



Changing landscapes in Leeds for Conference 2020

Psychology's role in supporting future generations, the future workforce and future research will be up for discussion at the British Psychological Society's Conference 2020. The two-day event, held at the Royal Armouries Museum in Leeds, will open with a special live broadcast of BBC Radio 4's *All in The Mind*, presented by Society member, radio presenter and author Claudia Hammond. Professor of Public Engagement with Science Alice Roberts (University of Birmingham) will appear as an after-dinner speaker.

The conference will also feature a listening session on equality, diversity and inclusion, and keynote talks from Professor Miranda Wolpert OBE, Futurist and CEO of research think tank Fast Future Rohit Talwar, and Professor Alison Gopnik (University of California at Berkeley). The theme of 'Psychology of the future: Changing landscapes' will aim to bring together topics including psychology's role in tackling climate change, social injustice and poverty, the impact of AI on workers, and the challenges of increasing trust and openness in science.

Chair of the Society's Standing Conference Committee Dr Michael Smith (University of Northumbria) said he hoped the event would trigger dialogue, new innovations in research and practice, and showcase some of the work psychologists are already doing to help society meet the demands of a rapidly changing world. He told us: 'At Conference 2020 we will consider the role of psychology in addressing global challenges to support future sustainability.'

Given the British Psychological Society's central campaigning priority for 2020, 'From poverty to flourishing', Smith said there would be a focus at

Conference 2020 on the contributions psychology has to make in challenging the persistent, multifaceted problems of poverty, which have wide-ranging consequences for individuals and communities. 'There will also be much consideration of the ways in which the psychological research landscape is changing, via changing research practices and open science, the increased availability and use of Big Data and the trust that the public have in psychology and psychological research. Please join us, for what promises to be an insightful, inspiring and thought provoking event aimed at highlighting the increased relevance of psychology in shaping the landscape of the future.'

CEO of the British Psychological Society Sarb Bajwa said: 'We're focusing on the future for 2020 and want to find out how psychology can tackle some of society's biggest questions. Whether it's the climate crisis, poverty, the rise of artificial intelligence or the question of trust in science, I'm excited to find out what the latest psychological approaches are at conference 2020 in Leeds.'

In the student stream, Society award winner Dr Amy Orben will talk on screen time (and hear more in the latest episode of our PsychCrunch podcast). The Psychologist is also supporting a special student competition around the Conference and its theme. Students are being asked: **imagine the year is 2040. You are still working in Psychology, but it has changed. How?**

For more information and to register please see www.bps.org.uk/events/bps-conference-2020
The Conference is being held at the Royal Armouries in Leeds from Tuesday 30 June until Wednesday 1 July.

Changemakers on the big issues

The Big Issue recently named '100 Changemakers for 2020' including individuals, campaign groups and charities who are working to tackle challenges facing the world. Two psychologists, working on holiday hunger and decision-making, were named on the list.

Developmental psychologist Professor Greta Defeyter (Northumbria University) shifted her research focus around 17 years ago after visiting a school breakfast club, where she was exploring the effect of different breakfast cereals on cognition, and saw a young boy stuffing toast into his pockets. 'I spoke to the head teacher of the school and she explained to me that... they were running a school breakfast club because children were coming into school hungry and they weren't able to concentrate... and that their behaviour was also very poor.'

At the time there had been hardly any UK research on school breakfast clubs and Defeyter began looking into the effects of attending breakfast clubs on children's social relationships, attendance, behaviour and cognition. Later, while attending an All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on School Food, it suddenly occurred to Defeyter that many of the children who relied on breakfast clubs and free school meals during term time would have no such support during school holidays.

Defeyter, who is also Director of the interdisciplinary Healthy Living Lab, turned her attention to so-called holiday hunger, finding again that the area had been under researched, although some local-level interventions did exist to support families across the school holidays. She has explored the effects of school holidays on children's dietary intake, social relationships, health, wellbeing and educational attainment, as well as the role of holiday clubs in ameliorating some of these factors.

Defeyter said one of the most surprising things she had uncovered in her research so far was the extent of holiday hunger. 'It was a hidden hunger. One of the first things we did,



Professor Greta Defeyter

working with colleagues from social sciences, was to map the extent of holiday provision across the UK. This published research clearly showed evidence of need and the need for a nationwide programme to ensure families and children's needs are met. The need for that provision was probably the most surprising thing... current estimates suggest that about four million children are at risk of food insecurity.'

