

leaps  
and bounds

Fostering and Aftercare in Ireland 2011

National Conference  
of the  
Irish Foster Care  
Association

Venue: **The Landmark Hotel,**  
Carrick on Shannon, Co. Leitrim.

**4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> November 2011**

Hosted by IFCA Leitrim Branch  
with the support of the HSE.



**HE** Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

## Friday 4th November

5pm-8pm **Registration**

5.30pm-8pm **Dinner** in whichever hotel booked into.

8.30pm **Official Opening** by Minister for Children, Frances Fitzgerald

**Followed by entertainment**

## Saturday 5th November

9.00 **Opening presentation** by Colin Harrison, Child Care Manager with Sligo/Leitrim HSE. Address by Wayne Duignan

9.30 **Transition to Adulthood for young people in 'Care' – Education and other issues?** By Robbie Gilligan

9.30-10.15 **Leaving Care and Aftercare**  
By Robbie Gilligan

Robbie Gilligan is Professor of Social Work and Social Policy at Trinity College, Dublin. He is also Associate Director of the Children's Research Centre at TCD. Robbie has a long and distinguished research career that has informed Child Care Practice in Ireland, particularly in the area of Children in Foster Care.

10.15-11.00 **AfterCare – A Patchwork Quilt**  
By Peter McVerry

Fr. Peter McVerry is a leading campaigner on social issues and in particular on the impact of drugs on young people and their ability to parent adequately.

11.15-12.45 **Workshops**

**Workshop AM 1. Maintaining Links**

*Presented by Agnes O'Connor*

Agnes is a Child Care Leader with the HSE and psychotherapist with Fostering First Ireland.

This workshop will look at attachment issues for young people growing up and leaving the Care system. How do unresolved past issues play out in foster care? And how can Foster Carers manage this transition?

**Workshop AM 2 The impact of the temporary nature of fostering on the 'birth' children of Foster Carers.**

*Presented by Brenda Irwin*

Brenda is the Support and Mediation Officer with IFCA

The workshop will present the findings of Brenda's research into this topic. She will be looking at the impact of repeated 'endings' on the attachment process for birth children.

**Workshop AM 3 Preparing for Independence**

*Presented by Claire Sweeney and Sorrena Megan*

Claire is the Senior Education Liaison Officer with Fostering First Ireland and Sorrena is the Child Care Services Manager.

This workshop will consider ways of promoting independence skills in young people and options for third level education.

**Workshop AM 4 Aftercare – the Legal Perspective -A Question and Answer Session**

*Presented by Geoffrey Shannon*

Geoffrey is a leading expert and advisor on Family and Child Care Law in Ireland.

This will be an opportunity for participants to discuss Legal Issues in their work as Foster Carers.

**Workshop AM 5 ADHD – growing up**

*Presented by Ann Cull*

Ann is a Child Care Leader with the Sligo/Leitrim Child and Family Mental Health Service. She has worked with children in residential and Foster Care and has a particular expertise in working with families where there is a child or young person with ADHD.

This workshop will focus on managing ADHD as a Young Person gets older and begins to transition into independence.

## **Workshop AM 6**

### **Substance Misuse**

*Presented by Marina O'Brien*

Marina is a Substance Misuse Counsellor for Young People and works with the HSE in Sligo. This workshop will focus on young people and risk factors in drug and alcohol taking, what are the signs and what can Foster Carers do if they believe their foster child is taking drugs or abusing alcohol.

## **Workshop AM 7**

### **The Inspection and Monitoring of Foster Care Services**

Presented by Lorna Wogan and Gildas Gordon  
Lorna has over 20 years' experience as a practitioner and manager in residential child care and a post graduate qualification in Child Protection and Welfare. Lorna's role is currently as a Monitoring Officer for the HSE West.

Gildas is a Social Worker by profession with over 25 years' experience. He has been involved in the registration and inspection of children's residential centres since 2000. This workshop will outline the role HIQA has Foster Care and the responsibility of the HSE to monitor Foster Care Services. It will discuss the monitoring and inspection process and outline why this is necessary.

**1:00 – 2:30pm Lunch at The Landmark Hotel**

**2.30-4.00pm Workshops**

### **Workshop PM 1**

#### **Family Connections and the Transition to Adulthood**

Cahal McHale is Principal Social Worker for Alternative Care Services with the HSE in Donegal. He has carried out research into the impact of contact/access between birth parents and their children in Care.

