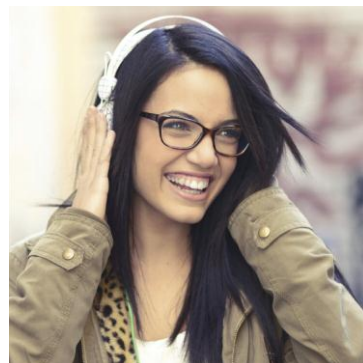
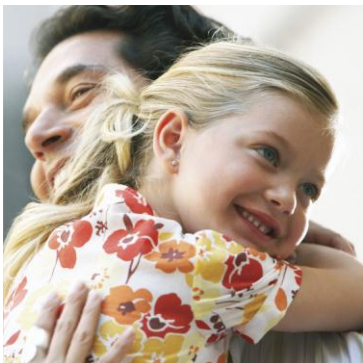


School of Social Sciences

Nottingham Centre for Children, Young People and Families

Newsletter

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What We Do

The Nottingham Centre for Children, Young People and Families (NCCYPF) is a specialist centre based at Nottingham Trent University, dedicated to improving the lives of children, young people and families.

We conduct real-world research, testing novel approaches, ideas or theories designed to improve outcomes for young people and families.

We also evaluate existing ideas and services aimed at children, young people and families, helping services to learn what works best, who it works best for and in what circumstances.

The work carried out by the Centre has some key features that set it apart from more 'traditional' research teams. Our work is always collaborative, service-oriented and real-world based, and driven by pressing issues faced by children, young people and families. In particular, we establish recordable impact through our extensive network of community groups and strategic partners.

By collaboration, we mean talking, working and hosting events with other academics at Nottingham Trent University and other institutions, service providers and service users. We are currently building a Youth Council to scrutinise and advise our research, and we have an internal Advisory Group to keep checking that we are delivering on our objectives.



Who We Are

The NCCYPF has been led to date by Dr Jason Pandya-Wood as Acting Director. Jason has been recently appointed as the Director of External Engagement and Strategic Partnerships for the School of Social Sciences at Nottingham Trent University, but he will remain actively involved in and with the NCCYPF. In his new role, Jason will oversee all external engagement for the School including helping to set up the pioneering think tank - the Nottingham Civic Exchange.

Much of the work of the Centre is coordinated by two Research Fellows, Rachel Harding and Sarah McDonald. A permanent Director of the NCCYPF is soon to be appointed.



Sir Al with Chris Leslie MP and other local stakeholders on his most recent visit to NTU

The NCCYPF is made up of many people. The Centre currently have about 90 academics from the School of Social Sciences who have signed up as members, and a growing list of individuals, groups and organisations based in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire who wish to work with the Centre.

NCCYPF have recently appointed two high profile external colleagues to take up Visiting roles within the Centre. Professor Sir Al Aynsley-Green, England's first Children's Commissioner and recent President of the British Medical Association, is our first Visiting Professor. Sir Al brings considerable expertise and experience around advocacy for children and childhood, a key focus of his role with us. Also joining the team as Visiting Senior Research Fellow is Bethia McNeill, Director of the Centre for Youth Impact. Bethia is a leading national voice on youth policy debates.

