



SEMINAR

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs): A Trauma Informed Approach to Early Years

Hosted by the Regional ACE Reference Group



@safeguardingni
@cypsp
@publichealthni
@westernHSCTrust

#ACESNI

#belfasthealthycities18

WELCOME

Maurice Leeson
Health and Social Care Board



A STRATEGIC POLICY CONTEXT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Dreena Evans
Department for Education NI



Programme for Government Outcomes

Working Draft – Still subject to political agreement

1

We prosper through a strong, competitive, regionally balanced economy

2

We live and work sustainably – protecting the environment

3

We have a more equal society

4

We enjoy long, healthy, active lives

5

We are an innovative, creative society, where people can fulfil their potential

6

We have more people working in better jobs

7

We have a safe community where we respect the law, and each other

9

We are a shared, welcoming and confident society that respects diversity

10

We have created a place where people want to live and work, to visit and invest

8

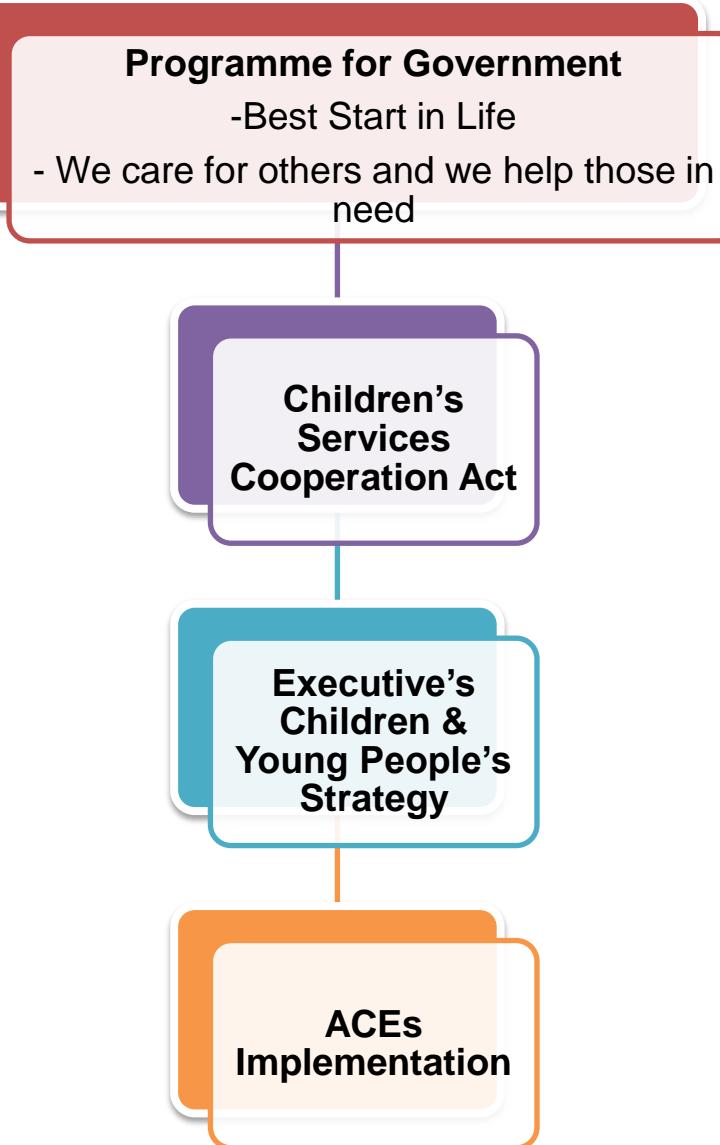
We care for others and we help those in need

12

We give our children and young people the best start in life



Context for Implementation



A STRATEGIC VIEW TO ADDRESSING ACEs IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Maurice Leeson
Health and Social Care Board



Overview of Today's Presentation

What you will hear about this afternoon:

- What are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)?
- Linking to developments across 6 Nations
- The Northern Ireland Context
- The Role of the Regional ACE Reference Group
- ACE Developments in Northern Ireland

How you can play your part;

- Support the creation of resilient communities
- Support an ACE aware and trauma informed workforce



Definitions of Adverse Childhood Experiences

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are stressful experiences occurring during childhood that directly harm a child (e.g. sexual or physical abuse) or affect the environment in which they live (e.g. growing up in a house with domestic violence)

(Bellis et al 2016)



What are Adverse Childhood Experiences?

