



All Ireland Network on Sexual Violence Research

Connecting sexual violence researchers across the island of Ireland

Newsletter November 2024

Introduction

We are delighted to welcome you to the All-Ireland Network on Sexual Violence Research (AINSVR), a Network that aims to connect scholars, practitioners and policy makers working on issues related to sexual violence across the island of Ireland.

Our newsletter provides a space to reflect on AINSVR activities and share information about

members research and other relevant initiatives.



On 2 September 2024 the Queen's University Belfast (QUB) hosted the AINSVR Conference

on *Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Across the Island of Ireland*. The conference hugely benefited from input, both in terms of presentations and attendee contributions, from representatives from government departments, statutory agencies, voluntary and community organisations and academia. The conference report can be found [here](#).

Remember to check out our website: ainsvr.org and follow us on X @ainsvr2023.

Publications

- [Aisling Swaine](#) (2024) Research Report - 'When you know what they are capable of': Paramilitary-related Gendered Coercive Control. Available [here](#).
- [Katrina McLaughlin, Rosalyn Millar & Caoilfhionn Hardy](#) (2024) Policy Paper – Domestic Abuse Survivors' Experiences of Family Courts in Northern Ireland. Available [here](#).
- [Chloe Hanna](#) (2024) 'Defendant Anonymity in Northern Ireland: Stigma, Shame and Vulnerability' (2024) 9 Criminal Law Review 627. Available [here](#).

- [Daniel Kane, Nessa Gill, James Walshe, Clare Fallon, Karen Flood, Maeve Eogan](#). Sexual assault of the older person: Attendances to the Republic of Ireland's sexual assault treatment unit network. J Forensic Leg Med. 2024. Available [here](#).
- [Daniel Kane, James Walshe, et al.](#) Women attending the sexual assault treatment unit services in the Republic of Ireland: A 7-year review Int J Gynecol Obstet 2024. Available [here](#).
- [Daniel Kane, James Walshe, et al.](#) Storage of evidence and delayed reporting after sexual assault: Rates and impact factors on subsequent reporting. J Forensic Leg Med. 2024. Available [here](#).

Projects

Professor Louise Crowley & UCC Bystander Intervention

All Right All Night - 6 Module Bystander Intervention Youth Programme. This programme targets 16-24 years, supporting them to understand and prevent all forms of sexual misconduct, harassment and

violence and has been created by the University College Cork (UCC) Bystander Intervention team. This national project is funded by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media and focuses on young people's safety and well-being whilst engaging with cultural events and socialising within the Night Time Economy.

The key message is to ONLY INTERVENE IF IT IS SAFE TO DO SO, with students learning how to assess a situation identifying the best skills to utilise to safely intervene in order to ensure a safe outcome for everyone. For more information see [here](#).

Coaching Boys into Men (CBIM)

Nicole Devlin, QUB, reports that, this year, Coaching Boys into Men (CBIM), an evidence-based US violence prevention programme, was implemented in a secondary school in Northern Ireland. The programme aimed at fostering a safe and supportive environment for all students. The initiative was designed by [Futures Without Violence](#) to educate

young males about the dynamics of violence and misogyny, promote healthy relationships, and encourage bystander intervention.

As a result of the programme, students reported increased awareness of gender-based violence issues and a greater willingness to intervene when witnessing inappropriate behaviour. Through "Coaching Boys into Men," the school has cultivated a culture of respect and safety, equipping students with the tools to challenge violence and support one another. Collaboration with local organisations is required to take this global initiative forward to address the broader societal issues surrounding gender-based violence and harmful attitudes towards women and girls. These partnerships will enrich the programme and create a network of support for students facing challenges outside of school. Watch the pilot study with Banbridge High School, [here](#).

Researching VAWG

Stacey Scriver, University of Galway, and Lorrie Hayman, University of Galway, are engaged in a project that seeks to better understand the emotional demands of conducting research into VAWG and how best to support researchers from various disciplines. As researchers of VAWG engaged in emotionally demanding work, our project is inspired by a recognition of the impact our work has on our lives and the lives of those around us.

We are conducting interviews with other researchers (in academia, research organisations, the media/journalists) over the next 6 months and are interested in hearing from researchers in multiple disciplines and research contexts about their experiences. If you are interested in possibly speaking with us or would like to find out more, please contact the PI, Stacey Scriver, at: Stacey.scriver@universityofgalway.ie

Child Sexual Abuse and Recovery: Historicising Survivor and Practitioner Experiences (1950-2022).

Ruth Beecher, a senior research fellow at Birkbeck, University of London, has been awarded a Career Development Award by the Wellcome Trust. The £1.4 million grant will fund an interdisciplinary research project covering Ireland, England, Wales and Scotland.

The project aims to challenge the current emphasis on medical and psychiatric models of recovery, which often focus solely on psychological 'damage' and clinical treatments. Dr Beecher's study, co-produced with survivor and practitioner partners including Survivors' Voices, Survivors' in Transition, The Flying Child, and the Association of Child Protection Professionals, will examine the wider social, cultural, and medical history of child sexual abuse (CSA) recovery. The project prioritises the voices and experiences of survivors, aiming to understand the multitude of ways that they achieve emotional and physical equilibrium.

