

Centre for Effective Services  
Review 2013





The Centre for Effective Services connects research, policy and practice to improve outcomes for communities, children and young people across the island of Ireland. Part of a new generation of intermediary organisations, CES is a not-for-profit that helps communities, children and young people thrive.

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# Contents

Welcome from  
Dan Flinter, Chair

4

Our Mission

6

Better Evidence,  
Better Outcomes:  
CES Strategy 2012-2014  
Implementation Update,  
by Nuala Doherty,  
Director

8

Highlights

12

**18**  
Our Team

**27**  
Our Board

**28**  
Appendix 1:  
Publications  
& Resources

# Welcome from Dan Flinter, Chair



As the Chairperson of the Board of the Centre for Effective Services (CES) it gives me great pleasure to introduce this Review of CES. It is a snap shot of the work of CES at a point in time as the organization ends the foundation phase of its development and initial funding cycle, and looks to the future with increased experience and optimism.

CES has grown and developed over its first six years from an innovative idea and concept to an all-island organisation with a unique contribution to make across the island of Ireland as an intermediary organisation in the fields of evidence translation and implementation science.

CES works with a wide range of organisations from government departments and policy makers to service commissioners and practitioners. The Centre has also significantly extended its reach across sectors including Children and Youth, Health, Education, Community and others. The purpose of this Review is to give our different audiences and stakeholders a picture of the breadth and depth of CES' work in support of whole systems change. One of the core aims of CES is to connect and join up different parts of the system; to bridge the gap between researchers and policy makers, and between policy makers and practitioners. We hope that the descriptions of the work and the narratives in the Review will bring the work to life and help the reader to make some of those important connections.

The Review documents examples of our work in translating research into evidence with government departments and policy makers, to inform and guide the direction of public policy.

Whenever possible we publish this evidence for use by a wider audience. The *Children's Services Reform: Key Learning and Messages* is a good example of this work which is of interest to service commissioners, managers and practitioners. The reports and briefing papers from our work Capturing the Learning from the investment in prevention and early intervention have been widely disseminated and used across the system to inform and influence policy, service design and practice.

CES has strengthened its expertise in the field of Implementation with strong collaborations in Europe and globally. There is widespread acknowledgement that we need to improve on how we implement policies to achieve improved outcomes. CES is supporting the implementation of a number of national policies, for example the implementation of Children's Services Committees and the implementation of the Area Based Childhood Programme. We provide technical and practical support to organisations, services and consortia to translate the policy into a coherent plan and to implement it in a consistent and systematic way.

The decision to appoint a full time Senior Manager in Northern Ireland represents our commitment to an all island approach and a belief in the transferability of the work across jurisdictions in a way that adds value to both. CES describes itself as a 'think and do' tank, with equal emphasis on both. The application of scientific rigour is essential so that the translation of research into useable information is robust. CES also wants to help solve real life complex problems and work with services on the ground to achieve better outcomes for clients.

The value of the work of CES was highlighted in the Government's *Second Progress Report on its Public Service Reform Plan 2014–2016*. The document referenced the work of CES as a model for supporting systemic change.

I wish to acknowledge the continued support from our Funders; the growing partnerships and collaborations with complementary organisations; and the continuous learning from all those we work with.

My personal thanks to our Director and her professional and committed colleagues as well as to the members of the Board for their guidance and support.

Dan Flinter  
July 2014

# Our Mission

The Centre for Effective Services' (CES) mission is to connect research, policy and practice to improve outcomes for communities, children and young people across the island of Ireland.

As part of a new generation of intermediary organisations, CES helps communities, children and young people thrive. We believe that our contribution to the field of children and community services is unique, because our approach combines these five elements:

- 1 We influence policy and systems change so that they are informed by relevant evidence, and ultimately achieve better outcomes for children, young people, families and communities.
- 2 We champion innovative service design and implementation.

- 3 We build knowledge, skills and capacity for government departments, organisations, researchers and practitioners.
- 4 We promote and seek out partnerships and collaborations.
- 5 We develop organisational effectiveness within CES.

1

10

Sectors

Projects

1

12

Months

2

# Better Evidence, Better Outcomes

## CES Strategy 2012-2014 Implementation Update

by Nuala Doherty, Director

2013 was the second year in the implementation of the CES Strategy and we made progress in each of the five areas designed to contribute to improved outcomes for communities, families and children. As set out in the Mission Statement, our core ambitions are to:

- 1 Influence policy and systemic change.
- 2 Champion innovative service design and implementation.
- 3 Build knowledge, skills and capacity.
- 4 Promote partnerships and collaborations.
- 5 Develop CES organisational effectiveness.

The implementation of the strategy is supported by an annual work plan. The team carry out their work on a project basis and report on targets and progress in the plan. This annual work plan is reported to the CES Board. With over 52 live projects in 2013, this Review presents a selection of the work across the five key areas. The section 'Highlights' will focus in greater detail on a number of projects.

### 1. Influence Policy and Systemic Change

We aim to bring good quality evidence to policy makers in clear and timely formats. An example of such work in 2013 is the publication *Children's Services Reform: Key Learning and Messages*. This briefing paper contains the key messages and learning from a high-level comparative analysis of international and regional jurisdictions undergoing children's services reform. The research and information was primarily gathered by CES at the request of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) and was used to inform the work of the Task Force for the establishment of The Child and Family Agency, Tusla.

