presented illustrating that while there are supports available to them in their role, the challenges are numerous. An online survey was e mailed to the DLP of all primary schools in Ireland. Of the 3,248 schools, 387 DLP's responded, reflecting a response rate of 12.01%. Particular attention is paid to the challenges of the role of DLP and the potential impact on children's lives and children's safety.

**Children's voices: Participation in decision making within the goal-setting process in occupational therapy.**

**Deirdre O' Connor with Dr Helen Lynch and Dr Bryan Boyle (Supervisors)**

**University College Cork**

**Introduction:** Children's participation in decision-making remains an under-researched area, especially in the context of occupational therapy. Therefore, the principal aim of this research was to explore the experience of children in relation to having their voices heard within goal-setting in occupational therapy. This is in line with Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, (1989) and with occupational therapy's commitments to client-centred practice (World Federation of Occupational Therapy, 2019).

**Study Design:** Informed by the approaches of ethnography, this qualitative study had 17 participants including 6 children, 5 parent(s)/guardian(s) and 6 occupational therapists to gain multiple perspectives from those involved in goal-setting. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with all participants, while a mosaic approach offered children multiple methods to communicate their experience. Findings were analysed using a thematic analysis approach.

**Findings:** On analysis, 3 themes emerged: 1) The context of decision-making, 2) I have a right to be heard - "Just because they're a child doesn't mean that their opinion doesn't count", and 3) Collaborative goal setting - "What does the balance look like?". Findings suggest that occupational therapy goals are, for the most part, adult directed and as such children's voices are subsumed by adult agendas.

**Conclusion:** Findings illustrate that despite healthcare professionals valuing the voice of children, children and their parents are not consistently included in goal-setting. Numerous barriers to the implementation of Article 12 were found. Moreover, few formal guidelines or standards exist in how to operationalise a child's right-based approach in practice.

**The identification of anxiety by teacher nominations compared to children's self-report ratings on an anxiety measure**

**Pia O' Farrell, Dr Charlotte Wilson and Prof Gerry Shiel**

**DCU and Trinity College Dublin (joint project)**

**Background:** Children experiencing anxiety are often under-identified in the school context, despite the fact that anxiety disorders are among the most common psychiatric disorder (Headley & Campbell 2013; Polanczyk, Salum, Sugaya, Caye, & Rohde, 2015).

**Aim and objective/s of the study:** The purpose of this study was to compare the identification of anxiety by teacher referrals/nominations of children (eight to twelve-year-olds) and children's self-report ratings on an anxiety measure, entitled the Revised Children's Manifest Anxiety Scale, Second Edition (RCMAS-2).

**Method:** Ethical approval was obtained. Stratified random sampling was used to select schools from different categories. The nominations made by 59 primary school teachers were compared to 914 children who completed the RCMAS-2 (Reynolds & Richmond, 2008) and some researcher designed questions on anxiety. SPSS 24 was used to analyse the data.

**Findings:** Findings indicated that there was a significant relationship between pupils nominated by the teacher and pupils "at risk" on the RCMAS-2 ( $\geq 60$ ),  $\chi^2(1, N = 894) = 5.83, p < .01$ . It is worth noting though that the effect size is very weak (.01).

Conclusions and implications: These findings play an important role in our understanding of how children are identified in schools and the relationship between nominations made by teachers and pupils self-report scores. Implications for practice and future research are discussed.

### **The empowering role of play in supporting the socioemotional development and learning of pupils on the Autism Spectrum**

**Christina O'Keeffe**

**Dublin City University, IoE**

Play is an integral aspect of early childhood and remains the natural means of expression for children in the early years (Wierda, 2016). Bass and Mullock (2007) define play as an essential vehicle through which children develop lifelong social interaction skills and friendships (Bass & Mullock, 2007). For pupils on the Autism Spectrum (AS), difficulties in social communication are compounded by challenges in accessing interactive play opportunities. This may further exacerbate the isolation experienced by pupils on the AS (Hess, 2006), who often remain on the periphery of socially interactive experiences (Francke & Geist, 2003). Whilst there are increasing recommendations from both national and international legislation surrounding the use of play based approaches to learning (NCCA, 2009; UNCRC, 1989), few supports are currently in place to promote the interactive play of pupils on the AS. This is surprising given the central role of play within the early years (Whitebread et al., 2017). Therefore, it is essential that children on the AS are supported to access play opportunities and its associated social developmental benefits. This, in turn, will not only support the development of play but also social participation (Manning & Wainwright, 2010), offering children a valued voice within the classroom context.

