



Dear Members, welcome to the Spring 2024 IRCT newsletter!

The newsletter provides you with up to date information regarding the work of the Institute along with initiatives and research that relates to our mission to improve understanding and intervention into childhood recovery from trauma. We aim to provide three newsletters a year to you. We are very keen for the newsletter to be a conduit for communication and involvement with all members so please do contact the Institute to tell us about the work you are undertaking, and new initiatives, research, theory and resources we can disseminate.

Please contact Chris Bennett at chris@irct.org.uk with anything you would like to share.

New events announced and see below how you can support IRCT Trustee James McAllister in his half marathon this weekend!

The APPG for Childhood Trauma

Last year IRCT took over the secretariat for the APPG for Childhood Trauma. All-Party Parliamentary Groups are informal cross-party groups that exist to increase understanding and awareness of specific issues across both Houses of Parliament.

The APPG for Childhood Trauma aims to promote increased awareness and understanding of the impact of complex childhood trauma and the implications for children's services. The Chair of the APPG is Wera Hobhouse MP and we have more than 20 members from both Houses.

We hold termly meetings with parliamentarians, academics, and representatives from voluntary and statutory services. At the meeting in November 2023, we considered the impact and cost of childhood trauma across mental health, early years, education, and the criminal justice system. The briefing papers can be downloaded from the website [here](#) and were distributed to over 70 MPs and members of the House of Lords.

It was agreed at this meeting that we would aim to secure a follow up meeting with Damien Hinds, Minister of State for Schools, to discuss the impact of education policy and practice on children who have experienced trauma. This issue was discussed in more detail at our meeting in March with a presentation from Julie Harmieson, Trauma Informed Schools, and a wide-ranging discussion with representatives from education, the voluntary sector, academia, London's Violence Reduction Unit, the Excluded Lives Project, and the Attachment Research Community. There is real concern that current education policy and practice is contributing to the increase in school exclusions, particularly for children who have experienced trauma, as well as increasing emotional and mental health problems and emotionally based school avoidance. Damien Hinds has agreed to a meeting, and this is currently being arranged.

It is likely that we will be looking at access to mental health services in future meetings this year. If you would like to know more about the APPG or be added to the mailing list, please contact sarah@irct.org.uk



IRCT Trustees at our recent APPG meeting

11th Annual Inclusion Conference

Last month, Dr Jon Reid, IRCT Trustee, hosted the 11th Annual School of Education Inclusion conference. The event was well attended by Initial Teacher Education students, Undergraduate students, Postgraduate students, and colleagues.

The theme of this year's conference was belonging.

Jon opened the conference with a plea to guests to engage in compassionate non-conformity to resist educational initiatives which are increasing experiences of distress in our school communities. Rather than an education system which is currently focused on competition, comparison, compliance, and control, Jon encouraged a re-imagining of the education system to one that is more focused on collaboration, creativity, care, and compassion.

Throughout the day a variety of workshops were hosted. Jon offers his thanks to colleagues Christine Ivory, Dr Carmel Capewell, Rachel Faulkner and Matthew Wimpeny-Smith for hosting the morning workshops. Our afternoon workshops, hosted by external speakers, focused on children affected by labels and assumptions, children affected by disparate educational opportunities, children affected by parental imprisonment and children affected by adversity and trauma. Feedback from the days event has been positive.

The morning keynote was offered by Rawz, a local multidisciplinary Artist from Oxford. Rawz shared powerful experiences of interacting with the education system and wider society as a working class, mixed heritage male from a single parent family, living in one of the UK's most deprived wards. He described his struggles to find a place of belonging in Oxford "a city whose very name is globally synonymous with privilege, tradition and conformity".

Useful links to research related to trauma informed and compassionate educational approaches:

Education and exclusions

<https://deref-gmx.co.uk/mail/client/j6dXAwEkGel/dereferrer?redirectUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fepi.org.uk%2Fpublications-and-research%2Foutcomes-for-pupils-suspended-in-primary-school%2F>
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02643944.2024.2318776>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRSPgW7yGgA>
<https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/outcomes-for-young-people-who-experience-multiple-suspen/>

Trustees

Sadly, Jacqui Sansom has resigned from her Trustee role due to a lack of sufficient time to fulfil the role responsibilities. We are currently looking for more trustees! If you are interested, please contact Sylvia Duncan, IRCT Chair chair@irct.org.uk

Patronage

IRCT are actively searching for someone from the House of Lords to takeover from Baroness Butler-Sloss who has kindly agreed to continue until we can find someone new.

Upcoming Events

Join us at the House of Lords in July!