We supported the expert advisory group established by the Minister in 2012 on the Early Years Strategy with five evidence papers to guide its work and ensure the group had access to good quality evidence. The final report *Right from the Start* was published in September and includes the five evidence papers. We were asked by DCYA to carry out a high-level review of the implementation of the Youth Homelessness Strategy, published by DCYA in 2001. The purpose of the review was to establish the extent to which the strategy has been successful in identifying challenges to its implementation and to make recommendations for future action. The *Every Child a Home* review and briefing paper were launched by DCYA in July 2013.

## 2. Champion Innovative Service Design and Implementation

### Prevention and Early Intervention

CES has a strategic commitment to promote a Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) approach as an important ingredient in achieving better outcomes for communities, families and children. We were requested by The Atlantic Philanthropies and DCYA to summarise and synthesise the learning from the significant investment with 39 organisations delivering 52 prevention and early intervention projects. This Capturing the Learning project is described in greater detail in the section 'Highlights'. Rich and extensive learning was produced in 2013 with the publication of four reports and four accompanying briefing papers in the following areas:

- Children's Learning
- Child Health and Development
- Promoting Inclusion
- Improving Child Behaviour

### The Area Based Childhood Programme (ABC)

This new national cross-departmental initiative in Ireland has its origins in a commitment in the Programme for Government and aims to improve outcomes for children in areas of particular disadvantage. The initiative builds and expands on the learning and the work of the Prevention and Early Intervention Initiative (PEI). The Area Based Childhood Programme (ABC) is co-funded by the Irish Government and The Atlantic Philanthropies, with a total investment of almost €30 million between 2013 and 2016. The delivery of the ABC Programme is being managed jointly by CES and Pobal, with each having distinct and complementary roles.



new CES resources  
produced

**"The impact of involvement with the Special Interest Group on Supporting Parents has been: the sharing of information on evidence from programmes, contributing to the validity of commissioning decisions; the availability of critical friends in an area of particular importance and providing a positive drive for policy development in Northern Ireland."**

**Gerry Conway, Commissioning Lead – Early Years and Family Support, Health & Social Care Board NI**

The main achievements of the programme in 2013 were:

- The design of the overall programme along with an application process and call for applications from interested consortia in disadvantaged areas.
- The review and selection of ten areas (from 50 applications) to participate in the design phase of the programme. The three original areas funded under the Prevention and Early Intervention Programme (PEIP) – CDI Tallaght, Young Ballymun and Preparing for Life, Darndale – transitioned into the ABC programme, which brought the total number of areas to 13.
- Support to the areas on service design and implementation.
- Initial thinking as to how the programme could be evaluated at a national and local level.

### What Works ProCESs

The CES *What Works ProCESs* is an evidence informed quality improvement tool which enables organisations to reflect on how evidence informs what they are doing to improve outcomes for children and families. In 2013 the *What Works ProCESs* was delivered to five sites in Ireland. The recommendations from an evaluation of the tool were implemented in 2013 and work commenced on Version 2..

## 3. Build Knowledge, Skills and Capacity

### Youth Work

CES continued to support the work in the field of youth in partnership with the Youth Affairs Unit in DCYA. We commissioned a systematic review of the international research literature for DCYA, the first international review of youth work outcomes of its kind. Published mid-year, it

is part of a wider project to develop an evidence-informed Youth Policy Framework to support high quality practice in youth work. We developed a tool to enable practitioners to make clearer links between their work and underpinning theories. This tool links with the National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF) for Youth Work and will support its implementation. The work we carried out in support of the delivery of Ireland's policy objectives for the EU Presidency of the Youth Council is documented in the section 'Highlights'.

### Big Lottery Impact of Alcohol Project

The Big Lottery has invested over £10m in Northern Ireland to address the harm caused by alcohol misuse. The Impact of Alcohol Programme is funding a diverse range of social, community and health projects across what is a vast and complex area. We were successful in our joint bid with the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NICVA) to provide structured support to the Big Lottery Impact of Alcohol Programme. This involves supporting self evaluation and dissemination to around 37 organisations across Northern Ireland. The support will be delivered over the next five years. We developed a framework for self-evaluation and examples of measures that organisations could use to evaluate their work. The work also involves delivering training workshops and providing one-to-one support on commissioning and undertaking evaluations.

### Promoting Capacity Building in Ireland

We collaborated with two Associates to help them communicate the findings from work they have completed on Capacity Building in Ireland. The work, which included a review of the literature on capacity building and writing up a number of organisational case studies of capacity building

in Ireland, was funded by The Atlantic Philanthropies. CES and the report authors hosted a seminar in November in Dublin which was attended by 25 managers, consultants and academics engaged in capacity building. We also assisted with publication of the report and case studies and in the production of a short, colourful summary of the learning from the literature review.

### 4. Promote Partnerships and Collaborations

Building and sustaining partnerships that strengthen CES' impact and our capacity to tackle complex problems is core to our mission. Last year we strengthened and deepened existing partnerships and developed new ones. Several examples and highlights are included.

"Through the development of the national CSC co-ordinator role, CES understood the importance of providing clear national support and leadership... and worked with key representatives from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs to make it happen. I have learned a lot from working with CES over the past few years and I know that no query is too big, no question too stupid and help is just a phone call or an email away."

Claire O'Toole, Co-ordinator, Kerry Children's Services Committee

"Being part of this Special Interest Group is a unique experience of collaborative work. The quality of information sharing and outputs from this group contributes enormously towards learning and informing policy, planning and practice at all levels."