Current Projects

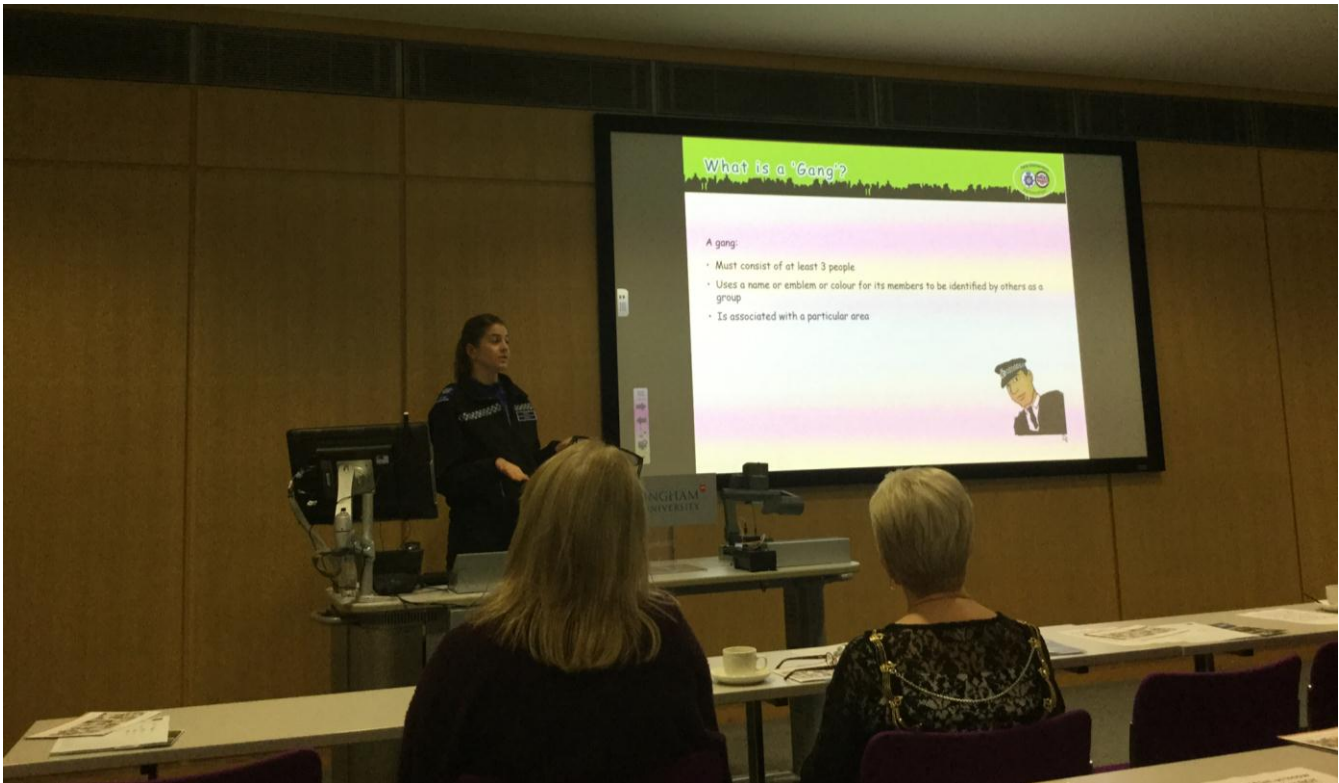
Street Aware

Throughout 2016, we have been working on the Nottinghamshire Police Street Aware evaluation project, which has been funded by Nottingham City Council.

Street Aware is the name of a programme of prevention and awareness talks that are given to year six school students in Nottingham City schools by Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's). Dr Paul Hamilton (Criminology) has been working with support from the Centre on finding out about the impact of these talks on children between one and three years after the talks were given.

The study has involved both self-report questionnaires and focus groups. The survey was translated into different languages to accommodate the literacy skills of ethnic minority children in Nottingham. The project has involved collaboration with both local schools and the police and has helped shed light on teenagers' understandings and experiences of guns, knives and gangs.

The project was included in the ESRC's Festival of Social Science. An event was on Saturday 5 November, which provided an opportunity for those involved in the study and other interested parties to reflect on the research findings.



On the day, Milli, one of the PCSO's who delivers Street Aware in Nottingham City schools, explained how the sessions are received by the year six children. We watched a specially commissioned film that we hope will serve as a useful source of information for children and parents about Street Aware, and we heard from Paul about the chief findings of the evaluation. At the end of the morning, over a super curry, several discussions broke out that have paved the way for future work on Street Aware and useful collaborations.



Street harassment experiences of secondary school students

This study has looked at the incidents of street harassment experienced by secondary school students and how these make them feel. It has been funded through NTU's Health and Wellbeing Proof of Concept fund. An interdisciplinary team (Psychology, Social Work, Education, Linguistics and Law, has been led by Dr Lucy Betts and Kendall Newbold, an undergraduate law student. So far the study has found that street harassment is experienced by both boys and girls, whether on their own or in a group, and in different socio-economic areas. An interim report has been produced, and extensive liaising with community and strategic links have helped promote the impact of the findings. An externally funded bid for an extended project is being submitted, and conference papers are planned with academic outputs from the different disciplines represented.

