

CIRCY Autumn Newsletter 2022

A WELCOME FROM CIRCY TO ACADEMIC YEAR 2022-23!

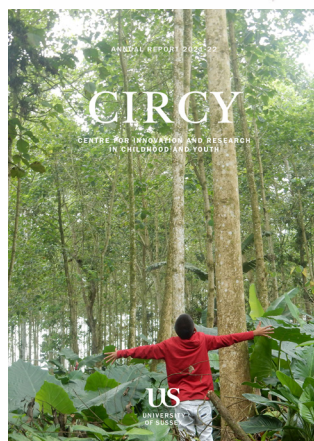
Dear CIRCY members and friends

We hope you have had some time for rest and relaxation over the summer amid all the productive work that continues through the non-teaching times.

In this newsletter we'll let you know what some of our members have been up to, and set out the programme of events for the autumn term 2022.

We have included some brief information at the end of this newsletter about what CIRCY involves and we'd like to encourage you to share this newsletter with new members of staff, doctoral researchers, and any other colleagues or students who might be interested in CIRCY and our activities.

Hopefully by now you will have seen [CIRCY's Annual Report 2022](#). If you haven't, do take a look! It is viewable/downloadable [from the CIRCY website](#). It's filled with inspiring and fascinating stories of research by CIRCY members, as well as beautiful artwork and photographs by children and young people from the UK and Ecuador on the theme of what matters most to them.



WE ARE 10 YEARS OLD!

A decade ago, colleagues in the School of Education and Social Work came together with others in the university with an interest in childhood and youth and built a case for a new cross-university commitment to this interdisciplinary area of focus. With the appointment of colleagues, **Rachel Thomson** and **Janet Boddy** – our first directors – CIRCY was born!

Ten years on we have a vibrant interdisciplinary university centre. Our academics and doctoral researchers are engaged in a variety of research studies and knowledge exchange with a range of external partners and stakeholders - and our undergraduate and postgraduate courses in childhood and youth are thriving.

We will celebrate what we have achieved so far with a hybrid celebratory event on 29 November at 4pm. Participants locally, nationally, and globally will join us both face-to-face and online. Our two headline speakers are [Professor Sonia Livingstone](#) (London School of Economics) and [Professor Carlene Firmin](#) (Durham University) They will be troubling the concepts of agency and rights in these contemporary times. We will be circulating further details in a couple of weeks' time so do look out for these and save the date!



AUTUMN TERM EVENTS

We are delighted to invite you all to the activities and events we host this term! Activities and events will be a mix of online, in-person and hybrid in their delivery.

- **CIRCY PGR WELCOME COFFEE & CAKE**
Monday 10 October 2022/ 1-2pm /
The Conolly Room, Ground Floor, Essex House

Our PGR network consists of postgraduate researchers from across the University who are engaged in research with/about children and/or young people.

The group meets twice in a term to discuss different themes/topics. This is specifically a welcome event to introduce incoming and ongoing researchers. To join the PGR network, email bm333@sussex.ac.uk.

- **JOINT CIRCY-CSWIR OPEN SEMINAR**
Monday 24 October 2022 / 4.30-6pm /
Zoom link to be shared with registrants

'Your Baby and Child'

presented by Dr Penelope Leach, Psychologist

Dr Leach is a renowned developmental child psychologist. Her research includes work on discipline, the effects of babies on their parents, and ongoing studies into childcare in the UK. Dr Leach is most widely known for her best-selling books on child development and parenting, including *Babyhood*, *Children First: What Society Must Do – and Is Not Doing – for Our Children Today*, the classic *Your Baby & Child: From Birth to Age Five* (new edition 2022), and *Your Growing Child: From Babyhood Through Adolescence*. She also wrote the lifetime television series of 72 programmes, "Your Baby and Child with Penelope Leach" which won a CableAce award and was nominated for an Emmy.

- **CIRCY COFFEE & COLLABORATION**
Thursday 3 November 2022/ 1-2pm /
The Conolly Room, Ground Floor, Essex House
+ Zoom (*link shared by email*)

In this termly CCC meeting, Helen Drew (Psychology), Simon Flack (Law) and Roni Eyal-Lubling (Education and Social Work) will each make a short presentation on an aspect of their research relating to children or young people. There will then be plenty of time for discussion. Drop by with your afternoon cuppa or join us online!

- **CIRCY PGR WRITING WORKSHOP**
Monday 21 November 2022/ 1-2pm /
Zoom link to be advised

To join the PGR network, email bm333@sussex.ac.uk.

- **CIRCY 10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATORY SYMPOSIUM**

Tuesday 29 November 2022 / 4-6pm /
Conference Centre, University of Sussex + Zoom

We will share more details of this event, including Zoom link, via the CIRCY mailing list. Please email Brontë McDonald [bm333@sussex.ac.uk] to be added.

