



Adolessence & Beyond

CONFERENCE 2025

WELCOME MESSAGE

Adolescence & Beyond Conference 2025

We are delighted you could joint us at conference 2025. This year's event will offer more insights and tools to help you navigate adolescent development. We have an very interesting and insightful day planned which ir focused in this years theme: Relational connection with your teen.

Teenagers, parents and the professionals who support adolescent development now face more challenges than ever. An increase in anxiety presentations and symptoms, social media pressure, identity challenges, an increase in neurodiverse presentations all within limited resources, time pressures and the ever evolving teenage brain cause confusion, distress and upset for everyone. As the complexities of this journey are navigated our role in fostering meaningful connections becomes even more important.

In this years conference we have focused on addressing these complexities with our panel of experienced speakers who are directly involved in adolescent development and the process of supporting parents and professionals.



Gina Dermody

Director Of Adolessence & Beyond

We have also introduced a special segment: *Hear my Voice*, a personalised glimpse into the adolescent experience, inspired by what we all hear at various stages in our contact with adolescents in distress. The adolescent voice matters and at our conference we have created the opportunity to really listen and learn.

We hope you enjoy this years conference and leave with a sense of compassion, connection and inspiration for all that you do with adolescents. Thankyou for being part of this important conversation.



In collaborating with experts from different disciplines, we will aim to strengthen communication, better understand the supports, skills and options available in adolescent services. This will better enable adolescents and their families to receive the compassion. In order to provide the best care possible for young people, we want to bring together parents, caregivers, and professionals in a collaborative setting that offers useful tools, knowledgeable insights, and thought-provoking conversations.

By bringing together experts from different disciplines, we hope to close support gaps, lower obstacles to care, and guarantee that teenagers get the compassion, direction, and help they require. We aim to build a community that supports each young person's well-being and enables them to flourish both now and in the future via education, shared experiences, and candid discussions.

MISSION

Our goal is to create a conference that not only educates but also motivates action. We are dedicated to offering a space where parents, caregivers, and professionals can unite to gain deeper insights, exchange knowledge, and develop practical strategies to support adolescents with empathy and understanding.

Looking ahead, we aim to broaden our reach, strengthen collaborations, and advocate for accessible, timely care for young people. By listening to their voices, tackling emerging challenges, and working together, we hope to make a lasting impact that empowers both adolescents and all involved in supporting their development.



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Last year's event was held at The Louis Fitzgerald Hotel in Dublin, and the theme was **Contact and Connection** with Adolescents.

We were fortunate to hear from specialists such as Dr. Richard Hogan, Dr. Malie Coyne, Stella O'Malley, and Dr. Josen McGrane. They spoke about the significance of connection and how as professionals we work in this area to best support adolescent development and the challenges it can bring.





We recognised the need for a conference aimed at educating and uniting professionals, offering a comprehensive set of tools to enhance the quality of care we provide to adolescents in the most compassionate manner possible.

The goal of offering insight from professionals int the field is to gain insight into what we understand about adolescent development, its challenges and the opportunities for support and change. By working together we are striving for shared understanding, improved services and access to skills and learning for everyone involved in adolescent development.



Gina Dermody

Director Of Adolessence & Beyond

Gina is the Director of Adolessence, a Beyond Psychotherapy clinic that specialises in supporting adolescents and families. As a Child, Adolescent & Family Psychotherapist and Clinical Supervisor, Gina leads a team of three therapists who provide therapy to adolescents, parents, adults, and couples. Established in 2011, the clinic is located in Tuam, Co. Galway, and serves the local community, surrounding schools, the greater Connacht region, and offers online services to clients in other areas.

Gina has been working in psychotherapy since 2011, after beginning her career as a social worker in 1998. She specialised in Adolescent Therapy in 2016 and continues to pursue advanced training in this area. Gina also specialises in Child and Adolescent supervision, providing individual and group supervision. working with the HSE and GRETB to provide support to clinicians. Gina provides Adolescent Services: Workshops, Group Supervision with both schools, HSE and GRETB. She has also designed the School Space TY Programme.

Gina enjoys being part of yoga, outdoors and anything fun in her personal time, balancing her professional commitments with embracing any new challenges that come her way.