Defeyter and her colleagues at the Healthy Living Lab are also active in bringing their work to the attention of policymakers. The lab shares its findings directly through the Commons Library and the APPG on School Food and the APGG on Hunger as well through Select Committees. Defeyter is an advisor for government and her work has been included in various government publications.

Defeyter said she was 'absolutely flabbergasted' when she learned of her inclusion as a Big Issue Changemaker. 'I want to say thanks to *The Big Issue* because they've really laid down the challenge. It's not what my lab has done, the challenge is what we are going to do in the future.' Defeyter said the solution to holiday hunger was not as simple as handing out parcels of food to struggling families – she said a true shift would involve a change in government policies that address structural causes of poverty, including reform to the benefits

system, alongside a change in culture and attitudes. 'This is something that will involve a cultural shift in attitudes towards holiday provision across the UK. The stigma at the moment is around the fact that holiday clubs are something that are primarily offered to the disadvantaged members of our society... I suggest that we see holiday provision as a nationwide offer to all children and families.'

Defeyter, who is also part of the British Psychological Society's Expert Reference Group on its policy priority for the year – From Poverty to Flourishing – said that alongside these approaches governments should also consider benefit reform, the living wage and investing in communities. 'These are the real key factors that will drive changes in poverty and help the estimated 5.2 million children that are predicted to be in poverty over the next few years.'

A second Changemaker, Chartered Psychologist and chief fire officer with West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service Dr Sabrina Cohen-Hatton, has had a life of defying the odds. At 15 she became homeless for almost two years and sold *The Big Issue* before starting work in the fire service aged 18. As well as gaining her PhD while working full-time in the fire service, and becoming the youngest fire chief in the UK aged 36, Cohen-Hatton is also an Honorary Research Fellow at Cardiff University. She has researched decision-making and risk in firefighters – work that has informed national policy and won multiple awards.

Last year Cohen-Hatton published her book *The Heat of the Moment* and since then has appeared on *Desert Island Discs*, in *Marie Claire's* 2019 list of Future Makers, and challenged stereotypes and the stigma of homelessness. She told *The Big Issue*: 'I want to encourage people not to feel ashamed of their backgrounds or where they've come from. It was something I suffered with for a long time. I don't want anyone else to feel like they have to hide part of their history, because it makes you who you are.'

Including children in their own education

Annie Brookman-Byrne reports from the Division of Educational and Child Psychology Annual Conference 2020 in Northampton.

A role for neuroscience?

Neuroscience is clearly a hot topic for the Division of Educational and Child Psychology (DECP), as the words neuroalarmism, neuroenthusiasm, neurobalance, neurobabble, neurohype, neurorealism and neuroessentialism all appeared in talks at the DECP conference this year. Nicki Carpenter outlined neuroalarmist and neuroenthusiast views on adolescent development in the digital age, but ended with an emphasis on neurobalance – growing digital resilience well before the teenage years so as to moderate any risk associated with technology.

Not everyone agreed on the role of neuroscience in educational psychology. Dan O'Hare voiced concern that neurobabble (overly simplified and misinterpreted neuroscience) is occurring more and more in educational psychology. He argued that educational psychology doesn't need neuroscience, that psychological confidence is what's needed. Tamara Hussain and Veronica Lawrence described trepidation and wariness around neuroscience among educational psychologists but argued that educational psychologists are actually the ones who can dispel myths about neuroscience, bridging the gap between neuroscience and education. For now it looks like the field is not willing to do what O'Hare urged in his talk and 'remove the brain!'.

Segregation within mainstream schools

Becky Taylor told us that education in England is generally very comprehensive, but that there is a lot of segregation within schools – at age 15, pretty much everyone is in segregated classes for at least one subject. Despite this widespread practice, there is no overall benefit of segregation, and in fact it exacerbates wider social inequalities, resulting in a double disadvantage. Taylor highlighted that pupils can be misallocated to groups, with black students, Asian students and girls more likely misallocated to lower sets, and white students and boys more likely misallocated to higher sets.

There is also evidence of teacher allocation bias, said Taylor, with the highly qualified teachers allocated to high sets. Perhaps the most concerning evidence Taylor presented was the effect of this segregation on students' confidence – being in a higher or lower set had a causal impact on self-confidence, which also resulted in a self-fulfilling prophecy. Taylor didn't recommend abolishing segregation in schools – first there needs to be an evidence base around what will make mixed attainment groups work. She did recommend that any segregation should be based on attainment only, so that attitudes, behaviour and teacher opinions don't come into play.