WHO'S WHO?

CIRCY Leadership Team

Director:

Michelle Lefevre (Social Work and Social Care)
E: M.Lefevre@sussex.ac.uk

Co-Director:

Liam Berriman (Social Work and Social Care)
E: L.J.Berriman@sussex.ac.uk

Postgraduate Research Assistant:

Brontë McDonald
E: bm333@sussex.ac.uk

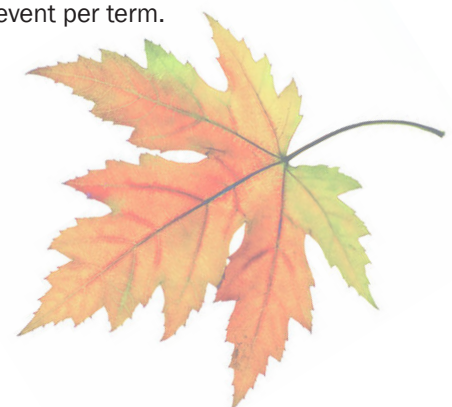


CIRCY Steering Group

Our Steering group meets termly to guide and facilitate the work of CIRCY. We would like to thank Fiona Courage (Mass Observation Archive), Pam Thurschwell (English) and Nuno Ferreira (Law) for their support of the CIRCY team and work of the centre as they move on to other responsibilities. And we welcome to Simon Flack (Law) and Kirsty Patrick (Mass Observation Project/Archive) to our steering group. We look forward to your contributions.

- [Robin Banerjee](#) (Psychology)
- [Janet Boddy](#) (Education)
- [Hannah Field](#) (English)
- Simon Flack (Law)
- [Kathryn Lester](#) (Psychology)
- [Jo Moran-Ellis](#) (Sociology)
- Kirsty Patrick (Mass Observation Project)
- [Dorte Thorsen](#) (Geography)
- [Rebecca Webb](#) (Education)

If your research has the rights, concerns and/or perspective of children and young people at its heart, and you are interested in joining our Steering Group, please contact [Michelle](#). The minimum commitment is to attend a termly Steering Group meeting, and to attend or help facilitate at least one CIRCY event per term.



SPOTLIGHT ON LIFELONG LINKS

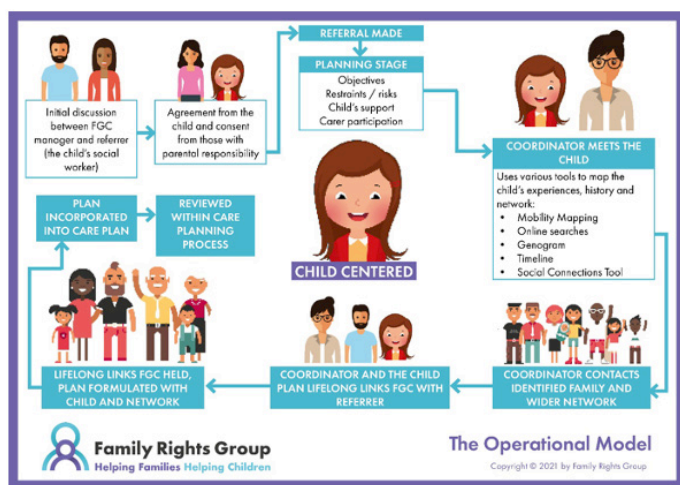
BY LISA HOLMES (EDUCATION)

I joined the University of Sussex in early 2022 and, as I settled into my new role, I had the pleasure of completing an evaluation of Lifelong Links which I had been involved in since 2015.

What is Lifelong Links?

Developed by Family Rights Group, Lifelong Links aims to ensure that a child in care has a positive support network around them to help them during their time in care and into - and in - adulthood. A trained independent Lifelong Links coordinator works with a child to find out who is important to them, who they would like to be back in touch with, and who they would like to know. The coordinator searches for these people, using a variety of tools and techniques, and then brings them together in a Lifelong Links family group conference to make a plan of support with and for the child. This plan is then embedded in the child's care or pathway plan.

Family Rights Group created this diagram to show Lifelong Links:



The main evaluation of Lifelong Links (funded by the Department for Education) ran from 2017-20 as part of the Children's Social Care Innovation Programme. Then we carried out further research to explore how Lifelong Links was being embedded into practice. There were three elements to the evaluation extension which took place in four local authorities in England. To understand how Lifelong Links was being embedded, a range of methods was used, including interviews and focus groups, as well as a secondary analysis of child-level outcome data. More information on this is available in the Embedding Practice Report on the [Family Rights Group website](#).

What did we find out?

