

# People

## Welcome

**Caralyn Blaisdell** who will be working on the 'West Lothian Early Intervention Programme Evaluation' project.

**Stefanie Schmachtel-Maxfield** is undertaking postdoctoral research with 'What Works Scotland'.

**Adele Lebano** is visiting from Cornell University and will be with CRFR until May 2015.

## Congratulations

CRFR PhD students **Christina McMellon** and **Catherine-Rose Stocks-Rankin** (formerly of the PROP project) on gaining their PhDs.

**Caralyn Blaisdell** who has won the Ethics & Social Welfare, Jo Campling Memorial Prize 2014. Prizes are awarded each year for the best student essays on a theme relevant to 'ethics and social welfare'.



The Scottish Knowledge Exchange Community of Practice (SKECP) is a network of knowledge exchange practitioners and researchers who share practices and experience, build peer relationships for information exchange and support, build KE capacity, advance knowledge of KE effectiveness and share KE events and activities.

If you would like to join the community of practice network, please email [kirsten.thomlinson@ed.ac.uk](mailto:kirsten.thomlinson@ed.ac.uk) outlining your area of work and interests.

# Publications

## Childhoods

Mandel Butler, U, Gadda, A M, Tisdall, E K M (eds) (2014) *Children and Young People's Participation and Its Transformative Potential: Learning from across Countries*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Viry, G (2014) Coparenting and Children's Adjustment to Divorce: The Role of Geographical Distance from Fathers. *Journal of Divorce and Remarriage* 55(7): 503-526.

## Research methods

Wilson, S (2014) Using Secondary Analysis to Maintain a Critically Reflexive Approach to Qualitative Research. *Sociological Research Online*, 19(3): 21.

## Health, caring and well-being

Pickersgill, M (2014) Neuroscience, epigenetics and the intergenerational transmission of social life: exploring expectations and engagements. In *Families, Relationships and Societies*, 3(3): 481-484.

Punch, S (2015) 'Possibilities for Learning between Childhoods and Youth in the Minority and Majority Worlds: Youth transitions as an example of cross-world dialogue,' in Wyn, J. and Cahill, H. (eds) *Handbook of Children and Young Adulthood*, Singapore: Springer.

## Parenting

Harden, J and Dickson, A (2014) Low income mothers' food practices with young children: A qualitative longitudinal study. *Health Education Journal*. Online first 4 June 2014.

Harden, J, MacLean, A, Backett-Milburn, K, Cunningham-Burley, S, and Jamieson, L (2014) Responsibility, work and family life: Children's and Parents' experiences of working parenthood. In Holland, J and Edwards, R (eds) *Understanding Families over Time*. Palgrave Macmillan.

## Rurality

Copus, A and de Lima, P (eds) (2014) *Territorial Cohesion in Rural Europe. The Relational Turn in Rural Development*. London: Routledge.



# crfr bitesize

Centre for Research on Families and Relationships January 2015



## What's new...

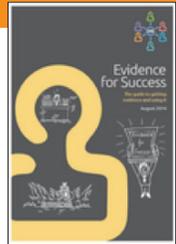
### Evidence for success - new guide

CRFR has been working with other members of the Knowledge Translation Network (KTN), established in 2002 and chaired by Evaluation Support Scotland, to facilitate and share learning about effective knowledge translation and dissemination activities.

The KTN recently published its first resource, 'Evidence for Success: The guide to getting evidence and using it', which offers easy to follow, step-by-step guidance and resources to support third sector organisations to use evidence to influence policy and practice.

The guide is for anyone who wants to use evidence to improve policy and practice, regardless of the level of experience they have in doing so. This guide will also be of value to a wide range of stakeholders, including: practitioners, service managers, funders and commissioners, and policy makers and planners.

Evaluation Support Scotland, supported by members of the KTN, ran two 'Evidence for Success' workshops to help 23 third sector organisations make the best of the advice and learning in the guide — feedback was extremely positive.



**"The guide looks really good, nice short and simple tips."** Pamela Barnes, Includem

**"Overall, I found the guide engaging – a good read, language, tone, etc. throughout is appropriate and excellent in my view. I genuinely enjoyed reading it."**

Carolyn Sawers, Big Lottery Fund

**"The course and working examples went a long way to my understanding of putting into practice."** Workshop attendee



To find out more about the Knowledge Translation Network and to download a copy of the Evidence for Success guide visit [www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk](http://www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk). Leave your feedback on Twitter using #evidence4success.

