Growing Up in Ireland
National Longitudinal Study of Children

6TH ANNUAL RESEARCH CONFERENCE

Book of Abstracts

Paper presentations

The impact of educational experience and school exclusion on criminal careers: Findings from the Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime

Keynote speaker

Professor Susan McVie
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Hogan Mezzanine 2

The place of school in the daily lives of young people is of central importance to their health and well-being. As well as a place of learning, schools provide a vital context in which children learn to behave appropriately, engage socially and negotiate their way through a range of complex interactions and relationships. There are clear links between young people's experience of school and their engagement in offending behaviour, and research has demonstrated the long term criminogenic effects of labelling troublesome youths and the use of persistent school exclusion. However, attitudes to school generally are positive and most children, even those who frequently offend, place great value on receiving a good education. Using data from the Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime, which involved participation from all Edinburgh secondary schools over a period of seven years, this paper will explore both the lessons to be learned and the positive opportunities for schools based on the experiences of a cohort of over 4000 young people and argue that schools play a critical role in diverting many of our young people away from a life of crime. This paper will also highlight the challenges and benefits of conducting a longitudinal study that tries to connect the events of childhood with adulthood while understanding the various transitional points along the way, and illustrate the importance of data linkage and persistent engagement strategies in enabling such research to make an impact on policy and practice.

One of the gang? Peer relations among students with special educational needs in mainstream primary schools

Joanne Banks, (ESRI)
Selina McCoy, (ESRI/TCD)
Denise Frawley, (HEA)

Session A, Hogan Mezzanine 2

Context: The adoption of inclusive education frameworks is generally viewed as positive primarily because of the social factors associated with attending mainstream schools for children with special educational needs (SEN). Despite this commonly held view, there is increasing evidence to show that children with SEN have difficulties participating in mainstream environments. In particular they are found to be less popular, hold low social positions, are more likely to have poor friendship quality and often have a low social self-concept.

Methods: Using *Growing Up in Ireland* data on nine year olds, this paper examines whether peer relations differ among typically developing students and students with different types of SEN. In order to understand the processes shaping negative peer relations, this paper controls for a number of individual, home and school level factors simultaneously in a regression model.

Results: Our findings show that, all else being equal, students with SEN are more likely to have fewer friends and experience negative peer relationships than their peers without any additional needs. Furthermore, the type of disability is significant in peer relations with those with multiple disabilities and emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) experiencing the lowest social position at school.

Conclusions: This paper argues that positive peer experiences should be viewed as an educational outcome alongside students' academic goals. We suggest possible interventions both in school and at home for improving the level and quality of peer interactions for students with and without SEN in mainstream settings.

Parents' Educational Expectations of Children With and Without Special Educational Needs (SEN): In-Depth Analysis of the *Growing Up in Ireland* Child Cohort

Jude Cosgrove, (ERC)

Session A, Hogan Mezzanine 2

Analyses of outcomes of children with special educational needs (SEN) on behalf of the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) showed that parents of children with SEN held comparatively low educational expectations for their children, compared with parents of children without SEN. While 78% of parents of children without SEN expected their child to attain a university degree, this was 53% for parents of children with SEN (Wave 1 data). Among children with SEN (classified into 12 groups), considerable variation was observed (range = 36% - 88%). The aim of the paper is to explore the potential reasons for these lowered expectations. A multiple logistic regression approach was taken, whereby the odds of parents of children with SEN (classified into 12 groups) expecting their child to attend college or university were compared to the odds of children without SEN, both before and after taking demographics, socioeconomic measures, home environment, and standardised test scores into account. Odds ratios for children without SEN are compared with those for children in each of the 12 SEN groups across separate models, gradually building a more complete model. Educational expectations of parents of children with SEN remain significantly lower than their no-SEN counterparts for all 12 groups in the complete model, with the exception of children with a physical or sensory disability. Potential policy responses to these findings are discussed, focusing both on teachers' and parents' expectations, and the provision of information on future educational careers of children. Follow-up work using Wave II is suggested.

Does time spent watching television in early childhood affect socio-emotional development?