MC Speaker

Dr Mary O'Kane is a Lecturer in Psychology, Early Childhood Studies and Education. Her research interests include childhood transitions; self esteem and wellbeing, and the value of play. Mary is a regular contributor to Newstalk Radio; RTE Drivetime, and a range of other national and local radio shows discussing a broad range of parenting issues. Her first book, Perfectly Imperfect Parenting: Connection not Perfection, was published in 2021. Her second book Anxious Children in an Anxious World will be released in April 2024. https://www.drmaryokane.ie/perfectly-imperfect-parenting/

Dr. Joanna Fortune

Playful pathways to relational connection with adolescents



Joanna Fortune (MICP; MIFPP; Reg Pract APPI; Ap Sup PTIrl) is a highly experienced and qualified psychotherapist with over 20 years of clinical experience. She specialises in trauma recovery therapy and the repair of ruptured attachment therapy.

A sought-after media contributor, Joanna regularly provides expert commentary and opinion pieces for various print media outlets. She also serves as the weekly parenting consultant on Newstalk FM's Sean Moncrieff Show and is a frequent guest on national and regional radio and TV programs.

In addition to her clinical work, Joanna is an accomplished trainer, delivering one-day seminars on a range of topics, including Trauma, Attachment, Therapeutic Play Techniques, Caring for the Carer (managing compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma in caring professionals), Teen Mental Health and Social Media, Therapeutic Parenting, and Developmental Play.



Awarded a Fulbright scholarship, he will conduct research at Antioch University Seattle on promoting inclusion in schools.

He is the author of Parenting the Screenager and his latest book, Home: Where the Start Is, exploring family dynamics and mental well-being. Richard also co-hosts the podcast They F*ck You Up with Dr. Ciara Kelly, examining relationships and human behavior.

With over 15 years of experience working with adolescents, Richard advocates against overpathologizing teenage behavior. His systemic, goal-oriented therapy approach fosters stronger family and couple communication.

A regular media contributor, he frequently appears on Newstalk, RTÉ, and Virgin Media, offering expert insights into mental health and relationships.



Testing, and Gender Identity Counselling. She is currently pursuing a PhD on gender dysphoria in children and adolescents.

Her therapeutic approach is rooted in psychodynamic depth psychology, with a focus on anxiety and stress.

She has authored bestselling books, including Cotton Wool Kids (2015), Bully-Proof Kids (2017), Fragile (2019), and What Your Teen Is Trying to Tell You (2023). Her latest book, When Kids Say They're Trans, co-authored with Sasha Ayad and Lisa Marchiano, provides quidance for parents seeking a cautious, evidence-based approach to gender distress.

Stella is the founder and Executive Director of Genspect and the Gender Dysphoria Support Network. She also serves as a clinical advisor to the Clinical Advisory Network on Sex and Gender and is a founding member of Thoughtful Therapists. A respected voice in mental health, she speaks internationally on parenting, adolescent well-being, and gender issues.



Compassion in practice to support the tricky teenage brain

A Clinical Psychologist (BA MSc DPsychSc) with over 20 years of experience in HSE Primary Care. In addition to clinical work, Malie is a bestselling author, an adjunct lecturer on NUIG's Doctor of Psychological Science in Clinical Psychology program, and an active member of the Mental Health Advisory Panel for A Lust for Life.

Passionate about mental health advocacy, Malie contributes to print, radio, and TV, provides consultancy for TV productions, and speaks at events promoting well-being. Malie's first book, Love In, Love Out – A Compassionate Approach to Parenting Your Anxious Child (HarperCollins, 2020), offers guidance for parents navigating childhood anxiety. Other works include co-authoring The Little Book of Sound (2017) and contributing to Caroline Foran's Owning It (2017). Malie's writing appears in major Irish publications, including RTÉ Brainstorm, Mental Health Ireland, A Lust for Life, and Laya Healthcare.

A regular voice on Newstalk FM and Kildare FM, Malie has also hosted Mental Health Laid Bare on Dublin City FM, now a podcast series. Additional radio experience includes co-presenting Walk in My Shoes radio and frequent appearances on RTÉ's Today Show discussing child development, parenting, and mental well-being.

In television, Malie has served as a psychology expert on Stressed, My Anxious Life, Eating With The Enemy, and Big Year In Big School, as well as conducting off-screen mental health screenings for Ultimate Hell Week, Davy's Toughest Team, and Raised by the Village.

