

UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre 6th Biennial International Conference, June 13th & 14th 2013, NUI Galway

The aim of the conference was to view trends challenges and options relating to citizens engagement and participation in the field of family support.



Dr. John Canavan's input set the context for the conference and introduced its themes and their relevance to contemporary circumstances in Ireland.

A major theme of the conference related to the importance of participation, not just in the development of effective family support practice but also in developing skills of citizenship and civic engagement for young people. This is particularly developed in the presentations by Professor Constance Flanagan and Professor Mark Brennan.

These inputs are complimented by an interesting input from Professor Anne Power on the views of parents bringing up children and young people in challenging circumstances.

Andy Lloyd from Children's Services in Leeds addressed the very topical issue of developing and supporting family support in difficult financial circumstances.

Dr Bernadine Brady and Dr Carmel Deveney spoke on their research into the benefits, challenges and limitations in volunteer led service provision.

The presentations by Gerison Lansdown and Norah Gibbons are very powerful presentations on the importance of rights and participation in the development of advocacy.

The conference also included a range of parallel sessions provided by practitioners and academics around the core conference themes of-

- Citizenship and Family Support
- The contribution of volunteers and communities
- Challenges facing professional worker-citizens in embattled systems
- Participatory structures
- The role of advocacy and protest
- Participation by children and young people.

The presentations from this excellent conference are all now available to view at the following link:

<http://www.childandfamilyresearch.ie/news/unesco-child-and-family-research-centre-6th-biennial-international-conference-0>