Liam O'Dalaigh, Director of Services, Daughters of Charity Child and Family Service

6,000  
'Capturing The Learning'  
publications distributed



## Sectors CES now works across

Children and Families, Health (public), Youth Justice, Education, Mental Health, Drugs and Alcohol (social inclusion), Youth, Community, Statutory sector, NGO/Third Sector

We strengthened our partnership with Children in Northern Ireland (CiNI), the umbrella organisation for the children's sector in Northern Ireland. In October 2013 we hosted a joint event with CiNI and the Children and Young Peoples Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) on the theme of How to Communicate Evidence to Policy Makers and Practitioners. We also collaborated with Save the Children and Queen's University Belfast to co-host a deliberative workshop in November 2013 on how best to support children's learning.

Our new partnership with NICVA was successful in the Big Lottery Impact of Alcohol bid. The combined range of skills from both organisations brings added value to the programme.

In the field of Education, our partnership with the Teaching Council and with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) enabled us to enquire into issues that would strengthen teachers' use of research and evidence and generate a discussion with a broad range of teachers. We worked with the Economic & Social Research Institute (ESRI) to join up the learning from the *Growing up in Ireland* Study and the emerging learning from the Prevention and Early Intervention Initiative (PEII), and held a symposium in September in Dublin for high-level policymakers, researchers and senior practitioners to consider the collective data from the two sources and examine its relevance in the area of parenting and children's learning.

Finally, we share a number of common areas of interest with the Institute of Public Health (IPH), an all-island sister organisation that brings evidence to policy makers in health, North and South. We explored approaches to influencing policy makers, worked together on summarising the learning from PEII on Child Health and Development, and initiated a joint publication linking policy with practice in the area of prevention and early intervention in the field of child health.

## 5. Develop Organisational Effectiveness

The mid-term review of CES in 2012 recommended the need for a more streamlined, flexible and responsive organisation. The CES Strategy prioritised the realignment of organisational structures and processes to improve performance, flexibility and value for money. It recognised the need for CES to move to a more diverse funding model, based on a broader range of revenue sources, with the lowest possible operating cost. These changes were implemented in 2013 resulting in a significant restructuring plan. The new organisational structure resulted in a smaller core team supported by a network of Associates, thus bringing greater flexibility and a broader skill set. This included the decision to appoint a new Senior Manager to support the development of our work in Northern Ireland. A new business model, developed in our organisational plan for sustainability, was implemented. In this model, we generated income through commissioned work, tendering and procurement. Finally, we were successful in 2013 in securing a second grant from The Atlantic Philanthropies and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

As CES now enters a new phase of development as an all-island, intermediary organisation, we are on target to deliver on our mission to: influence policy and systems change; champion innovative service design and implementation; and build knowledge, skills and capacity for government departments, organisations, researchers and practitioners, which help communities, children and young people thrive.

**"The CSCs in Galway and Roscommon [are] an excellent forum to co-ordinate our efforts to enhance outcomes for children in our area. It requires leadership to drive the initiative and I have been very fortunate to have an excellent local co-ordinator. I have great hopes for the future."**

**Anglea Toolis, Area Manager, The Child & Family Agency, Tusla, and Chairperson, Galway & Roscommon Children's Services Committees**

# Highlights

Fifty-two projects were undertaken in twelve months. New partnerships were forged and existing collaborations strengthened. Amongst others, we launched the first of what we aim to be a series of innovative digital resources, made new connections in the education sector, and continued to develop our work on parenting across the island of Ireland. The following projects illustrate the breadth and depth of our work in 2013 and are representative of our ongoing mission to ensure that children, young people and communities across the island of Ireland thrive.

The first National Co-ordinator for Children's Services Committees was appointed in June 2013, and in November a part-time Project Support person was recruited. These posts are fully funded by DCYA and hosted at CES. The annual national CSC Networking Event was held on the 19th September at Dublin Castle and was attended by 160 individuals involved in CSCs across the country. The event was launched by the then Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Frances Fitzgerald TD, and included presentations from 15 CSCs on their work in prevention and early intervention. In the second half of 2013 our team focused on embedding CSCs into the wider system through securing the inclusion of CSCs in the national policy framework, and by initiating a series of meetings with senior management at The Child and Family Agency, Tusla, to ensure their renewed commitment to CSCs.

## Children's Services Committees

Children's Services Committees (CSCs) are the key structure identified by Government to plan and co-ordinate services for children and young people in every county in Ireland. The overall purpose of CSCs is to secure better outcomes for children and young people. CSCs co-ordinate the implementation of national and regional policies and strategies that relate to children, young people and families. They plan and co-ordinate services for children and young people in the county or local authority area. Last year, there were 16 CSCs, all at differing stages of development and operation. The policy direction and leadership on CSCs is provided by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA). CES has been providing strategic and implementation support to DCYA and Children's Services Committees since 2009.



A first National Co-ordinator  
was appointed  
to support 16 CSCs

Our CSC work is an exciting and evolving programme of considerable national significance that has a countrywide brief, reach and depth. The work of local CSCs across the five national outcomes for children and young people has contributed to improving outcomes for children and young people under a range of themes including, for example, literacy, parenting support, consultation with children and young people, and identification and assessment of the needs of children and young people.

### Prevention & Intervention

For more than a decade, The Atlantic Philanthropies, sometimes in conjunction with Government and other organisations, has invested over €127m/£105m in 39 partner agencies and community groups running 52

prevention and early intervention services and programmes across the island of Ireland. Known as the Prevention and Early Intervention Initiative (PEII), it supports diverse services across a wide range of settings and age groups, all of which are evidence-informed and use a prevention and early intervention approach. To date, 90,000 children and young people, 24,000 parents or caregivers and 4,000 professionals have benefitted from the PEII's programmes, which have been delivered throughout the island.

