



# 12th International **Signs of Safety** **Gathering** Program







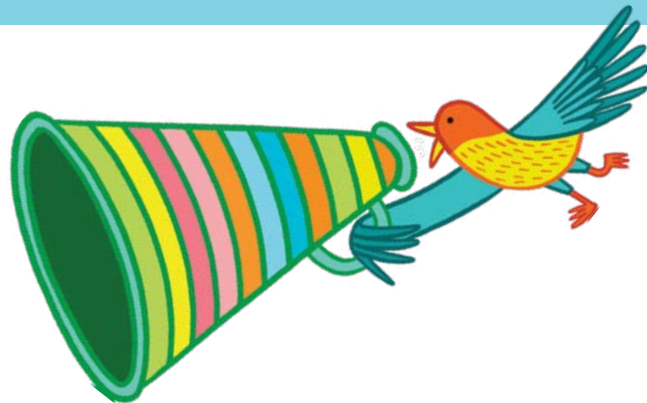
# sofsgathering2018

Join in on **social media** and post your thoughts, comments and images from this event to the wider Signs of Safety community using the hashtag **#sofsgathering2018**.

Be sure to visit **[www.signsofsafety.net](http://www.signsofsafety.net)**, the hub for all things Signs of Safety.

You can download a PDF version of this program from **[knowledgebank.signsofsafety.net/program](http://knowledgebank.signsofsafety.net/program)**.

This Gathering will be streamed live at **[knowledgebank.signsofsafety.net/live](http://knowledgebank.signsofsafety.net/live)**.



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# Sharing What Works

Our goal for the Gathering has always been to bring people together to share and document what works in real day-to-day practice.

This Gathering will be streamed live, for free, to the Knowledge Bank, allowing us to bring as many professionals from all around the world together to participate in a truly international learning experience.

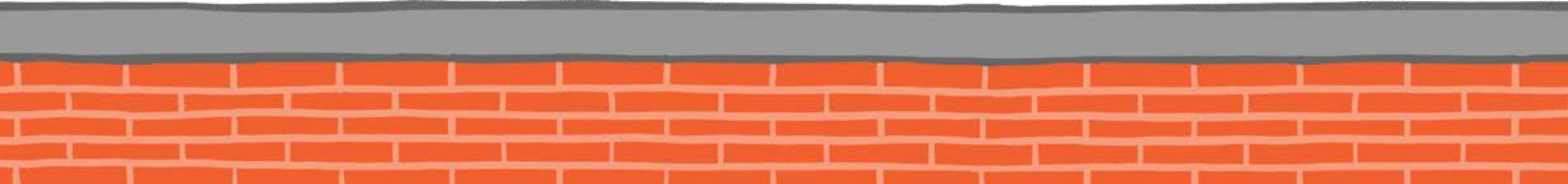
To watch the live stream go to  
[knowledgebank.signsofsafety.net/live](https://knowledgebank.signsofsafety.net/live)

To document our learning for the future, videos of all of the Gathering presentations will be added to the **Signs of Safety Knowledge Bank**.

All presentations will be available immediately to those with an organisational Knowledge Bank subscription.

Five selected presentations will be featured on the free area of the Knowledge Bank for two years.

To find out more about organisational Knowledge Bank subscriptions go to: [knowledgebank.signsofsafety.net/about](https://knowledgebank.signsofsafety.net/about)



# Sharing What's Learned



Throughout the Gathering, participants — both those in the room and those watching via the live stream — will be able to give **real-time feedback** via their phone or mobile device. This feedback will be visible to the audience at the conference centre and to presenters onstage.

In the spirit of the Signs of Safety, there are two columns for feedback. The first is 'What I Have Learned', and the second is 'Questions'.

To send questions regarding a presentation, we ask that participants first send a 'What I Have Learned' statement about the same presentation.

Presenters will not be calling for questions at the end of their presentation but if presenters have time, they may choose to address some of the questions raised through this feedback. Questions from participants and statements of what they are learning will provide a real-time feedback loop and deepen the learning of everyone involved.

To participate, go to  
[knowledgebank.signsofsafety.net/feedback](https://knowledgebank.signsofsafety.net/feedback)  
on your mobile device



## Welcome to the Twelfth International Signs of Safety Gathering!

I have spent so much time in Ireland over the past two years that I have not only come to love the country and its people, I'd like to think I'm a little bit of a local

now. That's the magic of the Irish; you want to connect yourself with their country, culture and their ways. So, it's a joy for me that we are holding the 2018 International Signs of Safety Gathering in Dublin and I'm sure it will be a joy for all of us who have travelled here this week, whether you've come from Tokyo or Tralee (that's in County Kerry).

