

SWCONF25 parallel sessions programme

(subject to change)

10th National Child Protection and Welfare Social Work Conference

24th October 2025

Child Protection and Children's Rights: The Future of Social Work



By popular demand! For 2025, **parallel sessions will run twice**, once in the morning and once in the afternoon. You will need to select two preferences when registering.

The symposium on AI (#7) will only run in the morning session.

All registration enquiries to conferenceucc@ucc.ie

This event is supported by the Department of Children, Disability, and Equality; Tusla; and UCC.
This is a not-for-profit CPD activity.

Parallel Session 1	
Morning: 11 – 12.50	Devere Hall, Student Centre (0 mins)
Afternoon: 2.25 – 3.55	ORB_123, O’Rahilly Building (8 mins)
Child Safeguarding: A form of Troublesome Knowledge?	Professor Jo Finch ¹ , Dr David McKendrick ¹ ¹ Glasgow Caledonian University, Glasgow, Scotland Paper withdrawn by the speakers
‘Crossing the line’: child protection and welfare managers’ and social workers’ experiences of social media and digital abuse and harassment	Ms Amy Bradley ¹ , Dr Fiachra Ó Súilleabháin ¹ , Ms Olwen Halvey ¹ , Dr Kenneth Burns ¹ ¹ University College Cork, Ireland
Frontline Social Work Teams Experiencing Violence, Harassment and Aggression (VHA) – The Future Pathway for Tusla’s National VHA Programme.	Mr David O Connell ¹ ¹ Tusla, Cork, Ireland
Investigating Social Workers’ Perspectives of the Management of Workplace Violence, Harassment and Aggression (VHA).	Tony O’Gorman ¹ , Prof. Bill O’Gorman ² , Dr Eugene Crehan ² , ¹ Tusla, Ireland, ² South East Technological University

Parallel Session 2	
Morning: 11 – 12.50	Shtepps Auditorium, The Hub (8 mins.)
Afternoon: 2.25 – 3.55	Shtepps Auditorium, The Hub (8 mins.)
Transforming foster care practice: Sharing innovative practices that drive children's right to stability in foster care	Dr Maria Lotty ¹ , Lisa McCormack ² , Niamh Campbell ² , Dylan Stanley ² ¹ University College Cork, Cork City, Ireland, ² TUSLA - Child and Family Agency, Dublin South Central Area, Ireland
The Solihull Approach: Promoting attachment, resilience and mental wellbeing - Early implementation of the Solihull Approach in Ireland	Ms Debbie Scales ¹ ¹ Consultant working with Tusla, Dublin 12, Ireland
Empowering Practitioners and Practice Initiative (EPPI) - developing evidence informed, outcomes focused social workers in child protection and welfare	Ms Stella Owens ¹ ¹ Tusla, National
Children's Experiences of Signs of Safety: A Scoping Review	Dr Louise Caffrey ¹ , Dr Eavan Brady, Ms Orla Keegan ¹ , Ms Siobhan Dunne ¹ , Mr Greg Sheaf ¹ Professor Stephanie Holt ¹ , Professor Robbie Gilligan ¹ ¹ Trinity College Dublin

Parallel Session 3	
Morning: 11 – 12.50	CACSSS Seminar Room, O'Rahilly Building (8 mins.)
Afternoon: 2.25 – 3.55	CACSSS Seminar Room, O'Rahilly Building (8 mins.)
What do care-experienced young people value most? Exploring their experiences and views of independent advocacy	Hilary Jenkinson ¹ ¹ University College Cork, Cork, Ireland
Our Voices: Insights from Young Adults Accessing Aftercare Services	Emer Saunders ¹ , Charlie O'Sullivan ¹ , Marcella Buckley ¹ Two care experienced young persons ¹ Tusla Cork Aftercare Services, Ireland
Enhanced Coaching Skills, Supporting Young People and Families: A Positive Psychology Approach in Tusla Practice	Caroline Maguire ¹ , Sean Blackwell, Denise Sheridan, Suzanne Kiernan, Cathal Grant, Ann Marie Quigley ¹ Tusla, Ireland
Strengthening Attachment Through Play: A Learning and Development Approach to Embedding Relational Practice in Social Work	Ms Caroline Maguire ¹ , Yvonne Maycock, Ann Marie O'Reilly and Siobhan O'Connor ¹ Tusla, Dublin Northeast

Parallel Session 4

Morning: 11 – 12.50	Béarra, Student Centre (2 mins.)
Afternoon: 2.25 – 3.55	Dr Dora Allman Room, The Hub (8 mins.)
"Out of Sight, Out of Rights: Child Sexual Trafficking in Ireland"	Miss Marta Sofia Mendes Mendonca Correia ¹ ¹ Deaf Awareness Coordinator, Cork Deaf Association
A Research Overview: The impact of Maternal Incarceration on Mothers and Children using a Social Identity Perspective.	Miss Lynn Fenton ¹ , Dr Daragh Bradshaw ¹ , Dr Anca Minescu ¹ ¹ University of Limerick
Working with the Online Offender- A New Approach to Practice.	Mrs Jill Coogan ¹ ¹ Specialist Inquiry Team Tusla, Cork
Domestic Violence and Child Protection - how can social workers ensure balance of parental and children's rights?	Ms Sonya Bruen ¹ ¹ MHC LLP, Dublin