## What is CRFR?

CRFR produces research and commentary on families and relationships. It facilitates a network of researchers, and those interested in families and relationships, to promote the use of research in policy and practice.

To find out more about all CRFR research projects go to [www.crfr.ac.uk/projects/current-projects/](http://www.crfr.ac.uk/projects/current-projects/)

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# CRFR blog exclusive

## The brain, the family and the state

Tineke Broer and Martyn Pickersgill, The University of Edinburgh



Does it help if parents receive advice on how to raise their children? Or does it make them more confused, trying to find their way through all the information?

These are some of the questions being asked in a CRFR project looking at how ideas from brain sciences are being used in policies relating to parenting and family life. The child's brain has come to be a hot topic, and whether or not parents are aware of the origins of the advice they receive, brain science is being increasingly used to shape professional practice: from the content of parenting courses, initiatives encouraging singing and reading with your baby, through to legislation targeting children and families... read on at:

<http://crfrblog.blogspot.co.uk/>



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Challenges of policy-oriented research on children's rights in post-Soviet countries

Integrating children's services: exploring practice through comparison

## Family engagement in education

A child's achievement and progress at school is significantly influenced by how involved their parents are in their learning, regardless of the family background.

Earlier this year CRFR carried out a literature review, commissioned by the Scottish Government, in partnership with Children in Scotland. The findings form the basis of a website, to provide support to teachers and schools on how they can engage with families to improve the attainment and achievement of disadvantaged pupils.

The website and an infographic are available at:

<http://engagingwithfamilies.co.uk>



## Events/training

**Emotions, addiction and bodies: exploring accounts of self-harm among young people aged 13-16**

Glasgow, 25 February 2015

**CRFR New researchers in families and relationships conference**

Edinburgh, 26 May 2015

**5<sup>th</sup> International and interdisciplinary conference on emotional geographies**

Edinburgh, 10-12 June 2015

**CRFR 5<sup>th</sup> International conference: Unequal families and relationships**

Edinburgh, 13-15 June 2016

**Making and measuring impact**  
Edinburgh, 30 April 2015



**Advanced methodologies in researching families and relationships**

This masterclass is offered in conjunction with the CRFR New researchers in families and relationships conference.

Edinburgh, 27 May 2015

For more information go to: [www.ncrm.ac.uk/](http://www.ncrm.ac.uk/)



## CPD courses

*The following courses can be taken as stand alone courses or as a series of 2 or 3.*

**Involving children and young people in research and consultation**

26 & 27 February 2015

**Using creative methods in research with children and young people**

12 & 13 March 2015

**Using digital methods in research with children and young people**

23 & 24 April 2015

**For details of these and other CRFR events go to [www.crfr.ac.uk](http://www.crfr.ac.uk)**

## New publication

CRFR PhD student Carine Leborgne has authored a report for World Vision — 'What next? Ways forward for children's and young people's participation'.

The purpose of this study is to review key theoretical perspectives and practice in relation to children's and young people's participation. This review is being undertaken in order to enhance World Vision's understanding and practice in the field of participation.

The report can be downloaded from the World Vision website: [www.wvi.org](http://www.wvi.org)



**Research associate Sarah Nelson, a specialist in sexual abuse issues, has been much in demand this year as revelations about sexual abuse continue to come to the fore in the media. She writes:**

The upsurge in revelations about historic institutional child sexual abuse, abuse by celebrities, and large-scale child sexual exploitation of vulnerable young teenage girls, has raised great public and professional debate. It has produced a much-increased demand for presentations and seminars in 2014 and it's especially encouraging that professionals – social workers, children's panel members, voluntary sector support agencies, mental health practitioners – want to learn more from research on the subject, and to feed in their own experience to researchers!

The Centre for the Vulnerable Child in Fife, Rape Crisis England & Wales, Glasgow Children's Panel, BASPCAN, Child Protection Research Centre Four Nations Seminar, The Scottish Government, The Abuse Seminars series here at The University of Edinburgh and Say Women in Glasgow are just some of those agencies requesting presentations this year.

### **Visual resources for young people's self-care and transformation**

In November, associate director Sarah Wilson was invited to speak at a seminar series held by the University of Sussex. She explored the use of visual digital resources by 'looked after' young people to blank out – but also to engage with and re-think – difficult histories and current circumstances.