Suzanne Egan, (UL)
Aisling Murray, (ESRI)

Session B, Nally Suite

The majority of households in Ireland have more than one television set (Ipsos Mori/BCI, 2008) and GUI data suggest that 16% of Irish three-year-olds have a television, computer or games console in their bedroom. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no more than one to two hours per day watching television for children. International research has shown that three or more hours per day of screen-time are associated with higher scores for problem behaviours on the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire in children (Parkes et al., 2013; Hamer et al., 2012). However, prolonged periods of television-watching also tend to be correlated with other socio-demographic risk factors for disadvantage (Hoyos, Cillero & Jago, 2010).

In this paper we investigate the role of television watching in children's behaviour. Using regression modelling we examine if the amount of time spent watching television, and whether there are family rules around watching television, are cross-sectionally associated with measures of socio-emotional problems at age 3 years. After controlling for various socio-demographic and child factors such as maternal education, family type and infant temperament, the results indicated that excessive amounts of time spent watching television have a modest but statistically significant negative association with children's internalising and externalising behaviour at age 3 years. Screen-time is only one of many factors that influence a young child's socio-emotional development but one that is potentially highly amenable to intervention, and so quantifying the extent of its role is an important undertaking for research.

Are classroom internet use and academic performance higher after government broadband subsidies to primary schools?

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Richard Layte, (ESRI/TCD)
Selina McCoy, (ESRI/TCD)
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Session B, Nally Suite

This paper combines data from a government programme providing broadband access to primary schools in Ireland with anonymised survey microdata on schools', teachers' and pupils use of the internet to examine the links between public subsidies, classroom use of the internet and educational performance. The microdata are drawn from the 9-year-old cohort of the *Growing Up in Ireland* Study. We estimate regression models to identify the factors associated with internet use in the classroom and students' scores on standardised reading and mathematics tests, and we check whether internet use is endogenous in the test score models. We find that provision of broadband service under the government scheme is associated with more than a doubling of teachers' use of the internet in class after about a two year lag. Better computing facilities in schools are also associated with higher internet use, but advertised download speed is not statistically significant. Internet use in class is associated with significantly higher average mathematics and reading scores on standardised tests. A set of confounding factors is included, with results broadly in line with previous literature.

Use of the Public Health Nurse Service in Ireland during the First Nine Months of Life

Anne-Marie Brooks, (DCYA)
Sinead Hanafin, (TCD)

Session C, Davin Suite

There is a growing body of evidence demonstrating short-, medium-and long-term benefits of home-based nursing services for individuals, families and communities. This is supported in Irish policy. For example, the recently published Report of the Expert Advisory Group on the Early Years Strategy highlights the centrality of the role of the Public Health Nurse in the provision of child health services noting that 'a high-quality child health screening programme requires a public health nurse home-visiting service, which is an excellent early warning and preventative system'.

Using data from wave one of the infant cohort in *Growing Up in Ireland*, this study will identify child- (e.g. gestation period, birth weight, health status, birth order), family- (e.g. maternal education, maternal age, ethnicity, maternal mental health) and community- (e.g. urban/rural living) related factors that are associated with use of the Public Health Nurse service in Ireland during the first nine months of life.

Planned home birth and breastfeeding in Ireland

Clare Quigley, (TCD)
Cristina Taut, (TCD)
Lina Zgaga, (TCD)

Session C, Davin Suite

Context: Breastfeeding rates remain low in Ireland although breastfeeding is regarded as the optimal form of infant nutrition. Improved breastfeeding outcomes have been reported for infants delivered at home.

Methods: This study is based on the *Growing Up in Ireland* (GUI) infant cohort. Information on place of birth and breastfeeding was collected. Association between place of birth (hospital or planned home birth) and breastfeeding among low-risk births was examined, before and after adjustment for multiple covariates.

Results: Within the GUI cohort, there were 10,640 low-risk births; of which 157 were planned home births. Home birth was found to be associated with breastfeeding at all examined time-points, including at birth, 8 weeks, and 6 months (OR: 2.22 [CI: 1.60-3.08]), an association which increased for breastfeeding exclusively for ≥6 months (OR: 2.92 [CI: 1.99-4.28]). This persisted after adjusting for important covariates; the strongest association was again observed with home birth and exclusive breastfeeding for ≥6 months (OR: 2.78 [CI: 1.78-4.34]).