The workshop will explore the factors to be considered when assessing how access arrangements may be used to put in place constructive connections as the young person negotiates this important life process.

### **Workshop PM 2**

#### **Allegations in Foster Care and the Criminal Law**

*Presented by Deborah Kelleher*

Deborah is a solicitor practicing in the area of criminal law.

This workshop will consider the issues faced by Foster Carers when an allegation is made and the implications for them and their practice.

### **Workshop PM 3**

#### **Recognising and managing mental health problems encountered in children and teenagers**

*Presented by Dr Philip Tyndall*

Dr Tyndall is Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist with the Child Guidance Service in Roscommon

This workshop will consider mental health issues encountered with children and teenagers, including ADHD, Oppositional Defiant and Conduct problems, Self Harming and Depression. The emphasis will be on managing problems as they arise in Foster Care

### **Workshop PM 4**

#### **IFCA Support and Mediation Service**

*Presented by Brenda Irwin*

In this workshop Brenda will outline the service offered by IFCA in relation to supporting Foster Carers, and offering support and guidance to carers in difficult situations.

# Conference Delegate Rates

## Weekend Package

2 nights B&B, Dinner Friday night at respective hotel, Lunch and Gala Dinner Saturday night at The Landmark Hotel.

Members: €250 pps

Non Members: €300 pps

Single supplement: €30 pp pn

## Childrens Package

2 Nights B&B, Meals Children Programme:

0-4 Free sharing with adults

5-12 €45 sharing with adults in same room

5-12yr €130 Children in Own Room

13-16 €75 sharing with adults in same room

13+ €155 Children in Own Room

Limited number of Child places available, Maximum 3 children per family room

0-4yrs Crèche

5-8yrs Puppet show and activity centre

9-11yrs Horse Riding

12+ Lough Allen Adventure Centre

pm Followed by lunch and Cinema for all.

Children return to own Hotels for their Dinner at 6.00pm

## Day Attendance Adults

Plenary, Workshops, Coffee Breaks, Saturday Lunch

Members: €60

Non Members: €100

Gala Dinner: €55

## Booking Deposit €100 per room

Payable to: The Landmark Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim.

Closing Date 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2011

Cancellation as per Hotel Policy.

Babysitting must be pre-booked with the hotel

*Booking form and deposit of €100 per room must be returned to the Landmark Hotel, Carrick-on-Shannon, Co. Leitrim by the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2011.*



### Workshop PM 5

#### The social networks of Young People who have experience of Long Term Foster Care

*Presented by Conor McMahon*

Conor is the Child in Care Reviewing Officer in the HSE, covering Sligo/Leitrim.

Conor's workshop will focus on his recent research, looking at the social networks of young people in long-term Care. The presentation will focus on the significance and importance of these networks and the Foster Carers role in encouraging and maintain them.

### Workshop PM 6

#### Separated Children Seeking Asylum

*Presented by members of the HSE SCSA Social Work Team.*

This workshop will look at trends and patterns of separated children arriving in Ireland, their legal position and their needs, both short and long term.

### Workshop PM 7

#### After Care – an After Thought?

*Presented by Danielle Douglas*

Danielle is a relative foster carer and spent a large part of her childhood in Care.

Danielle will present her workshop from the perspective of the young person and some of the overwhelming feelings that they may have as they contemplate leaving the care of their Foster Carers. New relationships and roles within those relationships may have to be established and this can be a fragile and overwhelming time.

4.30pm

### Open Forum

Chaired by Chairperson of IFCA  
With a panel of speakers

8.00pm

### Gala Dinner in the Landmark Hotel

## Sunday 6th November

### 10.30-11.30am Mindfulness and Self-Care

*Presented by Frances Larkin*

Please book at registration.

Frances works part-time with the HSE National Counselling Service in Sligo, and has a private psychotherapy and supervision practice. She has developed and facilitated workshops incorporating mindfulness, for various groups, including therapists, social workers, and other health care professionals, corporate employees, and clients.

### Workshops

**EPIC** (formerly the Irish Association of Young People in Care) will present workshops for 13-15yrs and 16+yrs

Claire O'Flaherty will present a **drama** workshop for children aged 5-12yrs.

Claire O'Flaherty is a Dramatherapist registered with the Irish Association for Creative Therapists and has a background of working with children and adolescents with a history of being in care

### Silent Auction

We would like each delegate to bring an interesting or novel gift for the silent auction.