WELCOME TO CIRCY

The Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth (CIRCY) is a pan-university research centre at the University of Sussex, with a membership that spans social sciences, arts, humanities and professional fields including social work, law, education and health. Established in 2012, CIRCY’s research is interdisciplinary and international in scope. Our diverse research and scholarship is united by a critical engagement with children and young people’s lives in time, and a focus on the child or young person at the centre of inquiry.

In this academic year, 2017-2018, we celebrated CIRCY’s fifth anniversary. It has been a year in which the Centre has grown, increasing our membership and establishing several major new projects. We have used the opportunity of our anniversary in order to reflect, reviewing our work and discussing future possibilities. We have consulted with our members, paying particular attention to understandings of interdisciplinarity, while also revisiting the research themes that were established two years ago, following our last review. We have also continued to build links with other centres of expertise within and beyond the University, in the UK and internationally.

Considered together, the multidisciplinary perspectives offered by CIRCY projects enrich our understanding of childhood and youth as a field of research and practice. In this report, we do not seek to document the whole of CIRCY’s work, but rather to highlight examples that help to convey the richness and variety of our activity, in seeking to understand – and make a difference to – the lives of children, young people and families. We also present some ‘spotlight’ examples of our activity, including research projects, knowledge exchange activities, and doctoral research, as well as reflecting on the growing influence of CIRCY’s work.

Our fifth anniversary review has shown that CIRCY continues in its mission to provide a supportive and creative ‘space to think with’ for the academic community – capacity building, opening up new possibilities, and supporting the work of colleagues at all career stages. We have an active social media presence, with a Twitter feed and blog, and our taught courses, the Childhood and Youth: Theory and Practice BA and the Childhood and Youth Studies MA, continue to flourish. This year, we established the CIRCY Dissertation Prize for Outstanding Undergraduate Research on the Childhood and Youth BA; the prize was awarded to Catherine Driver for her research ‘Teacher Haltung within a Culture of Performativity: Narratives of Resistance’. In another exciting new development that reflects our growing reputation as a centre for doctoral studies, students will now have the opportunity to pursue a Childhood and Youth Studies PhD.

CIRCY researchers have secured funding for several important new research initiatives this year – for example with new grants from the UK Department for Education and the Economic and Social Research Council. Among our new projects is one which has inspired the presentation of this annual report: Professor Robin Banerjee (Psychology) has been funded to develop his work on kindness, linking the CRESS (Children's Relationships, Emotions, and Social Skills) Lab with CIRCY’s ‘Emotional Lives’ theme in a new initiative called Kindness UK@Sussex. Building from last year’s ‘Picture the Future’ project, CIRCY and Kindness UK@Sussex have been working together on another picture project for 2018 called ‘Picturing Kindness’. We invited children and young people to share their images of kindness, either submitting them online or taking part in a drop-in workshop as part of the Sussex Community Festival. These images – along with the young people’s descriptions of their work if they chose to provide captions – have illustrated this Annual Report. This small-scale project is also informing the developing work of Kindness UK @ Sussex, helping to build our understandings of what kindness looks like.

Cover image: Teddy giving a cake to his friend, by Tyler
Contents page image: Animal love, by Lilah
In this section, we set out the underpinning conceptual concerns that link CIRCY’s work, across projects and disciplines, before going on to provide an indication of the variety of projects that characterise our approach. Our research themes were established to inform and inspire our work, not to categorise or set boundaries between studies. Revisiting these themes in our most recent review has highlighted the importance of synergies across themes, and here we set out our themes as three underpinning conceptual concerns that intersect to inform the conceptualisation of childhood and youth across space and time:

- ‘Good’ childhoods? Everyday and (extra)ordinary lives
- Childhood publics/Public childhoods
- Emotional lives

Of course, not all projects engage with all of these concerns, but as they span substantive topics and disciplinary boundaries, they generate transdisciplinary space in which our work, collectively, builds critical understandings of childhood and youth. The Research Spotlights provide more detailed examples of our work.

One key change arising from the review of our themes is that we no longer have a discrete theme on ‘digital childhoods’. CIRCY continues to maintain strong links with the Sussex Humanities Lab (SHL), with an ever-growing reputation as a centre of expertise on everyday childhoods in a technological age. But, as everyday lives for children and adults alike are increasingly digitally saturated, it would be misleading to treat the digital aspects of childhood as discrete from ordinary lives. These important issues are explored in a major new book on Everyday Childhoods by Rachel Thomson, Liam Berriman (both Social Work/SHL) and Sara Bragg (CIRCY Advisory Group), which is featured in one of our Research Spotlights.

‘GOOD’ CHILDHOODS? EVERYDAY AND (EXTRA)ORDINARY LIVES

This conceptual area prompts us to engage critically with normative assumptions about ‘good’ childhoods, and ‘ordinary’ (and conversely, ‘extraordinary’) lives. It reminds us to recognise the diverse and contingent meanings of childhood and youth, as well as the ways in which global processes may cut across these in the expression of powerful ideas of what a ‘good childhood’ or an ‘ordinary childhood’ should or could be. Research within this theme also considers categories of children, young people and families whose circumstances are ‘extraordinary’, placing them outside of normative ideals. It also prompts us to consider the ways in which categorisations of vulnerability or difference may function as a dividing practice, neglecting the ‘ordinary’ aspects of ‘extraordinary’ lives, practices and relationships, and potentially adding to the stigmatisation and disadvantage that young people face.

CHILDHOOD PUBLICS/PUBLIC CHILDHOODS

In some contemporary work that focuses on childhood, the child can be defined in a way that can seem individualised, isolating, or abstracting: the child at risk, the child at play, the sexual child. The phrase ‘childhood publics’ reminds us that children are never confined to the family, or even to the family and school; they are never outside of politics and history. They experience versions of public life that may be distinctive in comparison to adults’ experiences, not least in the ways they are shaped and controlled by adults. But public life is no less relevant – no less intense or formative – for children and young people than for adults. Now especially, in our digital age, children have access to a multitude of mediated public spheres; the child alone in their bedroom is, more often than not, participating in a childhood public. With these considerations in mind, our Childhood Publics/Public Childhoods theme acts to emphasize work that foregrounds and theorizes children’s interaction with public life, reminding us to stay attuned to the rich range of questions that emerge from the formulation of childhood as always ‘public’ and publicly constructed.
**EMOTIONAL LIVES**

The theme of Emotional Lives takes account of historical and cultural contingencies, reminding us to take account of the ways in which emotion expresses and confirms the materiality, relationality and sensuality of social lives. This theme is also concerned with the need to build practice and policy approaches that are emotionally engaged and which seek to build insight into emotional dynamics and development among young people and those working with and for them.

As a whole, CIRCY researchers’ attention to the conceptualisation of Emotional Lives prompts us to build critical thinking about established and taken-for-granted issues in childhood and youth – whether studying young people, policy or professional practice – by thinking through the lens of emotion and affective practice.
OUR APPROACH TO RESEARCH

Imaginative Methodologies

Over the last five years, CIRCY has built an international reputation for methodological excellence, engaging in international advisory work and collaborations. CIRCY has also provided a critical space in which to interrogate the meanings of methodological innovation across disciplines. Central to our work is the pursuit of imaginative methodologies – sometimes the search for new, innovative approaches, sometimes the reimagining and repurposing of traditional methods – which underpins our fundamental concern with keeping the child or young person at the centre of our thinking.

Regardless of discipline, our methodological approach depends on how we conceive of the child, and we challenge CIRCY researchers to imagine alternatives to reductive, static or objectifying lenses on childhood and youth. In this way, our emphasis on imaginative methodologies provides a distinctive conceptual space that connects our expertise in temporal research methods, in participatory approaches, in research ethics, in cross-national methodology, and in creative, digital, sensual and psychosocial approaches.