Details of a press release can be found from www.ntu.ac.uk/streetharassment



Working with the Centre for Youth Impact



We have been working with the Centre for Youth Impact on a project examining social investment in the youth sector. Our work will look at helping the youth sector to survive and thrive in the new investment environment. Social investment has become a key mechanism for charitable organisations and social enterprises to fund themselves. Learning to navigate the financial system and understanding the types of financial support available can be challenging for organisations unfamiliar with seeking funding. Furthermore, youth sector organisations occupy a very small proportion of the charitable and non-profit organisation market, and changes to funding sources might put them at risk of losing out to other sectors.

The Centre for Youth Impact website can be found at <http://youthimpact.uk>

Making an Impact

One of the main aims of the Centre is to ensure that the work we do makes an impact – but what do we mean by 'impact'? There are different elements of impact, and part of our responsibility as researchers is to work out which elements need to be addressed in each individual research project we undertake.

We have been able to develop a structure for considering and measuring the impact of our research thanks to the recent work of one of our School of Social Science colleagues, Catherine Goodall.

Catherine has recently finished working on a Knowledge Transfer Partnership project with Nottinghamshire County Council and within this, she developed a set of guidelines for considering impact. Some key components of impact that the Centre will be ensuring are adopted across our research are:

Capacity Building – helping others to develop skills and competencies in research.

Connectivity – to help to grow and maintain collaborative relationships within and across organisations.

Academic output – producing high quality journal publications and policy documents.

Changing attitudes – working to invigorate 'stuck' debates, reframe negative views and to both challenge and be challenged on accepted notions.

Our ability as a Centre to keep making an impact will rely on our ability to reflect on feedback and be open to the views of all people involved in and affected by our work.

An interview with Jason Pandya-Wood

Sarah McDonald sits down with Acting Director Jason Pandya-Wood to discuss the conception and direction of the Centre and the challenges it will face in the future.



SM: “Can you provide a summary of where the Nottingham Centre for Children, Young People and Families is at right now and the journey it has been on over the past year to get there?”

JP: “After lots of gradual, incremental development through conversations and meetings and so on, the Centre officially launched in March 2016 with an event attended by lots of practitioners, national and local policy makers and academics, and it was launched by Professor Sir Al Ainsley-Green. That was a real marker because although some work had been going on in the background beforehand, that gave us momentum and brought us to the attention of people outside. It was a real personal and professional privilege to have Al Ainsley-Green’s support, particularly as his role with us is ongoing. The Centre now has two Research Fellows who have been employed to generally lead the work of the Centre, and I am overseeing it until we appoint a Director, which will be happening imminently.”

“The projects that we have underway are very interesting collaborations with other colleagues and groups, and we have been responding to some pressing issues locally with novel approaches. For example, I think through the Taking A Stand For Change project we are not only tackling something important, but doing it in a new and challenging way - it’s an approach that’s been garnering national attention over the last year particularly. We have a number of those kinds of projects that are ongoing, but there are a number of new projects blossoming from our own Centre’s interests, such as a project on mindfulness and some collaborative work with Professor Matt Henn on young people and politics.”

JP: "Nottinghamshire, on many indicators, has deprivation spread all over. There are communities where challenges are particularly enduring and inter-generational around health and wellbeing, and where well-meaning attempts to intervene have not worked to disrupt that cycle. You also have areas where there are stark inequalities, where people live side by side but in completely contrasting social and economic circumstances. We want to work with all the different kinds of communities in the city and the county, and carefully consider what works where, and why."

"That perhaps sounds negative, but it isn't – despite social and economic challenges, what I see and hear about and really like about Nottingham is that there is ambition, a thirst for creativity. I know that there are other Local Authorities that would never have dreamt of supporting a partnership to go for the Big Lottery Fund, but that is what we have seen with Small Steps, Big Changes, or to have the early conversations with us when the Centre was merely an idea about how they could work with us as a University. We didn't know it would be a Centre, but the openness of the Local Authority to come in and talk of their ambition to crack their key problems and to want to do things differently. I'm really excited by that."

