

Call for abstracts for 2017 Special Issue

The editors of the *British Journal of Social Work* invite submission of abstracts for this special issue to be guest –edited by Dr Trish Walsh (Trinity College Dublin, Ireland) and Dr Tor Slettebø (VID Specialized University, Oslo, Norway)

What fresh thinking is needed for child and family social work in the 21st century?

From its original theoretical base in psychodynamic theory and practice, child welfare practice now incorporates and is influenced by a myriad of other theoretical approaches, ranging from cognitive behavioural therapy to parent-training to attachment therapy, from fields of practice spanning developmental psychopathology, psychiatry, epigenetics, neuroscience, positive psychology, education and criminology. With advances in medical and scientific knowledge have come some new insights into the causes of child maltreatment and the social problems most commonly associated with child maltreatment but no real consensus on how we can practise most effectively to disrupt the negative effects of sustained patterns of child abuse and neglect.

‘There is a fascinating, difficult and immensely worthwhile task awaiting us: to articulate for the early 21st century, the role of social workers in working with children who cannot live with their families or who are at risk within them’ (Stevenson, 2013, pg 98).

From our work as practitioners, academics and researchers, we observe new inequalities and marginalised voices which emerge from current practices. New challenges arise from increasing levels of inequality, deeper divisions between the global North and global South, war and forced migrations, and transnational movements of vulnerable youth and families. Not only are the voices of children within care systems in the main silent and unheard, but also those of parents of children in care. As a profession, we have focused on user participation for decades, but why do we not show more success when it comes to children and families in child welfare services?

The main aims of the Special Issue are:

- To raise an international debate about the current frameworks of child welfare – ideological, political, philosophical, theoretical, organizational and ethical - and the understanding of this from a social work perspective locally and globally
- To introduce papers that will explore and discuss what could be social work’s own contribution (as a discipline and a profession) in trying to understand the needs of children and parents in contact with the services and how these could be met

- To provide contributions to this debate which draw on the experiences of those most affected by social work actions: children, parents and families, kinship carers, foster-carers, adopters and residential care staff
- To invite papers which develop innovative practices

Key themes are:

- Social work practice including children's need for protection and parents needs for support
- Central challenges for including a 'both/ and' perspective in child welfare
- Theory and knowledge that could inform new and innovative approaches

We welcome in particular papers that:

- Offer original perspectives
- Authors from across the globe
- New research findings
- New theoretical perspectives

Guidelines for abstract submission:

Abstract proposals **not exceeding 800 words** in length should be sent by email to arrive **no later than July 29th 2016 to Dr Trish Walsh**, School of Social Policy and Social Work, Trinity College Dublin. Trish.walsh@tcd.ie.

Please ensure that you include your full name and email contact details.

Timescale for the Special Issue

Prospective authors must be in a position to meet the following key deadlines if their abstract is accepted:

Full drafts of all papers will be due at the latest by **October 31st 2016**

Following review, draft papers will be returned to authors with a decision by **Dec 24th 2016**

Final versions of manuscripts from authors must be received by **February 28th 2017**

NB: Papers may be submitted in advance of these due dates. In accordance with *BJSW*'s normal publication procedures, all accepted papers, including those not selected for the Special Issue, will be published online on the *BJSW* website in advance of publication in the printed volume.