Kindness to animals and friends, by Zeineddin
How to be kind, by Tara
EXAMPLES OF OUR RESEARCH

REPRESENTING CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

Responding to critical questions about the representation of childhood and youth, CIRCY’s researchers have developed an increasing body of work concerned with archives and museums, engaging the ways in which childhood is recorded – and can be revisited – in time.

Rachel Thomson (Social Work) has been awarded funding under the ESRC’s Transformative Research call. The project, entitled ‘Reanimating Data: Experiments with people, places and archives’ will be conducted in collaboration with Sharon Webb (Sussex Humanities Lab), Niamh Moore (University of Edinburgh) and Alison Ronan (Feminist Webs). Focused on teenage sexuality over a 30 year period, the team will work with two unique projects – the ESRC funded Women, Risk and AIDS project, conducted from 1988-1990, and Feminist Webs, a Manchester based community archive that acts as a resource for practitioners, volunteers and young women involved in youth and community work. The project will develop methods for reanimating data, working with new generations of young women, aiming to inspire current and future researchers, in academia and in the community, to archive and share their data.

Over the last two years, CIRCY researchers have been building links with the Victoria and Albert Museum. Hannah Field (English) has been working with the V&A as a Visiting Fellow, and her work there is described in more detail in a Knowledge Exchange Spotlight. Also in the School of English, Katherine Kruger spent six months, supported by CHASE funding, working part-time as part of the collections team at the V&A Museum of Childhood on a project to relaunch the museum’s unique childhood studies library. Working in close proximity with the archivist, Gary Haines, and the museum’s extensive archive, presented Katherine with an opportunity to consider in more detail the socioeconomic histories behind the material culture of childhood separately from the representations of such objects in literature, which is the usual focus of her research.

Considering the role of childhood as a site of cultural fantasy invested with idealised notions of innocence and imaginative creativity, Katherine’s doctoral thesis seeks to examine the ways in which representations of “childhood” are largely determined by the material objects associated with the child at play. The Museum of Childhood was one of the first museums to consider the child audience in its curation and is now revisiting this in order to both develop more immersive displays and to foster a mode of design that responds to the innovations which emerge during child’s play. Katherine reflected on her experience, saying:

‘The focus on childhood as at once an audience and a site of inspiration, forces us to consider in more detail the ways in which childhood is culturally defined by the sorts of spaces children are given access to, the culture they are allowed or expected to consume, and the ways in which cultural sites define or delimit childhood in attempting to both appeal to the child and market or conserve a particular history of childhood.’
One important strand of CIRCY’s research is concerned with making a difference to children, young people and families whose lives might be deemed ‘extraordinary’ as a result of their involvement with child and youth welfare services, work that often links with the Centre for Innovation and Research in Social Work, within the Department of Social Work and Social Care at Sussex.

CIRCY researchers Janet Boddy (Education) and Gillian Ruch (Social Work), working in partnership with the NGO Research in Practice (RIP; www.rip.org.uk) led a successful bid to evaluate projects funded within Wave 2 of the UK Department for Education’s Innovation Programme in Children’s Social Care (see https://innovationcsc.co.uk). The team have been allocated three major project evaluations, which involve colleagues from Education, Social Work, Economics and Psychology:
• ‘Pause’ (www.pause.org.uk) is a service for women who have experienced recurrent removals of children into care, women who have often experienced significant trauma and disadvantage through their own childhoods. Janet Boddy (Education) is leading the project, working in collaboration with Bella Wheeler (Education), and with researchers from Research in Practice and Ipsos Mori (who are leading on economic elements of the evaluation).

• ‘Contextual Safeguarding in Hackney’ examines the development of a new contextual safeguarding model in the London Borough of Hackney, designed to assess and intervene in relation to the risks young people face from outside the family, such as sexual exploitation and gang-related violence. The evaluation is led by Michelle Lefevre (Social Work), working with colleagues including Robin Banerjee and Helen Drew (Psychology), and Kristine Hickle and Rea Maglajlic (Social Work), as well as researchers from Research in Practice.

• ‘Children’s Social Care Innovation in Northamptonshire’ is also a local authority systems change project, incorporating changes such as a move to locality team working. The evaluation is led by Gillian Ruch (Social Work), collaborating with Research in Practice as well as colleagues including Tish Marrable (Social Work), Louise Gazeley and Gill Hampden-Thompson (Education) and Michael Barrow (Economics).

These awards extend the portfolio of evaluations conducted for DfE within Wave 1 of the DfE Innovation Programme, work led by Barry Luckock (Social Work), once again in conjunction with colleagues in Social Work, Education and Psychology.

Kristine Hickle (Social Work) has partnered with Brighton and Hove City Council and Safer London on Centre for Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse evaluation contracts, and evaluated Safer London’s ‘Empower Families’ project, which seeks to provide specialist support to parents and carers who are caring for children or young people at risk of gang-related sexual exploitation.

Michelle Lefevre (Social Work) and Chris Hall (Visiting Senior Research Fellow, Social Work) have partnered with two local authorities to explore how social workers engage and communicate with children and young people during home visits as part of safeguarding assessments and interventions. The innovative methodology asks social workers to video their everyday practice with children, while the children and social workers are also interviewed to gain their perspectives on the encounters. The recording is then subject to conversation, discourse and psychosocial analysis in order to explore the nature of talk, play and interactions in these often complex and contested situations.

Over the years, CIRCY has developed a growing reputation for work on the experiences and wellbeing of young people who have experience of living ‘in care’ (described as ‘looked after’ in the English legislation). This includes work such as the Against All Odds? project, funded by the Research Council of Norway, and involving Janet Boddy and Fidelma Hanrahan (both Education) and Louise Gazeley and Tamsin Hinton-Smith’s (Education) evaluation of the Higher Education Champions Coaching Programme pilot project, in conjunction with AimHigher South East, which examined the role of care experienced coaches in supporting young people in accessing higher education. Both of these projects are now completed, and the teams are publishing and developing impact from the work (see Knowledge Exchange).

Helen Drew (Psychology) is working on a new project entitled ‘Improving the Emotional, Social and Psychosocial Wellbeing of Looked-After Children: Testing the Shared Training and Assessment for Wellbeing package’, which is funded by the Sir Halley Stewart Trust and an anonymous donation. Working with Robin Banerjee (Psychology) and colleagues at the Rees Centre at the University of Oxford, the project involves integrated training on mental health for foster carers and teachers, as well as home and school-based assessments reviewed by a clinician, to identify any indicators of potential mental health difficulties.
UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORTING EMOTIONAL LIVES

As noted in the introduction to this report, Robin Banerjee (Psychology) has been awarded funding to support the development of his work on kindness, working with Jess Cotney (also Psychology) and supported by a cross-University advisory group. This new initiative, Kindness UK@Sussex, also links with Robin’s CRESS (Children’s Relationships, Emotions, and Social Skills) Lab.

Nicola Yuill (Psychology) and the ChaT (Children and Technology) Lab have also been developing further work on emotion, including working with Brighton and Hove City Council evaluating the use of the Just Right emotion regulation intervention in city primary schools.

Over the five years since CIRCY was established, internal support from University of Sussex funding has been invaluable in enabling our researchers to develop new and innovative strands of work. Recent research by Helen Drew (Psychology) provides an example of this. Helen was awarded funding from the Research Development Fund to undertake a six month pilot project entitled ‘Reading Feelings: Does reading fiction improve empathy and social skills in children?’. The project is supervised by Robin Banerjee, Alan Garnham and Jane Oakhill (all Psychology). The research aims to develop methods to assess how children’s emotional engagement with a text and wider reading experiences are associated with empathic and prosocial skills.
Smiles on the sunshine,
by Georgi

what kindness means to me...