This presentation discusses the empowering role of play in supporting children's access to key social developmental opportunities within the early year's classroom, a relationship that remains relatively unexplored within both research and practice.

### **Feasibility Study of an Online Pain Management Programme for Children Undergoing Major Orthopaedic Surgery: iCanCope Post-Op**

**O'Reilly, P<sup>1</sup>., O'Grady, B<sup>1</sup>., Mulry, M<sup>1</sup>., O'Dwyer, B<sup>1</sup>., McCarthy, K<sup>2</sup>., Kiely, P<sup>2</sup>., Hundert, A<sup>3</sup>., Stinson, J<sup>3</sup>. & McGuire, B<sup>1</sup>.**

**1. Centre for Pain Research, School of Psychology, NUI Galway, Ireland. 2. Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin, Ireland. 3. The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids), Toronto, Canada.**

**Centre for Pain Research, NUI Galway**

Poorly treated acute postsurgical pain can negatively affect sleep, anxiety, social functioning, quality of life, remobilization, and if untreated can develop into chronic postsurgical pain. Psychological interventions have been successful in assisting young people to manage acute postsurgical pain. The use of mobile technology in the maintenance of health behaviours has increased in the last decade. One such area where this has been shown is pain management, however this has mainly been limited to desktop web-based interventions. Wireless handheld technology with Internet capabilities may improve access to pain self-management for adolescents with postsurgical pain.

By adapting the Canadian *iCanCope* pain self-management smartphone application specifically for children 12–18yrs undergoing scoliosis, limb reconstruction and pectus repair surgery, this project aims to improve postsurgical pain self-management, reduce the impact of acute postsurgical pain and deliver improved physical and psychological outcomes for these populations.

Phase 1: Adolescents, their parents and relevant healthcare professionals will advise on how best to adapt the *iCanCope* smartphone application to be relevant for these surgical populations. Phase 2: The aesthetics, usability and functionality of the newly adapted *iCanCope PostOp* smartphone application will be tested by adolescents. Phase 3: A Pilot RCT will determine the effectiveness of the *iCanCope PostOp* smartphone application across 5 time points.

The results of Phase 1 have been collated and the *iCanCope PostOp* smartphone app has been adapted accordingly. Phase 2 of this project is currently underway and will be complete by December 2019. Phase 3 will begin in February 2020.

### **Play as a Valued Pedagogical Tool in Autism Classrooms?**

**Dr Carol-Ann O'Síoráin**

**Hibernia College**

In 1992 Ireland signed up to the UN Convention for the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and in 2018 ratified the UN Convention of the Rights of the Person with Disabilities (UNCRPD). Both conventions enshrine the rights of the person to develop as a uniquely talented and creative person. Is it time to reflect on how we support our children with autism in achieving their potential? Children with autism can experience many barriers to play and communication and supporting these children to engage socially with their non-autistic peers is critical to inclusion and generating a sense of belonging. It is well researched that play is rarely referred to as a pedagogical tool in autism teaching and learning, and where play exists, that there is an over-focus on pretend play. Article 31 of the UNCRC positions the right to play as 'engagement in play, creation and leisure'.

This presentation positions an argument to challenge a critical reflection on play in practice in autism specific setting in mainstream primary schools and draws attention to the voice of the autistic child through playfulness and structured play. It seeks to ask, is play valued within the observed curriculum structures of autism classrooms in the Republic of Ireland? Classroom observations provide evidence for this discussion and the voice of autistic children in play and playfulness are presented to encourage us to become playful pedagogues.