BEST PRACTICE FORUM

Creating an Inclusive Environment to Promote Recovery from Trauma: Relational Practice in Action

Friday 12th July 2024, 10am - 2pm
House of Lords



This conference is suitable for all practitioners working to help children and young people who have experienced complex trauma to recover so that they can have a better chance to take their place in their communities with

can have a better chance to take their place in their communities with confidence, make mutually satisfying relationships with others and fulfil their potential

What to expect from the event;

A range of speakers from a background in education, therapeutic residential care and foster care will share their models of working. Please see eventbrite for more details.



Tickets: FREE

[Reserve your space today!](#)

CONFERENCE 2024

How do Foster Parents contribute to children's recovery from trauma?

Friday 22nd November 2024



November 2024 Conference

"How do Foster Parents contribute to children's recovery from trauma?"

Friday 22nd November
10am - 1pm

Early Bird tickets £20 (all proceeds go to further the work of IRCT)

*Tickets will increase to £30 after 30 June

In this exciting online conference, we will explore how foster parents and fellow professionals understand the concept of recovery and the important part we all play in the child journey to recover from trauma. We will explore this topic from a range of perspectives including research, practice, theory, and foster parent's own experiences. We will also have a round table discussion to generate ideas and strategies to help improve the outcomes for the children we care for.

[Get your Early Bird tickets today](#)

Dates for your diary

**Autumn 2024
ONLINE Best Practice Forum**
Programme TBA

In addition, we will be facilitating 2 more APPG Events (one a term) during the year and we welcome suggestions for these events.

Trustee James McAllister is running for IRCT

Our trustee James McAllister will be running a half-marathon at the Great Manchester Run this weekend to raise money for IRCT. Click on the image below hear about the work of IRCT, and you can donate online by clicking the orange button. Any donations will be gratefully received. Our website is www.irct.org.uk



[Click here to donate and support James](#)

Lobbying

We have increased our lobbying activities alongside and in partnership with other organisations as we approach a General Election later this year. It is an opportunity to try to influence the manifestos of the three main parties to ensure that more importance is given to services for children in the future together with appropriate funding and resources to deliver what is being pledged. There is a demand to make children a priority at a national and local level.



IRCT is a member of the @Party Manifesto Influencing Group led by the National Children's Bureau (NCB) which is aiming to bring the children's sector together in an inclusive way to collaborate, share information, work towards common goals, and provide a platform from which to speak out jointly.

There are around one hundred representatives in the group from a wide range of children's charities and voluntary organisations. Issues discussed most recently include the need to improve mental health support for children both within school, by the creation of Mental Health Support Teams (MHST), and through community hubs as well as the urgent need to address child poverty which impacts negatively on all aspects of children's development and well-being. IRCT is pushing for all children's services to be trauma informed.

IRCT continues to collaborate with the **Alliance for Children in Care & Care Leavers** and is represented not just in the main group but also the Mental Health Sub-Group. Following a meeting with David Johnston, Minister for Children, Families & Well-Being, IRCT was invited to be part of the **DfE-DHSC Advisory Group on 'Statutory Guidance: Promoting the health and well-being of looked after children.'** This gives us a voice alongside others to influence the government guidance on the shape of the provision of both physical and mental health service provision that is deemed to be essential for this group of children who are amongst the most vulnerable and damaged children in our society.

Supporting National Campaigns

words
matter 
help us end verbal abuse of children

Words Matter is an ambitious new charity on a mission to improve children's mental and physical health and development by helping to end verbal abuse of children by adults around them. Children's brains are built in response to the relationships they grow up with, and the words and tones around them, right from the moment they're born. Warm, encouraging words and stable and secure relationships are the building blocks all children need to grow and thrive – but too many children are growing up without the supportive and loving relationships they need to succeed.



London Inclusion Charter

Evidence shows there is a correlation between children with a history of either suspension or exclusion from school and violence. An Ofsted report on knife crime showed that children excluded from school are twice as likely to carry a knife, while data also



to carry a crime, crime data also highlights that almost one in two of the prison population were excluded as children*. We need to make a London-wide aspiration and commitment for change for the benefit of young people to keep them safe and to support them to thrive in school. This must be backed up by investment to support schools and the promotion of good practice already happening across the capital. This is a big ambition that no one agency can achieve on its own.

To find read the reports and find out more visit <https://irct.org.uk/campaigns/>



Children at the Table

Children deserve safer, happier and healthier childhoods. Ahead of an upcoming general election, the UK's five leading children's charities – Action for Children, Barnardo's, The Children's Society, the National Children's Bureau and NSPCC – have joined together. We want to make sure the next government has a plan to make decisions for babies, children and young people with children at the table.

To find read the reports and find out more visit <https://irct.org.uk/campaigns/>

Research

IRCT is making links with various universities, institutes, and research organisations to keep members up to date with latest research relating to the recovery from childhood trauma. Links to latest research will be placed on our [website](#).

Thank you for your ongoing support
The IRCT Trustees

Please like and follow our socials for latest news and insights



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