Including trans children

'We are not at a place of full acceptance or equality for trans people yet', Robin Dundas told us last year in *The Psychologist*. So it's not surprising that almost all research into the experiences of trans children has focused on the negatives. But Matt Leonard said that he wanted to explore the positive school experiences of trans children. Leonard set out to research the small things at school that made a difference to the young people he interviewed – not dismissing their negative experiences, but focusing on what made things better. One interviewee initially said he had no positive experiences to report, then remembered a moment of acceptance – when his teacher said 'ladies and gentleman', rather than just 'ladies', to include him

at the girls' school he attended. This exemplifies the most prolific theme that Leonard identified, the importance of language. Respect of their chosen name was often the first sign of respect these children experienced.

Other themes that Leonard identified were support from an individual teacher who would challenge students and peers, whole-school approaches such as LGBT societies, the importance of community both online and through youth groups, and 'my own best friend' – self-advocacy and humour that provided self-support. Leonard said educational psychologists are uniquely placed to support transgender children, so an understanding of these positive experiences might help.

Cora Sargeant recommended

the BPS guidelines for psychologists working with gender, sexuality and relationship diversity. Sargeant spoke about a new model of gender that she would like to introduce to children, moving away from the binary girl/boy model. In Sargeant's model there are three spectra, along which people can land anywhere (or in more than one place, or nowhere) on a scale from masculinity to femininity. These three spectra are biological configuration, gender identity, and gender expression. While Sargeant sees this model as a bit reductionist too, the aim is to communicate the idea that gender can be diverse, there are many ways of being in the world, and all of these are okay. Sargeant likened this to the shift there has been to accepting and understanding different sexualities.



Rob Webster spoke about the experiences of pupils who work with a teaching assistant (TA). The inclusion of special educational needs (SEN) children in mainstream schools is heavily reliant on TAs, who make up 26 per cent of the school workforce. Webster described a pattern of segregation and separation of these pupils who are more likely to be grouped together in class, and have more interactions with TAs at the expense of interactions with peers and teachers.

This is a problem because TAs offer lower quality pedagogy (Webster stressed this is not their fault), giving inaccurate or confusing explanations, with a focus on task completion and correction, through unengaging and repetitive tasks. TAs can even sometimes complete the work for the child. One-to-one TAs are considered essential for some pupils, but it can be embarrassing to have a TA, and Webster said that one TA voiced the view that it may not be healthy for a child to spend 20 hours a week with one person. Overall, Webster painted a picture of the marginalisation of SEN children in what is presented as an inclusive setting.

Much like Taylor's cautionary words, Webster didn't recommend abolishing TAs – they make up such a large part of the school workforce that it is not clear what would happen if they were to go. Instead, schools should review and improve the use of TAs.

Inclusion and play

Former Labour MP Thelma Walker was a headteacher and SENCO before leaving under Michael Gove to go into politics. Walker argued that we need a cultural shift in how vulnerable children are supported in school. She

described how exclusions can be an easy option for schools, so that the excluded pupil isn't impacting on school results. Walker spoke about the human rights issue relating to isolation booths, whereby pupils are denied the right to learn effectively. Involving children in the writing of their education and health care plans was one of Walker's recommendations for including the voice of the young person. Walker described herself as a voice for vulnerable people, and though she is no longer a teacher or an MP, she intends to continue being that voice.

The conference itself enacted inclusion through inviting two different groups of young people to speak. Shooting Stars, a group of young people with special educational needs and disability (SEND) spoke about their involvement in local decision-making in organisations and the county council. Talk Out Loud, a mental health awareness group for young people, presented their work that promotes the idea that it's okay to talk about mental health. They also crucially share information on where young people can go to find support for each other.

The DECP launched a video at the conference (see tinyurl.com/bpsrighttoplay), following on from the Division's position paper on children's right to play that was published last year. The children in the video speak about the fun of play, its health and wellbeing benefits, while giving advice for adults: 'If adults played more they wouldn't be as stressed all the time' (if only it were that simple, children). A key point from the position paper is emphasised – that excluding children from play time should never be a punishment. The video features author Michael Rosen, who says: 'Play isn't an extra, it isn't an add-on. Play is a fundamental human right.'