Conclusions: Planned home birth was strongly associated with longer breastfeeding and exclusive breastfeeding in low-risk births. This association may be due to the subjective experience of home birth, to the level of support experienced by mothers, to the varying advocacy of formula supplementation, or to the differences between those who choose home birth versus hospital birth. Increasing breastfeeding is an important public health goal, and aspects of the peripartum processes which are unique to home birth may provide clues as what aspects of home birth may increase breastfeeding. Further research is indicated.

Identifying factors contributing to school disaffection among Irish primary school pupils

Maeve Thornton, (ESRI)
Merike Darmody, (ESRI)

Session D, Hogan Mezzanine 2

Aim: To explore the multidimensional nature of factors related to school disaffection among Irish primary school pupils.

There is now a growing body of literature on student engagement with school and its subsequent impact on other domains, and while a range of outcomes has been highlighted, one of the main findings to date is that pupils who feel a sense of belonging to their school tend to do better academically compared to their less engaged peers.

Much of the research to date has focussed on outcomes as they relate to older students, and relatively little attention has been paid to those factors which predict disaffection among younger children. Disaffection is believed to encompass a number of elements (including behavioural, cognitive and affective) that often mark the beginning of a progression that can lead to early school leaving. Research to date has rarely explored these factors simultaneously, and this paper attempts to address that gap in the research by exploring the multidimensional nature of factors that are believed to be related to disaffection in primary schools.

Regression models will be used to analyse data from the first wave of the 9-year cohort of the *Growing Up in Ireland* in order to explore the relationship between a number of factors including behavioural, cognitive, affective, individual and family factors, and school disaffection.

Age or stage? Influences on the transition to junior cycle education

Emer Smyth, (ESRI)

Session D, Hogan Mezzanine 2

Context: There is a large body of research internationally on the difficulties young people experience in making the transition to second-level education. Some commentators attribute this pattern to the mismatch between school structures and the developmental needs of adolescents. However, such studies have rarely been able to disentangle the effects of stage of schooling from those of age. GUI data on 13 year olds provide a unique opportunity to identify the factors which facilitate the continued engagement of young people over the transition period, while distinguishing by school stage (year group).

Methods: The paper uses multilevel modelling techniques to examine the influence of individual background factors, engagement at age 9, school experiences over the transition period and stage of schooling on two measures of school engagement at age 13: attitudes to school and levels of school attendance.

Results: School engagement at age 9 is highly predictive of engagement four years later but important changes are evident between the two time-points. All else being equal, second year students are less positive about school and have higher levels of absence than first year students. School climate, that is, the quality of interaction between teachers and students is a key factor in maintaining school engagement over the transition period.

Conclusions: The paper points to the importance of school climate in fostering engagement with school, providing an important evidence base to inform on-going junior cycle reform.

An maith leat Gaeilge?: An analysis of variation in primary pupil attitudes to Gaeilge in *Growing Up in Ireland* study

Ann Devitt, (TCD)
Joe Condon, (DIT)
Gene Dalton, (TCD)
Jane O'Connell, (TCD)
Melanie Ní Dhuinn, (TCD)

Session D, Hogan Mezzanine 2

This paper presents an analysis of children's attitudes to Gaeilge in the primary school in the context of curriculum and language policy for the Irish language. The data for this paper come from the first wave of the child cohort of the *Growing Up in Ireland* study. This paper follows on from the ESRI Primary Classroom report (McCoy et al., 2012) but focuses specifically on pupil attitudes to Gaeilge addressing the following questions:

What are the children's attitudes to learning Irish?

Do their attitudes vary by personal, classroom and/or school factors?

The ESRI report found that gender and school gender mix bear a relationship to pupils' attitudes to Gaeilge. This paper explores further potential relationships including factors at the level of the child (e.g. ethnic and linguistic background, engagement with language interests, engagement with school in general), of the teacher (e.g. teaching and learning methods employed, career stage, time dedicated to Irish) and of the school (e.g. school ethos, categorisation).

The NCCA review of the primary curriculum for Irish (NCCA, 2008) and the 20-year strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030 (Government of Ireland, 2010) as well as the NCCA Draft Primary Language Curriculum (NCCA, 2014) provide interesting counterpoints to the multi-level analysis conducted here. These documents make a number of recommendations in relation to the teaching and learning of Gaeilge. This paper explores interactions between policy as expressed in these documents and the experience of pupils as evidenced in the GUI study.

