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Editorial

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Editors

Welcome to the spring 2025 issue of the *Scottish Journal of Residential Child Care*. In this issue the editors are making a special request to our readers to become involved in developing the journal's book review section. While we have an open invitation to readers to volunteer to review new books, this request is to review classic texts in our field.

The idea came from a member of our editorial board, Professor James Anglin. James describes his idea in a short article we publish in this issue: 'Do you have a book from over 10 years ago that has made a difference to your practice or your thinking about child and youth work? Perhaps others in our field could benefit from reading this text or at least might be inspired by your story of encountering it.'

We plan to include the first of these reviews in our next issue. Please consider getting involved. Is there a book that has particularly influenced you in your work? Perhaps it was reading this book that convinced you to work in our field. Or maybe it's a text you refer to regularly. Maybe the book has special meaning because it reminds you of the lecturer or mentor who recommended it, or because of what you were doing at the time you first read it. By re-reading with a review in mind, you are likely to come at the book with a fresh perspective which should be rewarding for you and our readers.

To get involved, just send an email to our book review editor, [Dr Nadine Fowler](#), with a brief proposal including the book title and name of the author(s). Book reviews should be around 500 words in length and Nadine will provide advice on aspects of style. We look forward to hearing from you.

In this issue we feature the usual mix of original research articles, shorter articles and book reviews. We also publish an article by Professor Kenneth Norrie based on his Kilbrandon Lecture at the University of Strathclyde in November 2024; readers can watch and listen to the lecture and the following discussion via the [Kilbrandon Lectures archive](#).

Long form articles

Mairena Hirschberg of the University of Zurich explores the work of the Australian Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and the Swiss Independent Expert Commission (IEC) on Administrative Detention. Mairena examines the different approaches these two truth seeking commissions take in relation to personnel, mandates and framing of issues, and



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how these approaches then shape their recommendations and broader national responses to institutional abuse.

Sarah Parry of the University of Manchester, and Tracey Williams and Jeremy Oldfield of Manchester Metropolitan University examine the experiences of staff wellbeing in children's homes and how these in turn influence the care that children receive. The authors make recommendations for improvements and suggest that, if addressed, there would be an improvement to care quality and the support offered to children and young people.

Arora Akansha, Kalra Gurneet and Modi Kiran offer an account of research exploring a capacity building initiative by Udayan Care in India and Duke University in North Carolina, USA to enhance caregivers' attitudes, knowledge and skills while managing their own wellbeing in their roles supporting traumatised children. This study highlights the burnout experienced by caregivers in child care institutions arising from emotional, psychological, and structural pressures, with the authors emphasising that prioritising caregivers' wellbeing is both a moral responsibility and a strategic necessity for child development.

Julia Clark, a researcher based in Scotland, reviewed research articles concerned with holistic family support in early childhood, education and care settings with the aim of identifying lessons for the Scottish context. Julia found that 'family agency is built through collaborative relationships between parents and practitioners, parent participation in activities, and flexible, responsive ECEC programmes' and argues that these findings suggest a need for adaptations to the way health visitors work.

Grace Pellegrinelli and Ann Hodson of Queen Margaret University in Scotland used an online questionnaire to research Scottish foster carers' knowledge and awareness of children's speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). Their findings suggest that foster carers are knowledgeable about speech, language and communication needs and can identify support structures for advice and guidance. 'Only a small percentage of foster carers had receiving specific training with respect to speech, language and communication, and there was a strong desire for such training to take place'. The authors say there is a need for a national SLCN training programme for foster carers provided by speech and language therapists.

Carl Purcell of King's College London, with colleagues Martin Elliott, Cindy Corliss, Mary Baginsky, Rebecca Playle, Alyson Rees and Michael Robling of Cardiff University report the findings of their evidence review of the impact of reforms of regulatory processes in children's residential care in England and Wales. Their research identified four themes which they regard as being important for the design of good regulatory systems, including 'a stronger focus on organisational cultures and leadership'.

Dave Roberts of the Mulberry Bush Organisation in England discusses his doctoral research based on a case study of the Hill View School. His article explores understandings of therapeutic care by staff, children and families.



Short form articles

Our short form articles provides an opportunity for a broader range of writers, including people with personal care experience, practitioners, policy makers and research students, to report on work in progress or innovation, or to explore current issues relevant to residential care or child and youth care generally. We are grateful to our many contributors over the years, and we always welcome submissions; the editors will be pleased to offer advice on your ideas for an article.

In the first of three short articles published in this issue, Margaret Davies of Red Dragonfly Services and David Lett of New Meaning Training describe the introduction of a 'Loving Care' approach to an alternative education provision in England. The article outlines the first phase of the project and includes feedback from staff and next steps plans to measure impact as the project continues. The authors include reflections on the lessons learned during phase one in the hope that they will be of benefit to other organisations who may wish to adopt a similar approach.

Mihaela Manole, Laura Quinn, and Gemma Watson of (CELCIS), the Centre for Excellence for Children's Care and Protection, at the University of Strathclyde in Scotland explore how the use of practice profiles can support develop residential childcare practice. They highlight the importance of a whole system approach, leadership support and a sense of shared ownership.

Finally, as trailed above, we include James Anglin's article establishing our challenge to readers to contribute reviews of classic texts in child and youth care.

The Kilbrandon Lecture

The 22nd Kilbrandon Lecture, 'Who then, in law, is my parent?' was given by the distinguished legal scholar, Kenneth Norrie, professor emeritus at the Strathclyde Law School. In his lecture, Kenneth explored the definition and concept of 'parent' and the different interpretations and understandings of this term in different legal jurisdictions, cultures and time periods.

Book Reviews

The book review section of this issue includes two reviews.

'Looked After, A Childhood in Care' by Ashley John-Baptiste (Hodder and Stoughton, 2024) is reviewed by Chelbi Hillan, a CELCIS Consultant with lived experience.

'In Harm's Way: The Memoir of a Child Protection Lawyer' by Teresa Thornhill (Harper Collins, 2024) is reviewed by Kenneth Norrie, professor emeritus at Strathclyde Law School, the University of Strathclyde.



Obituary: Dr Ruby Whitelaw

It was with shock and great sadness that we learned of the sudden death of our friend and colleague at the University of Strathclyde's Children and Young People's Centre for Justice, Dr Ruby Whitelaw. Ruby was well known and loved by the child and youth care community in Scotland and beyond. As well as being an effective advocate for our profession, she was a huge supporter of the *Scottish Journal of Residential Child Care*. She will be sorely missed by us all, and especially by her family. We end this issue with a moving tribute by Ruby's friend and former colleague at Kibble Education and Care Centre, Neil McMillan. May Ruby Rest in Peace.

Open call for papers

We welcome submissions about relevant child care research and practice from around the world. If you are engaged in research or have an idea for a short article we would be delighted to hear from you. Please email us at sjrcc@strath.ac.uk

About the authors

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