The reason I have been in Ireland so much is that the Irish child protection service, Tusla Child and Family Agency, has adopted and is implementing the Signs of Safety as their national child protection practice framework. Tusla (*say toos-la*) like elsewhere, faces the usual myriad challenges in trying to deliver caring and intelligent child-focused services. If you were to believe most of what is said in the press and in parliament, you would think Tusla was failing badly on all fronts and given child protection work is always pressurised and never perfect, the agency and its staff can, of course, come to believe the negative press.

Ireland is a land of poets and storytellers, and one of their most famous, William Yeats, wrote two things I'd like to draw on here:

“

*The world is full of magic things, patiently waiting  
for our senses to grow sharper.*

”

“

*There is another world, but it is in this one.*

”

The artists we love most tend to be those that see the 'doubleness' of things, and the Irish themselves have a gift for seeing the divine within the struggles and messiness of everyday life. Likewise, our best social workers are folk that have this ability — seeing opportunities, courage and worth in people even in the ugliest circumstances. The problem we have is that we so rarely tell stories about our best work.

Signs of Safety Gatherings are designed to be a place where our senses can grow sharper and explore another world that is in fact within this one. Child protection is over-organised by stories and fear of failure but there is little to learn from constantly re-telling those stories. The Signs of Safety Gathering creates a stage where we listen to different stories and from storytellers we rarely hear from. In a Signs of Safety Gathering, we hear from practitioners telling us stories of work they feel proud of. Alongside the stories from practice and woven within them, we will hear about changing our organisations so that compassionate, participatory practice can flourish.

It's a simple but radical idea we change the story, our practice, and organisation by sharpening our senses to good practice.

As I prepared these introductory remarks, I asked Maria MacInnes of Tusla to describe the most important changes she has seen in her agency since the implementation began at the beginning of 2017. Maria said:

*"The biggest difference I've seen is more excitement from people — they have something now they can use to make a difference in their practice that makes sense to them.*

*I am seeing people who are willing to just get on with it and try and use the approach. What's got people excited and willing to try it is a genuine connection to the principles — this is how they want to do the work and the Signs of Safety gives us a way of doing what we've always wanted to do."*

Being an approach created by and with practitioners, the Signs of Safety makes sense and generates excitement. That energy will be present in all the presentations we hear from Ireland, both from the north and the south, Belgium, Japan, Sweden, USA, England, Canada and Cambodia. I want to honour and thank all those who will make these presentations. You have made time in your busy schedules to prepare and take on the challenge to present — thank you! You will be brilliant, and you will make this Gathering.

I also want to thank all the staff of the Tusla Child and Family Agency, and the senior management team for welcoming the Signs of Safety Gathering to Ireland and I particularly want to call out Cormac Quinlan, Sue Kane and Maria MacInnes for working so closely with us as we organised the event.

We love the image of the proud and bold rainbow bird with her megaphone created by Dublin illustrator Chris Judge. Laying claim to good child protection practice and successful organisation requires commitment, courage and above all, connection. Enjoy this Gathering in this wonderful country, learn lots and make new friends and if you're visiting the country, see if you can sight all the Dublin landmarks in the Gathering artwork while you're here!

**Professor Andrew Turnell**



## A Welcome Message from Tusla Child & Family Agency

*Dia Dhuit*, and a warm welcome to our national and international visitors from the four corners of Ireland, and many distant shores. It is a huge privilege and honour for Tusla to host the International

Signs of Safety Gathering in Dublin, Ireland in 2018. For those arriving in Ireland for the first time, we specifically welcome you, and hope that this is the beginning of a long and lasting relationship with our people and our country.

A Gathering, like in many cultures, has huge significance in Ireland. At the heart of the Irish tradition of spirituality is the principle of *AnamCara*, (On-im-Car-ah), meaning 'Soul-Friend.' This Gathering brings alive our spiritual kinship in our relationships, our beliefs and the essence of what has brought us to, and continually connects us to this work. The weaving and nurturing of these kinships is vital to our sense of togetherness and continued support, particularly in light of the challenges of living in a contemporary and profoundly shifting world.

At the heart of Signs of Safety is the central importance of networks; a core belief that we are better together than apart. This understanding nourishes a community of learning and support that puts the voice

of the practitioner as the heart of what we do, and demands that organisations shape and build an environment that continually supports them to be our most important resource. This view is in line with Tusla's overall belief in the importance of our staff and our interagency partners.

In 2017, Ireland adopted Signs of Safety as its national approach to practice on the clear understanding that we wanted change for our organisation, our staff and our practice. Trying to keep children safe while shifting the balance of power and authority towards families will never be an easy task, particularly in the anxious and contested environment of child protection, but that is never a strong enough reason not to try! Over the coming years, it is our intention to push these boundaries, to embed Signs of Safety within all of our work and to make children safer by doing our work *with* people rather than *to* them.





We also recognise that we are only one jurisdiction at the start of our journey and we know that in each implementation site there will be both common and unique challenges and opportunities. We all operate in different political, legal, cultural and practice environments. However, we all share a common obligation to act as agents for social change and to lead, and advocate for this change, creating a different vision for this challenging work. We must learn from others and we must share the obligation to inform where we have learnt. It will not be an easy road but we must never give up. We owe it to ourselves and to the children and families we serve.