Friendship and well-being among children with chronic physical and mental health conditions in *Growing Up in Ireland.*

Sophie Gallagher, (UCD)
Eilis Hennessy, (UCD)
Ela Polek, (UCD)

Session E, Nally Suite

Research findings in developmental science consistently demonstrate the value of friendship for children with chronic physical and mental health problems. However, to date this relationship has not been tested within a large-scale longitudinal study, making it impossible to determine whether friendship has long-term benefits for emotional well-being. The GUI dataset provided an important opportunity to test this relationship. From a total of 6649 children, for whom the data about chronic illness at ages 9 and 13 were available, 402 had chronic illness at both ages. These 402 were matched based on propensity score to 400 children with no chronic illness at either age. T-test analysis showed that children with chronic illnesses had significantly higher scores on emotional problems; conduct problems and hyperactivity at age 13. In addition, children with chronic illness had significantly fewer close friends at age 9. A mediation model was tested using pathway analysis in Mplus 7.2 with propensity score as a control variable predicting all other variables. This model indicated that number of close friends at age 9 partially mitigated the negative effects of chronic illness on conduct problems and hyperactivity at age 13. Number of close friends at age 9 completely mediated the relationship between chronic illness and emotional problems at age 13. The findings highlight the important role that friendship plays in the lives of children who are chronically ill, emphasising the importance of strengthening school and hospital policies that facilitate friendship development and maintenance for these children.

Not difficult, just sick: The relationship between temperament and early childhood illness

Brían Merriman, (ERC)

Session E, Nally Suite

Context: Temperament is considered a stable characteristic that is identifiable from early infancy and linked to behaviours in childhood and adulthood. Some have argued for a genetic basis for temperament, and the field of behavioural genetics has a strong influence in its conceptualisation. However, infant temperament is most often assessed by parents and biases in their responses could influence assessment of temperament.

Methods: The present study uses an exploratory sequential mixed methods design to identify factors affecting the classification of infant temperament. Study 1 addresses possible sources of bias in parents' reports of their child's temperament using data from *Growing Up in Ireland*'s infant cohort qualitative study. Based on these results, Study 2 examines the relationship between temperament ratings and child health and maternal depression using GUI quantitative data from both waves.

Results: Content analysis indicated that infants described by their parents as 'difficult' were significantly more likely to have experienced serious acute or mild chronic illness since birth. Parental classification of temperament may be influenced by the additional demands on parents due to the child's illness. Children who had health problems at birth, at nine months, and at three years had significantly higher fussy-difficult scores at nine months and their mothers had higher depression scores at nine months.

Conclusions: Classifying a child's behaviour as difficult could have an adverse effect on their development by creating expectations of poor behaviour. These results suggest that a more sympathetic conceptualisation of infant temperament could change how children categorised as difficult are treated.

The effect of a disability on siblings

Gráinne Collins, (National Disability Authority)
Cliona Doherty, (National Disability Authority)

Session E, Nally Suite

Researchers have focused a great deal of attention on mothers, and to a lesser extent fathers, of children with a disability. This research has been used to justify policy intervention for families. Less work, and little in Ireland, has focused on the siblings of children with a disability and their experiences. To date, the few (if growing) studies of siblings have addressed a narrow range of variables and issues- the detection of maladjustment being the primary concern. These studies generally focus on small numbers or adult siblings.

Drawing on data from the child cohort wave 1 and 2 of the *Growing Up in Ireland* Study this paper seeks to examine adjustment in the study children who have a sibling with a disability (identified in wave 1). In particular using the questions that ask about a sibling with a disability and whether this has affected the study child. This paper will explore adjustment over time and control for factors that have limited the value of other investigations of siblings. Specifically, the paper will examine variables such as what the study child thinks about school, their diet, activities they report doing with their parents, their favourite hobby or activity, things they can do for themselves and household chores. It controls for socio-economic status, income/poverty status, parent stress, parent style, family time and routines, family communication, and age of the disabled child relative to the study child to explore sibling adjustment difficulties.