The learning from PEII about designing, delivering, implementing and evaluating services/programmes has great potential to inform policy and the commissioning of services. CES has been summarising this learning so that it can be more widely used to improve decision making and service provision. *Capturing the Learning* represents a milestone in one of the biggest investments made by a philanthropic funder in driving systems change towards evidence-informed practice anywhere in the world. In 2013 CES completed the first phase of reporting on the learning from the initiative and produced reports and briefing papers on children's learning, behaviour, health, promoting inclusion, parenting and organisational learning. These were disseminated widely, including the circulation of over 6,000 briefing papers to different audiences in health, education and social care.

In 2013 the learning was used and shared in a variety of ways to influence policy and practice. For example, it informed the development of the National Policy Framework for Children and Young People, *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* and the Area Based Childhood (ABC) Programme. The learning about how to select evidence based approaches, as well as support their implementation influenced the development of proposals submitted to the ABC initiative as well as the technical and implementation support which has subsequently been provided to successful consortia. As outlined in the Section Better Evidence, Better Outcomes, a joint event was held with the Economic & Social Research Institute (ESRI) to showcase the learning from the *Growing up in Ireland* study and the Prevention and Early Intervention Initiative for policy makers and service commissioners. In NI an Economic & Social Research Council (ESRC)-funded deliberative workshop was held with policy makers and practitioners to discuss how best to support children's learning. This event was co-hosted with Save the Children and Queen's University Belfast. A workshop on implementation using real-life examples from the organisational learning was delivered for practitioners at the Early Years Annual Conference. Learning from the initiative around the importance of leadership and

Capturing the learning  
from PEII's support for  
**90,000**  
children and young people,  
**24,000**  
parents or caregivers and  
**4,000**  
professionals

supporting systems change was presented at the Global Implementation Conference (GIC) in Washington, DC and the organisational learning report was circulated to more than 700 attendees at this international event.

Although it has been challenging to condense and synthesise thousands of pages of evaluation reports into short briefing documents, it has been immensely rewarding to see the project's first phase come to fruition with the successful production of the first wave of reports.

### CES Lecture Series

The CES Lecture Series is eight digitally filmed lectures, delivered online and accompanied by downloadable materials and associated readings. Launched in 2013, this resource provides a unique opportunity to watch, listen



digitally filmed lectures  
became our number 1  
online resource!

and learn from some of the leading international voices in evidence-informed approaches to practice and policy in child, family and community services. This resource provides the knowledge and knowhow to support this approach in practice. It delivers expertise in evidence-informed practice which subscribers can use to build their skills and capacity, and which ultimately will influence policy and systemic change. Over twenty purchases of the series have been made to date, and we have ongoing interest for additional individual and corporate registrations.

The presenters were chosen from our existing networks and collaborations, as well as through researching those who are leaders in their fields. It was an opportunity for us to share our expert contacts with the wider world, and also to create a product outside of the standard publication.

"I appreciated [the presenter's] stance on valuing practitioner wisdom and found this to be a useful concept in our own practice. I feel that the module was time and money well spent and am looking forward to completing the course."

CJ Backhouse, YMCA Ireland

Over time, as evidence and implementation science grows and more literature and thinking become available, our aim is to refresh the series in order to keep the material current and relevant, and to add in any future topics of interest to our subscribers.

### Parenting NI

CES undertook a number of commissioned pieces for Parenting NI to support their use of evidence in informing their services. This included writing four 'Knowledge Reviews' which detail the theory and evidence base for each of the following programmes: the Flat Pack Guide, which is aimed at fathers; Parenting Apart, aimed at separated parents; Sink or Swim for parents experiencing mental health issues; and Managing Children's Challenging Behaviour. Our aim is that each will strengthen the learning for parents, increase the knowledge capacity of the trainers

"The knowledge papers are an immensely useful resource for the organisation and we are delighted with the quality and richness of the research evidence contained within them."

Pip Jaffa, Chief Executive, Parenting NI

and will lead to the review and revision of session plans and the training of the trainers.

We also worked with Parenting NI to develop evaluation methods for assessing their effectiveness on influencing children's and parents' outcomes. These tools are designed for administration as part of day-to-day delivery, so it is critical that they are robust, cost-effective and can be routinely administered by frontline staff. This project developed practitioner skills to access, gather and use evidence in their service development and delivery.

This work with Parenting NI is a good example of an ongoing partnership with a well-established organisation. We have supported Parenting NI to integrate evidence about what works into their ongoing service delivery, and they have shared their expertise about working with parents with us by: hosting a training session with our interns; co-developing a workshop with us for the Man Matters conference on working with fathers; and being a key player in the Parenting Special Interest Group.

### Research Alive Conference, 11th May 2013

CES was delighted to work in partnership with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), The Teaching Council, and Professor Mark Morgan as independent researcher, to promote an evidence-informed approach in education. Research Alive, a one day conference in Dublin, resulted from this partnership. The first event of its kind, its aim was to discuss and explore teachers' experience of, engagement with, and access to, educational research. It also addressed how access to educational research might be improved. Ninety teachers, researchers and other stakeholders attended the conference and over 1,200 people viewed the presentations live online.