Take this I've got lots more

Be the sunshine to some one's day & give them a smile!
DIGITAL CHILDHOODS
Book Launch & Seminar

29th January 2018, 4-7pm
The Digital Humanities Lab
Silverstone, University of Sussex
Spotlight on Researching Everyday Childhoods: Time, Technology and Documentation (Bloomsbury Press 2018) http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781350011779

This new book Researching Everyday Childhoods is a culmination of several threads of methodological development in the field of qualitative longitudinal research. The project focuses on children and young people and what it is like to live and grow in a culture that is saturated by digital technology. It is also a book about what it means for researchers to operate in the same environment, recognising how our practice is transformed by new tools and changing relationships of expertise and authority. The book is a meditation on a shift from analogue to digital knowledge that encompasses all of the actors involved: the researchers, the participants, the funders, the audiences, the publishers, the data. This is achieved by anchoring the empirical project to our own pasts – the seven year old children in the study are the yet to be born babies in our earlier intergenerational study of new motherhood. The researchers following them have known their families for almost a decade and this ‘back-story’ forms part of the relationship and data shadow for their cases. We have also adapted methods first trialled in the earlier project: a day in a life, object based conversations and ‘recursive interviews’ where fragments of data and analysis from the research relationship are represented and responded to in the present.

Another innovation has been starting rather than ending with the archive. Where previously we had promised confidentiality and anonymity as a condition of the research, in this project we invited participants to work collaboratively with us to co-produce a publically accessible archive. The practice of ‘curation’ is as important to us as ‘data generation’ and we are aware that professional social researchers no longer have a monopoly over such knowledge practices and the resulting knowledge relations. Working in collaboration with the Mass Observation Archive and our participant families we have created a new multi-media collection as well as an open access online interface – something that has involved us entering the archive itself, exploring what it means to become data, to be available for unknown audiences and unforeseen modes of secondary analysis. Thinking through what is the same and what might be different, we move more deeply into an era of digital data in which notions of indelibility, anonymity and trust change their character. We cannot confidently make promises about a future that we are yet to apprehend. We can however engage in the analytic and ethical labour necessary to ensure that we are thinking together in a way that is transparent, reflexive and accountable. Our book Researching Everyday Childhoods: Time, Technology and Documentation in a Digital Age does just that. We are pleased that it is also open access, meaning that along with the public archive it may be used as a resource for teaching and collaboration.
Loads of love, by Evie
SPOTLIGHT ON RESEARCH: YOUNG CARERS IN EUROPE

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Saul Becker, and Research Fellow, Feylyn Lewis (both Social Work), are leading the UK’s research activities of the “ME-WE” (MEntal Health & WEllbeing) project, funded by the European Union under the Horizon 2020 programme. The goal of the project is to strengthen the resilience of young carers aged 15-17, improve their mental health and well-being, and mitigate the negative influences of psychosocial and environmental factors. Whilst it is assumed that young caring is a widespread phenomenon across Europe, specific data, awareness and formal support interventions and services are not frequently available. Taking on a caring role constitutes a relevant risk factor for the occurrence of both immediate and long-term problems in young carers’ mental health, well-being and development, as well as for their transitions to adulthood, social inclusion, education and employability.

The project develops an innovative framework of primary prevention interventions to be tested and adapted in six European countries (Italy, Netherlands, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom) at different stages of awareness and development of services for young carers. The project has three specific objectives: (1) to systematise knowledge on young carers; (2) to co-design, test and deliver psychosocial interventions in six countries; (3) to evaluate what works and provide knowledge translation actions at national, European and international levels. Researchers will engage directly with and involve young carers, together with major stakeholders (educators, health and social care professionals, youth organisations, carer organisations) through all the stages of the project via national Blended Learning Networks, user groups, workshops, and in an International Advisory and Ethics Board. The project will have international impact, improving young carers’ mental health and well-being, educational outcomes, transition, employability and social inclusion, as well as creating evidence-based practices, to improve health equity and societal benefits.

The first activity of the ME-WE project is the spring 2018 commencement of an online survey designed to inform a profile of the needs and experiences of European adolescent young carers.

For more information, visit the ME-WE project website (http://me-we.eu) or contact Feylyn Lewis (F.M.Lewis@sussex.ac.uk).

PROJECT PARTNERS
CIRCY’s work is fundamentally concerned with making a difference to children and young people’s lives, a principle that applies across diverse disciplines through our efforts to build ‘real world’ understandings of lives in time and place. We aim to think beyond the academy, making our research visible and accessible, and engaging with research users – including researched groups – throughout the research process and beyond the lifetime of specific projects. In this section, we highlight some examples of the range of work we do with knowledge exchange, public engagement and partnerships with stakeholders beyond the academy.

Alongside ‘traditional’ academic activities such as dissemination and expert advisory work, we are strongly committed to building opportunities for mutual learning between researchers and others who have a stake in research process and outcomes (whether practitioners, policy makers, other academics, or children, young people and families). This strategy, of connecting research and knowledge exchange through embedded partnership working, is illustrated by our two Knowledge Exchange spotlights, which showcase Hannah Field (English) and her work with the Victoria & Albert Museum, and Kristine Hickle (Social Work), and her development of trauma informed research and practice within Brighton and Hove.

Kind thought, by Noah
POLICY AND PRACTICE CONNECTIONS

Reflecting our growing reputation as a centre of expertise in children and young people’s lives and services, an important component of our work is engagement with policy and practice stakeholders. CIRCY Co-Director, Michelle Lefevre (Social Work), has been advising the UK Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) as part of an expert reference group setting standards of proficiency for humanistic and integrative psychotherapists who work with children and young people. CIRCY Director, Janet Boddy (Education), has, for a number of years, served on the Partnership Board of Research in Practice, a non-governmental organisation which promotes evidence informed practice in children’s services, and as noted earlier, CIRCY and RIP are now collaborating in research for DfE. In her capacity as CIRCY Director, Janet also took part in a roundtable discussion hosted by the Fabian Society in November, discussing ‘Community, Identity and Citizenship: Young people and the world around them’, and highlighting the range of work CIRCY has done in relation to concepts of Childhood Publics and Ordinary/(Extra)Ordinary Childhood and Youth.

Over the last five years, CIRCY’s researchers have developed a significant programme of work on sexualities and relationships, supported through close collaborations with the national NGO Brook (www.brook.org.uk). Building from this work, Rachel Thomson (Social Work), Ben Fincham (Sociology), and Elsie Whittington (Social Work), along with Ester McGeeney and Laura Hamzic and (Brook), have collaborated with OnClick to develop two e-learning modules from original research findings from their project entitled ‘Pleasure and consent: delivering critical digital pedagogies in sex and relationship education’. The creation, production, and evaluation of the Consent and Pleasure e-learning modules was made possible by an ESRC Impact Acceleration grant from the University of Sussex. See https://learn.brook.org.uk

Our work with care experienced young people continues to attract widespread policy and practice interest. Janet Boddy (Education) regularly participates in the All Party Parliamentary Group for Looked After Children and Care Leavers, and in the autumn of 2017 she met with Sir Martin Narey and Mark Owers to discuss implications from her research for their Fostering Stocktake for the Department for Education. Janet was also delighted to be invited to share findings from the Against All Odds? study at Battersea Arts Centre, as part of a series of events for National Care Leavers Week which highlighted creative work by care experienced young people including an exhibition of visual arts and a theatre performance, and culminated in a sold-out performance by Lemn Sissay (British author, poet, artist and broadcaster). The collective value of the work was captured in a blog by Elemental, who led the visual arts component. They commented that the work Against All Odds? has done with music, ‘offered a unique and personal window into different experiences, showing how effective creative arts can be in self-expression’. See: https://batterseaartscentreblog.com/2017/11/13/national-care-leavers-week-2017-everyone-is-creative/

In 2013, Louise Gazeley (Education) led a study of inequalities in school exclusions for the Office of the Children’s Commissioner, a project which linked CIRCY with the Centre for Teaching and Learning Research (CTRL) within the Department of Education at Sussex, and involved collaboration with colleagues including Tish Marrable (Social Work) and Janet Boddy (Education). The work attracted increasing attention in the last year, with the Education Select Committee’s Inquiry into Alternative Provision, and Louise gave evidence to the Parliamentary Select Committee on Alternative Provision in April, and took part in a Ministerial Roundtable in July.

KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND PARTNERSHIPS

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While we are proud that our work speaks to national and international policy debates, local connections are equally important to CIRCY researchers. We are delighted by our ongoing, and strengthening, relationships with policy and practice stakeholders – and with children, young people and families – in our local community. For example, Kristine Hickle's (Social Work) work on trauma-informed practice in Brighton and Hove is featured as a Knowledge Exchange Spotlight in this report. Kristi’s research on child sexual exploitation (CSE), in the UK and internationally, has led to close working links with the police, and she continues to serve as a member of the ‘Regional CSEA Strategic Governance Group’ with South East Police Forces.

In July, Liam Berriman (Social Work) presented his work on everyday childhoods in a technological age, as part of a major event organised by Brighton and Hove City Council to inform planning for their 2030 Vision for the City. The strategy includes a core strand on Children & Young People in 2030: Ensuring a bright future for Children & Young People in Brighton & Hove, and CIRCY is delighted to be working with the BHCC team to identify and develop links between our research and their developing vision for children and young people.

ChaT (Children and Technology) Lab has also been working with Brighton and Hove City Council, evaluating the use of the Just Right emotion regulation intervention in city primarily schools. ChaT Lab was also involved with the Brighton Science Festival in February, looking at making grammar learning fun and drawing an enthusiastic crowd of youngsters using technology to play with language. Nicola Yuill and Zoe Hopkins (Psychology) also shared their ESRC-funded research on the @Wechat project on what makes a good conversation for children with language difficulties, with Brighton Speech & Language Therapists group.

In May, Lucy Robinson (History) used funding from an Innovation in Teaching Prize to host ‘Doing It Together’, working with students on her Post Punk Britain course and with the storyteller Jon Mason, to produce a site specific treasure hunt for children and young people at the Brighton Open Market. As noted in the introduction to this report, CIRCY also hosted a workshop, Picturing Kindness, at the Sussex Community Festival in June, where Esther Mahon (CIRCY Research Fellow) and Jess Cotney (Kindness@Sussex Research Fellow) worked with 169 visitors over the course of the day, many of whom generated the images that illustrate this report.

In October, CIRCY lent support to the Indie Rock-a-Nore Festival, which raised money for Brighton suicide prevention charity, GrassRoots, who provide support across East Sussex. Lucy Robinson (History) blogged about the event, highlighting the creative power of linking the personal and political in inspiring research, and above all, in understanding, and supporting, young people’s lives in challenging times. See: https://circyatsussex.wordpress.com/2017/11/22/indie-rock-a-nore/
**TALKING METHODOLOGY**

As noted earlier, we continue to extend and consolidate our reputation as an international centre of excellence in methodologies for researching childhood and youth. In September, we hosted an ESRC National Centre for Research Methods workshop on *Thinking with ethics in and beyond the field*, delivered by Janet Boddy (Education), Rachel Thomson (Social Work) and Jette Kofoed (Aarhus University, and former visiting researcher to CIRCY). Janet also gave a workshop at the University of Groningen in May, discussing concepts, ethics and methods in research with ‘vulnerable’ populations. In October, Professor Ann Nilsen from the University of Bergen opened CIRCY’s seminar series with a methodology workshop on case studies and gave a seminar on *Young People’s Thoughts about the Future: Methods and Data from three different studies*.

Rachel Thomson’s (Social Work) expertise on qualitative longitudinal research continues to be highly influential. She contributed to a panel on new directions qualitative longitudinal research at the annual conference of the Society of Longitudinal Lifecourse Studies held at the University of Milan Bicocca in July. She also visited the Childhood Societies Research Centre at the University of Wuppertal, at the invitation of Heinz Sünker (CIRCY Advisory Group), to talk about her work, and facilitated a conference and two day workshop on narrative and prospective social action organised by colleagues at VIVE (the Danish National Centre for Social Research) linked to a special issue on the theme in the International Journal of Social Research Methodology, to be published in 2019. Matt Ellis (Social Work) who gained his PhD this summer also gave a paper at the workshop, providing a critical perspective on the use of narrative therapy with young people in treatment for harmful sexual behaviour.

As with these examples, CIRCY researchers have also been sharing their methodological expertise in visiting lectures and workshops in the UK and internationally (see Talking About Our Work).

**TALKING AND LISTENING TO CHILDREN**

In 2017, Gillian Ruch (Social Work) led a Talking and Listening to Children (TLC) research impact project to develop her ESRC funded research. Involving social workers in two English local authorities, the work explored changes to practice as a result of engaging with facilitated learning using the TLC online resources. Delivered in monthly small group sessions the facilitators used a reflective learning method, called Action Inquiry – a cyclical process of reflection and action to strengthen individual and organisational practice which operates at three interrelated levels: the individual, with colleagues, and at the systems level.
INTERNATIONAL LINKS

CIRCY continues to serve as an international hub for researchers and we have been pleased to build our international partnerships in the last year. Jo Moran-Ellis (Sociology) is currently Visiting Scholar in the Research Centre ‘Childhoods. Societies’ at the University of Wuppertal in Germany, and Janet Boddy (Education) has been appointed as an Adjunct Professor at Oslo Met University in Norway, where she will be working in 2018 with the child welfare research group at NOVA. Janet also visited the University of Groningen in the Netherlands in May, where she examined a PhD and gave a workshop for postgraduate researchers. While there, Janet met with Monica Lopez Lopez to discuss the development of links between Sussex’s Childhood and Youth Studies MA and the University of Groningen’s International Masters in Youth Society and Policy, through their ENVOIE project (Enabling Virtual Online International Exchange). Liam Berriman (Social Work) is continuing to build this collaboration in his role as convenor of our Childhood and Youth Studies MA course.

Building on a successful CIRCY visit to University West, Trollhättan, Sweden, last year, Louise Gazeley (Education) has continued to build this collaboration, developing a book proposal for the Springer series Young People and Learning Processes in School and Everyday Life. The proposal is for an edited volume which will involve several CIRCY researchers, and will be entitled: Inclusion policies in practice: Insights from England and Sweden.

Professor Bernadette Tillard from the University of Lille visited CIRCY in the spring and gave a seminar in March on her research on kinship and network foster care in France, and met with academic and local authority colleagues to learn more about approaches to kinship and network care in England. In addition, Professor Robbie Gilligan from Trinity College Dublin joined CIRCY as a Visiting Professor in May and June. He gave a seminar in May at which he presented his international research on Access to Work for Young People in Care and Care Leavers.

