

## **News release**

### **Young People recognised for their contribution to Research**

Young people from Barnardo's Armagh-based Disabled Children & Young People's Participation Project, 6<sup>th</sup> Sense Group attended a reception earlier in the year at the Palace Demesne in recognition of their contribution to research on disability issues with Queen's University Belfast.

Hosted by former Armagh Lord Mayor Cathy Rafferty seventeen young people aged nine to 24 received certificates and talked about their contribution to research including 'The participation of disabled children & young people and their parents in health and social care decisions' and "Don't Box Me In" a study on the transition from childhood to adulthood.

The young people from 6<sup>th</sup> Sense also produced a DVD which reviewed the research findings of Don't Box Me In and is now used by Queen's School of Social Work and Social Policy to educate students.

Dr Berni Kelly, Co-Chair of the Disability Research Network, QUB highlighted the value of the young people's partnership in research,

*"Queens University Belfast has worked in partnership with 6<sup>th</sup> Sense for over a decade now. We have learnt a lot from this collaboration with disabled children and young people and together we have been able to identify priorities for childhood disability research, develop new approaches to participatory research and engage in creative ways to analyse and disseminate research findings to maximise its impact on policy and practice. The group have also benefited from opportunities too influence the research agenda and develop their own research and presentation skills. 6<sup>th</sup> Sense continue to play a key role in supporting the Disability Network at Queens University Belfast and encouraging staff to undertake participatory childhood disability research*

*that is inclusive, meaningful and innovative. We look forward to our continued partnership for many years to come."*

Disability Research Network

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Lord Mayor Armagh City and District Council Cathy Rafferty said she wanted to acknowledge the young people's work and highlight the difference they have made.

Barnardo's Armagh Manager Rosemary Murray said: "We are very proud of what our young people have achieved. They are ensuring their voices are heard on issues that impact on their lives. As well as taking part in research along with Queen's University they have also developed their own research proposal on the emotional wellbeing issues of young people with disabilities, which although not yet published, has been adopted by the NI Clinical Research Network."

The event was attended by young people, parents and families and staff from Barnardo's Armagh Disabled Children and Young People's Participation Project together with Professor John Pinkerton, Dr Bernie Kelly, Dr Sandra Dowling, Dr Grace Kelly and Dr Bronagh Byrne from Queen's University Belfast together with Maurice Leeson, HSCB, Director Barnardo's NI Lynda Wilson and Barnardo's NI Assistant Director Una Magee.

**Ends.**

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We believe in the potential of every child and young person, no matter who they are, what they have done or what they have been through. We will support them, stand up for them and bring out the best in each and every child.

Every year Barnardo's NI helps thousands of children turn their lives around - but we cannot do it without you. Visit [www.barnardos.org.uk/northernireland.htm](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/northernireland.htm) for further information.