

Changing Lives: Tackling Adversity in Childhood in NI

November 2017

Background

Children who are routinely exposed to situations such as domestic violence, mental ill health, alcohol and other substance misuse problems in their homes experience a negative impact which can last well into adulthood. These chronic stress situations are called Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and are often associated with poorer outcomes for children in educational attainment, employment, involvement in crime, family breakdown, and a range of health and wellbeing measures.

Keynote speaker at the conference, Professor Mark Bellis, Public Health Wales said, "What happens during childhood changes the way individuals' brains and bodies develop and can set them on a happy and prosperous life course or one that rapidly leads to anti-social behaviour and ill health. ACEs or Adverse Childhood Experiences, including suffering physical abuse as a child or growing up with domestic violence, have life-long impacts that can even result in developing cancer, diabetes and other diseases earlier in adult life. If public services work together we can prevent ACEs for many children and we can reduce the toxic impact on individuals who have already suffered traumatic childhoods. The more we invest in developing safe and well-adjusted children, the less it will cost health, social and criminal justice services to support them throughout the rest of their lives."

The conference was organised by CYPSP, Department of Health, Western Health and Social Care Trust, Health and Social Care Board, Safeguarding Board NI and Public Health Agency. Those attending included a wide range of organisations in a position to take action on ACE's from government, education, health and social care, safeguarding, policy, youth justice, policing, local government, universities and community and voluntary sectors organisations.

Further information about the event can be downloaded at: www.cypsp.org

Making a contribution to the following High Level Outcomes for children

All Children and Young People have good physical and mental health

All Children and Young People live in safety and stability

All Children and Young People Learn and Achieve



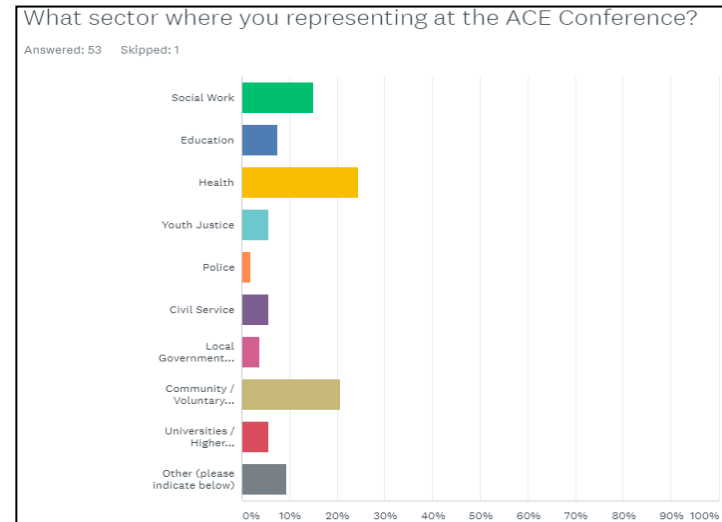
Keynote speakers with leaders from across Northern Ireland at the Adverse Childhood Experiences Conference

Front row: Sara Dodds, Scottish Government, Katrina Godfrey, The Executive Office, Kieran Downey, Chair of the Association of Executive Directors of Social Work, Pete McNally, WAVE Trust

Back row: Sean Holland, Department of Health, Maurice Meehan, Public Health Agency, John Devaney, Queens University Belfast

How much did we do?

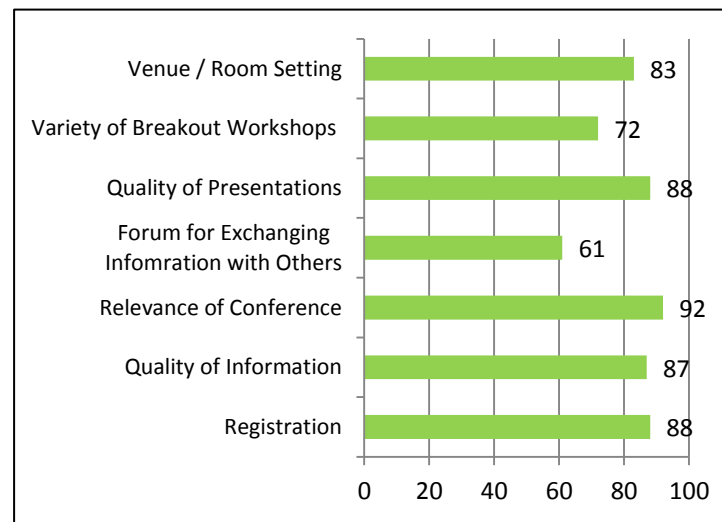
- 1 full day conference was hosted by an HSC partnership of 6 agencies/partnerships; DH, HSCB, PHA, SBNI, WHSCT and CYPSP
- 170 participants attended the ACE conference (A waiting list of over 600 people highlighted the volume of interest in learning about ACEs)
- 10 sectors were represented by the delegates attending the ACE conference including local government, health, education, justice and community/voluntary sectors
- Three UK Nations were represented by keynote speakers sharing learning and best practice at the conference: Public Health Wales, Scottish Government and Wave Trust (England)



How well did we do it?