**'I don't feel that I can complain about my brother's diabetes': siblings' participation in care**

**Regitze Anne Saurbrey Pals<sup>1,2</sup>, Imelda Coyne<sup>3</sup>, Timothy Skinner<sup>1,2</sup>, Patricia Enebær Irene DeCosta<sup>1,2</sup>, Dan Grabowski<sup>1</sup>**

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Family interactions play an important role in children's diabetes management. However, psychosocial interventions for pre-teen children with type 1 diabetes often overlook the value of targeting all important family members and their relational dynamics. The aim of this study was to explore how care and support were enacted and perceived by pre-teens (9-12 years old) with type 1 diabetes and their siblings.

Methods: Four interactive workshops were held with pre-teens (n=17), their parents (n=26) and their siblings (n=14) across four hospital settings in Denmark. Dialogue tools were applied to facilitate discussion and reflection about family life with type 1 diabetes. The workshops were audio-recorded and data analysed using radical hermeneutics. Ethical approval was obtained.

Findings: The relationship between pre-teens and siblings appeared to be marked by a distinction between 'family life' and 'diabetes life'. Siblings expressed a wish to support their sibling with diabetes but were unsure how. At the same time, they did not want diabetes to take up too much family space, but avoided expressing their frustrations. Pre-teens perceived diabetes as something that could interfere with their relationship with their sibling and preferred them not to worry about diabetes. However, they reported feeling safe if their sibling knew how to support them e.g. when they were without their parents. That especially applied to older siblings.

Conclusions: Managing diabetes within the family and negotiating relationships is challenging for pre-teens and their siblings. Clearly siblings should be 'seen and heard' in future interventions for pre-teens diabetes care.

**Sharing unheard children's voices from our past: Tragedy in the Orphanage, 1908**

**Dr Jennifer Pope**

**Mary Immaculate College**

Over the course of a few days in November 1908, in the Mount St. Vincent orphanage in Limerick, ten girls had died and over seventy were ill due to food poisoning from beef stew. 'So swiftly was the happy scene of childish life and merriment changed into one of deepest gloom and sadness' (Sisters of Mercy Annals, Vol.5 1908-1941). Child mortality from food poisoning was not a common occurrence and this tragic event received widespread attention at a local, national and international level. The Mayor described the event as 'the most lamentable calamity which occurred in the city for a long period of years' and thousands lined the

streets of Limerick to pay respects to the funeral cortege of the young girls. Subsequent medical journal articles and textbooks referenced the case to contribute to learning for the wider medical community and this still has implications for current practice in terms of food hygiene. This paper discusses this tragic event and the responses from a range of perspectives, giving insights into life in the orphanage at the time and into Irish society, childhood and industrial schooling. It also details the author's own response to this story and the effort to commemorate these girls by providing an opportunity to tell some of their short life stories behind the generic label of 'inmates' which they were often referred to in the coverage at the time.

**Transitioning from Early Intervention Teams - The case of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).**

**Gráinne Quinn and Dr Niamh Gallagher**

**IT Sligo, Health Service Executive: Ireland**

Seamless and continuous care experiences are the gold standard for children and caregivers impacted by ASD when transitioning through health and social care services. However, little is known about the experience of continuity of care in this context. The aim of this study was to explore service users' and providers' perspectives of continuity of care when children with ASD transition from Early Intervention Teams(EITs) to Primary, Community and Continuing Care Teams(PCCCCT). Semi-structured interviews framed in theoretical perspectives of Strauss's Chronic Care Trajectory Framework (Corbin & Strauss,1985) were completed with parents of children with ASD who had transitioned services(n=5). Service providers were also interviewed(n=14) to explore factors impacting on users' experiences. Parents' expectations of this transition are dissimilar to their experiences, leading to emotional and 'work' consequences. Participants report that they are not 'known' in EIT(relational continuity) which heightens the need for effective information transfer(informational continuity). Caregivers report that they are burdened by the responsibility of communicating key details regarding their children's complex trajectories to new service providers. The context and approaches to care vary significantly when the child transitions services(management continuity). Service providers concur that information sharing practices need to be more streamlined to ensure a smoother transition. Results of this study highlight the 'work' involved in coordinating care in this transition and propose solutions to improve experienced continuity of care. Findings offer novel insights into experienced continuity of care associated with health and social care transitions and offer potential for shaping both policy and practice in children's disability services.

