

IRISH AFTERCARE NETWORK

Providing Support to People Working With Care Leavers

Annual Conference ***Friday 13th October 2023***

***“Power and Empowerment – Changing Perceptions,
Challenging Barriers and Promoting Change”***

9.00am – 3.45pm

Sheraton Hotel
Athlone, Co. Westmeath

Members only event

Social Care Ireland endorses this conference as being of high quality
and relevant to the CPD needs of Social Care Workers

About the Conference Speakers



Roderic O'Gorman TD is the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. He was appointed to this role in June 2020, having been elected as a member of the Dáil in February 2020 in the Dublin West constituency. He was previously a county councillor on Fingal County Council between 2014 – 2020. He is a member of the Green Party/Comhaontas Glas and served as Chairperson of the Party between 2011-2019. Prior to being elected to the Dáil, Roderic was a lecturer in the School of Law & Government in Dublin City University. His research focus was in the areas of European Union Law, comparative Constitutional Law and the law surrounding Climate Policy in Ireland and the EU. He lives with his partner Ray in Blanchardstown.



Kate Duggan, Interim CEO Tusla Child & Family Agency was appointed into this post in March 2023. Kate joined the Agency in August 2020 as Director of Services & Integration (& Deputy CEO).

Prior to taking up the role in Tusla, Kate held various positions at regional and national level in the HSE, working across the span of community services.

Kate qualified as a Speech & Language Therapist from Trinity College Dublin and has completed a Master's in Public Administration (IPA) and a Master's in Business Practice (IMI).

Kate has a keen interest in the area of preventative and early intervention services, the development of multi-disciplinary services internally in the Agency and working collaboratively with external partners to support the delivery of more integrated response pathways for children, young people and families.



Dr Niall Muldoon is Ireland's second Ombudsman for Children. Niall, is a Counselling and Clinical Psychologist and was appointed, for a second 6-year term, by President Michael D Higgins in February 2021. As Ombudsman for Children Niall has focused on generating an Ireland where

children and young people are actively heard, particularly those who are most vulnerable.

During his tenure, the Office has sought to give voice to those children who are often not listened to. In that time the Office has consulted with young people availing of Ireland's Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Direct Provision, those in children's hospitals, homeless young people living in Family Hubs and it has facilitated young people to produce a report for the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2022).

The OCO has also published a range of special reports on topics such as Assessment of Needs, Scoliosis Treatment and School Places for Children with Special Educational Needs, as well as investigations highlighting cases where children's rights were not respected in the provision of disability supports, in the care system and in housing.

Working with others, Niall has contributed to i) the introduction of the 'Barnahus, Onehouse Galway' model to ease trauma for children who have been sexually abused and ii) bringing an end to young people being held in adult prisons and iii) pushing for the establishment of a stand alone Child Poverty Unit within Government.



Dr Cian Aherne is a Chartered Clinical Psychologist. He is a Clinical Manager for Jigsaw, the National Centre for Youth Mental Health in Ireland. Cian's background and interests are in critical psychology, social justice and social constructionism. Cian is a proud Limerick man and an avid sportsman. He is

married and is the father of 4 young children.



Dr Katriona O'Sullivan is a psychologist and memoirist. Her first book, *Poor*, debuted at #1 on the Irish Non-Fiction bestseller list. The book, a memoir of growing up in extreme poverty, describes the far-reaching impact of childhood poverty. As one of 5 children in a home shaped by

her parents' heroin addiction, Katriona's story chronicles her journey from poverty, being in care, teenage pregnancy, homelessness to graduating with a PhD from Trinity College Dublin and becoming an award-winning lecturer whose work challenges barriers to education. *Poor* is her stirring argument for the importance of looking out for our kids' futures. Of giving them hope, practical support and meaningful opportunities. Katriona is now a professor in the Department of Psychology, Maynooth University. She is the Principal Investigator on the STEM Passport for Inclusion project, and was featured recently on RTE Changemaker series. She has been invited speaker at the World Education Forum, the European Gender Action Workshop on Women and Digitalization and most recently at the UN gender equality workshop. She has worked with Irish policy makers to develop policies around education and inclusion.



Dave Dunn. Dave is a group facilitator who stewards the process for courageous conversation, wicked workshops and meaningful meetings.

<http://dave.dunn.ie/>



Dr Philomena Mullen is a graduate in English and Philosophy from Trinity College Dublin. She is currently Assistant Professor of Black Studies in the Department of Sociology.

She spent 18 years working in the NGO-sector, a great deal of which was with the Irish Traveller Movement.

She was a member of the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) and formerly an Irish representative on the European Network against Racism (ENAR). She returned to Trinity College as a Government of Ireland PhD scholar to examine the racist and racialised aspects of how Black, mixed-race women who grew up in the Irish industrial school system, without families, constructed their identity.

She is co-chair of the Race, Ethnicity and Equality Working Group in Trinity College, and sits on the advisory board of Trinity Colonial Legacies Project. She is a Trustee of the Association of Mixed Race Irish (AMRI), and a member of African Scholars Association of Ireland (AFSAI). She is also a member of the UN IDPAD steering committee set up to work with the Irish state to implement programmes for the Decade of People of African Descent 2015-2024.



Dr Sadhbh Whelan joined the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth in February 2018 as the Child Protection Information Manager, prior to that she was working as an independent research consultant. In the early part of her career, Sadhbh worked as a practitioner in

frontline services, in the areas of child protection and homelessness. Latterly she worked as a researcher mostly in university based research centres where she worked on research studies and evaluations relating to the needs of children and families and services provided. Sadhbh's doctoral thesis was on child protection and welfare reporting.

Conference Programme

9.00am-9.30am	Registration	
9.30am-9.40am	Welcome Daniel Keogh	<i>Chairperson, Irish Aftercare Network & Conference MC</i>
9.40am-10.00am	Opening Address	
	Minister Roderic O’Gorman	<i>Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth</i>
10.00am-10.10am	Kate Duggan	<i>Interim CEO, Tusla Child & Family Agency</i>
10.10am-10.40am	Power Imbalance in Children’s Rights	
	Dr Niall Muldoon	<i>Ombudsman for Children</i>
10.40am-11.10am	Tea/Coffee/Networking	
11.10am-12.10pm	A new lens: Thinking about power in the lives of young people using the Power Threat Meaning Framework (PTMF)	
	Dr Cian Aherne	<i>Clinical Psychologist & Clinical Manager, Jigsaw, Limerick</i>
12.10pm-1.00pm	My Story	
	Dr Katriona O’Sullivan	<i>Psychologist, Memoirist and Lecturer</i>
1.00pm-2.00pm	Lunch	
2.00pm-2.50pm	Connecting with others with power in mind – a networking session	
	Dave Dunn	<i>Group Facilitator</i>
2.50pm-3.15pm	Institutionalisation and identity: power dynamics and marginalised children aging out of the historical industrial school system	
	Dr Philomena Mullen	<i>Assistant Professor of Black Studies, Department of Sociology, Trinity College, Dublin</i>
3.15pm-3.40pm	Care Experiences: Journeys through the Irish Care System. Project background and updates	
	Dr Sadhbh Whelan	<i>Child Protection Information Manager, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth</i>
3.40pm-3.45pm	Wrap Up & Close	
	Yvonne Casey	<i>National Director, Breaking Through (co-ordinators of the Irish Aftercare Network)</i>

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The Irish Aftercare Network would like to thank our sponsors for their generous support



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Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige**
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