The tensions of ‘meaningful work’

Zoe Sanderson reports from a keynote at the British Psychological Society’s Division of Occupational Psychology Annual Conference.

What makes work meaningful? In her keynote, Professor Gillian Symon (Royal Holloway, University of London) dived into this deep question, pointing first to its long and distinguished history in the social and political sciences.

For Marx, the issue revolved around alienation, for Weber it was linked to the necessity of working for the greater good and the Protestant work ethic. In psychology, we have Hackman and Oldham’s famous ‘job characteristics model’, which includes meaningfulness among the psychological states that can contribute to positive work outcomes such as motivation and performance. A seminal 2010 review produced by Brent Rosso and colleagues suggests that work is meaningful when it resonates with our beliefs or values, bolsters our self-efficacy and self-worth, seems purposeful and significant, provides a sense of belonging, allows us to transcend the self, and echoes wider cultural understandings of meaningfulness. Other recent theorists point to the importance of authenticity in work – the antithesis of what David Graeber calls ‘bullshit jobs’ – or emphasise the moral and ethical aspects of meaningfulness (as in Ruth Yeoman’s *Meaningful Work and Workplace Democracy*), exploring how it may involve aiming for a greater good, regardless of whether that contributes to an organisation’s bottom line.

It might seem, then, that meaningfulness at work is a straightforwardly positive thing. But Symon suggested that ‘meaningful work is messy – it’s dynamic and requires the negotiation of tensions’. For example, in the case of zookeepers in the USA, research by J. Stuart Bunderson and Jeffery Thompson suggests meaningfulness is a double-edged sword: by viewing zookeeping as a calling, these workers experienced a strong sense of the significance of what they did, but they sacrificed pay, personal time, and comfort for the sake of doing work that they considered to be a moral duty, making them vulnerable to exploitation. Moreover, according to Symon, the meaningfulness of work changes over time because ‘it’s something we need to negotiate between us and with ourselves. We have to work at it, work through it, and work to produce it.’

Given the ubiquity of digital technologies in many modern jobs – laptops, mobile phones, social media, and the like – Symon posed the question of how these might shape our interpretations of work as meaningful. With her co-researchers at the EPSRC-funded Digital Brain Switch project, she gathered video diary entries from research participants that included a group of social entrepreneurs, distilling from this material four tensions of meaningful work in a digital age.

First, the tension between doing work that most people would regard as highly meaningful (such as social entrepreneurship) and the necessity of doing mundane and unrewarded tech-related work in order to make that



possible. Symon commented that her colleague on the DBS project, Dr Rebecca Whiting (Birkbeck, University of London), ‘saw hours of footage of social entrepreneurs maintaining technology – setting up laptops, clearing out emails, charging devices, fixing gadgets when they break down – this is invisible work that she called “digi-housekeeping”’. While familiar to many of us, digi-housekeeping can be more extensive when we have the older technology that accompanies shoestring budgets, such as in many social enterprises. She continues: ‘meaningful work always involves some mundanity, but digital technology generates more of it’.

Secondly, the high levels of emotional engagement and self-realisation that meaningful work can provide is delicately balanced against the tendency for this to tip into overload. Many workers know that digital technologies can facilitate the blurring of boundaries between work and non-work life, making it hard to resist the pull of emails in the evenings and at weekends, for example, and this may be intensified by experiencing work as very meaningful.

Thirdly, the drive to form meaningful connections to others through social media sits uneasily with the perceived exploitation of those connections by the companies that run the major platforms. This may be especially problematic for Symon’s social entrepreneurs, whose business models seek to offer an alternative to the dominance of large corporations, but who also need to generate profile and networks by using those platforms to make their enterprises succeed.

Lastly, participants in the DBS project described a tension between the desire to authentically reflect their ‘true self’ online and the perils of exposure to public scrutiny in a sometimes hostile online world. Awareness of these tensions may help us to wisely navigate and potentially extend meaningfulness in work, as psychologists or simply in our own working lives.

Zoe Sanderson is a doctoral researcher at the University of Bristol, and one our ‘Voices In Psychology’ winners.

More on our website, in a report from a ‘race gap’ symposium <https://thepsychologist.bps.org.uk/refusing-turn-blind-eye-race-gap>

Pockets of resistance and change

Ella Rhodes and Jon Sutton with a few highlights from the Annual Conference of the British Psychological Society's Division of Clinical Psychology, in Solihull.