In advance of the conference, the partnership circulated a survey to all registered teachers in Ireland. It gathered information directly from teachers themselves on how they use evidence in their daily practice, and how they can be supported in using evidence more effectively. Over 4,000 teachers responded and our initial findings were presented at Research Alive.

Philippa Cordingley, an internationally acknowledged expert in using evidence to develop education policy and practice was the keynote speaker. Philippa is Chief Executive of the Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE) and her keynote at Research Alive focused on different models of sharing research with teachers, as producers and consumers of evidence and research. The presentation also focused on the role of social media

in disseminating key messages. Teachers from Davis College in Mallow shared their experiences of operating an Academic Council and the positive impact it has had on staff and students, demonstrating a real-life example of evidence-informed practitioners in action at local level.

A website was set up [ncca.ie/en/Conference/Research-Alive.html](http://ncca.ie/en/Conference/Research-Alive.html) with preview videos and details about the conference and keynote speakers. This site was used in all communication with participants and partners, and videos of all presentations and pictures from the day remain on the NCCA website. The response from teachers to the open invitation was overwhelming and while space for participants was limited, we were able to use technology to live stream the event. It showed that there was a real

**"I joined the live feed and was very impressed. It's a great way of being able to join in and I was able to follow up things on the web as soon as they were mentioned. It sounded like there was a great buzz in the place!"**

**Karen McCullough, Department of Education Northern Ireland**

appetite in the education sector to engage with and use evidence to inform practice.

Further feedback and suggestions for potential next steps was captured by Professor Mark Morgan at the Teaching Council Féilte Conference on National Teachers' Day in October. At both events teachers articulated two main requests: they wanted more access to research; and they wanted more critical engagement with that research. As a response, the Research Alive team looked at how teachers could be supported to really engage with research, researchers, other education professionals, and one another. As a result, the partner organisations are jointly commissioning a new online research hub, [www.MolFeasa.ie](http://www.MolFeasa.ie). The Irish term mol feasa means hub of knowledge.

The website will offer a space for teachers and other education professionals and researchers to connect with educational research and with one another. MolFeasa.ie will be launched in 2015. The CES team worked closely with our education sector partners and were delighted that the event so successfully introduced us to a new audience. The collaboration is continuing with the development of the www.MolFeasa.ie resource.

### **Midlands Area Parenting Partnerships (MAPP)**

A very exciting project for CES in the field of implementation support is through the Midlands Area Parenting Partnerships (MAPP). This project consolidates our position as being at the forefront of supporting implementation and the implementation of evidence into practice. It is the

**"CES has provided a forum and process which has resulted in us challenging and further clarifying our understanding of implementation strategies and practices."**

**Conor Owens, Programme Director, Midlands Area Parenting Partnerships**

first time a CES implementation support team has been established to support, plan and coordinate a longer-term implementation process.

Through a continued collaboration with MAPP, CES was funded to provide implementation support for a population approach to parenting in Ireland, beginning in June 2013 and extending until June 2015. The implementation support is being provided to MAPP which is extending implementation of the Triple P Parenting Programme in Longford and Westmeath to also cover Laois and Offaly. The Longford Westmeath Parenting Partnership has been delivering the Triple P Parenting Programme since 2010 and is now extending this delivery into Laois and Offaly, through a newly established Laois Offaly Parenting Partnership.

International researchers assert that sustained, high quality implementation by communities is essential to the achievement of maximum public health impact of evidence based interventions. CES established an implementation support team to work closely with the project management team in MAPP. This team includes one of our current Associates and international expertise from Allison Metz, Co-Director of the National Implementation Research Network in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, as well as CES staff with expertise in implementation science, child and family services and evidence based programmes and approaches.

Through an action learning approach, the CES implementation support team will, over the two year period 2013-2015, assess the implementation processes, procedures and protocols within the Longford Westmeath and Laois Offaly Parenting Partnerships. The team will lead the writing of implementation handbooks for the implementation of Triple P Parenting Programme in Ireland, working closely with the MAPP core team. We will also produce six monthly 'Lessons Learned' reports to inform and improve the ongoing implementation, as well as a final report on the implementation support process.

Since commencing the implementation support process, the CES team meets regularly with the MAPP project management team who are delivering and providing practitioner training and mentoring, and has developed an implementation measures framework which sets out how parent and child outcomes and the implementation process will be measured.

### **Children's Budget Project**

Northern Ireland is fortunate in having access to a lot of freely available information relating to the development of policy, budgets and expenditure. However, it is difficult to assess how much of this expenditure relates to children and young people specifically, or any other group of beneficiaries. There is an increasing recognition that understanding what is spent, on whom, and what difference it makes would be useful for Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs), policy makers, service commissioners, service providing organisations, advocacy groups, young people and other members of the general public. Of course this is true of any beneficiary group, but particularly so for children and young people. That is why the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY) project examined the feasibility of compiling a children's budget, in order to better understand how much is being spent on children and young people, and the impact it has.

**"In this time of recession it is vital to be able to see where government is allocating money to [children's] services, and how that is changing over time... This [project] was a challenging piece of work, and CES were very positive to work with as they were willing to take on the challenge and flexible in adapting their approach as necessary."**

**Patricia Lewsley, Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY)**

The project raised awareness of how a children's budget could be compiled in a devolved administration, as well as some of the challenges and potential benefits. It was informative for both policy makers as well as those in the voluntary and community sectors. Interviews were undertaken with a number of key people from the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM); Department of Finance and Personnel; Health and Social Care Board; Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership; Department for Social Development; Department of Justice; Department of Education; Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety; Youth Justice Agency; CiNI; and MENCAP.