Have a fantastic Gathering!

**Cormac Quinlan**  
**Tusla Child and Family Agency**



An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency



*May I live this day compassionate of heart, clear in word, gracious in awareness, courageous in thought, generous in love.*

— John O'Donoghue





# The Third Space

Adoption solved  
two problems,  
but what  
about me?

Agi B Gault

Agi Gault's book *The Third Space: Adoption Solved Two Problems, But What About Me?* will be available for purchase for the first time at the Dublin Gathering.

Agi Gault has been a front line social worker in child protection since 1998, both as practitioner and manager. Agi now works as a Signs of Safety Trainer and Consultant. Agi was drawn to a career in child protection because of her personal lived experience of going through the care system as an adopted and abused child.

The book is a narrative of Agi's life interspersed with a collection of her poems which were Agi's communication, metaphors of her lived experience, her therapy, and they say what has been unspeakable throughout her life.

*"I grew up in the Third Space and watched professional after professional overlook who I was and what I was trying to communicate, I had become the problem they told me I was. Today I live with the consequences of being seen but never recognised..."*

Paperback available exclusively  
at the Gathering

Available digitally online at: [signsofsafety.net/store](https://signsofsafety.net/store)

## SCHEDULE

### Tuesday 6 November

**9.00 a.m. The Borderers**

Performing 'The Gathering'

**9.10 a.m. Welcome To Dublin**

Cormac Quinlan (Tusla Child & Family Agency, Republic of Ireland)

**9.20 a.m. Welcome To The Signs Of Safety Gathering**

Professor Andrew Turnell (Signs of Safety Co-Creator)

**9.30 a.m. Using The Whole Approach In Our Very First Case**

Tusla Child & Family Agency, Republic of Ireland

**10.00 a.m. When Babies Can't Speak, Networks Can**

Carver County Health & Human Services, USA

**10.30 a.m. Morning Tea & Coffee**

**11.00 a.m. It Takes A Village To Raise A Child**

Cambodia Children's Trust, Cambodia

**11.30 a.m. Our Journey From "Do We Have To Talk About Signs Of Safety Again?" To A "Safety Plan Filled With Love From The Network"**

Municipality of Solna, Sweden

**12.00 p.m. Making Safeguarding Personal**

Western Health & Social Care Trust, Northern Ireland

**12.30 p.m. Lunch**

**1.30 p.m. Landing Signs Of Safety In Everyday Practice**

Tusla Child & Family Agency, Republic of Ireland

**2.00 p.m. In Pursuit Of Smooth And Easy**

Noriko Okano, Japan

**2.45 p.m. Afternoon Tea & Coffee**

**3.15 p.m. Creating Safety And Supporting Whole System Implementation Through A Whole System Learning Process**

Alberta Children's Services, Canada

**3.45 p.m. Offering Choices To Youth By Bringing Forth Their Voice**

Highland Shores Children's Aid, Canada

## Wednesday 7 November

**9.00 a.m. Lighting Each Other's Candles: From Delivering Training To Leading Learning**

Tusla Child & Family Agency, Republic of Ireland

**9.30 a.m. Working With Female Genital Mutilation**

North Yorkshire County Council, UK

**10.00 a.m. Transforming Child Intervention Practice In Alberta**

Alberta Ministry Of Children's Services, Canada

**10.30 a.m. Morning Tea & Coffee**

**11.00 a.m. Supporting Children And Families To Have A Voice In Cambodia**

Children's Future, Cambodia

**11.30 a.m. Equity Integration: Reducing Barriers And Discrimination Towards Black Families And Children At The Children's Aid Society Of Toronto**

Children's Aid Society of Toronto, Canada

**12.30 p.m. Gathering Photo**

(Location to be advised)

**12.45 p.m. Lunch**

**1.45 p.m. Strength Grows With Change**

Western Health & Social Care Trust, Northern Ireland

**2.15 p.m. How To Lead The Learning Journey From Families And From Workers**

Flemish Youth Care & Welfare Agency, Belgium

**2.45 p.m. Afternoon Tea & Coffee**

**3.15 p.m. Sink Or Swim: New Team Embraces Change Wholeheartedly...What Happened?**

Tusla Child & Family Agency, Republic of Ireland

**3.45 p.m. Implementation Across All Services And Building A Functional IT System**

North Tyneside Local Authority, UK

**4.15 p.m. The Third Space: Adoption Solved Two Problems, But What About Me? Book Launch**

Agi Gault

## Thursday 8 November

**9:00 a.m. Changing The Story After 22 Years: From Seeing A Problem Family To Finding Their Solutions With Them**  
Tusla Child & Family Agency, Republic of Ireland