It's not often you're asked to tickle a stranger in the first session of a conference. Konrad Jacobs' pet hate is the framing of so-called medically unexplained symptoms in children. To induce such symptoms he got us to split into pairs and to ask each other the most ticklish parts of our bodies, before slowly moving a finger toward that particular part. We laughed, we tensed up and backed away.

'You felt those sensations but you weren't being touched – you've just experienced a medically unexplained symptom. A symptom with associated avoidance behaviour which is not associated with illness, disease or pathology.' A Consultant Clinical Psychologist and joint clinical and programme lead of the Oxford Centre for Children and Young People in Pain, Jacobs has worked with many children who experience persistent pain, tenderness and avoidance of contact in areas of their bodies which were injured but have long since healed. He said 'medically-unexplained' was a misnomer given that many physical symptoms people experience cannot be explained by medicine, that medicine does not fully understand the mechanisms and aetiology of all recognised diseases, and the term separates the mind and body when they are inextricably linked. Jacobs argues for a term such as 'persistent physical symptoms' instead, found to be more acceptable to patients in this position.

In a session on the use of Psychologically Informed Environments (PIEs) Consultant Clinical and Forensic Psychologist Dr Helen Miles spoke about her work with Centrepoin – a homeless charity for young people. Since joining the charity in May, Miles said she had aimed to increase staff training in psychological tools to support the young people they work with, increase the use of reflective practice, make the housing for young people more welcoming and homely, and embed evidence-based practice.

Catherine, a former Centrepoin resident, and Morgan, a current resident, have been working with Miles as PIEneers giving their feedback on the PIE strategy and asking other residents what they'd hope to see in their environment. They shared some quotes from a poster they put together outlining what young people expect from a PIE. 'When we're at Centrepoin we want to feel we belong and we're at home'.

In his keynote address Dr Dave Harper, Reader in Clinical Psychology (University of East London) pointed out the huge rise in anti-depressant prescriptions in the UK since 1998 as well as growing levels of inequality and its role in distress and mental illness. Harper noted there is still little public appetite for changes in tax rates or support for lower-earners. He suggested that the way issues are framed and the narratives surrounding them affect how we understand our own and others' experiences – outlined in the Power Threat Meaning Framework as an alternative way of understanding mental illness. He said clinical psychologists themselves have blind spots to inequality – there is very little BAME representation in the profession, with the workforce not reflecting the make-up of the population.

However Harper was quick to point out that there was hope. Prevention is on the government's agenda and there is acknowledgement by the UN and other bodies that social issues can affect mental health. He suggested that clinical psychology could be a voice for taking a psychosocial and preventative approach to mental health, and pointed to the work of Psychologists for Social Change and the potential role for clinical psychologists in shifting the public's perception of the social determinants of mental health.

On day two, Louise Hayes led a workshop on Acceptance and

Commitment Therapy (ACT) for young people. 'Anxiety is like a big elephant in the room', she said, and we must 'push it out of the way to see the vitality and value'. ACT suggests that what you love and care about should be the biggest thing in the room, along with what in you makes it hard to get that. What would give you a rich and meaningful life? We can't hide from the fact that facing what is important to us can make us feel vulnerable. Our 'British Anglican heritage' – all stoicism and 'pull your socks up' – hasn't, Hayes argued, served us well. 'It certainly isn't serving young people well... we need to help young people open up to the normality of being human.'

As a practitioner, that can involve creating contexts that empower young people to clarify what they value or what brings them vitality, and to choose value-consistent actions. Techniques might include encouraging the young people to do 'weird, quirky things that have no emotion in them... break the rule, say "I can't do it" and then just do it'. Hayes outlined the Discoverer Noticer Adviser roles that make up our minds, and what happens when you get 'stuck inside an adviser space that is all about rules and risk'. Young people need to step outside of thinking and see it as a tool; to explore in order to develop skills and resources, and expand their context. 'It's an active, engaged way to work with clients to help them get what they care about', Hayes concluded, 'and I love it'.

Emma Watson (Sussex Partnership NHS Trust) spoke passionately about her work with Sara Meddings on peer support and the lived experience. 'I'm obsessed with peer support', she admitted, describing her personal experiences of feeling lost and lonely and then coming to view lived experience 'as a strength I could use'. Sharing that lived and life experience can 'sometimes be quite a political thing

to do', Watson admitted, pointing to surveys which suggest a third of people are still afraid of the stigma attached to it. Common fears are that peer support workers will be 'too fragile', or won't know the difference between friendships and working relationships. Role clarity is important, Watson said. She ended with a fascinating consideration of when / how to share life experience, and what happens when an approach based on mutuality meets a hierarchy – peer workers can find their lived experience is both a source of power and a source of feeling powerless.

