



## Welcome to the Summer IRCT Newsletter!



IRCT continues to be busy on many fronts, advocating for the right to recovery from childhood trauma. We have been active in many exciting initiatives and policy developments so far in 2025 that we look forward to sharing with you in our latest newsletter.

Plus information on how to join our next in-person Best Practice Forum at the House of Lords this September

### Lobbying 🗣️

#### Cuts to the Adoption and Special Guardianship Support Fund (ASGSF)



IRCT is deeply concerned by the impact that these cuts are having and will have on children who have suffered early life trauma

We are calling on the government to reinstate the previous levels of therapy and assessment funding within the ASGSF.

[Read our Statement](#)

#### Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill

The children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill is currently being debated both in the House of Commons and the House of Lords and IRCT has been collaborating with other likeminded charities and organisations to make changes to the proposed Bill.

#### Children at the Table - Children's Charity Coalition



IRCT is a signatory to the briefing paper from the Children's Charities Coalition on amendments to the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill. These would make it a requirement for local authorities and the Secretary of State to take children's views into account. At present the Bill fails to put children's voices at the heart of decision-making. This means that critical decisions can be made at local and regional levels without consideration of the views and experiences of the children they affect. The Bill is currently at the House of Lords Committee Stage and the amendments are being tabled by Baroness Tyler.

#### Just for Kids Law



IRCT is also part of a larger coalition facilitated by Just for Kids Law of 123 children's organisations asking for Peers to support further amendments which have been tabled by Baroness Lister of Burtersett in a bid to ensure that the Government has to ensure that the rights of children are systematically considered in law and policy making. Ultimately we want to see the full incorporation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children (UNCRC) into UK law, something IRCT has been promoting for a long time.

[View more details on the Briefing Papers](#)

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#### **Increasing access to evidence-informed mental health service provision for children in care in England – National recommendations for change**

Led by Professor Rachel Hiller (UCL) researchers from the University of Cambridge, University of Sussex, Kingston University, Kings College London, University of Bristol and the National Institute for Health & Care Research (NICE) pooled their research evidence and then created some shared recommendations for change.

IRCT attended a launch event attended by practitioners, care experienced young people and civil servants. Helen Hayes MP and Chair of the Education Select Committee gave an introductory speech before Rachel Hiller shared the recommendations which span commissioning practices, integrated service delivery, and workforce training.

[Read about the national recommendations for change here.](#)



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#### **IRCT Policy Document (2024)**

Our updated [IRCT policy document](#) is being distributed across political parties and to relevant governmental departments.

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#### **Therapeutic Childcare Standards**

Many residential and foster care services describe themselves as offering therapeutic care but there has been no agreed standard available to allow comparisons between services or to confirm efficacy.

Sylvia Duncan (IRCT Chair) and Andre Palmer (IRCT Trustee) have been actively involved in the development of Therapeutic Childcare Standards with the Royal Psychiatry Community of Communities Group working party.

[The final version has just been published and can be read in this link.](#)

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#### **Recovery Principles**

IRCT Trustee, Andre Palmer, in collaboration with other IRCT board members has been undertaking a project to identify core principles for intervention to enable recovery from childhood trauma. The principles are aimed to guide those working towards recovery from childhood trauma across various contexts and approaches. We hope to share this work with you in the autumn.

### Introducing new Trustee - Jay Vaughan, MBE, MA

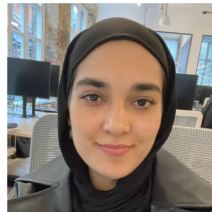
Jay has been working with traumatised children since 1989, and passionately believes in the use of arts, play and body-based approaches in helping care experienced children and their families heal.



Jay is a co-founder of [Family Futures](#), a leading therapy centre for care experienced children and their families in the UK. Since 1998 when Family Futures began thousands of families have been helped through the pioneering assessment and therapy service which helps children heal from early life trauma and abuse. Jay's extensive clinical experience with children and families has informed the Family Futures therapy model, Neuro Physiological Psychotherapy (NPP), Jay was awarded an MBE in the Queen's Jubilee Birthday Honours Lists in 2022 for services to children and young people. Jay is also a trustee for CVAA.

Jay is a Dramatherapist, Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapist, Somatic Experience Practitioner and Theraplay Practitioner, trainer & supervisor and is a published author, trainer and children's advocate.

We are very excited to have Jay's experience and expertise!



### Welcome Halah Brown

Halah is a volunteer at IRCT, supporting the charity's digital engagement and helping to expand its reach. She has a background in business analysis and project management and also works as a tutor supporting children with special educational needs (SEN). Through this, she has seen the challenges faced by children who have experienced trauma and the importance of ensuring they receive the right support. She is committed to raising awareness of trauma-informed care and strengthening IRCT's online presence to connect more people with the charity's vital work.