CIRCY has been working with the Centre for Cultures of Reproduction, Technologies and Health (CORTH) and the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) as part of an internal International Research Partnerships and Network Fund (IRPNF) award from the University of Sussex to establish a new network of researchers from India, Bangladesh, Ghana and the UK, focused on ‘Narrating Blood’. Led by CORTH Director, Maya Unnithan (Anthropology), CIRCY Director Janet Boddy (Education) and Hayley McGregor (IDS), the network draws together interdisciplinary expertise to establish a set of analytic and methodological instruments to address the social, economic and health burden of hidden blood related conditions – such as anaemia – in lower and middle income countries. It will focus on the way blood is narrated within policy discourse as well as perceived in terms of weakness (anaemia) or stigma (menstrual) in everyday family, school and livelihood contexts in poor, rural, urban and migrating populations. The network met for the first time in June, with scholars from all four countries coming together in Sussex.
KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND PARTNERSHIPS

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Congratulations to Elsie Whittington (Social Work), CIRCY Research Fellow until September 2017 and a doctoral researcher. Elsie received the BERA Early Career Research Award 2017 for her work on sex and relationships education and consent. You can read her blog about the work (which was the focus of a Spotlight feature in our 2017 Annual Report) here: https://www.bera.ac.uk/blog/consent-education-undoing-the-binary-and-embracing-ambiguity

Perpetua Kirby (Education) was shortlisted for the University of Sussex Doctoral Research Image Competition, exhibited at ACCA, 27 June, and won the ‘People’s Vote’ prize for her image. She was also shortlisted for the BERA Early Career Researcher Presentation Award 2018 for her proposed paper entitled “‘Learning hard’: children’s lived experiences of classroom character initiatives’, which will be presented at the British Educational Research Association (BERA) Annual Conference, 11-13 September 2018, Northumbria University, Newcastle. Perpetua’s research is featured as a Spotlight on Doctoral Research in this report.

CIRCY ONLINE AND IN THE NEWS

The CIRCY blog [https://circyatsussex.wordpress.com] and Twitter feed (@SussexCIRCY) continue to be active, highlighting our research and activities.

Specific projects also have their own blogs and social media activity, including Everyday Childhoods (http://blogs.sussex.ac.uk/everydaychildhoods/) and Connectors (https://connectorsstudy.wordpress.com/). Lucy Robinson (History) also blogs about her research (https://profirobinson.com/), and CIRCY Advisory Committee member, David Buckingham blogs regularly on issues relating to children, media and education: www.davidbuckingham.net

Nicola Yuill’s (Psychology) ongoing research with The Language Alignment in Autism ESRC-funded project (ChaT Lab at Sussex and lab in Edinburgh) has started with the launch of wechat.org.uk and a Twitter feed @WechatProject

Rachel Thomson, Liam Berriman (Social Work) and Sara Bragg (CIRCY International Advisory Committee) set up a multimedia data collection, tied to their book Researching Everyday Childhoods, on the Everyday Childhoods blog: http://blogs.sussex.ac.uk/everydaychildhoods

Rachel’s work was also featured in the ‘This is Not A Sociology Blog’, in a podcast about her research on digital archives and children’s digital lives: https://thisisnotasociology.blog/2018/08/16/digital-sociology-podcast-episode-9-rachel-thomson-digital-archives-and-childrens-digital-lives/

In October, The Guardian newspaper highlighted ESRC-funded research from Gillian Ruch (Social Work); her Talking and Listening to Children research project was featured in an article entitled: ‘Talking to vulnerable children on their terms helps to build trust’.

Elsie Whittington wrote two blogs for the Huffington Post on ‘Why We Need To Teach Pupils Sex Is Not Just About Warding Off Groomers And Avoiding STIs’ and ‘The Impact Weinstein And #MeToo Must Have For Younger Generations’.
Between May and September 2018, Hannah Field (English) has been working as the University of Sussex/V&A Exchange Fellow. The exchange fellowship is designed to support research collaboration between the two institutions, and allows Hannah to spend one day a week on dedicated research at the V&A. From her base in the Museum’s Research Department, she is undertaking two projects in childhood studies.

First is the development of a major new research project, which seeks to move the study of nineteenth-century childhood away from its traditional focus on precocity and giftedness, looking instead at the figure of the dunce or dull child. Hannah is interested in the insights that different representations of the figure offer into concepts of educability, hard work, failure, sympathy, and punishment in the period. Although her training is in literary studies, the project has a strong focus on how dunces have been depicted in visual and material culture as well, and this is significantly enhanced by the opportunity to work with the collections at the V&A, especially the Museum of Childhood’s holdings.

The second project involves setting up a research network on the theme of childhood and dress. Along with Professor Kiera Vaclavík (Queen Mary), Hannah is planning a series of workshops that will address key research issues in this understudied field. How can the models of agency at the heart of both childhood studies and fashion theory be reshaped through an examination of intergenerational conflict and collaboration over dress? How do different spheres of children’s clothing – from fancy dress and uniforms, to baby clothing and layettes, to everyday leisurewear – construct childhood, now and in the past? How might the answers to these questions feed into the display and usage of children’s dress within museum settings (as artefact and as interactive activity)? This network will also bring CIRCY together with the Centre for Childhood Cultures (CCC), a research partnership between Queen Mary and the V&A Museum of Childhood that has been set up by Professor Vaclavík – and hopefully the first of a number of collaborations!
Building on her research on multidisciplinary trauma-informed practices with young people, Kristine Hickle (Social Work) has been working with Brighton and Hove City Council to train social workers and other professionals working with children and families to understand the impact of trauma and work more effectively with traumatised children and families. ‘Trauma-informed practice’ is a strengths-based framework that was initially developed in the United States and is now increasingly being utilised in the UK. Trauma-informed practitioners understand the potential impact of trauma in people’s lives, work to avoid retraumatisation, and prioritise five key principles in their work: safety, collaboration, trust, choice, and empowerment.

This year, Kristi has trained approximately 75 professionals and managers in trauma-informed practice, with plans to train 140 more multidisciplinary professionals over the next year. Feedback from the trainings indicates that practitioners do feel more able to understand the behaviours of traumatised children and parents, and work in practical ways to help them begin to feel safe.

‘I have taken away a wealth of ideas and tips to apply to my practice’
‘loads of great approaches to better understand how trauma manifest for people who we work with’
‘lots of practical ways to work with trauma and also a better understanding of what might cause trauma and how agencies can approach the work.’

Kristi has also began working with public health professionals in Brighton and Hove to help design a multidisciplinary approach to addressing trauma in an evidence-informed, strengths-based way across the sector. In the autumn, she will be taking her work further afield, and training senior police strategic leads in West Yorkshire on trauma-informed policing practices.

In the last year, she has presented this work in other national forums and through a training organised by the Centre for Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse. She was invited to contribute a chapter in an edited book published by Young Minds called Addressing Adversity, which focuses on the impact of childhood adversity and trauma on children and young people’s mental health (https://youngminds.org.uk/media/2142/ym-addressing-adversity-book-web.pdf) which was launched at an event in the House of Commons early February, to coincide with Children’s Mental Health Week 2018.
Seminars and events

CIRCY hosts exciting and inclusive events throughout the year, including workshops, seminars and conferences. This year, we were delighted to highlight events hosted in conjunction with other research centres across the University, in addition to solely CIRCY-hosted events:

10 OCTOBER 2017
On translation: knowledge between institution and intuition, Dr Martin Bittner, Researcher, Department of Education, Europa-Universität Flensburg, Germany.
Hosted by: CIRCY/Connectors

18 OCTOBER 2017
Young people’s thoughts about the future: methods and data from three different studies, Professor Ann Nilsen, Department of Sociology, University of Bergen, Germany.
Hosted by: CIRCY

12 DECEMBER 2017
Emotional lives at school over 100 Years: 1918-2018, Professor Robin Banerjee & Dr Hester Barron, University of Sussex.
Hosted by: CIRCY

29 JANUARY 2018
Researching everyday childhoods: time, technology and documentation in a digital age, Professor Rachel Thomson, Dr Liam Berriman (Sussex) & Dr Sara Bragg (Brighton).
Hosted by: CIRCY