There followed an inspirational set of talks from Sheffield, the UK's first 'City of Sanctuary'. Claire Bone (South Yorkshire Housing Association / University of Sheffield) described her work with the Cuthbert Bank Homeless Families Service, and Diane Morrison from the Sheffield Group of Psychologists for Social Change talked about 'pockets of resistance and change' in such projects. That led nicely into 'Make my city fair', a stirring account of change in Birmingham. Martin Straker Welds, a Labour Councillor in the Moseley Ward, described how austerity has 'eroded Birmingham's capacity to support our community'. Psychologist Lawrence Moulin joined him in arguing that austerity divides, equality unites. 'We need to tell the stories of what we have lost', Moulin said, 'and change public attitudes about the positive societal impacts that follow from early investment'. Angela Hewitt called for research on how to communicate austerity, and its 'false economies – there are no savings... it's not acceptable and it's not fair.' Emma Bridger (Birmingham City University) looked to find a way to 'bring people's stories to the budgetholders – a "balance sheet" of the real cost of cuts'. Moulin urged us to 'challenge austerity head on', and to work in partnership on how 'doing something different can enable other parts of the system to do more, support people better and reduce pressure on services'.

Additional reflections at thepsychologist.bps.org.uk/pockets-resistance-and-change

Five minutes with... Dr Chantelle Wood

The University of Sheffield's 'Plastics: Redefining Single Use' project brings together chemists, psychologists, ecologists, biologists, engineers, physicists and researchers from the arts and humanities, to develop solutions to plastic waste. Ella Rhodes spoke to one of those involved with the project – psychologist and University of Sheffield academic and lecturer Dr Chantelle Wood.



Tell me about your interests.

I'm interested in interventions that help translate people's intentions into actions. I also focus on testing why particular behaviour change interventions work. For example, one of the behaviour change techniques that I'm most interested in is the Question-Behaviour Effect, also known as the mere-measurement effect, which refers to the finding that simply asking people questions about their behaviour can increase the likelihood that they will engage in that behaviour. I'm conducting research that examines the role that cognitive dissonance plays in this effect, looking at whether changes in behaviour occur in order to reduce the discomfort people may feel when their predictions about their future behaviour are inconsistent with their past behaviour (for example 'I predict that I will donate blood in the future... but I haven't in the past').

How did you get involved with the plastics project?

I was invited to be a co-investigator due to my expertise in behaviour change. Plastic pollution is fast becoming a pandemic, and single-use plastics are also particularly salient in the public consciousness following David Attenborough's *Blue Planet II* which highlighted the impact of single-use plastics on sea-life, along with the BBC's *War on Plastic*. I jumped at the chance to be involved: being able to apply my knowledge of behaviour change to a key environmental issue is invaluable from a professional viewpoint, but

also from a personal one – I want the world that my daughter grows up in to be a safe and healthy one.

What has the project involved so far from a psychology perspective?

The project takes the perspective that plastics aren't the enemy – they have many positive properties that have led to their ubiquity. For example, they're cheap to produce, and lightweight and hardy to transport. The problem is the lack of value that human beings place on plastics – treating them as something discardable rather than a precious commodity. We're not fighting a war against plastic but a war against plastic waste. Taking a psychological perspective is therefore critical in order to understand how people think, feel and behave with respect to plastic across a wide range of domains. For example, we are currently looking at the barriers and facilitators of reducing, reusing or recycling agricultural plastics on dairy farms, the public's concern with respect to sustainable practices in dentistry, and the acceptability of reuse in the general public. Which plastic products are people willing to reuse and what impact does their appearance and ownership history (i.e. your bottle or someone else's) have on willingness to reuse?

Have you done much multidisciplinary work in the past?

This is my first time working on a multidisciplinary project, and indeed an interdisciplinary one at that, where different disciplines are actively working together to advance knowledge. It's been a fascinating experience. While psychologists have the expertise to identify and tackle the barriers to individuals reducing, reusing or recycling single-use plastics, this is only part of the puzzle. We need the expertise of polymer chemists, engineers and physicists regarding what properties of plastics might facilitate effective reuse or recycling. We need the expertise of ecologists, environmental biologists and experts in life-cycle analyses on the differential environmental impact of reusing or recycling single-use plastics, and importantly the environmental impact of their alternatives. Finally, we also need the expertise of those working or conducting research in fields where single-use plastics are particularly prevalent or important, in order to appreciate the drivers of single use and preserve this functionality.