Following a launch at Stormont (early 2014), OFMDFM is taking this work forward in a pilot project on compiling a children's budget as part of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* monitoring requirements. We will continue to provide advice and support to this process. As a result of working on the Children's Budget, CES has developed a greater breadth of in-house skills and understanding around budgetary analysis in a Northern Ireland context.

#### **Expert Advisory Group on Youth Affairs**

CES has been informing the work of the European Commission's Expert Group on Peer Learning. CES has been chairing the expert group on *Promoting the creativity and innovative capacity of young people through non-formal and informal learning* linked to their employability which was established following a request from the Council of Ministers responsible for youth in May 2012. Since its inception, the group has met ten times and has representatives from 24 European countries.

In 2013, the report produced by the Expert Group confirmed that engaging in non-formal learning activities can help boost young people's employability and social inclusion. Participation in non-formal learning activities allows young people to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that are frequently said to be needed in the labour market. This includes teamwork, communication, leadership, flexibility and responsiveness. This also comprises discovering one's entrepreneurial and innovative potential, by defining problems, coming up with ways of dealing with them and committing to a chosen course of action.

The Expert Group analysed the state-of-play in policy, relevant research literature and concrete examples



**24 European countries  
since 2012 represented in  
the Expert Advisory Group  
on Youth Affairs**

from practice as a basis for policy recommendations. On this basis, the report identifies a need for greater recognition of non-formal learning and recommends actions, for example, to better explain non-formal learning to employers and educators, translate non-formal learning outcomes to the world of work, encourage youth entrepreneurship and promote partnerships and cross-sector innovation.

The Report comprehensively draws together the evidence from policy, research and practice in the area of youth work and continues to be disseminated widely. The work of the Expert Group will culminate in a major seminar in Brussels in 2014.

# Our team

2013 was another busy and deadline-driven year in which many projects came to fruition and new ones commenced. The following is a selection of our highlights of the year.



Nuala Doherty, Director

Nuala leads the teams in Dublin and Belfast, and is responsible for delivering on the five core focus areas identified in the CES strategy. Prior to joining CES in 2011 she was Director of Educational Welfare Services in the National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB), with responsibility for the NEWB's school attendance strategy and the nationwide delivery of the Education Welfare Service. Before that, she was Director of Services for Children and Families in the HSE North East Region.



new collaborations/  
partnerships developed in 2013:  
9 national, 6 international

▫ As always, children, young people and communities across the island of Ireland were at the heart of our work at CES last year. Our role is to ensure they thrive. □

Nuala Doherty

# 12

core team members  
in Dublin

# 3

core team members  
in Belfast

► Seeing Children's Services Committees move into the foreground, and being recognised at national and county level for their amazing potential was a real highlight for me. □

Katie Burke



Katie Burke,  
Senior Manager

The Senior Manager of CES' ROI Team, Katie was formerly head of the non-profit and philanthropy practice and a Director of Prospectus Consultants. Her brief included providing consultancy to the former Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs on Children's Services Committees and to other agencies and organisations across a range of areas of health and social policy and practice.



Dr John Bamber,  
Project Specialist

John's primary areas of responsibility are in relation to work with young people and people in communities. His work promotes evidence-informed policy and practice in child, family and community services by connecting the design and delivery of services with tested scientific and technical knowledge. In 2013 he addressed the meeting of the EU Council of Education, Youth, Culture and Sport. He also acted as Rapporteur for the Informal Expert Roundtable which led to the production of the Irish EU Presidency Declaration: Dublin Declaration on the Contribution of Youth Work to Youth Employment.

◀ Highlights for me were the Irish Presidency's focus on quality youth work and on how it can support unemployed young people; and getting the opportunity to Chair the European Commission's Expert Group on promoting young peoples' creativity and innovation through non-formal and informal learning. □

Dr John Bamber



# 52



Live Projects during the year  
(including Strategic Organisational Projects)  
9 Projects completed

► As chair of the Special Interest Group - Supporting Parents, I was delighted that we launched our 'Supporting Parents' Position Paper to a packed house full of passionate practitioners at a symposium in July 2013! □

**Dr Stella Owens**



**Dr Stella Owens,  
Project Specialist**

Stella's work at CES includes; the development of Children's Services Committees, supporting implementation of area based initiatives in socially disadvantaged communities, evaluation

findings synthesis from the Prevention and Early Intervention Initiative, and leading the Special Interest Group on Supporting Parents. With a background in social work practice and management, Stella has worked in residential, child protection and therapeutic family support services. Stella's PhD explored family involvement in family support services in Ireland.



**Dr Helga Sneddon,  
Project Specialist**

Prior to joining CES, Helga was Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Child Care Research at Queen's University, Belfast. Her main interest is in the evaluation of child and adolescent development,

care and wellbeing. Her recent work includes a systematic review on the effectiveness of psychological interventions for young offenders, studies of parenting and child development, and outcomes for young people in care. She has expertise in qualitative and quantitative research methods, including randomised control trials.

► In 2013 we showcased the learning about systems change and leadership in Ireland to international delegates at the Global Implementation Conference in Washington. It was a great opportunity to talk about initiatives here and what we've learnt about making services more evidence based and effective. As a conference 'tweet ambassador', we were able to share the learning in real time. □

**Dr Helga Sneddon**



Colma Nic Lughadha, National Co-ordinator for Children's Services Committees

Colma's background is in health promotion, youth and community development and education management, particularly within disadvantaged communities. Much of her work has been to develop participative structures and lead multi-sectoral and interagency collaborations to achieve system change. In June 2013 Colma was appointed as the first National Co-ordinator for Children's Services Committees.