<http://www.sussex.ac.uk/esw/circy/newsandevents/current>

### **Gender equality and violence**

Nancy Lombard, Reader in Sociology and Social Policy, has written a blog post entitled 'Gender equality and violence: the role of schools for the British Educational Research Association. She will also present a seminar on this subject at Brunel University, London, in April 2015 as part of the 'Violence and Young People: Methods of Study and Intervention' seminar series.

You can read Nancy's blog on the BERA website:

<https://berarespectingchildren.wordpress.com/>

## **New projects**

### **Alcohol stories**

Men aged 35 to 54 are at higher risk of alcohol related harm and suicide compared to other groups. This pilot study will explore narratives of men in mid-life who have experienced suicidal distress and will look in particular at the role of alcohol, both positive and negative, in their experiences.

Contact: [a.chandler@ed.ac.uk](mailto:a.chandler@ed.ac.uk)

### **Integrating children's services: exploring practice through comparison**

A new project affiliated with What Works Scotland is exploring and reflecting on what it takes to provide integrated local children's services. The research will also help to develop new perspectives to the challenges and dilemmas that local partnership working poses to local authority professionals.

For more information read Stefanie Schmachtel-Maxfield's blog at:

<http://whatworksscotland.blogspot.co.uk>

### **Impact evaluations of genomic centres**

CRFR has been commissioned by the ESRC to create impact case studies of research from their genomics centres in the UK. These impact case studies will examine the outcomes of various project findings, against both researchers' and research users' experiences and perspectives, to generate evidence of the scope of the influence they have achieved.

Contact: [s.morton@ed.ac.uk](mailto:s.morton@ed.ac.uk)

### **Risks and realities of neonatal abstinence syndrome**

Neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS), is where babies, whose mothers used drugs of dependence during pregnancy, show symptoms of drug-withdrawal after they are born. This study is exploring the views of parents, health and social care providers in Edinburgh and the Lothians, on what Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome is and how best to prepare parents and other carers for looking after a baby who has been diagnosed with NAS.

Contact: [a.chandler@ed.ac.uk](mailto:a.chandler@ed.ac.uk)



## **Principles in practice:**

### **Financial provision on divorce under the Family Law (Scotland) Act 1985**

Scots law has a legal framework for financial provision on divorce which sets out five very clear and detailed statutory principles. It has been in place now for almost 30 years and during that time it has been praised and admired for its clarity, certainty and coherence, although there has been very little research into how it works in practice. In a collaborative research project involving the School of Law, University of Glasgow and CRFR, and funded by the Nuffield Foundation, 200 published court decisions were analysed covering the period since the Act came into force.

Now moving into a second phase, 30 legal practitioners will be interviewed about their experiences of using the legislation. The findings from this research will contribute to our understanding of how law is used and operates in practice.

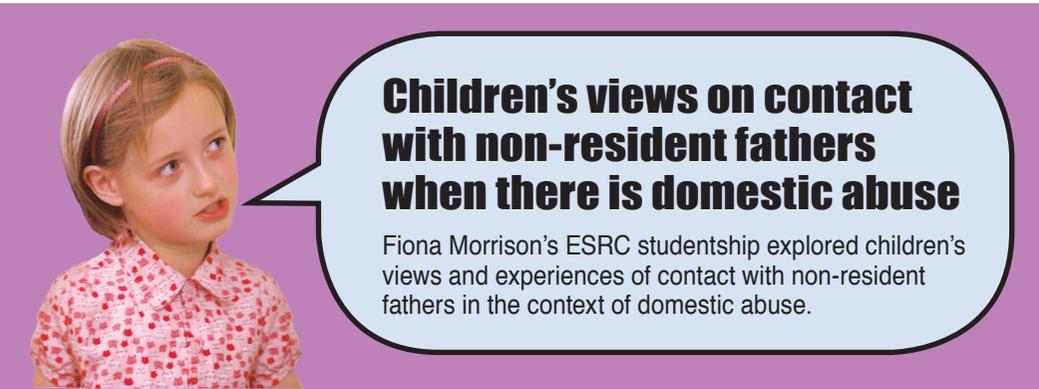
For further information email: [Jane.Mair@glasgow.ac.uk](mailto:Jane.Mair@glasgow.ac.uk)

## **Asking the tough questions in a special issue of the International Journal of Child, Youth & Family Studies**

A team of researchers, led by CRFR Co-Directors Kay Tisdall and Jeni Harden and CRFR PhD student Cara Blaisdell have recently published a special issue in the International Journal of Child, Youth & Family Studies on the involvement of children and young people in research.