Malie also leads efforts to advance Infant Mental Health practice in Galway, integrating it into the Galway City Early Years Health and Wellbeing Plan (2016).





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GUEST PANEL Dr. Josen Mc Grane

Consultant in General Adult Psychiatry



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A Consultant in General Adult Psychiatry with the adult psychiatric inpatient unit in St Vincent's University Hospital, Dublin 4 and with the Vergemount Community Mental Health Team. Josen graduated with a 1st Class Honours in English and Sociology from Trinity College Dublin, following which he studied Medicine in UCD. He then trained in General Adult Medicine in Tallaght University Hospital and St James' Hospital, where he obtained his membership of the Royal College of Physicians in Ireland. He completed Higher specialist training in both Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and General Adult Psychiatry with Irish College of Psychiatry and also obtained membership of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. Josen graduated with an A in the Masters in Adolescent Psychotherapy via the Dublin Counseling and Therapy Centre in collaboration with the University of Northampton under the supervision of Bronagh Starrs. Josen previously published research under the supervision of Professsor Mary Cannon, RCSI. Josen is currently in the process of submitting "A Qualitative Systematic Review of the Experience of Psychotherapy for Youth with ADHD" for publication. Josen is currently Vice Chair of the Youth and Student Mental Health Faculty with the College of Psychiatrists of Ireland. Josen was a former board member of "First Fortnight (Art of Mental Health) festival charity." In his spare time Josen likes to dance around his kitchen, park-run, gym, go to gigs, and laugh with colleagues and friends. www.linkedin.com/in/josenmcgrane

Emmet Major

Planet Youth Coordinator WRDATF

Emmet Major is responsible for the implementation, coordination and localisation of the Icelandic Prevention Model in the West of Ireland. Emmet Major has over twenty years of experience in the health sector, specialising particularly in the area of substance use. He has worked as an addiction counsellor, rehabilitation centre manager, and community worker. He is currently the Planet Youth Coordinator with the Western Region Drug and Alcohol Task Force.





Dr. Mary O Kane
Dr. Joanna Fortune
Dr. Richard Hogan
Stella O Malley
Adam Harris
Malie Coyne

Dr. Josen Mc Grane

Emmet Major





9.00: C o n f e r e n ce Opening and Address

9.15: P I a y f u I P athways to Relational Connection with Adolescents
Dr. Joanna Fortune

10.10: I d e n t i t y exploration in Adolescence

Stella O Malley:

11.00: Break

11.20: Parenting The Screenager

Dr. Richard Hogan

12.15: C o m i n g o f Age: The Teenage Years and Autistic Identity

Adam Harris:

13.15: Lunch Break

14.15: **C** o m p a ssion in practice to support the tricky teenage brain Dr. Malie Coyne:

15.10: Panel Discussion - All contributors

16.10:**Hear my voice**

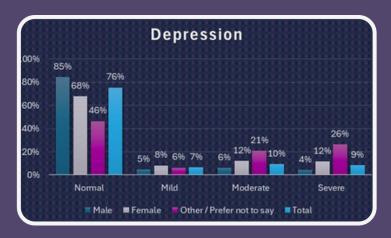
Gina Dermody & Collaboration

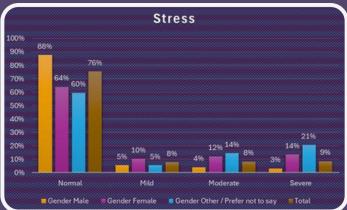
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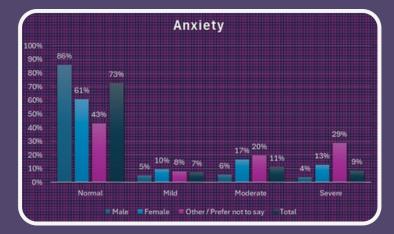


