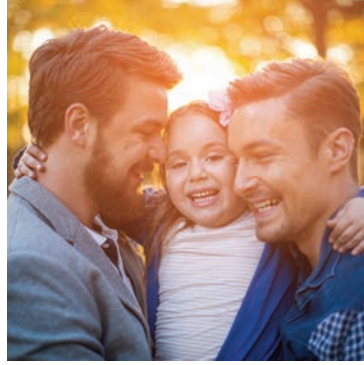


School of Social Sciences

Nottingham Centre for Children, Young People and Families

Newsletter



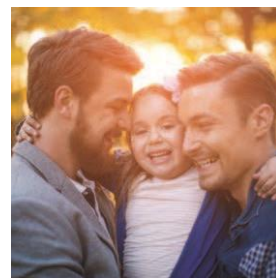
What we do

The Nottingham Centre for Children, Young People and Families (NCCYPF) is a specialist centre based at Nottingham Trent University (NTU), 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; and
- 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 NTU and other institutions, service providers and service users. We have an internal Advisory Group to keep checking that we are delivering on our objectives.



Who we are

The Centre is interdisciplinary. Our network of academics is vast – nearly 100 specialists and growing, but our core staff group consists of Professor Carrie Paechter, Director of NCCYPF; Dr Jason Pandya-Wood, Director of External Engagement and Strategic Partnerships for the School of Social Sciences; and two Research Fellows, Rachel Harding and Clare Lushey.

Professor Carrie Paechter joined the NCCYPF as Director in July 2017. Carrie was previously Professor of Education at Goldsmiths, University of London. She was the inaugural Dean of the Graduate School at Goldsmiths, University of London, and then Head of Educational Studies. Her main research focus is identity in childhood and young people, in particular what it means to be a gendered, embodied child. Other research interests include LGBTQI+ parented families and schools; active girlhood; spatiality and schooling; theoretical approaches to gender; and gender and curriculum.

Dr Jason Pandya-Wood led NCCYPF as Acting Director, prior to Carrie joining. Jason is now Director of External Engagement and Strategic Partnerships for the School of Social Sciences at NTU, but will remain actively involved with the Centre.

Rachel Harding and Clare Lushey, Research Fellows, coordinate much of the work of the Centre. Rachel joined NCCYPF in December 2015. Her funded and commissioned work to date includes researching the street harassment of secondary school students, evaluating misogyny as a hate crime in Nottinghamshire, and three local school evaluations: the Street Aware programme (knife, gun and gang crime awareness), Character Education, and SEIO (police teaching in schools). Clare joined the Centre in November 2017. Much of her research experience consists of undertaking evaluations of projects aimed at improving outcomes for children and families. Clare is particularly keen on participatory research methods, in particular the peer research methodology where the researched group adopt the role of researcher.



Recent projects

Street Harassment of School Students

The Street Harassment study looked at the incidents of street harassment experienced by secondary school students and how this made them feel. It was funded through NTU's Health and Wellbeing Proof of Concept fund and undertaken by an interdisciplinary team (Psychology, Social Work, Education, Linguistics and Law). The study was led by Dr Lucy Betts (Associate Professor) and Rachel Harding (Research Fellow) worked on making links with external partners including schools, local authorities, police forces, LGBT+ charities, child protection organisations and social action groups around the country. The fieldwork also benefitted from Kendall Newbold (an undergraduate law student) who created the dataset with an NTU SPUR bursary summer 2016. The study 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.

A number of outputs have been produced including an interim report, a summary of research findings, an article in *The Conversation*, and a film. Visit youtu.be/U5YMw-PRBEI to watch the film online.

On 8 November 2017, an interactive event was held as part of ESRC Festival of Science to showcase the film and discuss the key findings. An externally funded bid for an extended project is being developed and conference papers have been presented at the Social Policy Association 2017 (Durham, England), Corpus Linguistics 2017 (University of Birmingham, England), 13th biennial International Association of Forensic Linguists Conference (Porto, Portugal), Society for Research in Child Development, Biennial meeting (Austin Texas, USA).