2 MARCH 2018
Social workers and kinship care in France, Professor Bernadette Tillard, Department of Sociology and Economics, University of Lille, France.
Hosted by: CIRCY

21 MARCH 2018
‘Bringing research to their doorsteps’: reflections using synchronous online focus groups for researching young people’s experiences of school-based sex and relationship lessons, Rachel Heah, Doctoral Researcher, Liverpool Law School, University of Liverpool.
Hosted by: CIRCY/CORTH

23 APRIL 2018
The trust is the work – film screening and Q&A, Tracey Fuller, Teaching Fellow in Education, University of Sussex.
Hosted by: CIRCY

2 MAY 2018
Ethics in early years education and childhood/youth research masterclass, Dr Alison Fox, Senior Lecturer in Education, University of Leicester.
Hosted by: CIRCY

14 MAY 2018
Promoting access to work for young people in care and care leavers: international perspectives on the critical issues, Robbie Gilligan, Professor of Social Work and Social Policy & Associate Director Children’s Research Centre, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland.
Hosted by: CIRCY

12 JUNE 2018
Thatcher’s children in literature, Dr Dominic Dean, Research Quality Officer, University of Sussex.
Hosted by: CIRCY
Pick me up when I fall, by Arabella
CIRCY’s postgraduate research community continues to go from strength to strength. Five of our students completed their doctorates in the last year – and we extend congratulations to Yusef Bakkali (Sociology), Helen Drew (Psychology), Matthew Ellis (Social Work), Cynthia Okpokiri (Social Work) and Tasleem Rana (Social Work). Others have joined us, and we are especially pleased to welcome Marie Claire Burt (IDS/Education), who is the first CIRCY postgraduate researcher to be supervised jointly with the Institute of Development Studies at Sussex. We are also delighted to be establishing a PhD pathway in Childhood and Youth. Initially this will be offered in three Schools – Education and Social Work; Law, Politics and Sociology; and Psychology – but we hope to extend this offer more widely across the University in coming years.

We remain strongly committed to building a thriving doctoral community, and continue to offer the Writing Into Meaning group highlighted in last year’s report, along with workshops and masterclasses from visiting scholars. As noted above, Professor Ann Nilsen from the University of Bergen delivered a workshop in October on case studies, and in the spring we hosted an ethics masterclass with Dr Alison Fox from the Open University, who has been working to revise and update the British Educational Research Association (BERA) ethical guidelines, 2018¹. Organised by Rebecca Webb (Education), the workshop was attended by Masters and postgraduate researchers from the Early Years Education MA and the Childhood and Youth Studies MA, as well as from the School’s doctoral (EdD, DSW and PhD) courses. Alison adopted an innovative ‘active learning’ pedagogy for the session which involved taking us through a framework she had prepared which underpins the new BERA ethical guidelines.

We also regularly support our doctoral researchers to engage in other training opportunities, nationally and internationally. For example, in May, Roma Thomas (Social Work) was supported by CIRCY to attend a short course for postgraduate researchers at Aarhus University in Copenhagen. The course, ‘Inside Out: Theoretically Informed Qualitative Analysis’ involved just 15 students, and was held in two parts with a two week break during which students conducted some focused analysis of their own data. Roma reflected on the value of the training:

‘Throughout the workshop we were skilfully led by the course leaders with lectures, debate, discussion and reflection. Best of all, in the final days, we worked in small groups of four, having read each other’s work beforehand. We gave each other feedback and had in-depth discussions about the way we were applying theory to our empirical data. I’ve returned home with a spring in my step. I have shared my own work and heard from others about their studies. In case you’re wondering, the whole workshop was conducted in English. Just as well when discussing poststructuralism and phenomenology. Thanks again to CIRCY whose support made my trip possible.’

https://www.bera.ac.uk/researchers-resources/publications/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2018
SPOTLIGHT ON DOCTORAL RESEARCH: HOW ARE ADOPTIVE FAMILIES MADE AND WHAT HAPPENS IN THE MAKING?

Louise Sims, Social Work and Social Care PhD

Louise’s PhD builds on theoretical work from social work and across disciplines, including cultural studies, anthropology, maternal studies and feminist philosophy. This ESRC funded and collaborative doctorate (supported by Coram/BAAF) aims to capture an ordinary practice relationship unfolding over time and to use this relationship as a lens in which to access data relating to matching practices. The direct access to different actors in the permanence project, the contribution of group processes and intergenerational perspectives has broadened the breadth of the research. The study has generated a unique data-set and provided an opportunity to consider how permanence practices operate relationally across an agency.

In July 2018, Louise attended the International Conference on Adoption Research (ICAR6) in Montreal, where she was invited to contribute to a symposium entitled ‘Dialogue on Nurturing the Future of Adoption Research’. The symposium took the form of a moderated round-table discussion with USA and non-USA adoption scholars. The field of adoption studies in the US and Europe is facing a generational shift; the departure of senior faculty represents the loss of accumulated years of institutional wisdom and research expertise. At the same time, early career researchers and faculty face a whole host of demands and constraints, including excellence in teaching, scholarship, and fundable research.

The presentation brought together seasoned adoption scholars and junior scholars beginning their careers for a dialogue that addressed the following questions: What can we do as a field to encourage critical engagement in the field? What can we do – beyond the traditional mechanisms of publications and mentorship – to transfer knowledge of seasoned scholars and nurture the next generation of scholars? What are the opportunities (new technology, big data, interdisciplinary work, grass-roots activism) and how can we ensure a vibrant research culture?

The symposium also connected with work Louise is involved with as part of the Coram/BAAF Research Advisory Group, where - alongside Cherilyn Dance from Manchester Metropolitan University – Louise is developing initiatives to encourage research collaborations.
Perpetua’s prize-winning image of her doctoral research
**How the Light Gets In: An Exploration of Children’s Agency in the Primary School Classroom**

**Perpetua Kirby, PhD in Social Work and Social Care**

Perpetua’s thesis examines where and how children achieve agency in the primary classroom, identifying the conditions that extend and limit the scope and scale of their agency, to understand more of the details of a phenomenon viewed as central to education but often glossed over in research. Drawing on post-structuralist perspectives, together with new materialism (e.g. Gert Biesta and Jacques Rancière) Perpetua’s study involved a multimodal ethnography of a Year One classroom, within an ordinary English primary school, including an in-depth focus on the experience of a few carefully selected children. In addition, a week was spent undertaking a ‘rapid’ ethnography in a Year One class in an ‘outstanding’ teaching school.

In the modern primary classroom, young children are expected to sit silent and still for much of their school day, listening to teachers. The research shows that children share a concern about these limiting conditions, and find brief moments in the school day to carve out their own orbits through movement, speech, humour, storytelling and optical adventures. It is in doing all these – as well as sitting quietly and still – that they think about, understand, re-imagine and speak their opinions.

Perpetua’s research identifies children’s competence in understanding what is expected of them, and their agency in performing the ‘good’ and ‘clever’ child subject positions, helping to make classroom life more liveable, although this form of agency is limited and unhelpful for dealing with the new and unexpected. Children also deviate, becoming the ‘desiring’ child, finding moments to pursue desires and ways of knowing not provided for within the on-task classroom. Here, children’s many practices, which include to laugh, move, speak, create, collaborate, as well as to sit and listen, offer embodied ways to think about, understand, re-imagine and transform the world. The children’s desires offer a critique of the on-task classroom, with its narrow focus on gaining knowledge and skills, and socialisation in moral rectitude, insinuating a desire to be educated through the transformation of the subject and existing social orders. All children pursue their desires in the classroom, but the middle class, male and oldest children have the greatest scope to deviate.

