

Institute for Children and Young People's Mental Health

at King's College London & Maudsley Hospital

Our research focuses include secondary trauma and compassion fatigue in foster carers, systematic reviews into adoption support for children and young people, and the misdiagnosis, assessment and diagnosis of children and young people with disrupted attachment histories.

Our research trials are also analysing '[Fostering Changes](#)', a British programme for foster carers, as well as randomised control trials to determine the best service for young abused and neglected pre-school children coming into foster care.

The King's and South London and Maudsley connection has been crucial to achieving our work. Staff at the National Academy for Parenting Research work in the national specialist conduct problems clinic and the National Specialist adoption fostering clinic, where we see a wide range of children's difficulties and learn how best to try to treat them. We then often with the same staff, conduct randomised controlled trials in the community to see what works. This is a unique facility which enables us to go from theory to day-to-day practice, in a way which would be impossible in most centres.

Furthermore, our training programme Fostering Changes was developed through research funding to the IoPPN our work in the National Adoption and Fostering Service, this was also tested within an RCT again through IoPPN funding. We are now able to offer training and consultation to services running this program from within the IoPPN.

Our team is passionate about translating research on legacy of maltreatment and abuse early on into the clinical and practitioner fields. One of our goals is to ensure that the complex presentation of the children we see in our national and specialist clinic is understood more widely through research on new treatments for reactive attachment disorder. Through our research we can disseminate clinical research around the prevalence of a wide variety of different disorders in this client group.

The clinical research we publish, and other academic research (for example into secondary trauma, practitioner's understanding of attachment issues, differential diagnoses of attachment issues and autism as well as treatments for reactive attachment disorder) aims to help clinicians go beyond headline, stereotypical issues and search for a deeper, more personalised understanding of individual children's patterns of strengths and difficulties.

Key Publications:

- Woolgar, M., & Simmonds, J. (2019). The diverse neurobiological processes and legacies of early adversity: implications for practice. *Adoption & Fostering*, 43(3), 241–255. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308575919877012>
- Hannah, B., & Woolgar, M. (2018). Secondary trauma and compassion fatigue in foster carers. *Clinical Child Psychology & Psychiatry*, 23, 629-643. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1359104518778327>
- Woolgar, M., Pinto, C., & Tomaselli, O. (2018). The Assessment of Children and Young People for Adoption Support: The evidence from 20 referrals to the National Adoption & Fostering Team at the Maudsley. https://kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/files/97475141/Briefing_maudsley_ASF_20_Cases_2018.pdf

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- Wretham, A., & Woolgar, M. (2017). Do children adopted from British foster care show difficulties in executive functioning and social communication? *Adoption & Fostering*, 4, 331-345. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308575917730295>
- Ibrahim, J., Cosgrave, N. & Woolgar M. (2017). Childhood maltreatment and its link to borderline personality disorder features in children: A systematic review approach. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1359104517712778>
- Luke, N., Sinclair, I., Woolgar, M., & Sebba, J. (2014). What works in preventing and treating poor mental health in looked after children? NSPCC & Rees Centre, Oxford University [http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/findings/evaluation/rees-report-full_wdf103943.pdf]
- Woolgar, M., & Simmonds, J. (2019). The diverse neurobiological processes and legacies of early adversity: implications for practice. *Adoption & Fostering*, 43(3), 241–255. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308575919877012>
- Joseph M, O'Connor T, Briskman J, Maughan B & **Scott S** (2014) The formation of secure new attachments by children who were maltreated: an observational study of adolescents in foster care. *Development and Psychopathology* 26: 67-80
- Green J, Biehal N, Roberts C, Dixon J, Kay C, Parry E, Rothwell J, Roby A, Kapadia D, **Scott, S** & Sinclair I. (2014) Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care for Adolescents in English Care: randomized trial and observational cohort evaluation. *British Journal of Psychiatry*: 204:214-221
- Sinclair I, Parry E, Biehal N, Fresen J, Kay C, **Scott S** & Green J (2016) Multi-dimensional Treatment Foster Care in England: Differential Effects by Level of Initial Antisocial Behaviour. *European Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 25:843–852