Parallel Session 5

Morning: 11 – 12.50	Crossleigh Computer Lab, Crossleigh House (3 mins.).
Afternoon: 2.25 – 3.55	Béarra, Student Centre (2 mins.)
Somewhere in the middle: the educational experience of Irish children in residential care	Tara Ciric ¹ , Dr Catriona O'Toole ¹ , Dr Aislinn O'Donnell ¹ ¹ Maynooth University
Supporting the inclusion of separated children seeking international protection: Balancing children's rights, care and independence at the threshold of adulthood.	Dr Muireann Ní Raghdhaigh ¹ , Professor Prospera Tedam, Dr Joanne Kelleher ¹ University College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland
The Care Experiences Programme; using research and data to contribute to the development of policies and services for alternative care.	Dr Sadhbh Whelan ¹ , Angela Feeney ¹ ¹ DCEDIY
Recognising and Valuing Alternative Care: A Case Study in Developing Foster Care Leave Policy in a Higher Education Institution	Dr Fiachra O Suilleabhairn ¹ , Dr Claire Murray, Dr Anne Gannon, Ms Susan O Mahony, Dr Avril Hutch, Ms Sarah Murtagh ¹ University College Cork

Parallel Session 6

Morning: 11 – 12.50	ORB_255, O’Rahilly Building (8 mins)
Afternoon: 2.25 – 3.55	Devere Hall, Student Centre (0 mins)
The operation of the in camera rule in child care proceedings in Ireland	Dr Aisling Parkes ¹ , Dr Simone McCaughran ² , Dr Kenneth Burns¹ ¹ University College Cork, Ireland, ² Trinity College Dublin, Ireland
Beyond the siloes: Building capacity for a child rights-based approach to responding to child sexual abuse through Barnahus Ireland	Dr Maria Lotty ¹ , Blathnaid McCabe ² , Sinead Hegarty ³ , Dr Rosaleen McElvaney² , Aoife Deacon ² , Eimear Lacey ² , Keith O'Reilly² , Sarah Roarty ² ¹ University College Cork, Cork City, Ireland, ² The Alder's Unit, Children's Health Ireland, Ireland, ³ Irish Child and Family Institute, Ireland
Barnahus Ireland: Strengthening children’s rights and access to justice and recovery in response to sexual abuse and violence against children	Ms Linda Cooney¹, Dr Olive Moloney¹, Ms Niamh Whooley¹ ¹ St. Finbarr’s Hospital, Douglas Road, Ireland,
“It was actually very stressful” Children’s experience and outcomes of court mandated access/contact with a perpetrator father	Dr Ruth Elliffe¹, Prof Stephanie Holt , Ms Soma Gregory, Ms Davina James Hanman, Dr Aisling Parkes ² ¹ Trinity College Dublin, ² University College Cork

7 Symposium: Using Artificial Intelligence in Child Protection

Morning: 11 – 12.50	Dr Dora Allman Room, The Hub (8 mins.)
Afternoon:	No afternoon session
Note: this symposium will run in the morning session only . Have you wondered what you can use Copilot for with your Microsoft 365 account? How useful is Generative AI for child protection practice? What does hallucination mean in Generative AI? What are the GDPR and ethical considerations with its use? This symposium will explore existing applications in use internationally and in Ireland, and consider their effectiveness in helping child protection and welfare services to keep children safe.	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Professor Lauri Goldkind, Fordham University, New York. 2. Fergus O’Cuanacháin, Chief Information Officer, Tusla, Child and Agency. 3. Niamh Browne, Principal Social Worker, Practice Lead TCM CPAC, Tusla, Child and Agency. 4. Bernie Redmond, ICT Digital Transformation Manager, Tusla, Child and Agency. 5. Ellie Loftus, Loftus AI consulting. 	

Parallel Session 8

Morning: 11 – 12.50	Aird Mhór, Student Centre (2 mins.)
Afternoon: 2.25 – 3.55	ORB_255, O’Rahilly Building (8 mins)
Listening to the Voice of the Child in Family Law Cases involving Domestic Violence and Abuse: Considering Best Interests.	Prof. Stephanie Holt ¹ , Dr Aisling Parkes ² , Ms Soma Gregory ¹ , Ms Davina James-Hanman ¹ , Dr Ruth Elliffe ¹ ¹ Trinity College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland, ² University College Cork
Collaboration in Action: Embedding Meitheal in Special Schools for Children with Complex Needs	Mrs. Orlaith Kerrigan ¹ ¹ Parent Advocate
Supporting parents involved in child care proceedings: Reflections on the development and implementation of a Parent Advocacy and Information Service	Niamh McCarthy ¹ , Dr Gráinne Hickey ¹ , Clare Deane ¹ , Aimee Doherty ² ¹ Barnardos Ireland, ² Tusla, Ireland
Navigating tensions to achieve a shared purpose: Findings from PhD research on child protection social workers and guardians ad litem	Dr Lisa Garavin ¹ University College Dublin, Dublin, Ireland

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