Through tracing lines of desire, acting with the presumption of equality, Perpetua’s work suggests that children become political subjects, engaged in the act of ‘dissensus’ through the redistribution of what is understood as ‘sensible’ within the classroom. They also raise a ‘common concern’ about the need for a different type of classroom. The thesis concludes with teacher dilemmas emerging from the research highlighting the inherent complexity in deciding which of the different purposes of education to foreground at any point. It identifies the need for future research on pedagogical spaces that allow for children’s transformation as well as their conformity, and the mental health implications of the on-task classroom.

**Stop press!** On 19 July, Perpetua passed her viva with the most minor corrections. Congratulations Dr. Kirby!
Kindness

Be nice to someone
Thinking of someone else
Spending time with someone
Caring
Love
Listening
For people
Looking out
Understanding
Listening to someone's opinion and views
Patience
CIRCY DOCTORAL RESEARCHERS

CIRCY doctoral researchers

CURRENT

Leethen Bartholomew (Social Work)
Working title: Accusations of child spirit possession and witchcraft: Experiences and outcomes for non-accused children within the same family network
Supervisors: Elaine Sharland, Russell Whiting (both Social Work)

Marie Claire Burt (Institute of Development Studies)
Working title: Mentorship in poverty alleviation programs: Evidence from Paraguay
Supervisors: Keetie Roelen (IDS) and Janet Boddy (Education)

Claire Durrant (Social Work)
Working title: An exploration of the identity construction and emotional well-being of young people with severe dyslexic difficulties
Supervisors: Tish Marrable, Rachel Thomson (both Social Work)

Owen Emmerson (History)
Working title: Childhood and the emotion of corporal punishment 1938-1986
Supervisors: Claire Langhamer and Lucy Robinson (both History)

Tracey Fuller (Education)
Working title: “Can I trust you?” Ethics considerations for secondary school counsellors in information sharing and multi-professional working
Supervisors: Janet Boddy (Education), Michelle Lefevre (Social Work)

Fawzia Haeri Mazanderani (Education)
Working title: A map without direction? The experiences, perceptions and practices of previously disadvantaged youth navigating post-school opportunities in South Africa
Supervisors: Barbara Crossouard, John Pryor (both Education)

Jenny Hewitt (Social Work)
Working title: How do UK young adults’ experience civic and political engagement in their everyday lives?
Supervisors: Janet Boddy (Education), Liam Berriman (Social Work)

Perpetua Kirby (Social Work)
Working title: An exploration of primary school children’s agency in learning
Supervisors: Colleen McLaughlin (external – formerly Education), Sevasti-Melissa Nolas (Social Work)

Katherine Kruger (English)
Child’s play, toys and pure games: Revising the romantic child in Henry James, Elizabeth Bowen and Don DeLillo
Supervisor: Pam Thurschwell (English)

Sandra Lyndon (Education)
Working title: An exploration of early years practitioners’ narratives of child poverty in England
Supervisors: Janet Boddy, Louise Gazeley (both Education)

Manuel Cruz Martinez (Education/Sussex Humanities Lab)
Working title: The capabilities of video games to explore history
Supervisors: Liam Berriman (Digital Humanities), Kate Howland (Informatics), Simon Thompson (Education)

Sushri Sangita Puhan (Social Work)
Working title: Sense of self and belongingness of Indian born adopted adolescents in India
Supervisors: Barry Luckock (Social Work)

Paul Shuttleworth (Social Work)
Working title: A critical analysis of kinship care for policy and practice (SENSS funding 3 years?)
Supervisors: Barry Luckock, Russell Whiting (both Social Work)
Louise Sims (Social Work)
Working title: What can be learned from the practice encounter in adoption support social work?
Supervisors: Barry Luckock, Gillian Ruch (both Social Work)

Roma Thomas (Social Work)
Working title: Doing Boy Work? Young masculine subjectivities and professional practice
Supervisors: Kristine Hickie, Gillian Ruch (both Social Work)

Elsie Whittington (Social Work)
Working title: Participatory processes with young people: exploring sexual consent
Supervisors: Ben Fincham (Sociology), Rachel Thomson (Social Work)

Helen Drew (Psychology)
Title: Understanding the mental health and well-being of early adolescents in foster care
Supervisor: Robin Banerjee (Psychology)

Matthew Ellis (Social Work)
Working title: Young people, harmful sexual behaviour and identity: How do young peoples’ narratives develop during treatment for harmful sexual behaviour?
Supervisors: Michelle Lefevre, Rachel Thomson (both Social Work)

Cynthia Okpokiri (Social Work)
Title: First generation Nigerian immigrant parents and child welfare issues in Britain
Supervisors: Elaine Sharland, Rachel Thomson (both Social Work)

Tasleem Rana (Social Work)
Title: Context is all: a qualitative case study of youth mentoring in the inner-city
Supervisors: Sevasti-Melissa Nolas, Rachel Thomson (both Social Work)

COMPLETED THIS YEAR

Yusef Bakkali (Sociology)
Title: Life on Road: symbolic struggle and the munpain
Supervisors: Rachel Thomson (Social Work), Susie Scott (Sociology)

Friendship, by Erin
CIRCY publications
2017–2018


North, G. (2018) ‘“It was sort of like a globe of abuse”. A psychosocial exploration of child protection social work with emotional abuse’. Qualitative Social Work. ISSN 1473-3250


Bee Kind, by Jessica
Friendship is best, by Fawn
TALKING ABOUT OUR WORK

Here, we report selected highlights from CIRCY researchers’ presentations and workshops from the last year, in the UK and internationally. The examples we share include knowledge exchange, peer-reviewed conference presentations, and invited and keynote lectures and seminars.

Robin Banerjee (Psychology) was keynote speaker at The Bookseller annual children’s literature conference in London in September 2017. In the same month, he also spoke at a symposium on Mental Health in Schools at Queens University, Belfast. He also took part in a panel discussion at the flagship Waterstones store in London with the Children’s Laureate Lauren Child and illustrator Benji Davies, chaired by the Sunday Times children’s books editor, Nicolette Jones. This marked the #Readforempathy campaign on #EmpathyDay, which takes place annually on 12 June.

Helen Drew and Robin Banerjee (both Psychology) organised a one day best practice forum on 24 November 2017, on ‘Education, Trauma and the Social Context’, in partnership with the Institute of Recovery from Childhood Trauma and members of Brighton and Hove Virtual School. It was held in the Conference Centre of the University of Sussex and was well-attended by a range of practitioners. The focus was on developing understanding of the mental health and wellbeing of children, drawing on research and practice, with a particular focus on the peer and social contexts.

Nuno Ferreira (Law) spoke about his research on ‘Rights and welfare perspectives of children’s training in football academies’, (with Anna Verges and Neil Partington) at the Socio-Legal Studies Association (SLSA) Annual Conference in March 2018. He also gave a professorial lecture in March with the title: ‘Sex, Gender and Sexuality in Europe: Sinking in Quicksand?’

Louise Gazeley (Education) gave evidence to the Parliamentary Select Committee on Alternative Provision on joint CIRCY/CTLR research on inequalities in school exclusion, conducted for the Office of the Children’s Commissioner in April 2018.

Janet Boddy (Education) gave the opening keynote address at the International Foster Care Research Network conference in Paris in September, where she drew on research projects conducted for the Nuffield Foundation, EU (MSCF), and the Norwegian Research Council, discussing meanings of family for young people who have been in care. Janet and Roma Thomas (Social Work), CIRCY PhD researcher, both spoke at the international conference ‘A Child’s World – New Shoes New Direction’ at Aberystwyth University in July. Janet gave a conference keynote address on ‘Thinking Through Family, Thinking Across Contexts’, and Roma presented findings from her doctoral research on ‘Working with boys, listening to boys: insights for practice’.