## Research ↗

### IRCT collaborates with Oxford Brookes University

Dr Jon Reid has recently been appointed as a Project Advisor (researcher) for a collaboration between Oxford University, Oxford Brookes University and Oxfordshire County Council. The Policy Lab 2025 project [here](#) involves supporting three Postgraduate Fellows to examine the association between Adverse Childhood Experiences and drivers for Education Health and Care Plans in Oxfordshire. More recently Jon has been invited by LifeSpace [here](#) to evaluate a project to examine the impact of supervision in schools.

IRCT are pleased to support the recent Attachment Research Community and the Restorative Justice Council publication 'Engaging our Children and Young People - Connecting the System' document. This document recognises the importance of ensuring that the statutory systems that support children and young people are connected, complementary and consistent. Recommendations for Education, Health, Social Care and Criminal Justice include the integration of Relational, Trauma Informed and Attachment Aware approaches. You can find the document [here](#)

In case you missed it, the Oxford University Excluded Lives Project has recently published Equity by Design: 'Our Children, Our Responsibility' – Policy and Practice Recommendations for Developing School Inclusion and Reducing School Exclusion in England.

To support the reduction in school exclusions, the report discusses the importance of positive school cultures which develop a sense of belonging through encouraging evidence informed inclusive approaches including "strengths-based approaches, trauma and attachment informed support, peacebuilding, preventative practices, fostering inclusive cultures, relationship building, and restorative practices". Such recommendations have been advocated by IRCT over the years and are reflected in our recent Policy recommendations paper. You can read the whole Excluded Lives report [here](#)

### The Anna Freud Centre Research

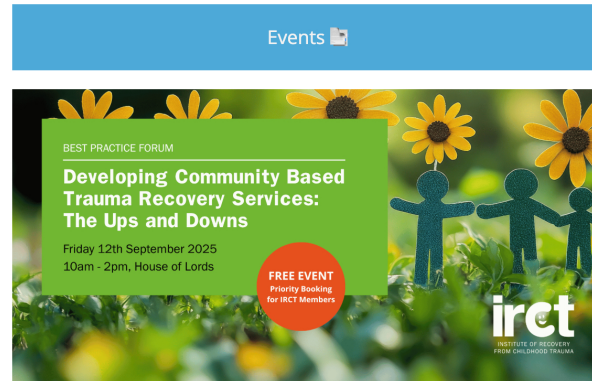
We have been made aware of interesting research by The Anna Freud Centre into the impact of reflective fostering.

[The Reflective Fostering Programme](#)

### Los Angeles National Centre for Child Traumatic Stress

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network have published a useful paper enabling people to look beyond simply using ACE scores to assess the severity of need of children and young people

[Amaya-Jackson et al \(2021\) Beyond the ACE Score: Perspectives from the NCTSN on Child Trauma and Adversity Screening and Impact](#)



JOIN US THIS SEPTEMBER AT THE HOUSE OF LORDS

### Developing Community Based Trauma Recovery Services: The ups and downs

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2025  
10am - 2pm  
Committee Room 1 House of Lords

There will be presentations by two community based teams describing the development, approach, challenges and successes of their services together with time for discussion and sharing of ideas for moving forward

This Best Practice Forum will be of interest to all practitioners and managers struggling to know how best to promote the recovery of vulnerable children who have suffered complex trauma.

***We anticipate a high demand for places which are free, but limited and will be restricted to IRCT members.***

***If you are not already a member, visit <https://irct.org.uk/membership-join/> to join and gain a free place at this and all our Best Practice Forums at the House of Lords.***

For full programme details, click on the button to go to eventbrite.

[Reserve your place today!](#)



**Mosaic Foster Care Conference this November**

Mosaic Foster Care is holding its 5<sup>th</sup> annual conference in Rayleigh Essex on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2025 “**Imagining a Better Future in Caring for Those Who Fight Against It**” with Ariel Nathanson Child, Adolescent & adult Psychotherapist.

The conference will explore working with children with complex developmental trauma and is free to all IRCT members – please save the date more details to follow...

For early sign up before general release please email [lauren@mosaicfostercare.com](mailto:lauren@mosaicfostercare.com)

With our continued focus on Recovery from Trauma, we explore questions such as 'What recovery from trauma means and looks like, How is it defined and how is it achieved'. We always welcome any ideas, experiences and resources regarding this focus that our members can share or direct us too. Please contact at [chris@irct.org.uk](mailto:chris@irct.org.uk)

Thank you for your ongoing support  
**The IRCT Trustees**

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