Abuse

- Emotional
- Physical
- sexual

Neglect

- Emotional
- Physical

Household factors

- Domestic Violence
- Substance misuse
- Mental ill-health
- Parental separation
- Imprisoned parent
- Living in care
- On-going parental conflict
- Serious illness or disability
- Poverty or financial stress
- Troubles related



What are Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?



Nadine Burke Harris – Ted Talk

[https://www.ted.com/talks/nadine_burke_harris_how_childhood_trauma
affects health across a lifetime](https://www.ted.com/talks/nadine_burke_harris_how_childhood_trauma_affects_health_across_a_lifetime)

Why understanding about Adverse Childhood Experiences is important?

- Creates a shared, whole system, understanding of the impact of adversity in childhood
- Raise awareness of impact of trauma across all agencies
- Makes a powerful case for early intervention and prevention for all agencies
- Cost to the public sector of late intervention in Northern Ireland is estimated at £536 million per year. This is equivalent to £288 for every Northern Ireland resident, or £1,166 per child
- Emphasizes for agencies, communities and families the importance of building and fostering resilience



National Study of ACEs in Wales (18 – 69 years)

Compared with people with no ACEs, **those with 4+ ACEs were**

- 4** times more likely to be a high risk drinker
- 6** times more likely to smoke tobacco or E-cigs
- 11** times more likely to have smoked cannabis
- 16** times more likely to have used crack cocaine or heroin
- 20** times more likely to have been incarcerated in their life

INDEPENDENT OF POVERTY

Policy - Preventing ACES in Wales could reduce;



**Heroin/crack cocaine
use (lifetime)
by 66%**



**Incarceration
(lifetime)
by 65%**



**Violence perpetration
(past year)
by 60%**



**Violence victimisation
(past year)
by 57%**



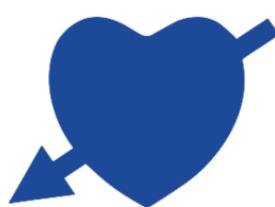
**Cannabis use
(lifetime)
by 42%**



**Unintended teen
pregnancy
by 41%**



**High-risk drinking
(current)
by 35%**



**Early sex
(before age 16)
by 31%**



**Smoking tobacco or
e-cigarettes
(current)
by 24%**



**Poor diet
(current; <2 fruit & veg
portions daily)
by 16%**

in adults aged 18- 69 years

(Bellis et al. 2015, n=2028)

What Can We Do?

- “To sustain improvements in public health a shift in focus to include **prevention of ACEs, resilience building and ACE informed service provision**” (Hughes et al 2017)

And in doing this we are...

- Building on an existing strategic direction
- Recognising that an body of work focused on trauma exists
- Supporting the development of resilience in individuals, families and communities
- Building a narrative of hope



What We Are Not Planning to Do

- Population wide screening for ACEs
- Encourage a widespread practice based on checklists
- Duplicate or ignore the contribution of existing service provision



ACEs and Resilience

Experience
of ACEs

Short to
medium
term Impact

Moderated
by
Resilience

Long term
impact of
ACEs





RESILIENCE

BREAKING

Always Available Adult

THE

Equipped to manage your behaviours and emotions

CYCLE

Feel you can overcome hardship and guide your destiny

Involved and connected
Of ACEs



By being ACE aware and Trauma Informed we will move from asking...

“What’s wrong with you?” To “What happened to you?”

Blame
Shame
Punishment

Understanding
Nurturing
Healing



Making Connections-6 Nation Special Interest Group

- Who is involved: England, Northern Ireland Scotland, Wales, Republic of Ireland, Channel Islands
- Inclusive of Civil Servants, Senior leaders from across Police, education, Social care, Justice Agencies, Children's Commissioner (Channel Islands)
- Focus on sharing knowledge/research
- Sharing experience of implementing responses to ACEs



Scottish and Welsh ACE Developments



ACE Support Hub Scotland

- Scottish Public Health Network Report – Polishing the Diamonds, 2016
- Scottish Conference Call to Action
- The Scottish ACE Hub will increase understanding of ACEs in Scotland; and
- Develop actions to better prevent ACEs, and support the resilience of children and adults affected to mitigate the negative impacts of ACEs
- [ACES Documentary Scotland](#)