Peer reviewed journal articles are being submitted and the team are liaising closely with Nottingham City Council and related safeguarding charities.

The Safer Living Foundation

The Safer Living Foundation deploys expertise, in close alignment with local and regional civic partners, in the support of high-risk sexual offenders and the protection of communities to prevent further victims of sexual harm. It is an initiative between HMP Whatton, NTU, National Probation Service (East Midlands), and Nottinghamshire Police. The Foundation focuses on reducing sexual (re)offending through rehabilitative initiatives that promote the protection of people from, and the prevention of, sexual crime, and support the rehabilitation of those who have committed or who are likely to commit sexual offences against others.

The Foundation runs a number of types of Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA) whereby highly trained volunteers support individuals at high risk of sexual reoffending, who have been released into the community at the end of their sentence, to assist their reintegration into society. The volunteers act as a support network and safety mechanism for offenders and for protection of the community at large. The Foundation runs both prison-based and community-based CoSA, together with Young Persons' CoSA for children between the ages of 10 and 18 who have demonstrated sexually harmful behaviour. In Autumn 2017, the Foundation launched a Prevention Project for individuals who are concerned they may sexually offend and are currently setting up what will become the Corbett Centre of Enterprise, Rehabilitation and Education at NTU.

The Foundation is recognised nationally and internationally for outstanding work, including mixed-method evaluations of each project. The Foundation was awarded the 2015 Robin Corbett Award for Prisoner Rehabilitation, the 2016 Guardian Award for Community and Society impact. In October 2016, Belinda Winder won a Butler Trust Certificate for her work on prisoner rehabilitation.

Professor Belinda Winder (Head of the Sexual Offences, Crime and Misconduct Research Unit [SOCAMRU]), Dr Nicholas Blagden (Associate Head of SOCAMRU) and Ms Rebecca Lievesley (Senior Lecturer in Psychology) were all part of the team from NTU that set up the Safer Living Foundation.

Further details available here: www.saferlivingfoundation.org

Current projects

Young People and Politics (YPP) Study

The ongoing Young People and Politics (YPP) study is led by NTU academic Professor Matt Henn, and involves other colleagues including NTU's Nick Foard (Senior Lecturer) as well as other external universities and youth advocacy groups and agencies. It is a series of major connected projects that have each been awarded funding by the UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). YPP examines the views and political orientations of today's youth generation. It has looked at young people's levels of interest in politics, attitudes towards democracy and what political parties need to do if they are to engage young people in the future. It has also involved the creation of various e-learning tools to help young people register, get informed and participate in the 2016 UK referendum on the European Union (EU), the 2017 UK General Election and the national Brexit debate 2017-19.

The research has revealed that, contrary to much received wisdom, the decisions of many young people to abstain from full participation in the democratic process is not borne of apathy or of self-exclusion. Today's youth are interested in political matters, but they are anxious that there exist only relatively few available opportunities for them to meaningfully participate in formal politics; moreover, they consider that those who have been elected to public office on their behalf have failed to champion their issue-interests. The onus is therefore on the political class to think creatively about how to make such democratic participation more meaningful and attractive to Britain's youth generation.

The YPP project has recently been subject to a major evaluation by the ESRC, which concluded that: "(The) research is of strong international quality and strong impact within its field, with publications in leading journals or other academic outlets; and high quality research with evidence of substantial impact on policy and practice."

School for Parents – Evaluation of Conductive Education

The project aims to develop an enabling environment for children with physical and intellectual disabilities. The research has the added value of a consultative evaluation with staff working with children with disabilities, an evaluation of Conductive Education, ensuring the child voice is heard in the research process and recommendations for service improvements.

There are three phases to the research:

1. Documentary research to examine policies and practices in the provision of this service;
2. An evaluation of the efficacy of Conductive Education in improving life chances for participants; and
3. Semi-structured interviews with staff carers of children with intellectual and physical disabilities in receipt of service from School for Parents.