On the construction of a health-wellbeing index for 9-month-old Irish infants

Cristina Taut, (TCD)
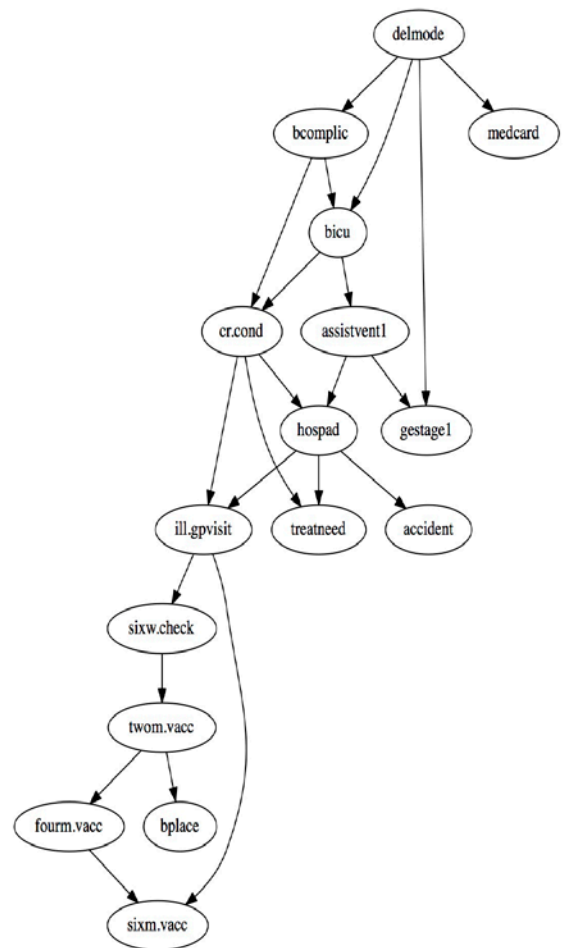**Alan Kelly,** (TCD)
Lina Zgaga, (TCD)

Session F, Davin Suite

Context: The central research question of this study revolves around identifying factors that contribute, affect and disrupt, Irish infant's health status. Defining and measuring infant health in the Irish context would offer best grounds to address detrimental factors and to facilitate positive change. We aim to develop a nationally representative infant health index to serve as an encompassing signaling element that would identify children at risk and would provide evidence for creation of responsive polices.

Methods: This project exploits the unique and extensive infant health data set from the Wave 1 of the Infant Cohort, GUI. The initial phase of the study involved identifying variables known to be highly influential for infants' health. Infant health is a latent, unmeasured trait therefore in defining the infant health-wellbeing index we will employ a range of modern statistical tools including Probabilistic Graphical Models (PGM) and Latent Variable (LV) models.

Results: Current focus is on Bayesian Network-PGMs to elucidate the conditional relationships between a selected set of 16 health-related variables. The attached graphic illustrates a near optimal model for this set.

Conclusions: The model identified by this Bayesian Network is being investigated. In due course, this work will be extended to investigate alternative graphical models, before progressing to a LV representation prior to deriving a health wellbeing index. It is planned that the research will extend to include additional domains for the purpose of generating a comprehensive multi-dimensional child wellbeing index predictive of child development.

Legend:
delmode- delivery mode
bcomplic- birth complications
medcard- medical card holder
bicu- baby spent time in Intensive Care Unit (ICU)
assistvent1- baby needed assisted ventilation while in ICU
cr.cond- baby was diagnosed with a chronic condition
hospad- hospital admissions during first nine months of life
gestage1- gestational age
ill.gpvisit- baby had to visit the general practitioner due to illness
treatneed- treatment needed
accident- baby suffered an accident
sixw.check- six weeks check-up
twom.vacc- two months vaccination
fourm.vacc- four months vaccination
bplace- birth place
sixm.vacc- six months vaccination

Prevalence of longstanding health conditions among three-year-old children

Steve Barron, (IPH)
Kevin Balanda, (IPH)
Lorraine Fahy, (IPH)

Session F, Davin Suite

Context: Longstanding health conditions among children can be associated with reduced quality of life and poorer outcomes for children and their families. Prevalence estimates are useful to describe patterns of health and ill-health, identify determinants of health and wellbeing, and support evidence-informed policy development, service planning and practice.