**9:30 a.m. The Success And Struggles...Words And Pictures In Family Services**  
Family & Children's Services Of Guelph & Wellington County, Canada

**10:00 a.m. Learning To Dance With Mother: A Swedish Example Of Using The Whole Safety Planning Roadmap**  
Mölndal Children's Services, Sweden

**10:30 a.m. Morning Tea & Coffee**

**11:00 a.m. Missouri's Implementation Journey**  
Missouri Department Of Social Services, USA

**11:30 a.m. Using A Safety Object: K9 To The Rescue**  
Children & Young People's Services, Rotherham MBC, UK

**12:00 noon Changing Our Children's Story**  
Western Health & Social Care Trust, Northern Ireland

**12:30 p.m. Lunch**

**1:30 p.m. The Power Of Networks And Meeting The Challenges Of Finding Them**

Tusla Child & Family Agency, Republic of Ireland

**2:00 p.m. Reflections On The 2018 Gathering**  
Professor Eileen Munro & Dr Louise Caffrey, Trinity College, Dublin, Republic of Ireland

**2:30 p.m. Close Of Gathering**  
Professor Andrew Turnell (Signs Of Safety Co-Creator)

## ABSTRACTS

Tuesday 6 November

TUESDAY 9:30 – 10:00 AM

### Using The Whole Approach In Our Very First Case



**PRESENTERS:** **Siobhan Nolan** (Social Work Team Leader),  
**Helena Grenham** (Social Care Leader), **Melissa Davidson**  
(Social Worker)

**Tusla Child & Family Agency, Republic of Ireland**

Despite never using the Signs of Safety before, Helena and Melissa decided the best way to learn the approach was to apply the whole approach to one case, with support of their leaders and Sharon Gorey.

This case involved a Nigerian mother of six children with significant prior history with Tusla. The case focused on domestic violence with the latest involvement arising when the mother travelled to Nigeria. The organised childcare arrangement had fallen apart leading Tusla to place the children into care.

Melissa and Helena will describe how they used all the key practice methods: mapping; My Three Houses, network; Words and Pictures and created the safety plan. They will speak about their learnings and conclude with the mother's reflections about what was most important.

TUESDAY 10:00 – 10:30 AM

### When Babies Can't Speak, Networks Can



**PRESENTERS:** **Samantha Koktan** (Investigative Child Protection Worker), **Holly Gilbert** (Investigate Child Protection Worker),  
**Ashley Stender** (Investigative Child Protection Worker)  
**Carver County Health & Human Services, USA**

This presentation will demonstrate work that has been done with families using Signs of Safety even before the baby is born. This will demonstrate the principles and tools in working with mothers and families who were using drugs while pregnant and after birth with their baby.

Signs of Safety was utilised in safety planning with these parent(s) and their families/network to keep the children with their parent(s) at the time of birth and afterwards. They will demonstrate a few of those plans and how they have seen networks wrap safety around the baby to keep it in its home.



TUESDAY 11:00 – 11:30 AM

## It Takes A Village To Raise A Child



**PRESENTERS:** **Sophorn Ngath** (Prevention & Strengthening Manager), **Lyly Tek** (Senior Social Worker)  
**Cambodia Children's Trust, Cambodia**

When CCT social workers met Samnang, his wife had just passed away, leaving Samnang caring for their three children, 5, 6 and 16 years old under difficult circumstances.

Social workers in partnership with the family and village used the Signs of Safety mapping to focus on tapping into the natural networks that already existed around the family and identify the areas where they could link into more support. The family have been able to build and strengthen the relationships of key people in their lives, link in with specialised services to support the needs of the children and feel hopeful for the future, surrounded by their village.

Sophorn and Lyly from CCT will present the work they have done with the family and the impact this has had for the family and community and also CCT's social work team.



TUESDAY 11:30 – 12:00 PM

## Our Journey From 'Do We Have To Talk About Signs Of Safety Again?' To A 'Safety Plan Filled With Love From The Network'



**PRESENTERS:** **Joakim Flood** (Learning & Development Coordinator), **Maria Schollin** (Vice Director of Child Protection Services), **Diana Nikosjkova** (Social Worker, Safety Planning Coordinator)  
**Municipality of Solna, Sweden**

The presentation gives us the journey Solna is making to challenge themselves from “We know what's best for you and your family” to “Let us figure it out together...”

How a single rigorous Safety Plan about newly-born twins, Victor and Vincent are changing the mindset at our workplace, the environment and the culture of the CPS in Solna. Solna is now striving to become the first CPS in Sweden to achieve a meaningful implementation of the Signs of Safety approach in the whole organisation.