Contact Ruth at r.beecher@bbk.ac.uk

Recent Events



The Centre for Crime, Justice & Victim Studies (CCJVS) hosted 'Words Matter: Promoting Best Practice in Media and Cultural Representations of Gender-Based Violence' on Friday, 25 October. The conference was organised by Dr Susan Leahy and included the launch of guidance for media reporting on sexual violence in Ireland, which was created in partnership with the Sexual Violence Centre Cork #FixedIt campaign. The research which led to the guidance and the conference were funded by the Irish Research Council New Foundations scheme.

The conference featured keynote presentations from Professor Karen Boyle, University of Strathclyde and Press Ombudsman, Ms Susan McKay, along with presentations from a number of Irish experts on media and cultural representations of sexual violence, including: Dr Audrey Galvin (UL); Dr Eileen Culloty (DCU); Ms Helen Crickard and Ms Elaine Crory (Raise Your Voice); Dr Dawn Wheatley (DCU); Ms Mary Crilly and Ms Dola Twomey (Sexual Violence Centre Cork), and; Dr Ailise Bulfin, Dr Aleksandra Milenovic, Dr Victoria Pohls & Dr Giulia Scapin (University College Dublin).

The event also featured a panel discussion on media reporting on sexual violence which included representatives from the media and victim support organisations.

The guidance launched at the conference, 'Words Matter: Guidance for Reporting on Sexual Violence in Ireland' is available to download on the Sexual Violence Centre [website](#).

The Sexual Assault Treatment Unit (SATU) team were delighted to hold their 16th annual study day in the Department of Justice, Dublin on 4th October 2024. The day included a welcome address by Minister for Justice, Helen McEntee TD with a closing address by the Secretary General of the Department. The presentations were diverse and insightful – highlighting all the professional groups and policy areas central to provision of an optimum response to people who have experienced sexual crime. Dr Susan Leahy introduced the work and ambition of AINSVR, which was greatly appreciated by many attendees who are already involved in sexual violence research and look forward to ongoing collaboration.

Upcoming Events

'Sibling Abuse - A problem for all the family' – Dr Carol Carson. (5th November 2024 QUB)

In partnership with NOTA NI, Queen's University Belfast are hosting Dr Carol Carson.

Dr Carson will speak on 'Sibling Abuse - A problem for all the family'. Carol has 40 years' experience in safeguarding children and specialising in HSB. She has written several books and articles on the subject, including the AIM Assessment model for Children under 12 years old; a children's story for working with children aged 5 – 8 years old "Johnny and the Sparkles in his Pants"; and the AIM Autism and HSB Practice Guide. Carol has a Research PhD on Developing good practice in Autism and HSB from Queen's University Belfast. Link to register [here](#).

MOVE Ireland's Upcoming Launch of Annual Report 2023 and Strategic Plan 2025-2029 (9th December in the Mansion House).

This upcoming launch provides the opportunity to not only reflect on the last year, but also look towards the future of the organisation through our 5-year Strategic Plan. Research is constantly confirming the vital role that men play in addressing DSGBV. Perceived peer support has been found to be a

consistent predictor of men's use of violence. This is why behaviour intervention programmes like 'Choices' are so important in combatting DSGBV as they encourage men to take responsibility for their abuse, reflect on their actions, and learn about the effects of domestic abuse on their partner and family.

This year's launch is called 'From Harm to Hope: Pivot to the Perpetrator.' The aim is to showcase that change is possible and that intervention programmes have a real impact on our society.

Launch of the Healthy Young Adult Relationship (HYAR) Research Project (14th November Ulster University, Belfast Campus)

Dr Susan Lagdon, Ulster University, and team are delighted to announce the launch of their Healthy Young Adult Relationship (HYAR) Research Project findings on the 14th of November at Ulster University's Belfast Campus. Further details and links for registration can be found [here](#).

NOTA (NI) Conference: Adolescents: Assessing and Responding to their Harmful Sexual Behaviour (Thursday 5th December 2024)

The aim of this conference is to raise understanding of: (1) the legal context of adolescent HSB; (2) the assessment of sexual behaviour of adolescents across the continuum of normal, inappropriate, and harmful; (3) the exploitation challenges through technology; (4) what interventions are available for the whole family to include the young person displaying harmful sexual behaviour, victims and parents / carers.

Visit NOTA Training page, [here](#), for more details and to book.

Other News

Call for Papers: Socio-Legal Studies Association (SLSA) Annual Conference 2025

The SLSA Annual Conference 2025 will take place from Tuesday 15th April to Thursday 17th April 2025 at the University of Liverpool Campus. The Annual Conference has been running since the association was founded in 1990 and is an opportunity for those in the field of socio-legal studies to disseminate knowledge and network with others in the field.

Dr Susan Leahy, Dr Eithne Dowds and Dr Siobhan Weare convene the Sexual Offences and Offending [Stream](#) and would welcome submissions in this area.

The Call for Papers deadline is 18 December 2024, see more [here](#).

If you have an idea for an event or want to collaborate in some way please do get in touch with us at ainsvr2023@gmail.com