ACE Support Hub Wales

- A small, virtual team who are co-ordinating, facilitating, sharing, learning, engaging, involving, influencing and asking
- Strategic engagement and organisational readiness
- Tools and resources to enable ACE informed approaches
- Support from sector leads > identification of what's already going on, the gaps and the barriers
- [ACES Documentary Wales](#)



The Northern Ireland Context

What will be discussed;

- Legislation, Policy and Operational Context
- Programme for Government
- Regional ACE Reference Group



Regional ACE Conference - November 2017



- Set a platform for the regional roll out of the ACE agenda across Northern Ireland.
- £1.5 million will be invested through the EITP to develop:
 1. General awareness of trauma informed practice across a multiagency spectrum
 2. Specialised training for professionals
 3. Trauma informed advisors to instil culture and practice at an organisational level.
- Full Conference Report - www.cypsp.hscni.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/ACE-Conference-Report-November-2018-1.pdf

Legislative, Policy and Operational Context

- UNCRC and International Conventions
- Children (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
 - Art. 17 (Definition) and Art. 18 (Duty)
- Policy – Co-operating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland 2016
- Operational and Procedural Response
 - CSIB / CYPSP / SBNI / SWS
- Cross-Departmental, Inter-Agency and Multi-Disciplinary working towards Outcomes



Regional NI ACE Reference Group

- Established following the ACE Conference in Nov 2017
- Membership has grown to include cross departmental and multi agency representation to ensure links to the policy context
- Participation in the 6 Nations ‘think tank’
- Begin the conversations...ensure consistency of message and response
- Hearts and minds – inter and across disciplines and agencies

Collaborate to transform



Regional ACE Reference Group - Membership

Name	Agency
Kieran Downey (Chair)	Western Health and Social Care Trust (on behalf of all HSC Trusts)
Helen McKenzie	Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland
Paul McConville	Department of Health
Rodney Morton	Department of Health
Maurice Leeson	Health and Social Care Board / CYPSP
Maurice Meehan	Public Health Agency
Pamela Woods	Education Authority
June Wilkinson	Department of Education
Jill Duffie / Ryan Henderson	Police Service for Northern Ireland
Colleen Heaney	Youth Justice Agency
Geraldine O'Hare	Probation Board for Northern Ireland
Catherine Taggart	Local Government (SOLACE)



Regional ACE Reference Group

- Share information about developments in the ACE agenda across agencies
- Share research knowledge and good practice in relation to the implementation of developments to tackle ACES and build resilience
- Promote collaboration by actively making linkages between initiatives designed to prevent ACEs and address the impact
- Act as a coordination point for ACEs development to ensure that there is no duplication
- Seek opportunities to promote the tackling ACEs agenda



Logic Model for ACES in Northern Ireland

NI VISION

A community and workforce that is aware of the impact of ACEs on children's outcomes and is able to respond effectively

ACTIVITIES

Awareness raising for multi-agency workforce who work or engage with children, young people and their families

Engagement of other key stakeholders including politicians, departments, service delivery agencies and communities

Service Development to model ACE informed working

Workforce Development – Trauma Aware Practice Training

OUTPUTS

Outcomes Groups screening of the Resilience documentary & other awareness raising events focused on communities

Awareness raising activities for politicians

MACE Project

EITP Project – Appointment of sectoral leads in health, education, police and VCs through EITP to develop the trauma informed practice

Training programme

Agreement by 5 Directors of Social Services to embed ACEs

OUTCOMES

Increase in awareness of ACE's within community and professionals

Professional engagement with ACEs and support for PfG measures

Model of ACE informed practice / services

Workforce able to effectively respond to trauma



Adverse Childhood Experiences

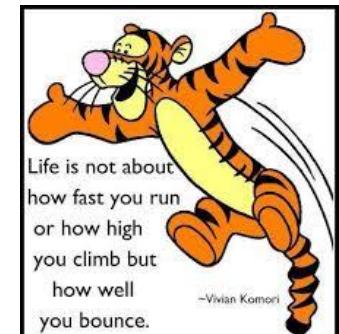
Developing a Trauma Informed Workforce

Helen McKenzie – Project Lead EITP WKS 4

Helen.mckenzie@hscni.net



@safeguardingni



Trauma Informed Practice – Professional Development

1. SBNI took the strategic decision in 2017 to adopt a trauma-informed approach to safeguarding practice, in the search for better outcomes for children.
2. Trauma informed practice is not a treatment model but a way of understanding and responding to problematic behaviour through the lens of trauma.
3. It is an example of service delivery which incorporates evidence of the impact of early trauma on behaviour across the person's life span.
4. Trauma informed practice requires the practitioner, **from whichever professional background**, to integrate their knowledge and understanding of trauma and the impact of such, on a person's sense of well-being and their current behaviour to then enable and assist the person to rebuild healthy relational skills.