What are the next steps from a psychology point of view?

As we develop our understanding of how people think, feel and behave with respect to plastics, and what we need to change in order to minimise the environmental impact of single-use plastics in particular, we've begun to think about how we can encourage the sustainable use of plastics. There are a number of studies underway or in planning that evaluate interventions to encourage plastic reuse, recycling and other behaviours related to sustainability. For example, the psychology team are currently collecting data for a study that evaluates a behaviour change intervention to promote the use of reusable coffee cups – an item that many of us possess, but don't always use.

News online: Find more news at www.thepsychologist.org.uk/reports, including a major new READY trial, a touch survey and more.

For the latest peer-reviewed research, digested, see www.bps.org.uk/digest. Email potential stories on psychologist@bps.org.uk or tweet @psychmag.

from the chief executive



January is always a really busy time for us as we start our work for the new year across the British Psychological Society, and hold three of our biggest network conferences within a couple of weeks of each other.

I was delighted to be able to attend all three this year and really enjoyed my time with our Divisions of Clinical, Educational and Child, and Occupational Psychology.

At the DECP conference in Northampton I saw the launch of a new video which they've been working on with children's poet Michael Rosen, which built on last year's call for schools to stop taking away children's break

times as a form of punishment.

Our educational psychologists have done a huge amount to explain why this is such a bad idea, but hearing schoolkids themselves talk about why play is so important really hammered that message home, as I'm sure it will for anyone who sees it. One particularly powerful comment from one of the young people was that 'maybe adults have forgotten how it feels to play', something that struck a chord with me and we could all consider a bit more.

You can watch the video on our website (bps.org.uk/righttoplay).

The DECP, DCP and DART-P jointly proposed our Senate campaign around children and young people last year and it achieved some real success, particularly through the response to Ofsted's new inspection framework.

We want the work we did on that campaign to feed into this year's priority, 'From poverty to flourishing'. Poverty affects thousands of children and young people in the UK, and there are clear links between living in poverty and poor mental health outcomes for young people.

We're not going to be able to make a difference for our children and young people without educational and child psychologists continuing the fine work which I saw in Northampton, so I've been pleased to see some further exciting developments from Scotland.

The BPS has been working with the Scottish Government on a new funding model for educational psychologists and, while we can't yet confirm full details, it's an extremely positive step. The new model will see the Scottish Government fund educational psychologists through the course of their training, including taking our educational psychology qualification.

I've been keen to expand the work we do alongside other organisations and policy makers, and both this news from Scotland and the confirmation that Health Education England will be continuing to fund 100 per cent of the training costs for clinical psychologists in England show the importance of that engagement.

Our members are involved in exciting projects such as this up and down the country and I'm always keen to hear about them, so please get in touch and let me know.

Sarb Bajwa is Chief Executive of the British Psychological Society. Contact him at Sarb.Bajwa@bps.org.uk

Run for wellbeing

A charity working to help young people look after their mental wellbeing has launched a free guide to help students recognise the symptoms of depression and anxiety. The launch of the Charlie Waller Memorial Trust guide forms part of the charity's Run for Wellbeing initiative, which highlights the benefits of exercise for mental wellbeing and asks people to share personal stories of how exercise has helped them with their mental health on social media using the #RunForWellbeing hashtag.

The trust was set up shortly after 28-year-old Charlie Waller died by suicide in 1997 after suffering with depression. Its CEO Clare Stafford said the charity was increasingly receiving reports of students struggling with their mental health. 'Our charity's mission is to equip young people with the tools they need to take care of their mental health, and to encourage them to seek help if they are depressed or experiencing other mental health issues.'

The new guide, available to download for free, contains advice on what students can do if they are finding it hard to concentrate or are having trouble sleeping and



emphasises that anxiety and depression are common. It also encourages students to be open about how they are feeling, to talk about their problems and to access support through their GP or university.

To find out more see tinyurl.com/s2m42pr and also see the studentsagainstdespression.org website – funded by the Charlie Waller Memorial Trust.

POST briefing note on autism

A briefing document produced by last year's winner of the joint BPS and Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) postgraduate award has now been published. Margaret Laurie's note covers information about autism and its prevalence, co-occurring conditions, interventions and support, legislation and policy, and the provision of services for autistic people.