Methods: GUI Infant Cohort Wave 2 was used to estimate the prevalence of carer-reported longstanding conditions (any condition, asthma/asthma symptoms, eczema/skin allergy, sight problems, and hearing problems) among three-year-old children. A multivariable statistical model was developed for each condition to describe how its prevalence varied with important child, carer, household and neighbourhood characteristics. National prevalence data and subnational data on characteristics related to prevalence were combined to produce synthetic prevalence estimates for counties.

Results: Approximately one in six (15.8%) three-year-olds had a longstanding illness, condition or disability. The prevalences of specific conditions were: asthma/asthma symptoms 9.5%, eczema/skin allergy 4.0%, sight problems 5.9%, and hearing problems 3.9%. Some of the key characteristics that independently increased the risk of these conditions were boys, children whose primary carer had a longstanding condition, children from households with the lowest social class, and children with a low birthweight.

Conclusions: Longstanding conditions are common among three-year-old children in Ireland. Characteristics that explain the variation in prevalence can be used to identify groups of children and their families who are experiencing a greater burden of these conditions. These characteristics provide targets for policy and service interventions to improve the lives of children and their families.

Maternal and Child Psychosocial Factors associated with Dental-Problems During Early Childhood

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Colman McGrath, (Hong Kong University)
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Alan Kelly, (TCD)
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Session G, Hogan Mezzanine 2

Background/Aim: Dental problems in infancy and early childhood can have an immediate and long-term impact on health and development. The aim of this study was to investigate psycho-social measures of the primary caregiver (PCG) and child that may be protective against the infant or preschool child experiencing a dental problem.

Methods: Data were derived from the first (2007/2008) and second (2010/2011) waves of the GUI infant cohort. Bivariate and regression analyses were carried out on statistically reweighted data to determine associations between reported dental problems and infant/child health and PCG health, controlling for socio-demographics.

Results: Dental problems were reported among 302 infants (2.7%) at 9 months of age and 493 children (5.0%) at 3 years. Reported dental problems at 9 months were associated with infant temperament - ICQ fussy-difficult score ($p<0.01$) and PCG mental health - Parental Stress Score ($p<0.05$) and Parental Depression ($p<0.01$). Reported dental problems at age 3 years were associated with child health ($p<0.001$), child behaviour - SDQ Total Difficulties Score ($p<0.01$) and PCG Parental Stress Score ($p<0.01$). Controlling for socio-demographic factors in regression analyses reported dental problems remained significantly associated with infant temperament, child health and PCG depression.

Conclusions: Dental problems were reported among more than 1 in 50 infants at 9 months old and among 1 in 20 children at age 3 years. Reported dental problems were associated with child health, infant temperament, child behavioural difficulties and PCG stress and depression. This has implications for understanding the importance of oral health in early life.

Low Mood Among 13-year-olds in Ireland

James Williams, (ESRI)
Mark Morgan, (TCD)
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Session G, Hogan Mezzanine 2

A substantial proportion of illness in adolescence is related to depression and mental health. The majority of adult mental health issues have their onset in adolescence. The World Health Organisation (WHO, 2003) notes that: "The lack of attention to the mental health of children and adolescents may lead to mental disorders with lifelong consequences, undermines compliance with health regimens, and reduces the capacity of societies to be safe and productive."

According to the Health Service Executive (HSE, 2012) 1 in 10 children and adolescents suffer from mental health issues that are associated with "considerable distress and substantial interference with personal functions" such as family and social relationships, their capacity to cope with day-to-day stresses and life challenges, and their learning.

A range of factors have been identified in the literature as being associated with mental health issues among children and teenagers. These include: family characteristics; maternal health and well-being; parenting styles; environmental factors; peer and other relationships.

This paper considers issues around low mood among 13-year-olds using the second wave of the Child Cohort from *Growing up in Ireland*. Using information collected in the Short Mood and

Feelings Questionnaire (SMFQ) it examines the relationship between low mood among 13 year olds and the characteristics of the young person him/herself; those of their families as well as the young person's relationship with their family and peers. The paper also considers how low mood is related to self-esteem across a number of aspects of the young person's life.

relationships and predicting outcomes similar to those of previous studies (for example Morgan and Haglund, 2004).