▷ Children's Services Committees are making more of a difference, for more children and young people, in more areas. We've begun to develop the CSC website which will be a key aspect of our communications. □

### Kimberley Kendall



Michelle Harris, Project Specialist

Michelle leads a variety of our projects, including the work on the Knowledge Transfer Scheme: Sexual Exploitation and the START programme. She has worked in the area of child and family services and has extensive experience in frontline practice in youth justice, child sexual exploitation, and community development. She has also worked in probation and residential services. She formerly worked with Barnardos Northern Ireland 'Safe Choices' initiative, where she focused on evidence based approaches with clients and developed relationships with external agencies. Michelle holds an MSc in Criminology and Criminal Justice.

▷ The Prevention and Early Intervention Across the Years event in Dublin Castle successfully showcased the county-level work of 15 CSCs to improve outcomes for children and young people. □

### Colma Nic Lughadha



Kimberley Kendall, Project Support for the Children's Services Committees Initiative

Kimberley joined us in November 2013 as our work with the Children's Services Committees initiative grows. She has a degree in Physical Geography from the University of Bristol and recently graduated with an MA in Dance Performance from the University of Limerick. She previously worked in both the retail and service industry.

▷ Recruiting two interns for our Belfast office made a real difference in 2013; the peer support element works so well, and enhances the experience for interns and the team alike. □

### Michelle Harris



Danyanne Quemper,  
Business and Resources  
Manager

Danyanne has a background in professional management/business administration. Her areas of expertise include Employment Law and Corporate Governance.

Danyanne is a Graduate Member of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (ICSA) and she is CES' Company Secretary.

► We launched our Lecture Series last year and it is already proving popular. The CES Lecture Series is a unique opportunity to watch, listen and learn from some of the leading international voices. □

Liza Clancy

◀ It was important to me that we turned the business model around and were equipped to deliver on the income targets set under the Sustainability Plan 2014-2016. □

Danyanne Quemper



Liza Clancy,  
Project Support

Liza works as PA to the Director and project support to the CES NI team. She has worked with us for four years. Her previous jobs included a role as PA to the Global Chief of an investment bank, and manager of the tours department of a travel company. She also ran her own outsourced administration business for two years.



Hazel Arthur, Business and Resources Support

Hazel has a strong administrative background within the childcare sector, an area in which she worked for over 13 years. Prior to joining CES, Hazel worked as an office manager for a leading childcare provider in Ireland.

◀ Finding sources of funding for our work is vital. Last year, knowing that we had secured funding to bring us into 2014 and beyond was really good news for the team. □

Hazel Arthur

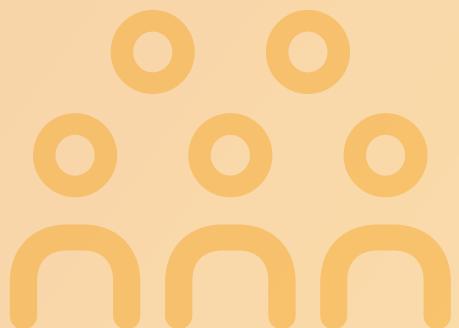


Breda Ryan,  
Project Support

Breda provides project support across many aspects of our work, particularly in relation to research, policy, systems and practice. She is key to organising events and in the co-ordination of our communications, both internal and external. Her background in the communications sector includes working as a co-ordinator and trainer in community radio.



Graduate Interns in CES



▫ A highlight of 2013 for me was working on such great events as 'Research Alive' and the 'Towards a National Parenting Strategy Symposium'. We were able to bring world class experts to a variety of audiences, start lively discussions, and build new relationships along the way. □

Breda Ryan

Niamh Ann Cross, Graduate Intern

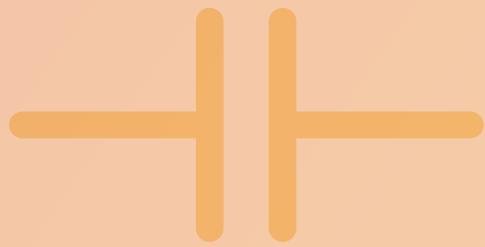
Niamh has a Degree in Law with Political Science from Trinity College Dublin and has worked in a law firm and on research projects for the European Law Students Association on the status of children's rights across Europe. Niamh has been a mentor for TCD students and a tutor within the Voluntary Tuition Programme.

Ellen Garvey, Graduate Intern

Ellen has a Degree in Psychology from Dublin Business School and represented Irish students within the European Federation of Psychology Students' Associations. She has worked with children of diverse ages and abilities in both mainstream and residential treatment settings.

## Lisa Ann Kennedy, Graduate Intern

Lisa Ann is currently completing the structured PhD in Child and Youth Research with NUI, Galway; her thesis explores the experiences of African adolescent refugees and asylum seekers in Ireland. She has a Degree in Psychology from University College Cork and a Masters Degree in Health Psychology from NUIG.



## Martina O'Brien, Graduate Intern

Martina has a Masters Degree in Community Development from NUI Galway and a Bachelors Degree in Social Science from NUI Maynooth. She has worked with various groups including women's networks, youth projects and asylum seekers in the Galway and Athlone areas.

## Joanne Walker, Graduate Intern

Joanne has both a Bachelors and Masters Degree in History from the University of Newcastle. Her experience is in working with a number of community groups, including women, families and the elderly population. She has worked with the charities Age UK and Barnardos.