**Supporting Primary School Teachers Implementing Aistear: Ireland's Early Childhood Curriculum Framework**

**Clare Roche**

**TU Dublin - Blanchardstown**

Aistear is a rights based, play based approach to learning. Aistear supports adults to engage with children in ways that afford children opportunities to participate in their own learning. By using an emergent curriculum the teacher provides the child with a voice and helps children to be active agents in their own learning. Often there is a difference between what teachers say and what occurs in practice. While teachers acknowledge that there are advantages to play as a pedagogy, they have also conceded they have a lack of understanding. This leads to a disparity of what takes place in the classroom. Goldberg (1995) found that child centered learning supported self-regulation, and that children are more independent and achieve greater academic success in their later years of schooling. The OECD (2015) found that adult interaction is crucial to encourage and inspire very young children in their learning. Since the introduction of Aistear in 2009, a curriculum framework has been in place to support children express their views and interests within the learning environment. This research aims to identify supports for teachers implementing the curriculum framework to facilitate the child's interests and provide rich learning experiences. This research aims to explore teacher's understanding and in turn provide supports to encourage the use of a play based curriculum in the classroom.

This research has employed a qualitative approach to gathering data. The research carried out one to one interviews with eleven primary school teachers. Following that, there were three classroom observations in order to witness Aistear in action.

**What does our emotionally competent future look like?**

**Ângelo Simoes**

**TUDublin – Blanchardstown Campus**

This presentation starts with a miracle question: If tomorrow we woke up to a highly emotionally intelligent society, what would that look like?

A great amount of research has been done on the development of emotional and social abilities – often called emotional intelligence. Drawing from research and the researcher's professional background as a psychologist working with couples and families, this presentation depicts an image of the emotionally intelligent society we are becoming. A special focus is placed on how children, their behaviours, opinions and attitudes are crucial to advance us towards that vision.

**Child and Adolescent Rule-following: Exactly what it says on the tin (Except not at all)**

**Alison Stapleton & Dr Louise McHugh (Alison Stapleton will be presenting)**

**University College Dublin**

Recent research has sought to examine rule-following with respect to distinct functional classes, namely pliance and tracking. Pliance refers to behavior under the control of arbitrary social consequences, whereas tracking refers to behavior under the control of the natural consequences of engaging in the behavior. Given that generalized pliance precipitates a loss of contact with natural reinforcers, problems arise when behaviour is predominantly under its control. However, while there have been efforts to empirically examine these classes of rule-following (through quantitative self-report and behavioral tests), such measurement relies on researchers inferring the participants' motivations (rather than just asking them). Based on this issue, the proposed lightbulb presentation will highlight the disconnect between what we may infer are the consequences of a rule versus how the rule-follower may experience the consequences. This presentation will be interactive and delivered in the context of recent research conducted with children and adolescents. Attendees will be introduced to different rules participants adhered to and asked to categorize these rules into the seemingly congruent class (i.e. pliance or tracking). Through multiple exemplars, this presentation will highlight that child and adolescent rule-following is exactly what it says on the tin (except not at all) and further emphasize the theme of this conference – that children should be seen *and* heard (i.e. we can qualitatively examine whether they are engaging in problematic generalized pliance by simply asking rather than trying to infer their internal motivations).

**Listening to Seldom Heard Children and Young People: Hearing the voice of CYP in child protection and welfare services**

**Edel Tierney (on behalf of the Child Research Study Working Group)**

**Tusla Child and Family Agency**

Research in Ireland and internationally has shown that children and young people often feel that their voices are not heard in the context of very formalised and bureaucratic child welfare and protection systems. Children's participation in the context of child protection and welfare offers a range of benefits for children and young people, such as ensuring that decisions taken are responsive to their needs, positive psycho-social development, increased self-esteem and a greater sense of agency in their lives.