Social Capital among 13-year-old children using the *Growing Up in Ireland* data

Oona Kenny, (TCD)

Session G, Hogan Mezzanine 2

According to Portes 'the concept of social capital is arguably one of the most successful 'exports' from sociology to other social sciences and to public discourse during the last two decades' (2000: 1). However there is continuing debate in the literature regarding its definition, how it is generated and in particular how it can be measured; within youth studies these issues are even less well understood and it remains under researched (Billet 2012).

Using principle components analysis, this paper constructs a multi-dimensional psychometric measure of youth social capital based on items from wave two of the *Growing Up in Ireland* child cohort study.

Drawing on learning from both quantitative and qualitative studies, only indicators that are relevant to young people and which reflect their ability to generate social resources from their own relationships and networks were selected. This represents a move away from traditional research which views social capital as a resource mediated to children through adult relationships and measured using proximal and often arbitrary indicators. The instrument created in this study was comparable with other multi-dimensional measures (Onyx et al., 2005; Koutra et al., 2011). It was also shown to have internal reliability, some degree of validity and effectiveness in revealing

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Involved Fatherhood – The Quiet Revolution

Barbara Moore, (UCD)

Session H, Nally Suite

Fatherhood is the most commonly shared experience of adult men, however, there is a paucity of empirical research on the role of fathers.[1] Further, internationally men are experiencing strong societal expectations to become 'nurturing' fathers. 'Involved' fatherhood, it is argued, has the potential to positively impact the lives of **all** family members, and consequently has important policy implications for both structural and interactional levels[2]. Fatherhood is a dynamic concept, responding to shifting social and economic environments. The contemporary transitional period in Irish society is a critical juncture in the construction of family life[3] and consequently a pivotal time to explore whether fatherhood practices predominantly reproduce the past or if a 'quiet revolution' is challenging previous societal norms.

Using a composite index measurement based on Pleck's (2012) 'positive engagement activities' component for the measurement of 'involved' fatherhood. This study utilises the data available in the 'Father's Questionnaire" in the "9-month-old' cohort of the GUI Study (2008), to elicit empirical evidence for 'involved' fatherhood attitudes and practices. Further, using the framework of 'social structural theory' the study explores the potential of social and structural elements to constrain or encourage paternal 'involvement'.

Although evidence of the 'stalled revolution' is present in the findings, there is significant evidence of 'involved' fatherhood, particularly in relation to emotional-based tasks. Indicating a

shift towards a more inclusive role for fathers in family life. Also, internal family characteristics show stronger associations with paternal 'involvement' than external social structures - class and education.

How open are the Irish? Exploring inter-cultural relationships in Ireland

Carmel Hannan (UL)
Antje Roeder, (TCD)
Merike Darmody, (ESRI)

Session H, Nally Suite

Before the economic boom, the rate of immigration to Ireland of different ethnic groups was relatively modest. A greater influx of immigrants into the country started in the 1990s and coincided with rapid economic development of the country. Previous research has shown that newcomers to Ireland were a heterogeneous group in terms of nationality, ethnicity, legal status and language skills, as well as religious affiliation. Despite a growing body of research on immigrants' labour market integration relatively little is known on their levels of social integration. We focus here on inter-cultural relationships, as they are generally understood to indicate significant boundary shifts between social groups and often interpreted as a positive sign for improved group relations.

The paper first looks at Census data from 1971 to assess the evidence that marriages are now more diverse than before. Using data from the *Growing Up in Ireland* infant cohort, which includes substantial numbers of parents from different backgrounds, we explore nationality, ethnicity, educational, country of origin, occupational and religious differences in the propensity to start a family with someone outside of one's social group. This preliminary evidence allows some insight into how Irish society is changing, its openness or lack of, and offers understanding of the social integration of different ethnic groups.