SOLNA STAD

**Changing the story.**

TUESDAY 12:00 – 12:30 PM

## Making Safeguarding Personal



**PRESENTERS:** Karen O'Brien (Director, Adult Mental Health, Learning Disability & Adult Safeguarding), Caragh McLaughlin (Service Manager, Adult Safeguarding)

Western Health & Social Care Trust, Northern Ireland

Karen O'Brien and Caragh McLaughlin will present on the use of Signs of Safety within Adult Services. With a focus on Adult Safeguarding, they reflect on how use of the model creates less risk through working collaboratively with service users and their support network to find sustainable solutions to enhance safety and well-being.

They will identify positives and challenges generating from a shift in professional responses to adult safeguarding; from reactionary, more paternalistic approaches to practice that locates service users more centrally in decision-making. With an increased emphasis on systems and outcomes, the journey has begun but there is still much road to travel.



TUESDAY 1:30 – 2:00 PM

## Landing Signs Of Safety In Everyday Practice



**PRESENTERS:** Eilidh MacNab (Area Manager), Maria MacInnes (Service Improvement Manager), Sarah Doyle (Principal Social Worker)

Tusla Child & Family Agency, Republic of Ireland

This presentation is about implementing Signs of Safety at the “front door” and embedding it within the structures, policies and standard processes that exist within our organisations.

The presentation will focus on learning how Signs of Safety can be applied within our processes and how it can bring greater rigour and clarity about what needs to happen to improve children's safety.

We will focus on the learning journey we have undertaken as an Agency; leading people through the anxiety of applying a new approach at intake, and bringing stronger governance and shared ownership to the difficult decision making required at the front door.

It will also address the task of building our internal capacity to lead this change across the whole system while continuously learning and challenging ourselves about the things we would need to change to truly land it in day-to-day practice of our social workers.





TUESDAY 2:00 – 2:45 PM

## In Pursuit Of Smooth And Easy



**PRESENTER:** Noriko Okano

We often are allowed two or three hours for a basic training of the Signs of Safety Approach. So we had to be super creative for us to convey the critical part of the Signs of Safety Approach without putting any burden on the trainees.

We have Origami; a paper craft of a tiny book to show exemplars of questions to use in Appreciative Inquiry and a 3-D safety circle using small stones at hand.

Our traditional art of Bonsai, in which a universe is expressed in a tiny body, is obvious in each creation.

TUESDAY 3:15 – 3:45 PM

## Creating Safety And Supporting Whole System Implementation Through A Whole System Learning Process



**PRESENTERS:** Toni Morkin (Regional Director), Corine Kruse (Generalist), Kristi Norton (Caseworker Supervisor), Christina Williams (Associate Director), Shauna Asselstine (Manager), Alberta Children's Services, Calgary, Canada

Representatives of Alberta Children's Service — Calgary Region, along with consultants Pene Turnell and Sarah Sundman will present a Whole System Learning Process. They will share how staff learned how to use Signs of Safety in practice while identifying opportunities and barriers in the whole system implementation.

Critical learnings of the case will be discussed with implication for the broader whole system implementation. An Appreciative Inquiry with the family highlights what worked well in this learning process.

TUESDAY 3:45 – 4:15 PM

## Offering Choices To Youth By Bringing Forth Their Voice



**PRESENTERS:** **Sonya Ross** (Child Protection Supervisor), **Richard Stevens** (Child Protection Worker), **Angie Whalen** (Child Protection Worker)

**Highland Shores Children's Aid, Canada**

On January 1, 2018, our age of protection changed to include 16 and 17 year olds. Highland Shores Children's Aid created a team consisting of three child protection workers — Angie Whalen, Richard Stevens, Kate Lightfoot, one child/youth worker Scott Adams and one supervisor Sonya Ross.

We will share how we use Signs of Safety and Signs of Something to get at the youth's voice and keep it at the centre of our work. We will bring examples of our work with youth and the difference Signs of Safety work has made with engagement and outcomes for these youths.



## Wednesday 7 November

WEDNESDAY 9:00 – 9:30 AM

## Lighting Each Other's Candles: From Delivering Training To Leading Learning



**PRESENTERS:** **Deirdre Malone** (Signs Of Safety Training And Development Officer), **Brenda Denzler** (Signs Of Safety Training And Development Officer), **Marie McSweeney** (Regional Manager)

**Tusla Child & Family Agency, Republic of Ireland**

Four Training and Development Officers (TDOs) and one Manager were appointed to the Workforce Learning and Development Service to support Learning and Development associated with the implementation. Central to the role is coaching, mentoring and supporting practice leaders and their teams to implement and embed Signs of Safety in everyday practice, plus assisting with training and practice leader call back sessions.

Marie, Brenda and Deirdre will present on developing their role and creating a positive learning environment in Tusla, guided by the learning tools/methods in the Signs of Safety Framework.



An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency

WEDNESDAY 9:30 – 10:00 AM

## Working With Female Genital Mutilation



**PRESENTERS:** **Barbara Thompson** (Social Worker), **Mark Stonell** (Practice Supervisor)

**North Yorkshire County Council, UK**

Barbara and Mark will present a Female Genital Mutilation Protection Order case, including trajectory planning to close the case, genogram, Words and Pictures, Safety Plan and an Appreciative Inquiry.