Sevasti-Melissa Nolas (Social Work) and the Connectors team held an exhibition called ‘in common: children’s photo-stories of public life’ at Candid Arts Trust in London in November 2017. The exhibition has been showing internationally in subsequent months, first in India and then Greece.

Roma Thomas (Social Work) presented her ongoing doctoral research on ‘Doing Boy Work? Young masculine subjectivities and professional practice’ at a Research-in-Progress session for CIRCY doctoral researchers in November.

Michelle Lefevre (Social Work) gave a keynote in December 2017 entitled ‘Looking, Hearing and Learning: What can we learn from analysing communication and engagement between social workers and children?’ at a conference in Perth, Scotland, organised by BASPCAN, a charity and membership association providing education and professional development opportunities for child protection professionals.

Michelle Lefevre and Kristi Hickle (both Social Work) presented a paper at the European Social Work Research Conference in Edinburgh in April 2018 on ‘Doublethink and the Doublebind: negotiating the protection participation dichotomy in working with child sexual exploitation’.
Nicola Yuill (Psychology) took part in a panel to discuss the effects of technology in children’s literacy development for the Beanstalk charity, at the Deloitte Academy in April 2018 with Dame Julia Cleverdon, Professor Teresa Cremin and Francesca Simon (author of Horrid Henry books). Nicola also presented a new paper at the CHI conference in Montreal which looked at ways to the use tangible technology to support students in special needs schools.

Pam Thurschwell (English) was an invited participant at the ‘Waiting, Persisting, Enduring’ event at Birkbeck College, University of London. This event was part of a Wellcome Trust funded Waiting Times project and was held in May 2018.

Louise Sims (Social Work) contributed to a symposium at the International Conference on Adoption Research (ICAR6) in Montreal in July 2018 on nurturing the future of adoption research. Louise spoke on ‘Rethinking matching in adoptions from care’ and to her experiences as a researcher as part of a round-table discussion with USA and non-USA adoption scholars from a range of disciplines.

Rachel Thomson (Social Work) presented work at several conferences, including her paper ‘Revisiting and reanimating archives as materializing social change’ paper presented at Animating archives: curating small research data, workshop at the University of Edinburgh, in July 2018, organized in conjunction with Niamh Moore.
Sussex Community Festival, Kindness Workshop
Yusef Bakkali (Sociology)
Robin Banerjee (Psychology, CIRCY Steering Group)
Jamie Barnes (Sociology)
Hester Barron (History, CIRCY Steering Group)
Leethen Bartholomew (Social Work)
Nehaal Bajwa (Education)
Saul Becker (Deputy Vice-Chancellor, CIRCY Steering Group)
Liam Berriman (Social Work)
Janet Boddy (Education, Director of CIRCY)
Margaret Boushel (Social Work)
Philip Bremner (Law)
Jo Bridgeman (Law)
Rachel Burr (Social Work)
Marie Claire Burt Wolf (Development Studies)
Tam Cane (Social Work)
Georgina Christou (Anthropology)
Jessica Louise Cotney (Psychology)
Fiona Clements (Law)
Gabrielle Daoust (International Relations)
Richard Dickens (Economics)
Helen Drew (Psychology)
Claire Durrant (Social Work)
Matthew Ellis (Social Work)
Owen Emmerson (History)
Helen Evans (Social Work)
Bobbie Farsides (Brighton and Sussex Medical School)
Anne-Meike Fechter (Anthropology)
Nuno Ferreira (Law, CIRCY Steering Group)
Andy Field (Psychology)
Hannah Field (English)
Zoe Flack (Psychology)
Tracey Fuller (Education)
Darya Gaysina (Psychology)
Louise Gazeley (Education)
Jenny Hewitt (Social Work)
Kristine Hickle (Social Work)
Ben Highmore (Media & Film)
Tamsin Hinton-Smith (Education)
Jessica Horst (Psychology)
Kate Howland (Informatics)
Iftikhar Hussain (Economics)
Malcolm James (Media and Film)
Pamela Kea (Anthropology)
Heather Keating (Law)
Russell King (Geography)
Perpetua Kirby (Social Work)
Claire Langhamer (History)
Michael Lawrence (Media and Film)
Hilary Lawson (Social Work)
Vicky Lebeau (English)
Kathryn Lester (Psychology)
Feylyn Lewis (Social Work)
Karen Lowton (Sociology)
Sandra Lyndon (Education)
Michelle Lefevre (Social Work, Co-Director of CIRCY)
Craig Lind (Law)
Barry Luckock (Social Work)
Aija Lulle (Geography)
Reima Ana Maglajlic (Social Work)
Tish Marrable (Social Work)
Fawzia Haeri Mazanderani (Education)
Tish Marrable (Social Work)
Manuel Cruz Martinez (Sussex Humanities Lab)
Paul McGuinness (Sociology)
Esther McMahon (CIRCY Research Fellow, CIRCY Steering Group)
Jo Moran-Ellis (Sociology, CIRCY Steering Group)
Linda Morrice (Education)
Maria Moscati (Law)
Anneke Newman (Anthropology)
Gemma North (Social Work)
CIRCY PEOPLE

Cynthia Okpokiri (Social Work)
Jane Peek (Brighton and Sussex Medical School)
Keith Perera (Education)
John Pryor (Education)
Sushri Sangita Puhan (Social Work)
Tasleem Rana (Social Work)
Lucy Robinson (History)
Gillian Ruch (Social Work)
David Sancho (Anthropology)
Elaine Sharland (Social Work)
Jacqui Shepherd (Education)
Paul Shuttleworth (Social Work)
Diane Simpson-Little (Engineering & Design)
Louise Sims (Social Work)
Alice Skelton (Psychology)
Roma Thomas (Social Work)
Rachel Thomson (Social Work, CIRCY Steering Group)
Dorte Thorsen (Geography, CIRCY Steering Group)
Pam Thurschwell (English, CIRCY Steering Group)
Maya Unnithan (Anthropology)
Richard de Visser (Psychology)
Chris Warne (History)
Charles Watters (Social Work)
Rebecca Webb (Education)
Catherine Will (Sociology)
Elsie Whittington (Social Work)
Nicola Yuill (Psychology)

CIRCY INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Susi Arnott is a CIRCY Honorary Research Fellow, freelance film-maker, media professional and co-founder of Walking Pictures.

Susannah Bowyer is Research and Development Manager, Research in Practice.

Sara Bragg is a Principal Research Fellow, Education Research Centre, University of Brighton.

David Buckingham is Emeritus Professor of Media and Communications at Loughborough University, UK, and a Visiting Professor at the Norwegian Centre for Child Research.

Jenny Clifton is an independent Consultant (formerly Office of the Children’s Commissioner).

Ros Edwards is Professor of Sociology at the University of Southampton.

Ann Phoenix is Professor at the Department of Childhood, Families and Health at the Thomas Coram Research Unit, UCL Institute of Education.

June Statham is Emerita Professor of Education and Family Support at the UCL Institute of Education.

Heinz Sünker is Professor of Social Pedagogy at Begische Universität, Wuppertal, Germany.

Uma Vennam is Professor of Social Work at Sri Padmavathi Mahila Viscavidyalayam University in Tirupati, India.
LOCATION

The Centre for Innovation and Research in Childhood and Youth (CIRCY) is located within the School of Education and Social Work which is based in Essex House on the University of Sussex campus. The University is situated on a modern campus on the edge of the South Downs National Park near the lively seaside city of Brighton. London is one hour away by train, and there is easy access to Gatwick and Heathrow airports.

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