## Our New Staff 2014

CES welcome the following, who have joined our Dublin and Belfast Teams in 2014.



**Majella McCloskey,**  
**Senior Manager**

Majella McCloskey joined CES from CO3, a leadership organisation for Northern Ireland's third sector. As Chief Executive of CO3, she developed a number of leadership development initiatives; took forward policy

in relation to the third sector's role in health and social care; grew the organisation's membership and turnover; and led its role in establishing and delivering CollaborationNI. Majella has previously been Director NI of the fuel poverty charity NEA, and led the Blackstaff Health Project on behalf of Belfast Healthy Cities.

▷ I look forward to working with CES' partners to develop our work in Northern Ireland, and help to build better outcomes for children, families and communities. □

**Majella McCloskey**

▷ Working with my colleagues on bringing together all of the exciting learning from the Prevention and Early Intervention Initiative and how it has helped children, young people, families and communities was really a rewarding experience and helped highlight all of the hard work initiatives all over the island of Ireland have been doing. □

**Sarah Rochford**



**Sarah Rochford,**  
**Project Specialist**

Sarah Rochford, a former CES Graduate Intern, was previously with Saint John of God Hospitaller Service, where she worked with children and young people with special educational needs and emotional disorders. Sarah has experience in both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Recent work includes contributing to synthesising the learning from the Prevention and Early Intervention Initiative in Ireland and developing supports for organisations undertaking self-evaluations.



Aisling Sheehan,  
Project Specialist

Aisling Sheehan, a former CES Graduate Intern, has a background in psychology and a PhD in Health Services Research. Previously a Research Fellow at Trinity College Dublin, her research

examined the experiences and impact of young people's transition from child to adult healthcare settings. She has also worked with children with disabilities and special educational needs and has expertise in evidence synthesis and a variety of qualitative and quantitative research methods.

▷ It's been a privilege to work with services in the Area-Based Childhood Programme in striving to achieve better outcomes for children and families. □

**Aisling Sheehan**

9

Conferences/events  
organised by or with CES  
& 23 conference/event  
presentations given by us

CES would like to gratefully acknowledge the contributions of Avery Bowser, Claire MacEvilly, Kate Morris, Mairéad Mullaney, Heino Schonfeld, Dr Sean Denyer and Órla Whelan in 2013.

# Our Board

CES has been developed by champions of evidence-informed policy and practice across Ireland and Northern Ireland. Hugh Connor joined the Board of Directors in September 2013 and Ruth Lavery stepped down in December, having served for four years on the Board. On behalf of the Board and everyone at CES we would like to offer Ruth our thanks for her contribution to our work during this critical period of development at CES.

In 2013, our Board members were:

## Owen Keenan

Founder and Managing Director of Middlequarter Limited and Former CEO of Barnardos Ireland

## Ruth Lavery

Barrister and Chair of Social Security and Mental Health Review Tribunals in Northern Ireland

## Hugh Connor

Former Director of Social Services in the Eastern Health and Social Services Board and current Chair of the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI)

## Dan Flinter, Chair

Business Strategist, non Executive Director of a number of companies and former CEO of Enterprise Ireland

## Dominic Burke

Social Worker, former Chief Executive of the Western Health and Social Services Board for Northern Ireland

## Mary Walsh

Chartered Accountant

CES would also like to welcome the new Board members who joined in 2014:

## Patricia Byron

Founding CEO of the Injuries Board in Ireland

## Dr. Paula Kilbane, CBE

Fellow of both the Faculty of Public Health Medicine and The Royal College of Physicians, and an Associate Fellow of the all-Ireland Institute of Public Health

## Dr. Trevor Spratt

AIB Professor in Childhood Research at Trinity College Dublin

# Appendix 1: Publications & Resources



New CES publications produced & 3 commissioned/contributed to by CES

CES produced the following publications in 2013:

- **Prevention and Early Intervention in Children and Young People's Services – Children's Learning**  
Full Report and Briefing Paper
- **Prevention and Early Intervention in Children and Young People's Services - Child Behaviour**  
Full Report and Briefing Paper
- **Prevention and Early Intervention in Children and Young People's Services – Promoting Inclusion**  
Full Report and Briefing Paper
- **Prevention and Early Intervention in Children and Young People's Services – Child Health and Development** Full Report and Briefing Paper

- **Children's Services Reform: Key Learning and Messages Briefing Paper**
- **Mid-Term Review of the Local and Community Development Programme 2011-2012.**
- **Every Child a Home – A Review of the Implementation of the Youth Homelessness Strategy**  
Full Report and Briefing Paper commissioned by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA).
- **CES Annual Review 2012.**

CES produced the following resources in 2013:

- CES Lecture Series.
- Capacity Building Leaflet.
- Information Leaflet on Children's Services Committees.
- Supporting Implementation of the National Quality Standards Framework for Youth Work, and the National Quality Standards for Volunteer-led Youth Groups (Route Map).

CES collaborated on the following publications in 2013:

- **Youth Work, A Systematic Review of the Research Literature** by Kelly Dickson, Carol-Ann Vigurs and Mark Newman. Commissioned by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA).
- **Right from the Start – Report of the Early Years Advisory Group on the Early Years Strategy** – inputs from CES (Appendices 1-5).
- **Development of an overarching measure of impact for Home-Start UK: a feasibility study** – co-produced with Colebrooke Centre and HomeStart UK.





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