

# Irish Foster Care Association National Conference: 27 - 29 October 2017

## Realising potential in foster care



## Call for workshop proposals

The Irish Foster Care Association National Conference brings together all those with an interest in foster care, including general and relative foster carers, care leavers, health and social care practitioners, academics, students, teachers, policy makers, and members of the community and voluntary sector to learn together, engage in dialogue, and share their experiences and best practice. This year, the conference will take place from 27 to 29 October at the Mount Wolseley Hotel, Tullow, Co Carlow.

## Conference theme

We are delighted to announce this year's conference theme: **Realising potential in foster care**. The Irish government's vision is one where the rights of all children and young people are respected, protected and fulfilled, where their voices are heard and where they are supported to realise their maximum potential now and in the future<sup>1</sup>. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises that all children, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, disability, parentage, sexual orientation or other status have the right to develop their potential in all situations and at all times. This applies to the spheres of health, education, family life, play and recreation, an adequate standard of living and protection from abuse and harm. Due to the circumstances which lead to children being received into care they may have specific vulnerabilities. Furthermore, they have been identified by the Ombudsman for Children as facing multiple obstacles to the enjoyment of their rights<sup>2</sup>. The conference will offer an opportunity to explore ways in which practice and policy in respect of children and young people in care can support them to realise their potential. It also allows scope for consideration of how the potential of all those with an involvement in foster care can be realised.

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<sup>1</sup> Ireland. Department of Children and Youth Affairs (2014) *Better Outcomes Brighter Futures, 2014-2020*, Dublin: Stationery Office.

<sup>2</sup>Kilkelly, U. (2007) *Barriers to the Realisation of Children's Rights in Ireland*. Dublin: Ombudsman for Children.

## Call for workshop proposals

We are seeking proposals for workshops of relevance to the conference theme. The conference programme will offer daytime workshops from Friday morning until Sunday lunchtime. They will be two hours long. Workshop facilitators view contributing to the conference as an excellent opportunity to showcase their work. IFCA offers facilitators free day-attendance to the conference on the day of their workshop, discounted hotel accommodation and cover of travel expenses within the island of Ireland. We do not offer a fee to facilitators.

## Submission instructions

You can submit proposals by using the online form [here](#). If you have any questions, you can contact IFCA Learning and Development, Maeve Healy, at [maeve.healy@ifca.ie](mailto:maeve.healy@ifca.ie), mobile 087 6555880 or Niamh Barrett, at [niamh.barrett@ifca.ie](mailto:niamh.barrett@ifca.ie); both available on 01 4599474. [www.ifca.ie](http://www.ifca.ie). Unit 23, Village Green, Tallaght, Dublin 24.

## Submission deadline

**Please submit your proposal by Friday 31 March.** You will be notified of the outcome of the selection process by Friday 21 April.

## Proposal selection criteria

When reviewing the workshop proposal submissions, we will select based on the following criteria:

- The content offers a significant contribution to the purpose of the conference
- The workshop has a clear purpose and desired learning outcomes
- The workshop format is dynamic and engages those attending through participation and discussion
- The workshop provides participants with concrete ideas / models that can contribute to the development of best practice in fostering.

## Irish Foster Care Association

The Irish Foster Care Association (IFCA) is the representative body for foster care in Ireland. Child centred and rights based, IFCA promotes excellence in foster care. We aim to accomplish this by providing information, support and learning opportunities for all those involved in foster care through our direct work in Advocacy, Branch Development, Support, Learning and Development. IFCA seeks to build a culture of learning that values the accumulation of knowledge, skills and experience of all with an involvement in fostering in the development of best practice. The annual conference is one of a range of opportunities in its learning programme which also includes training, seminars, and a journal on developments in foster care practice, policy and research, '[Foster](#)'.



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