The video is of a mother talking about the painful experience of Female Genital Mutilation and how initially she was resistant to work with the agencies to dispelling the secret to her girls, as well as hearing from the oldest child talk about her Words and Pictures, how it made her feel and her message to her mum. The Family Support Worker and Health Child Nurse describe how they felt throughout the journey.



WEDNESDAY 10:00 – 10:30 AM

## Transforming Child Intervention Practice In Alberta



**PRESENTER:** **Jon Reeves** (Provincial Director, Child Intervention Delivery)

**Alberta Ministry Of Children's Services, Canada**

Effective use of the Signs of Safety in practice requires whole system thinking about how to align the practice approach within child protection agency's workflow and decision-making processes.

Jon Reeves will describe the practice and system realignment of the initial assessment and intervention case work process in the Calgary Region that has utilised the Alberta Child Intervention Practice Framework which uses the Signs of Safety approach. This has secured significant changes in outcomes over the past five years including significant reduction of court involvement and out of home placements.



**Changing the story.**

WEDNESDAY 11:00 – 11:30 AM

## Supporting Children And Families To Have A Voice In Cambodia



**PRESENTERS:** **Pheun Sonthea** (Senior Social Worker),  
**Lee Henley** (Country Director)  
**Children's Future, Cambodia**

Pheun Sonthea, Senior Social Worker, and Lee Henley, Country Director, Children's Future Cambodia will describe how the Signs of Safety approach has enabled them to empower and involve children and their families in decision-making.

Using tools like The Three Houses and joint mapping, social workers actively encourage and support children and families to have a direct say in decisions about them. Families tell Children's Future they feel empowered and are able to take direct responsibility for the positive changes they make in their lives. In a country where children's voices are often ignored, this presentation will describe how Signs of Safety is contributing to positive change.



WEDNESDAY 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM

## Equity Integration: Reducing Barriers And Discrimination Towards Black Families And Children At The Children's Aid Society Of Toronto



**PRESENTERS:** **Claudia Lynch** (Anti-Black Racism Practice Integration Lead), **Elnaz Zeytouni** (Child Protection Worker), **Fred Magie** (Signs of Safety Implementation Lead), **Mahesh Prajapat** (Chief Operating Officer), **Nicole Bonnie** (Director of Equity and Community Development), **Russell Robicheau** (Child Protection Worker)

**Children's Aid Society Of Toronto, Canada**

Our organisation launched an urgent response to over-representation, disproportionality, and disparities experienced by black families, children, and youth at Toronto Children's Aid Society. In 2016, although African Canadians accounted for only 8% of the Toronto population, within our agency black children and youth represented approximately 40% of those in care. This complex reality results from a combination

## Children's Aid Society Of Toronto (continued)

of factors including, systemic anti-black racism and negative impacts of social determinants of health factors.

We will show how the Signs of Safety 'mapping' process was courageously used to give fourteen teams at the Intake Branch the opportunity to identify and examine how anti-black racism was operating within day to day work as well as the existing strengths and successes in reducing its harmful effects. Through multimedia, Gathering attendees will hear feedback from Intake staff about their experiences participating in these Three-Column Conversations and what was important about the participatory approach. We will further share how the viewpoints of the Intake staff were analysed to develop the components of the Intake Equity Assessment Map.

Our presentation will highlight how through strategically integrating equity frameworks into Signs of Safety we have been able to build organisational capacity and a responsive service to address the needs of black families, children and youth. This presentation will include two examples of Signs of Safety casework and the intentional strategies used to mitigate racism and oppression through a safety-focused and equity informed approach.



WEDNESDAY 1:45 – 2:15 PM

## Strength Grows With Change



**PRESENTERS:** **Gemma Wilson** (Social Work Manager),  
**Natasha Duddy** (Signs of Safety Implementation Lead)  
**Western Health & Social Care Trust, Northern Ireland**

Gemma Wilson, Social Work Manager and Natasha Duddy, Signs of Safety Implementation Lead, both within the Family Intervention Team, will present a case where Signs of Safety was used to support a family where a newborn baby was being considered for foster care following birth, to parents being able to look after their baby, and work with friends and professionals to develop safe ways of being together as a family. Gemma and Natasha will reflect upon their own practice and discuss their learning journey.

 **Western Health  
and Social Care Trust**

**Changing the story.**

WEDNESDAY 2:15 – 2:45 PM

## How To Lead The Learning Journey From Families And From Workers



**PRESENTERS:** **Nele Haedens** (Policy Maker & Project Leader, Implementation), **Angelique Beirlaen** (Caseworker in Court-Mandated Child Protection)

**Flemish Youth Care & Welfare Agency, Belgium**

Angelique and Nele from the Youth Care and Welfare Agency will highlight the paradigm shift they experienced in their thinking and their work by implementing Signs of Safety. They will show the opportunity that Signs of Safety offers as a parallel process, i.e. learning with the families as well as in the organisation.