Trauma Informed Practice – Professional Development Project

The aim of the project is that all SBNI organisations will;

- Have **awareness** of the adverse childhood experiences which cause trauma in a child's life
- Be aware of the impact of these adversities on the **development** of a child
- Be able to identify what creates **resilience** to cope with adversity
- Be able to develop policies and practice to **embed** trauma informed practice in their work.



The background of the image is a soft, out-of-focus photograph with a warm, golden-yellow hue. It features a subtle rainbow gradient, transitioning from yellow at the top to orange, red, and finally a darker greenish-blue at the bottom right. There are also some faint, dark shapes that look like leaves or petals scattered across the surface.

HOPE
CHANGES
EVERYTHING.

Who will be trained

ACE

EANI
PHA
Community & Voluntary
(Inc Sport)
Faith

AWARENESS

PSNI
PPS
PBNI
YJA

Training

HSCTs
(Multi Disciplinary)
Nurses
GPs
Councils



Three tiered training approach



Informed by:

- Evidence Review
- Knowledge transfer
- 6 Nations Special Interest Group
- Stakeholder Workshops
- Specialist Advisory Groups
- Training Needs Analysis
- Children and Young People



So What?

A system where :

- The workforce recognises and responds to the **impact of childhood adversity on children, caregivers and service providers**
- Trauma awareness, knowledge and skills are an **integral part of organisational cultures, practices and policies**
- Effective practice is used to maximise the physical and psychological safety of the child, **facilitate recovery of the child and family and support their ability to thrive**
- Children and families impacted by and vulnerable to trauma are **more resilient and better able to cope.**



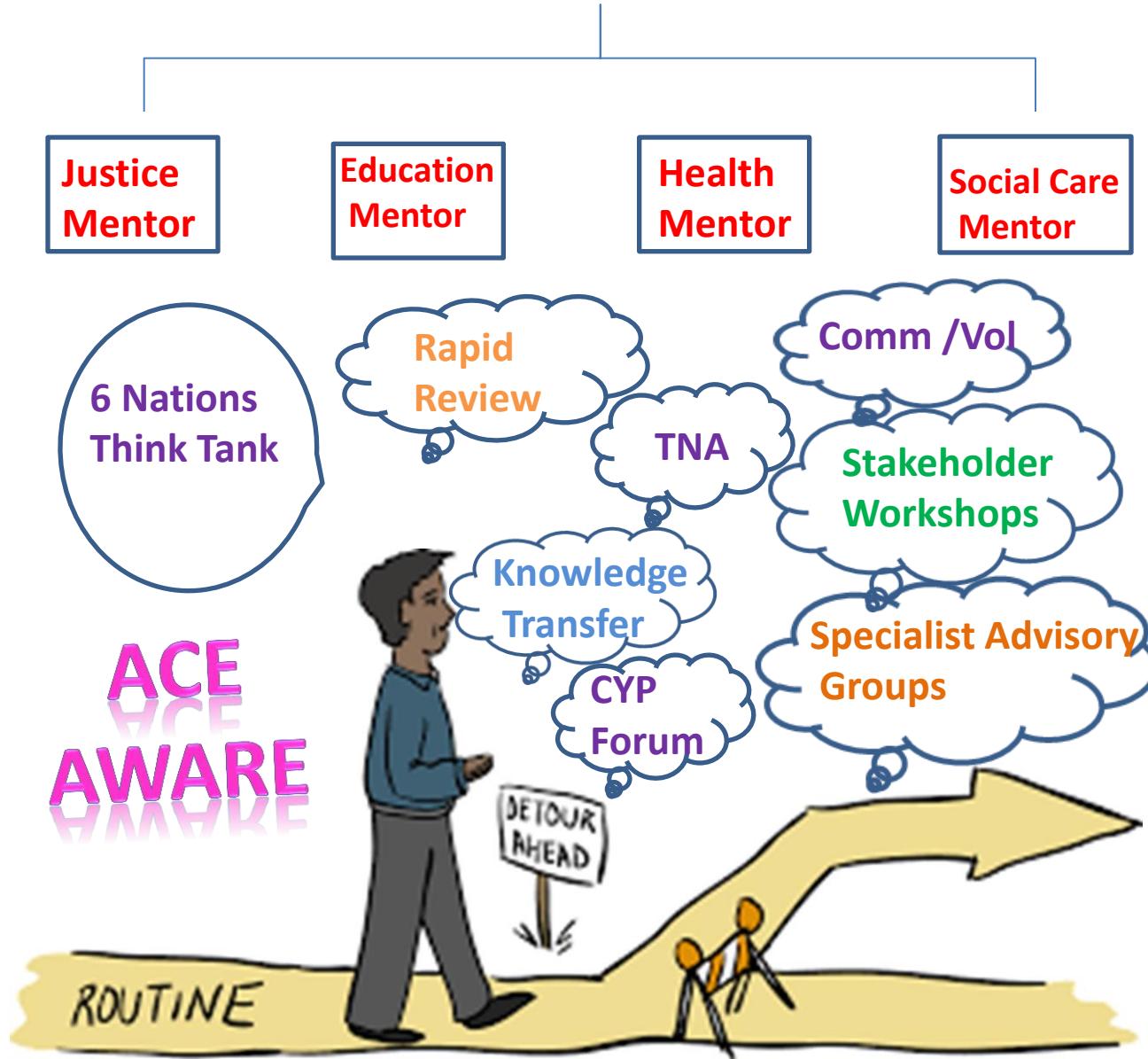
So What?