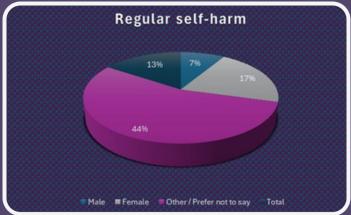


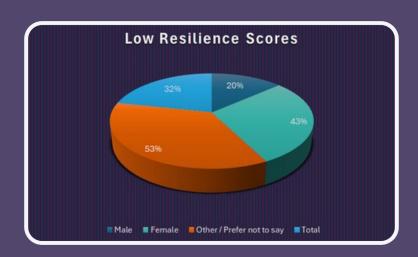
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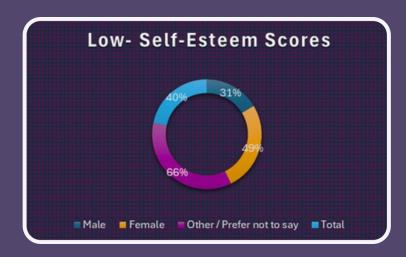






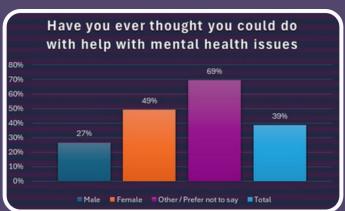


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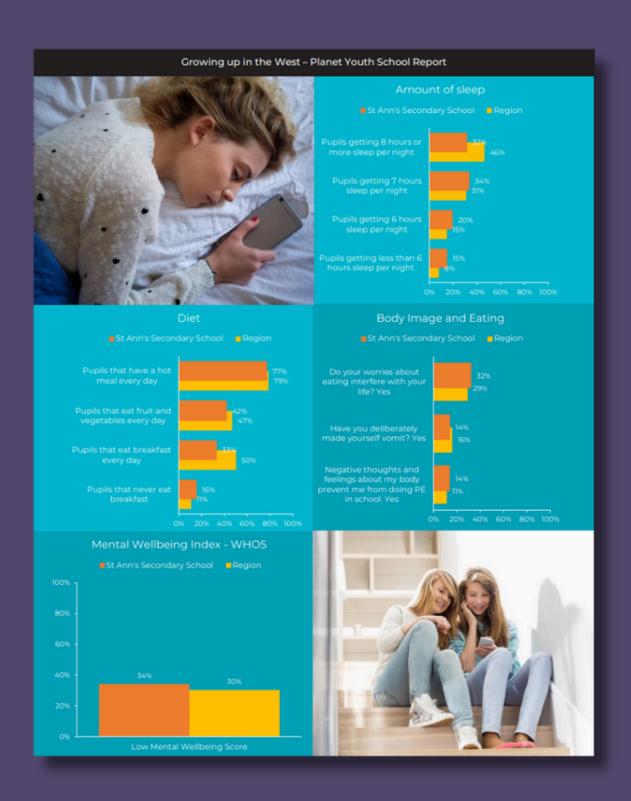






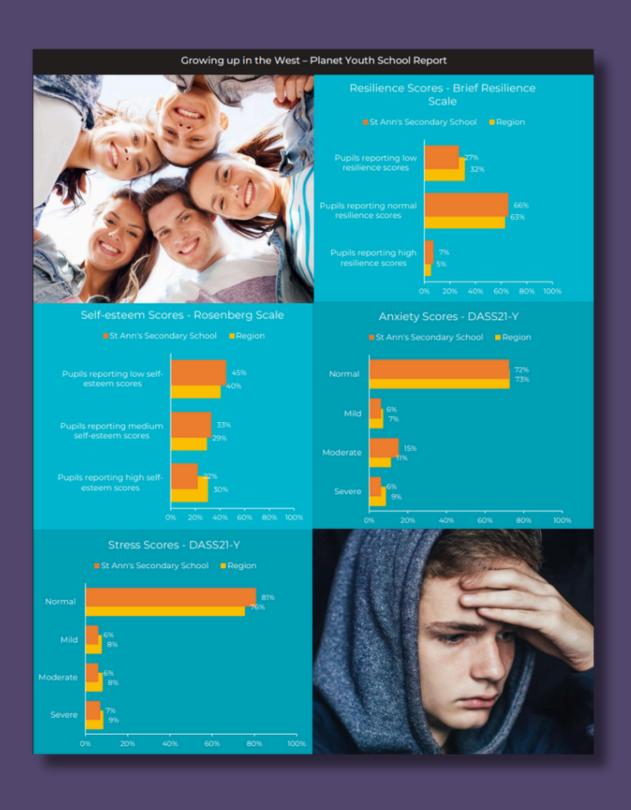






















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TUESDAY 10TH MARCH 2026