By working openly, showing a willingness to truly listen, asking a number of questions and looking for exceptions in safety, we can build partnerships with families and renewed collaborations with professional partners.

**Agentschap  
Jongerenwelzijn**

WEDNESDAY 3:15 – 3:45 PM

## Sink Or Swim: New Team Embraces Change Wholeheartedly...What Happened?



**PRESENTERS:** **Caroline Cafferkey** (Social Work Team Leader), **Alison Forde** (Social Worker)

**Tusla Child & Family Agency, Republic of Ireland**

This presentation tells the story of how their intake team transformed their case practice using Signs of Safety. The implementation was done under challenging conditions with an almost complete staff turnover and uncertainty about how they could take on the new approach across the directorate.

Alison and Caroline will explain how using the mapping for themselves and with families, and using regular group supervision has allowed them to create a clearer picture of why we are involved with families. By consistently using the framework, focusing on the concerning adult behaviours and the impact on the child, risks, strengths and existing safety, the team has been better able to identify thresholds and this has ensured that the child has remained at the centre of their work and created stronger engagement with families. Caroline will share how she has built her skills in leading group supervision and reflect on her learnings about leading a newly-formed team through this transition.

**TUSLA**  
An Ghníomhaireacht um  
Leanai agus an Teaghlach  
Child and Family Agency

WEDNESDAY 3:45 – 4:15 PM

## Implementation Across All Services And Building A Functional IT System



**PRESENTERS:** **Victoria McLeod** (Senior Manager, Safe & Supported Teams), **Anna McAlpine** (Team Manager, Safe & Supported Teams)

**North Tyneside Local Authority, UK**

Victoria and Anna will talk about their experience of implementing Signs of Safety across services in a Local Authority and being first in the world to use IT software with accredited Signs of Safety templates.

The Local Authority had their Single Inspection Framework visit from OFSTED in March 2017 and the outcome placed them in the top ten performing Local Authorities in England — Good with Outstanding Features. However, not satisfied with 'good', they set out on an ambitious plan to bring in a model of practice which would be embraced and implemented across all services — Building on Good, Becoming Outstanding.



North Tyneside Council

WEDNESDAY 4:15 – 4:30 PM

## Book Launch: The Third Space — Adoption Solved Two Problems, But What About Me?



**AUTHOR:** **Agi Gault** (Licensed Signs of Safety Trainer and Consultant)

Agi's book *The Third Space: Adoption Solved Two Problems, But What About Me?* will have its international launch following the end of Day Two and prior to the Dinner. Agi will share briefly about the book and invite attendees to join her for its launch.

*The Third Space: Adoption Solved Two Problems, But What About Me?* is a narrative of Agi's life interspersed with a collection of her poems which were Agi's communication, metaphors of her lived experience, her therapy, and they say what has been unspeakable throughout her life.

Copies of her book will be available at the launch.

## Thursday 8 November

THURSDAY 9:00 – 9:30 AM

### Changing The Story After 22 Years: From Seeing A Problem Family To Finding Their Solutions With Them



**PRESENTER: Dorothy Soye** (Senior Practitioner)  
**Tusla Child & Family Agency, Republic of Ireland**

Dorothy will present about her work with a family who had been open to Tusla for 22 years because of the impact of adult drinking on the children. Dorothy will describe taking a chance and introducing Signs of Safety to a completely divided family while Tusla was in the middle of court proceedings applying for a full care order over 11-year-old Brandon. Dorothy will reflect on her biases, assumptions, frustrations and judgments she had about this family, given the past history. Dorothy will describe how she used questioning, listening and reflecting to heal the divisions in the extended family and bring everyone together to build safety around on Brandon and get him back living with them. Ultimately Dorothy describes changing her story about this family and this enabling the family to change the stories they had about themselves.

THURSDAY 9:30 – 10:00 AM

### The Success And Struggles...Words And Pictures In Family Services



**PRESENTER: Amanda Beadle** (Child Protection Worker,  
Family Services)  
**Family & Children's Services Of Guelph & Wellington  
County, Canada**

Amanda Beadle, Child Protection Worker in Family Services, will present three case examples demonstrating the use of Signs of Safety tools to engage parent(s) in the Words and Pictures process and including the children in Safety Planning.

This presentation will demonstrate how family meetings were used to identify the worries for the family/children, but also how it initiated the process of Words and Pictures. While each case presented its own strengths and challenges, the presentation demonstrates how the use of Words and Pictures was valuable in completing safety planning with children in the care of their parent(s).