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[1] Esping- Andersen, 2009, p. 20

[2] Coltrane, 1996, Marsiglio et al., 2005

[3] Fine-Davis, 2011

Cash Poor/Time Poor? Maternal Employment Dynamics and Adolescent Outcomes in the UK, Ireland and Denmark

Patricia Keilthy, (UCD)

Session H, Nally Suite

Governments across Europe have moved from a welfare strategy that protects people from the labour market, to a model that seeks to empower people through the labour market. The argument for this policy approach, in terms of family welfare, is that reducing child poverty is more effective through increased maternal employment rather than cash payments. However, relatively little is known about the effect of maternal employment transitions on child and adolescent outcomes within the European context. Using longitudinal data from the *Growing up in Ireland* Study, the UK Millennium Cohort Study and the Danish Longitudinal Survey of Children, OLS lagged dependent variable approach was utilised to examine whether maternal employment transitions are associated with changes in social and emotional outcomes between middle childhood and early adolescence. Preliminary results show a negative impact of employment loss on adolescent outcomes (age 13) in Ireland, with no effect found in Denmark or the UK. Amongst the UK sample, those in household where their mothers were continually not working had the poorest outcomes. Sub group analysis of lone parents across all three samples showed little or no difference in this association relative to mothers in two parent families. Overall, these results suggest that employment transitions may have a neutral or small negative impact on adolescent social and emotional outcomes. However, the policy context may act of a buffer against the impact of such changes within the family labour market nexus.

Exploring the Association between Sleep Duration and Overweight and Obesity in Infants

Laura Mangan, (TCD)
Lina Zgaga, (TCD)

Session I, Davin Suite

Objective: Short sleep duration (SSD) has been shown to confer greater risk of overweight and obesity upon adults, adolescents and children. Despite the association between early overweight/obesity and its instance in later life, there has been little attempt to investigate this phenomenon in infants. The aim of this paper was to investigate whether SSD was linked to overweight/obesity in infants at 9 months.

Design: The data of the first wave of the *Growing Up in Ireland* (GUI) longitudinal study was sub-analysed. The primary caregivers of 11,134 infants were interviewed. Exclusion criteria (e.g. poor health status or sleeping problems) resulted in a total sample size of 8,895 infants available for the analysis. Multivariate regression analysis of infant body mass index (BMI; measured), weight-to-length ratio and weight gain at 9 months outcomes was carried out. The regression model was adjusted for known covariates, including: gender, breastfeeding, mother's BMI, ethnicity, sleep disturbances.

Results: With each hour less of day-sleep, infants were approximately 9% more likely to be overweight/obese (odds ratio (OR) =0.91; 95% confidence interval (95% CI): 0.86-0.97). With each hour less of total-sleep, infants were about 4% more likely to be overweight/obese (OR=0.96; 95% CI: 0.93-0.99). Night-sleep duration or sleep disturbance were not statistically significantly associated with overweight/obesity.

Conclusions: In line with previous research, the data demonstrated that sleep duration is significantly associated with BMI in infants. This information could be used to shape policy decision making and future overweight/obesity prevention strategies in order to avoid subsequent adult overweight/obesity.

Where you live matters: The local environment and physical activity among children

Mark Ward, (TCD)

Session I, Davin Suite

This paper tests the hypothesis that the characteristics of a child's local area impacts their levels of physical activity, a known risk factor for overweight and obesity.

Research has shown that safer neighbourhoods and those characterised as providing better access to recreational facilities are associated with higher levels of physical activity among children. In particular, neighbourhood socio-economic factors may be associated with physical activity with disadvantaged neighbourhoods having fewer or poorer access to physical activity facilities than more affluent areas.

The sample analysed was the cohort of nine-year-old children from the GUI study. Physical activity was operationalised using a newly constructed multi-domain indicator. Analysis consisted of a multilevel model with random effects which allowed us to examine the effect of predictors of physical activity at the individual, household, and neighbourhood level. It also enabled us to examine whether children in the same geographic area had similar levels of physical activity.

Key drivers of variation in physical activity among children were gender, income, television and computer screen time, and the characteristics of the local environment. The activity aspect of a child's temperament was also an important predictor of activity levels.

Lower household economic resources coupled with an often attendant disadvantaged local physical environment in terms of recreational facilities and safety may mean that children from disadvantaged households are doubly hindered with regard to physical activity. This might also explain why these children were observed to spend more time on sedentary behaviours, limited as they may be in opportunities for outdoor play.

Growing Up in Ireland
National Longitudinal
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