- 98% of participants who attended the ACE Conference and responded to the evaluation reported that the conference was satisfying or very satisfying
- From the participants who responded to the conference evaluation we were told that all six workshops scored above 67% in their effectiveness and delivery

Workshops	Scored 4 or 5 out of 5
1- South Eastern ACE Pilot	85%
2- Early Intervention Transformation Programme	67%
3- Contributions of the Infant Mental Health Strategy	83%
4- Designing a Service Response – CAWT / MACE	88%
5- Lessons in Education – Walla Walla	75%
6- Contributions of Local Research in Understanding ACEs	67%



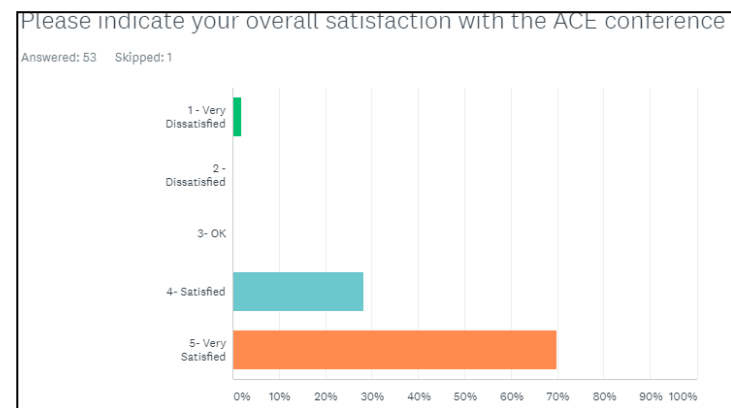
Communications:

- Twitter has reached 22,725 people via 109 tweets, 228 retweets and 372 likes
- A press release was published from the conference

From the participants who responded to the conference evaluation there appears to be a general positive consensus to the organisation and delivery of the conference

Is anyone better off?

- 91% of participants who responded to the evaluation reported to be 'feeling better informed of the ACE approach since attending the conference'
- 81% of participants responding to the evaluation reported to be 'feeling better informed and confident in embedding the ACE approach in my work since attending the conference'
- 19% of participants suggested they have 'some understanding of how the ACE concept can contribute to my work but require further guidance and support'
- 0% of participants said they were still unclear of how ACEs could contribute to their work since attending the conference



98% of participants who attended the ACE Conference and responded to the evaluation reported that the conference was 4 of 5 (satisfying) or 5 of 5 (very satisfying)

Suggestions from participants for moving forward with ACE Informed Practice in Northern Ireland

- Implementation through setting up an ACE's hub/steering group
- A follow up event should look at implementation - how to support young people and families who have faced a number of ACE's
- A follow up event to keep momentum and drive ACEs agenda collectively
- Variety of local and UK wide examples of improvements to support ACEs Facilitate discussions with delegates within their key areas of work
- Focus on how this really important information can be shared with parents in a timely, preventative way
- Scope how to create a trauma-informed community resilience model
- Cross-departmental examination of what is currently happening and a strategic approach to moving forward
- On the roll out and development of ACE informed and ACE aware communities.

Is anyone better off?

Positive Feedback From Participants Since Attending the ACE Conference

Absolutely fantastic conference, so well organised and ran smoothly

How the hubs work/ steering group has worked in other places

We enjoyed hearing about the specific project work as it demonstrated the practical outcome of consideration of ACEs as part of the work area

The input from Wales which provided some of the academic/theoretical basis for ACEs

Listening to the staff from SE Trust enabled a better understanding from a practical perspective

The insights from Scotland and Wales colleagues who are more advanced in the process than we are

The link from Government through to practice was key

It was useful to hear about different approaches and practice in other countries



Sharing research and practice at the Adverse Childhood Experiences Conference in Northern Ireland

Front row: Professor Mark Bellis, Public Health Wales, Kieran Downey, Chair of the Association of Executive Directors of Social Work, Mary Black, Public Health Agency, Bernie McNally, Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland, George Hosking, WAVE Trust

Back row: Sean Holland, Department of Health, Hugh McCaughey, South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust and chair of Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP).

Download the ACE Conference video at:

Download the presentations from the conference at:
<http://www.cypsp.org/ace-conference-changing-lives-tackling-adversity-in-childhood-in-northern-ireland/>