The involvement of children with intellectual and physical disabilities and hearing their voice is a structuring dynamic of the research. The research team with colleagues are interested in expressions of interest such as Knowledge Transfer Partnerships to contribute to the ongoing development of knowledge in the area of children, young people and families. The research is being undertaken by Dr Adam Barnard (Senior Lecturer), Linda Kemp (Research Assistant), and Dr Simon Cauvain (Principal Lecturer).

To see a full list of publications connected to the YPP projects and to download these, please visit: bit.ly/2BZy3iK

Evaluation of SafeBase

SafeBase is an established therapeutic parenting programme for adoptive families and other permanent carers, including families with older children and teenagers. SafeBase was developed in response to After Adoption's experience of requests from parents for practical ways to address and manage their children's challenging behaviour. The programme was first delivered in 2005 and was originally known as SAFE (Strengthening Adoptive Families in England).

SafeBase is a strengths-based approach which seeks to develop and strengthen the personal resources, confidence and resilience of carers and to develop the specific skills needed to care for and nurture a looked after or adopted child. SafeBase explores the impact of loss and trauma upon a child's attachment and development and helps adoptive parents and carers to develop an understanding of the impact of their child's past experiences of trauma and loss. The use of Theraplay® principles and activities gives a framework for parents to engage with their child in a non-threatening and fun way and helps them to reflect on methods to respond to their child in a sensitive and attuned manner.

Since its inception, 1,567 families have attended the SafeBase programme and After Adoption has asked NCCYPF to provide an evaluation of the programme. The evaluation will assess the short and long-term impact of the SafeBase parenting programme on adoptive parents and carers and identify strengths and weaknesses of the programme. Dr Jo Ward (Principal Lecturer) and Clare Lushey (Research Fellow) commenced the evaluation in January 2018.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex plus (LGBTQI+) parented families and schools

Dr Carrie Paechter (Director, NCCYPF) and Dr Anna Carlile (Senior Lecturer at Goldsmiths, University of London) have been examining the experiences of LGBTQI+ parented families in relation to the children's schools. The study considers the changing experiences of these families in the context of the legalisation of gay marriage and the Public Equality Duty and examines the extent to which parents and children feel they are included in school.

Overall, the researchers found that, while parents were generally happy with their children's schools, there were still problems with:

- The use of 'gay' as a general term of abuse in the playground.
- Official forms that assume that every child has a father and a mother.
- Lack of books and images that included LGBTQI+ parented families.
- Children not being supported to produce two Mothers' Day or Fathers' Day cards or include both parents when talking about their families.
- Children feeling that they had to become advocates for their families rather than their families just being accepted.
- School policies, while usually inclusive when it comes to LGBTQI+ children and young people, rarely mentioning LGBTQI+ parented families; often treating LGBTQI+ issues as simply about bullying, rather than about inclusion within the curriculum and the school community.

Also included in this study was an evaluation of the Educate and Celebrate Inclusion Programme, which suggested that targeted interventions can lead to greater awareness of LGBTQI+ parented families within schools, as well as greater inclusion in the curriculum.

The findings will be published as a book at the end of 2018.

Teaching and continual professional development

Cutting Edge Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Staff at the Centre provide bespoke training for professional workforces based on their needs. Whether you are looking to develop entry-level training or to support colleagues to obtain advanced CPD, the Centre can support you in responding to changing workforce development needs. Please contact us if you would like further information and to discuss your workforce training needs.

An interview with Professor Carrie Paechter

Clare Lushey sits down with new Director, Professor Carrie Paechter, to discuss the direction and future of the Centre.



Clare: Can you tell me about your research, and how this might shape and influence the work undertaken at the Nottingham Centre for Children, Young People and Families?

Carrie: My own research is mainly about children and gender, although I've just finished doing some research and writing a book with a co-author in London about LGBTQI+ parented families and schools. A lot of my work is around children and families; in relation to education and school settings; in relation to gender; and, to a lesser extent, sexual orientation. These ideas are crucial to the work the Centre does. The breadth of my work also helps me to bridge across different disciplines in relation to the Centre while keeping children, young people and families at the middle of it. I've done research on children, on young people and on families including work on divorce. This breadth allows me to bridge across different disciplines that involve in the Social Science aspects of the Centre and also to reach out to other departments such as Nottingham Law School.