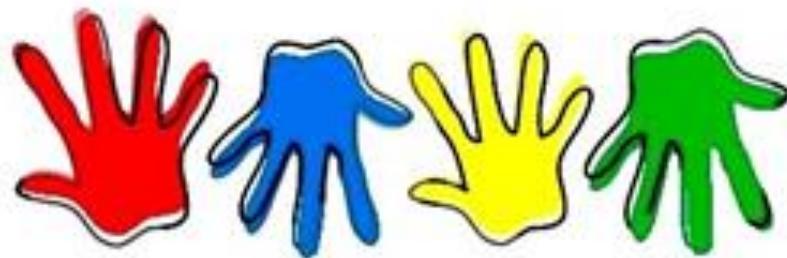
Which will mean :

- Children grow up in more stable and supportive homes leading to **improved learning, health, social and economic outcomes** throughout their lives
- Agencies, programmes and service **providers support individuals** who want to disclose. They understand life-long symptoms associated with childhood adversity.
- Continuity of care and **collaboration** are emphasised **across child-service systems**
- People exposed to adversity find it **easier to access support earlier**, and in a way which is effective for them
- **Parents and family members understand** the importance of supporting childhood development, minimising adversity and building resilience



Trauma Informed Practice Project April 2018 – March 2020





It takes a village to raise a child

Thank you for listening and for participating in this conversation.

BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES CAWT MACE PROJECT

Maurice Meehan
Public Health Agency



MACE Project Overview

AIM: To transform the lives of vulnerable children families who are at risk from multiple adversities in their lives, by identifying, intervening early and provide nurturing support within their own homes and communities.

TARGET POPULATION: Children within the age groups 0-3 and 11-13 and their families.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To establish an adversity matrix and risk stratification tool which will allow for early identification of vulnerable families
2. Develop a range of interventions to those assessed using the adversity matrix and/or risk stratification tool