[The main evaluation](#) indicated that, over the course of the first three years, Lifelong Links had made substantial progress in meeting its intended aims and concluded that it had contributed to children and young people's sense of identity, supported them to build their own narratives and addressed their needs to build safe connections and restore damaged relationships.

In a subsequent evaluation undertaken to understand how Lifelong Links was being embedded, we highlighted the importance of practice being child-led and carried out at a pace determined by them. We also highlighted the importance of recognising that, for some children and young people, the objectives they set at the start of Lifelong Links may change. This evaluation also emphasised the need to focus on the concept of 'relational stability' for children in care, recognising that relationships transcend placement start and end dates. It was found that we need a children's social care system that supports this and helps children and young people, their carers, and their birth families to work collaboratively.

Since the Report was published in early 2022, we have been sharing the evaluation findings at webinars, with policy-makers, and practitioners to inform the rollout of Lifelong Links to new local authority areas.

What's next?

We are delighted that several CIRC members will continue to be involved in the generation of evidence about Lifelong Links. We will be carrying out an evaluation of an adaptation of Lifelong Links to support care leavers in prisons. This new adaptation ('Always Hope') is being led by the [Innovation Unit](#). The evaluation will be co-led by myself and **Tamsin Hinton Smith** (Education) and we will be supported by Education Research Fellow, **Claire Durrant**.

RESEARCH, PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

We are delighted to announce a PhD Scholarship in Childhood and Youth funded by [The Mulberry Bush](#). Lucy Roberts was the successful applicant and is now developing her proposal which aims to improve understandings of how best to track the social and emotional development of children over time, particularly those who have experienced trauma. As part of her doctorate, Lucy will take forward the development of the '[Sea Scale](#)' – a short standardised measure of social and emotional adjustment used by teachers and practitioners.

[ACoRNS Sussex](#) ran a well attended inclusive event on Autistic Voices in May. They are now analysing the results. More details of the event can be seen in [their newsletter](#).

In September, the Applied Research Collaboration Kent, Surrey and Sussex (ARC KSS) held an in-person community of research practice event on [Children and Young People's Mental Health, Neurodevelopment, Neurodiversity and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\)](#), at the University of Sussex.

In September, **Robin Banerjee** (Psychology) started his new role as member of the [Introducing the Ending Youth Violence Lab](#) steering board.

Julia Winstone (Law Postgraduate Researcher) has been conducting Referral Order Panels for a youth justice service she volunteers with and liaising with colleagues on training, including identifying issues that the University could assist with. Julia also took part in roundtable discussions on disproportionality in restorative justice in a meeting of the Pan London Restorative Justice Practitioners Group on 29 September 2022. Results from the discussions will be fed into Phase 2 of the current APPGI into restorative justice.



CREATING WITH UNCERTAINTY

Perpetua Kirby and Rebecca Webb (both Education) hosted an exhibition on 'Creating with Uncertainty: Covid recovery to educate for sustainable futures' on Wednesday 5 October. It was the culmination of a number of experimental workshops undertaken over the summer at which experts shared scientific and other knowledge about the world to support the students of nine diverse local schools and colleges to engage with Covid and sustainability uncertainties.

Rebecca and Perpetua explained:

"We used discussion and creative arts for the students to explore a topic or question deeply. We focused on what students think, but also how they feel and experience their world through their bodies, their imaginations and ethical deliberations. We encouraged the consideration of how others – including other species – might also experience the world."

Students and teachers also provided feedback on "why the workshops mattered to me, my school or my community".

The exhibition featured photographs, films, text, artefacts and graphic art showcasing participants' responses.

The intention of the project was to inspire and support students from diverse backgrounds to engage deeply with sustainability issues, to enhance their curiosity and engagement, and to build emotional and community resilience.

IDEAS IN ACTION

'Ideas in Action' are regular CIRCY events at which colleagues present new ideas for interdisciplinary feedback and suggestions - for example a new or reworked bid, book proposals, or plans for knowledge exchange/impact generation.

Please let us know if you would like to present your work this term, or if you would like one of the CIRCY team to review a bid or advise on other work in progress. We are happy to respond at short notice!

PUBLICATIONS

[‘Exploring and Celebrating the Early Childhood Practitioner: An Interrogation of Pedagogy, Professionalism and Practice’](#) edited by **Rebecca Webb** (Education) and Carla Solvason (University of Worcester). Soon to be published by Routledge and available now for pre-order. The book includes the following chapters written by CIRCY colleagues and current and former Sussex colleagues:

- Nurturing Nature with(in) Children (or ‘George Killed the Worm’): Kathleen Bailey
- Embracing Creativity in the Early Years: Jacqueline Young
- Championing a Not Knowing Pedagogy and Practice: Rebecca Webb & Kathy Foster
- Reconceptualising Quality Interactions: Hayley Preston-Smith
- Recognising and Surviving Poverty within Early Childhood Practice: Sandra Lyndon

A new open access paper has been published by the Innovate Project which sets out a framework to help local authorities and social care organisations to plan and implement practice and service innovations:

- **Lefevre, M.**, Hampson, M. and Goldsmith, C. (2022): [‘Towards a Synthesised Directional Map of the Stages of Innovation in Children’s Social Care’](#), *British Journal of Social Work*

You can see our other publications and resources about innovation theory and practice on [The Innovate Project website](#).