THURSDAY 10:00 – 10:30 AM

## Learning To Dance With Mother: A Swedish Example Of Using The Whole Safety Planning Roadmap



**PRESENTER:** Linn van Bruggen (Signs of Safety Trainer & Consultant)

**Mölndal Children's Services, Sweden**

In this presentation Linn will tell us about the work of Lena and Victoria of Mölndal Children's Services where the safety planning work was done rigorously in a case involving violence, drug use and neglect.

We will also hear from the mother telling us about her experience of the work in what had become a stuck case for both her and the professionals.

In addition to describing the detail of the practice, Linn will speak about how the professionals organised themselves so they could lead the family in this work.



THURSDAY 11:00 – 11:30 AM

## Missouri's Implementation Journey



**PRESENTERS:** Christy Collins (Interim Deputy Director), Kara Wilcox-Bauer (Program Development Specialist)  
**Missouri Department Of Social Services, USA**

Christy and Kara will discuss the journey Missouri continues to take to implement Signs of Safety statewide. They will discuss what has been achieved over the past four years and highlight the strengths of the implementation as well as the struggles.

Christy and Kara will share lessons learned and tips for new implementation sites. They will explore how the judiciary alignment and integration work happening in Missouri has the power to inspire a bigger version for jurisdictions around the world that are also implementing Signs of Safety in complex legal contexts.



**Changing the story.**

THURSDAY 11:30 AM – 12:00 PM

## Using A Safety Object: K9 To The Rescue



**PRESENTER:** **Cathy Phillips** (Audit Consultant, Practice Lead For Signs Of Safety)

**Children & Young People's Services, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council, UK**

Cathy Phillips, a Practice Lead with Rotherham CYPS, has been co-working with a complex family using Signs of Safety. The breakthrough came when a safety object chosen by the 7-year-old became the focus of the safety plan. The adults in his life turned their attention to him.

Cathy will illustrate how the safety object helped the family network develop the safety plan using Words and Pictures and were able to prioritise the changes they needed to make for the child to be safe.



THURSDAY 12:00 – 12:30 PM

## Changing Our Children's Story

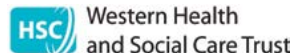


**PRESENTERS:** **Gavin Hamilton** (Social Work Manager),  
**Joanne Curley-Hannaway** (Social Worker)

**Western Health & Social Care Trust, Northern Ireland**

Gavin Hamilton, Social Work Manager and Joanne Curley-Hannaway, Social Worker (Looked After Children's Team), will present a case where Signs of Safety was used to support a family from parents being 'Ruled Out' — where their children would be parented separately in separate long-term placements, one in Adoption and one in Kinship Care — to parents being given new hope and being 'Ruled In' with the family being reunited at home!

Gavin and Joanne will reflect upon their own practice in this case example and discuss the learning for them and how this experience has developed their practice.



THURSDAY 1:30 – 2:00 PM

## The Power Of Networks And Meeting The Challenges Of Finding Them



**PRESENTER: Michael Cunningham** (Social Work Team Leader)  
**Tusla Child & Family Agency, Republic of Ireland**

This presentation will look at how the formation of a support network within a Child Protection case created safety for the children and became a source of support for the parent.

Michael will speak about how the network was formed and the children's views on the people within it. You will also hear from a member of the network speaking openly about what being a network member means for him and how he feels it has worked for this family.



THURSDAY 2:00 – 2:30 PM

## Reflections On The 2018 Gathering



**PRESENTERS:** Professor Eileen Munro CBE,  
Dr Louise Caffrey

Professor Eileen Munro and Dr Louise Caffrey will reflect on their observations and highlights from this Gathering.

This final session will encourage all participants to think more broadly about their own policy issues and those that face all child protection practitioners and organisations, and will assist us as we seek to create more participatory, family-focused children's services.

THURSDAY 2:30 – 2:45 PM

## Closing



**PRESENTER:** Professor Andrew Turnell  
Signs of Safety Co-Creator

Andrew will offer some final reflections followed by a video of our shared learning over the course of the Gathering.



RESOLUTIONS

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SIGNS OF SAFETY

# Knowledge Bank

An online library of  
the best examples and  
learning resources for child  
protection workers and  
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Explore for yourself at:  
[knowledgebank.signsofsafety.net](https://knowledgebank.signsofsafety.net)



## **An organisational subscription to the Knowledge Bank can support your Signs of Safety implementation with access to:**

- Over 100 examples of harm statements, danger statements, safety goals and safety scales
- All products from the Signs of Safety online store, including Power of Partnership, Safety Planning Workbook
- Every International Gathering Presentation
  - A substantial set of resources to assist your implementation including:
    - › Mission Critical Roadmap
    - › Comprehensive Implementation Theory, Framework and Trajectory



## Noticed anything different lately?

In the coming months you'll start to see **How Servelec is Changing**, as we move towards our integrated identity for our future together.

**What isn't changing is our unwavering commitment to our partnership with Signs of Safety®.** As the Lead Development Partner in the UK we combine world-leading practice and IT collaboration to support you in delivering the best outcomes for children.

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