DURATION: 48 months

START DATE: 1st July 2017 – 30th June 2021

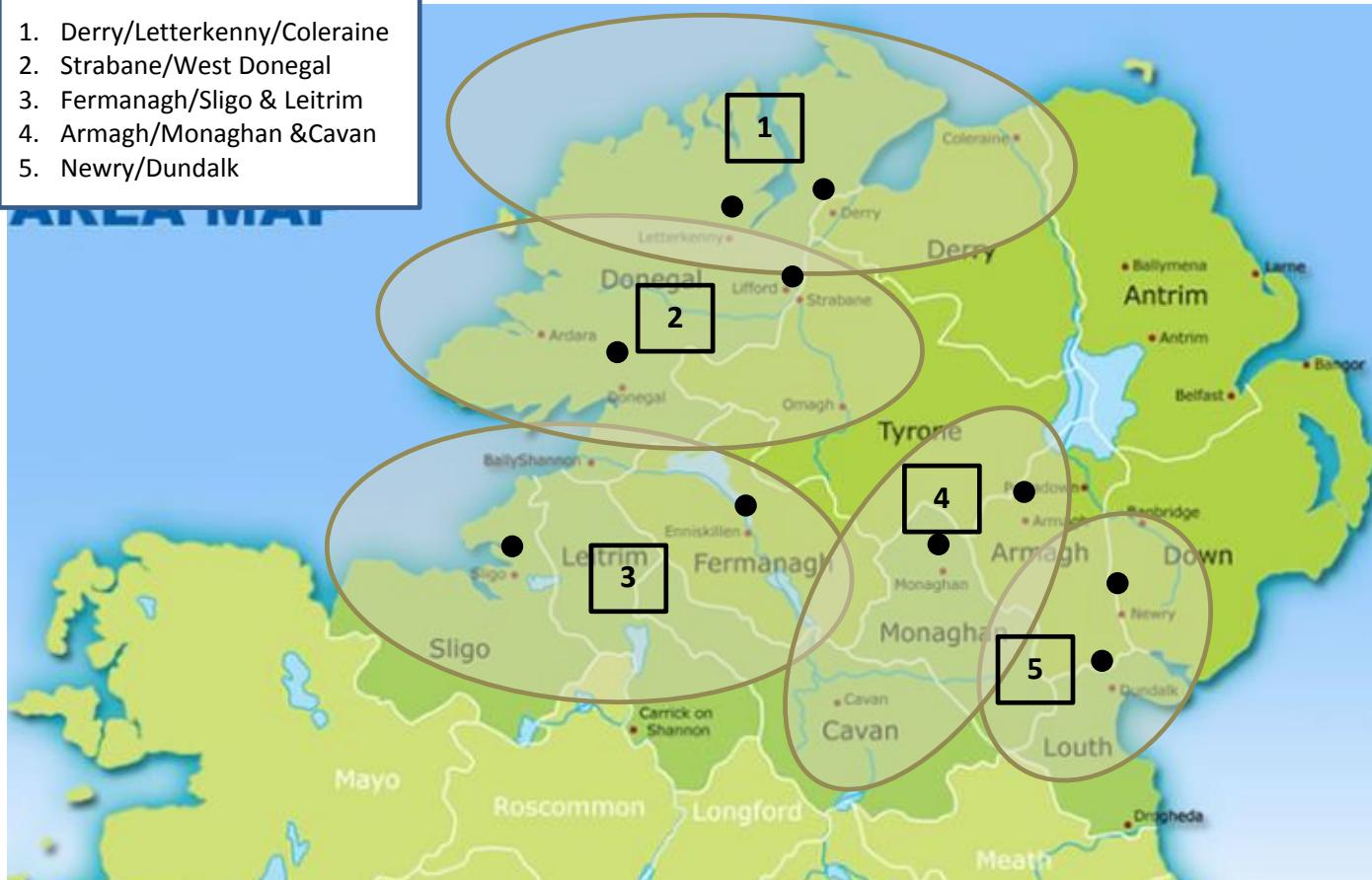
BUDGET: €5,010,240

PARTNERS: WHSCT, SHSCT, HSCB, PHA, TUSLA & HSE
(Lead Partner)



Indicative cross border community network areas

- 1. Derry/Letterkenny/Coleraine
- 2. Strabane/West Donegal
- 3. Fermanagh/Sligo & Leitrim
- 4. Armagh/Monaghan & Cavan
- 5. Newry/Dundalk



CAWT MACE Project



Project Outputs:

- Deliver and implement new border area frameworks for early intervention to benefit 3, 125 vulnerable families
 - Development of an Adversity Matrix & Risk Stratification Tool
 - 500 staff trained to identify and support vulnerable families
 - 5 cross border community networks of excellence
 - E-health technologies



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A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH TO ACEs IN SCOTLAND

*From evidence and policy to action in
communities*

Katy Hetherington

NHS Scotland

<see separate presentation>



PANEL DISCUSSION



FURTHER INFORMATION

Visit the ACE Reference Group webpage on the CYPSP website at:

www.cypsp.org/task-finish-groups/regional-ace-reference-group/