The award gives postgraduate students the opportunity to work alongside the POST to produce a concise and evidence-based document on psychological topics for MPs and peers. In her note Laurie, a PhD student in clinical brain sciences at the University of Edinburgh, also pointed to evidence that autistic people have the lowest employment rates of all disability groups. 'Many autistic people can and do work, but face barriers in employers' understanding of autism and lack of reasonable adjustments. The Department of Work and Pensions and the Autism Alliance produced an Autism and Neurodiversity Toolkit,



Margaret Laurie

which promotes awareness and understanding of autism and other neurodevelopmental conditions in the workplace. Research suggests that tailored support can reduce pre-university anxiety and improve graduate employment.'

Laurie said she was grateful for the three months she spent at POST learning about how scientific

research is used in policy settings and has taken that knowledge back to Edinburgh speaking with colleagues about how to make their research more accessible to policy makers. 'My PhD is about autism, so it was a great opportunity to take a step back and think about broader implications of my work, and I got to meet and interview some fantastic researchers and advocates whose work I've been following for years. It was great to learn about new topics I haven't quite studied before (like genetics!) and I relived the thrill of starting and finishing a project in only a couple of months... I cannot oversell the placement opportunities at POST in the slightest – it was challenging, invigorating, rewarding and unforgettable.'

Applications for the 2020 award will open in June, please see tinyurl.com/ybqkm8xs for more information and to apply.

To download a pdf of Laurie's note please see: <http://bit.ly/2umHuLh>



BPS Approved Certificate in



CBT

for Children and Adolescents

Starts Spring 2020, London or Webcast

Designed for SDS Seminars Ltd by DR ANDREW BECK, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Honorary Senior Lecturer at the University of Manchester, Senior Lecturer on the Children and Young People's IAPT programme, BABCP President Elect

This comprehensive course consists of:

- 19 training days spread over 12 months
- 15 training modules (1 – 3 days long)
- 133 training hours
- Final Online Exam

You can attend:

- At BPS, London or
- Via Live Interactive Webcast

Highly qualified tutors:

- Dr Andrew Beck, Consultant Clinical Psychologist
- Lisa Anderson, Accredited CBT Therapist
- Dr Rebecca Linnell, Principal Clinical Psychologist
- Dr Angela Latham, Consultant Clinical Psychologist
- Prof Paul Grantham, Consultant Clinical Psychologist

On completion you receive:

- BPS Approved Certificate in CBT for Children and Adolescents
- SDS Accreditation in CBT for Children and Adolescents
- Certificate of attendance after each module

Course Modules:

- CBT: Introductory Course
- Applying CBT to Children and Adolescents
- Working with Parents and Teachers
- Behaviour Difficulties
- Panic Disorder
- Separation Anxiety
- Generalised Anxiety Disorder
- School Refusal
- Behavioural Activation for Depression
- Treatment of Phobias
- Impact of Trauma and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Social Anxiety Disorder
- Working with Selective Mutism
- Treating Tics and Tourette's Syndrome
- Working Across Cultures



CERTIFICATE FEEDBACK:

I would like to say that the **Certificate Course** has been excellent especially all the days on Anxiety and Panic. The school refusal too was immediately effective and I am working with a school team and parents using Lisa Anderson's Module. Dr Linnell's days were exceptional. Dr Beck was exceptional also. The Diploma Course was excellent the modules that stood out for me were the introduction, substance misuse, anger management, Working with suicide, anorexia and all the modules on Anxiety. The Post Traumatic Stress course too was immediately useful. Finally, thank you to SDS staff, nothing was too much trouble for any of you!

Kate M., CBT for Children and Adolescents Certificate Participant, feedback via Webcast Private Message

A SPECIAL OFFER FOR THE READERS OF *The Psychologist* – SAVE £80

Book the first module of the Certificate, 'Applying CBT to Children and Adolescents', 31 March 2020, meet the course creator, Dr Andrew Beck, and decide whether it is for you – while saving £80 off the course price!

Follow the exclusive link: bit.ly/psy_kids_2020

You can book the whole course and save over £500. For further details on this option:

Email us: info@sds-seminars.com or call us: 01825 763710

You also can book the modules one by one, and enjoy spreading your payments over a year:

skillsdevelopment.co.uk/certificates/cbt_children_adolescents/