Childhood and Youth doctoral researcher and former CIRCY Research Assistant, **Loreto Rodriguez**, has published a paper with her Chilean colleagues:

- Madrid, M., **Rodríguez, L.**, & Capella, C. (2022): [‘Relación terapéutica, juego y abordaje de la experiencia de agresiones sexuales en psicoterapia: la perspectiva de niños/as y adolescentes’](#) [Therapeutic Relationship, Play and the Approach of the Sexual Abuse Experience in Psychotherapy: The Perspective of Children and Adolescents]. *Revista de Psicología*, 31(1), 1-14.

Rachel Thomson (Social Work and Social Care) has published two papers:

- Thomson, R. (2022): [‘Understanding inequalities through childhood studies’](#), *British Journal of Sociology of Education*
- Moore, N., Thomson, R. & McGeeney, E. (forthcoming 2022): ‘Putting place back into the patriarchy through rematriating feminist research: the WRAP Project, feminist webs and reanimating data’, in Julie McLeod, Kate O’Connor, Amy McKernan (eds.), *Temporality and place in educational research*, Routledge.

PRESENTING OUR WORK

The @WSSPsychLab, of which **Nicola Yuill** (Psychology) is a member, is presenting results of research and doing a live panel for parents and stakeholders into the experiences of parents of children with Wiedemann-Steiner Syndrome at the 4th annual WSS Foundation conference, Baltimore on 29 October.

Rachel Thomson (Social Work & Social Care) presented, as the keynote, ‘Reanimating and rewilding methods: The archive as a focus for participatory research’, at a conference on Multidisciplinary use of participatory research, hosted by ARU Participatory research Group, Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford, on 12 July.

Additionally, along with **Liam Berriman** (Social Work & Social Care), Rachel presented ‘Starting with the archive: Principles for a prospective participatory research’ at the Timescape Festival on 9 September. Rachel also gave a keynote on ‘Echoes, kaleidoscopes and wormholes: Metaphors for knowing in biographical research’ at The Biographical Echoes final conference, ISCTE, in Lisbon on 16 September.

Brontë McDonald (Psychology) presented ‘Development of a psychological intervention for primary school attendance problems: Codesign workshops with parent and educational professionals at the International Network for Social Avoidance in Amsterdam on 6 October.

Lisa Holmes (Education) presented a keynote focused on relational stability at the [11th International Foster Care Research Network Conference](#) in Barcelona in September. This presentation brought together findings from a range of projects, and also summarised the emerging key themes presented throughout the event. In October, Lisa will co-present with colleagues from Family Rights Group at the international [Kempe Conference](#) organised by the Kempe Centre in the US. The event is a global call to action to change child welfare. She will present the findings from an evaluation of Lifelong Links, developed by Family Rights Group and funded as part of the Department for Education Children’s Social Care Innovation Programme.

In July, **Robin Banerjee** (Psychology) was the keynote at [ISEND 2022 Mental Health Conference for Schools and Colleges](#) which focused on embedding a culture of kindness to promote mental health and emotional wellbeing.

WANT TO BECOME A CIRCY MEMBER?

WHAT IS 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. CIRCY's research is interdisciplinary and international in scope, united by a critical engagement with children and young people's lives in time, and a focus on the rights, voice and welfare of the child or young person at the centre of inquiry.

WHO CAN JOIN CIRCY?

CIRCY encourages academics, doctoral researchers and others across the university who write and research in these fields to become members.

WHAT DOES MEMBERSHIP INVOLVE?

CIRCY holds lots of events through the year which members can attend. These include seminars, reading groups, methodology workshops, writing retreats, and work in progress workshops where members can get feedback on research or writing ideas.

GET IN TOUCH!

If you're interested in taking part in any of our upcoming members events or other activities, or just want to find out more about CIRCY, contact Brontë McDonald:
bm333@sussex.ac.uk.

And please let us know if you have any ideas for members' events or seminars, or need any support with developing research bids, or other research-related activities, such as networking events or conference attendance.

TWEET TIME!

Don't forget to follow us on twitter.

When you tweet about your research, tag **@SussexCIRCY** and we'll re-tweet you to enhance your visibility!