Tusla are working to transform child protection and welfare services and ensure that children and families actively participate in the decisions that affect their lives. The implementation of The Child Protection and Welfare Strategy (CPWS) is underpinned by a whole system learning approach and is supported by the Child and Youth Participation Strategy. The CPWS Research Portfolio has responsibility for an action research programme and includes a research project to understand the experiences of children and young people in receipt of child protection and welfare services. The study has a particular focus exploring how children and young people experience these services and whether they feel that their voice is heard in decisions that are made in child protection and welfare service provision.

The focus of this presentation will be on how Tusla approached this study and their consultation with CYP to develop a research tender. Some of the ethical issues involved and how it may inform a wider evaluation of implementation of the CPWS in the future will be discussed.

### **Exploring children's experiences of play and recreation in local neighbourhoods with walking interviews**

**Karinda Tolland, Dr Carol Barron, Dr Yvonne Corcoran**

**Dublin City University**

This presentation will report on children's individual, social and physical experiences of play and recreation in local neighbourhoods. This ethnographic study drew from walking interview data whereby the child went with the researcher on a child-directed walk around their local neighbourhood. During the walk participants were asked about the spaces and places where their physical activity play and recreation occurs. The objective of the walking interview method was to obtain an in-depth and contextual understanding of children's play and recreation practices in local neighbourhoods and the wider built environment. The walking interviews produced data items in the form of interview transcripts, photographs, fieldnotes and maps. Thematic analysis was used to identify, analyse and report patterns within the data. The interpretation of the data reveals that participants' personal experiences within specific sites are unique, yet there are similarities in how these places are utilised by children and young people. The two dominant themes to emerge from the analysis of the data are: (1) Children's independent and interdependent spatial mobility (sub-themes: parental permissions and restrictions; and, accompanied mobility: companions and devices); and (2) Children's encounters and experiences with people and places (sub-themes: playmates and play spaces close to home; looking outward: built environment and natural spaces; place feelings and emotions).

### **Make Minority a Priority**

**Anne Walsh**

**National Youth Council of Ireland**

Make Minority a Priority, a National Youth Council of Ireland research project, sheds new light on the experiences on minority ethnic young people growing up in Ireland. It demands a re-listening of minority ethnic young people and deeply hearing what they have to say about what it means not just to be black (or white) but to act black (or white) in Ireland today. This puts forward a challenge to all of us to re-look at how we frame integration in Ireland and to consider the injustices that we do when the majority set the parameters of how we engage with one another in a culturally diverse society.

Focused on what the youth sector needs to do to meet the needs of minority ethnic young people it has messages for us all in how we look at integration and how we view social groupings and social spaces we provide in our schools and colleges.

The research also raises issues around the endemic nature of racism in Irish society and how those who experience it cope with racism and the many microaggressions that send young people the message that they do not belong. Reaching into key aspects of belonging and identity it also raises questions on how – and why - we do research with minority ethnic young people.

### **A Qualitative exploration of social networking sites and adolescent subjective wellbeing.**

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Young people are going online more, at younger ages and in more diverse ways (Livingstone et al., 2014) as social networking sites have now become ubiquitous in their lives (de Vries, Peter, de Graaf, & Nikken, 2016). This study will investigate the impact that communicating by social networking sites has on their subjective wellbeing, defined by The National Children's Bureau as "a state of positive mental health and wellness" (Weare, 2015). The aim of the study is to answer the research question, "Is there a relationship between the use of online social networking sites and the subjective wellbeing of adolescents?"

Three schools in Northern Ireland participated in the study, for each school there were two focus groups of year ten students (one with girls and one with boys), a parent focus group and an interview with a teacher who has pastoral care responsibility. The students were asked about their use of social networking sites and

how they think it affects aspects of their subjective wellbeing, the parents were asked if they thought their children's use of social networking sites affected the young people's subjective wellbeing and the teachers were asked to detail school policies, practices and experiences of using social networking sites within the school. The transcripts were analysed thematically following the six steps of Braun and Clarke (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and NVivo software was used for the analysis. Initial themes arising from the study were: connectedness, sleep deprivation, feeling left out and comparison.