Clare: Do you feel your previous research will assist in the Centre collaborating with other departments and other colleagues at Nottingham Trent University?

Carrie: Yes and I think it will also assist in collaborating with colleagues outside the University, partly because of my background in schools and having been a teacher but also because of my interest in some of the sorts of things people do locally in Local Authorities, in play centres, early years centres,

play schemes and so on.

Clare: Can you provide a summary of your vision for the Nottingham Centre for Children, Young People and Families?

Carrie: I think the Centre needs to be partly a bridge between research in the university and the wider world of Nottingham. That's partly through talking to people in Nottingham about the research that goes on at the centre and partly to do with hooking people up in the university with people in the local area and beyond who they might want to work with. But I think a key job for the Centre is to work with local communities, groups and policy makers, particular the Local Authorities but also charities, residents' groups, schools and so on to identify research that really needs doing and that will really make a difference to people in Nottingham, Nottinghamshire and beyond and then to get funding to do that work, to do that research and to do it very well.

Clare: So the focus of the centre is very much on research with and for Nottingham?

Carrie: I think the Centre needs to be a bridge between research in the University and the wider area of Nottingham. That's partly through talking to people in Nottingham about the research that goes on at the Centre and partly to do with connecting people in the University with people in the local area and beyond who they might want to work with.

I think a key job for the Centre is to work with local communities, groups and policy makers, particularly the Local Authorities, as well as charities, residents' groups, schools and so on to identify crucial research that will make a difference to people in the Nottinghamshire area and then to obtain funding.

Clare: What can we offer to local organisations?

Carrie: We can help them work on their own bids and funding and help them make those bids as good as possible. We can provide evaluation – if you've been given funding for evaluation of your project then we are very well equipped. We have a network of people we can call on to do those sorts of evaluations – we are very interested in those and we can link you in with expertise in particular areas within the University.

Clare: When you say "bids", do you mean in terms of projects they might want to develop or in terms of research?

Carrie: Both. Local groups are often bidding for money to do things and need to have a research base for that bid. We can help them to say, "We think we want to do this because the research suggests that doing something this way or doing this thing will make a difference to local children, for example or to local hard to reach families" and we can support by having that evidence to supply to them.

Clare: So support them to develop evidence-based interventions?

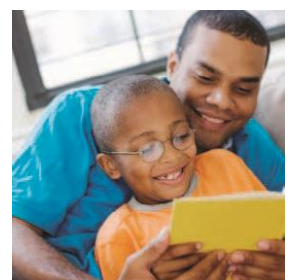
Carrie: We can support them and we can be part of bids. Most large bids for money to do things, to have interventions, will have an evaluation strand. We can help write the bid as the potential evaluation partner. That way, the evaluation is written into the bid right from the beginning. Mechanisms for evaluation are written in from the beginning, which makes a stronger bid and makes it a better evaluation. It also means we can build benefit in kind into a bid as well – if we're part of a bid as an evaluator we may also be able to build into that – we might be able to apply for university funding to support a student working on the project for example.

Clare: As a Centre, could you offer training or consultancy to organisations?

Carrie: Yes, we can offer training or consultancy. Much of the training that is offered takes place through departments within the School of Social Sciences and beyond but if you want bespoke training then we can work with you to establish what you want and then see what we can provide. If somebody says, "Do you have people who could train us in this?" we can put together bespoke packages – tailored training for peoples' real needs rather than off the shelf training.

Clare: Finally, can you tell us what you hope the Centre will achieve over the next few years?

Carrie: What I really hope is that the Centre will have some very strong links with local communities, government, education providers, play providers, health services and so on that will make a real difference to the lives of children, young people and families in Nottingham. I hope this will allow us to expand as a Centre and include even more people across the University and the local area. It's about having developed a relationship with everyone around us, inside and outside the University. The Centre is right at the heart of the vision of 'the university being of the city' – that's how I see it. The University is 'in the city and of the city' and that's the great thing about being in the middle of the city, is that we really are part of Nottingham.



How to get in touch with us

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