



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

- UNESCO Chair in
- Children, Youth and Civic Engagement
- Ireland
- **CHILD AND FAMILY RESEARCH CENTRE**

Locating a study on the social, emotional and behavioural well-being of children/young people living with parental mental illness in Ireland in a child indicators paradigm

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Parenting and mental illness

- “Parenting is difficult at best, but having a mental illness compounds parental stress and the ability to fulfill parental roles” (Mason & Subedi, 2006)
- ‘a complex matrix’
- Commonly framed within ‘risk’ discourse
- role of patient as parent – often overlooked

Prevalence

- Difficult to establish
 - Lack of agreement on definition of mental illness
 - Non-diagnosis
 - 'Fear' of accessing services
 - Lack of systematic recording of patients being parents
- Estimates suggest 20-30% of children live with a parent with a mental illness (Huntsman, 2008)
- In Ireland, there is no data available to establish the numbers of children living in this context

Children's well-being

Children whose parents are mentally ill live with the symptoms, behaviours and expressions of mental illness. They see it and feel it

- (Falkov, 2004)-

'The forgotten' – (McAndrew et al. 2012)

In Research:

- Lack of child's voice
- Based on perspectives of adult proxies
- Does not allow for children's subjective experiences

In Practice:

- Reliance on child protection intervention's
- Children excluded by professionals
- Lack of information and support for children
- Ignored during parental assessments

Research Aims

- Determine the social, emotional and behavioural well-being (SEBWB) of children (7-11 years) and young people (12-17 years) living with a parent with a diagnosis of (i) depressive disorder, (ii) schizophrenia and (iii) mania.
- Establish factors which children and young people identify as impacting on their SEBWB while living with a parent with a diagnosed mental illness.
- Examine differences and similarities in children, young people, parent(s) and gatekeeper perceptions of the SEBWB of the child in this context.
- Explore the implications of existing policy and practice for these children and young people living in families where parental mental illness is a factor in Ireland and its possible influence on future policy decisions

Methodology

Children / Young
People
N = 30

Parents
N = 30 / 60

Gatekeepers
N = 30

PHASE I: Standardised scales:

- Strength and difficulties questionnaire
- Parenting Style Inventory II
- Child and Youth Resilience Measure
- Emotionality, activity sociability and temperament scale

PHASE II: Mosaic Approach:

- Photography/scrapbook
- Eco-maps
- Informal Case Conferencing

PHASE II:

- Socio-demographic info.
- Semi-structured Interviews

PHASE III: Biographic Narrative Interview Method

- SQUIN – Life story Interview
- Semi-structured Interview
- Member validation process

Will the selected methodology accomplish the aims the project sets out to achieve?

THANK YOU

For further information please contact:

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