"Nottingham is also full of ambitious and creative children and families, and it is really important that you don't get caught all the time talking about the negative outcomes. This is a city of music, culture, great schools trying to do great things. The young people who came to our launch were just fantastic, phenomenal; they had really challenging life stories but just wanted to do so much. We want to work with them to get things going and continuing."

SM: "You talked about the enduring nature of challenges. I wonder what it is that you think the Centre will do differently, what it is about the Centre's approach that will now make a difference?"

JP: "I think there's a couple of things. Firstly, some of the core business of the Centre is to do discrete pieces of research and evaluation in a classic research model, and there is a great deal of value in this. We are doing some things differently, but we are still doing some of the things that have been done before because they do work and are helpful."

"However, we are approaching things in a way that is generally co-productive. We bring together all interested parties, professional and non-professional, to look at these problems on an equal footing, and have the space where they can ask questions about how to approach these problems. There has been a move in research to do more to 'hear the voice' of young people and of practitioners and to varying degrees that has been successful, but more often than not it has been at the level of consultation, or worse, it has been at a very tokenistic level. What I see the Centre doing is working more like a hive of honey bees: where everyone is in the room, working together, all working towards the same outcome and all being seen as being able to contribute to that outcome. It's real co-production."

"The second thing that the Centre will do differently is test new things, using the questions and ideas that come out of the co-productive work we facilitate. By having the service and local leaders in the room who have the power and permission to make decisions, we collectively have the ability to address five-year questions, to use the weight of evidence to do some really big and brave but really positive things."

"The third thing the Centre can and will do is to act as an amplifier. It is our duty to amplify the knowledge we pull together and generate. Yes, we will still produce academic articles, but even the most widely cited journal papers are really only read by a very small group of people within a small group of people who are able to have access to them. It's about us, as a Centre, opening the doors to the people who make policy, who make decisions, and getting those doors to stay open, so the children, young people and families, and the people who work with them, can hear what is happening, and can be heard. We want to achieve this in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, and not have policy activity only happening in Westminster. We want to positively disrupt the status quo and use our knowledge to good effect, as well as change how people work together."

Students making a difference: Kendall Newbold

This summer, we were pleased to be able to offer one of NTU's undergraduate law students, Kendall Newbold, the opportunity to come and work with us on the street harassment of secondary school students project. Kendall had the opportunity to find out about the research process from design and data collection to presentation and feedback at the Safer For Women conference. Kendall had specific responsibility for database creation and transcribing of recorded focus group and individual interviews, as well as visiting key community and university links. She contributed some great ideas which are now being taken forward in the next stage of the research.

Kendall provided some reflections at the end of her placement:

"Over the summer I assisted over a ten week period on an inter-disciplinary research team within Nottingham Centre for Children, Young People and Families looking at street harassment of secondary school children. We worked with two East Midlands and one London secondary school using a web app and paper based reports to collect data of young people's experiences of street harassment.

"Being part of a research team over the summer has been an incredible experience not only has it opened my eyes to the issues and problems young people are facing in modern day society, it will also help me in my future career in Law, which will consequently help my future employment. I have learnt several different skills including how to input data using an SPSS file and how to transcribe interviews and focus groups. It has given me the opportunity to develop my own skills as well as learning new ones. I have been meeting with external contacts such as POW, Nottingham LGBT Switchboard, The University of Oxford and The Nottingham Women's Centre. The research project has also given me the opportunity to speak at a national conference organised by the Women's Centre about street harassment being classed as a hate crime."

Getting involved

Join the Nottingham Centre for Children, Young People and Families by emailing us at nccypf@ntu.ac.uk or calling us on **+44 (0) 115 848 4836**.

Working together, we can:

- Understand what works, for whom, and in what circumstances
- Test and evaluate new ways of working
- Undertake meaningful consultation with user groups
- Tailor relevant and specific Continuing Professional Development
- Apply for funding to undertake collaborative research
- Provide Visiting Fellowship roles for those wishing to work alongside the Centre

How to get involved:

Email: nccypf@ntu.ac.uk

Twitter: @nottcypf

Phone: 0115 848 4836

Website: www.ntu.ac.uk/nccypf

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