Arising from the CRFR 2013 International Conference, the issue aims to advance the way that childhood studies is researched and practiced, by asking authors to reflect on the last 20 years of involving children and young people in research and critically examine topics such as the role of new technologies, the challenges of existing practice, and how ethical and practical approaches to working with children and young people can be developed.

CRFR associates Susan Elsley, Michael Gallagher, Marlies Kustatscher and Alice Maclean also contributed.



# Children's views on contact with non-resident fathers when there is domestic abuse

Fiona Morrison's ESRC studentship explored children's views and experiences of contact with non-resident fathers in the context of domestic abuse.

## Domestic abuse

The continuing impact of domestic abuse, on children and mothers, was a core concern for many of the children.

- Children drew direct connections between not wanting contact and their father's historic and on-going abuse towards them and their mother.
- This reinforces how enmeshed the interests of children and women can become in contact disputes when there is domestic abuse.
- The notion of wanting contact if their father's abusive behaviour could be controlled was raised in interviews with some children.

This was a collaborative study between CRFR and Scottish Women's Aid to examine children's views and experiences of contact with fathers in a context of domestic abuse.

## Changes in children's lives

### Alcohol

Several children were concerned about how their fathers' drinking affected their behaviour during contact. Children described being wary of their fathers, wondering whether they would be drunk during contact and what the repercussions of this might be.

### Siblings living apart

In several cases parental separation led to siblings living apart, causing distress and upset for the children concerned. Contact was seen not only as an opportunity to spend time with their father but also an opportunity to spend time with a sibling.

### Wider family

Contact with the father was identified by children as a way to continue relationships with their wider family (grandparents, aunts etc.). However, there were several cases where children's relationships with their extended family were jeopardised because of children's views about contact and their contact arrangements.

### Leaving the family home

The majority of children and their mothers had to flee the family home at the point of separation. Children's resulting homelessness, because of domestic abuse, meant that they often moved to unfamiliar areas, had to change schools, leave friends, pets and possessions behind. This meant that contact with a father was also a means for children to re-connect with important aspects of their lives that had existed pre-separation.

### Parents re-partnering

Difficulties that can arise for children as a result of parents re-partnering were often interwoven with children's views about contact.

# Insight Pathway to impact - the National Domestic Abuse Delivery Plan

Claire Houghton, (previously Scottish Government Delivery Plan Co-ordinator and Voice Against Violence Manager), demonstrates how Fiona Morrison's research (opposite page) has influenced the direction of Scotland's domestic abuse policy.

## POLICY DILEMMA We were faced with a distinct lack of research evidence in relation to child contact with abusive fathers when it was raised as a potential issue for inclusion in policy priorities (2006-7).

- Fiona's links with the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships and Scottish Women's Aid meant that she was both well connected with people working in relevant policy and practice areas and also aware of the evidence gaps which existed.
- Fiona was invited to become an expert advisor on the National Domestic Abuse Delivery Group to develop policy on contact and work towards publication of a National Domestic Abuse Delivery Plan for Children and Young People.
- Fiona's MSc and PhD research:
  - ▶ Provided the Scottish Government with Scottish specific evidence relating to child contact with abusive fathers, delivered at the start of the policy cycle.
  - ▶ Helped to ensure children's views were included in the development of policy on improving outcomes for children.
  - ▶ Led to the issue of safe contact and children's participation being included as a priority area in the Delivery Plan.
  - ▶ Supported government policy on areas of managing risk when domestic abuse continues through child contact arrangements; children's experiences of legal proceedings about contact and interventions targeted at perpetrators of domestic abuse.
- Fiona was also invited to discuss child contact issues with 'Voice Against Violence', a group of young expert advisors to the Scottish Government and CoSLA, to support them in developing their own briefing points about child contact, based on the perspectives of children and young people in Fiona's study as well as their own. This empowered the young people to speak directly with Cabinet Ministers on the subject and critique progress to the adult board. This has resulted in Ministers agreeing to the retention of safe contact as a policy priority beyond the lifetime of the plan, as well as local pilots and national prioritisation of the subject.