

Thursday 8th December 4pm – Maynooth University Psychology Department

Dr. Caroline Heary (National University of Ireland, Galway)

Stigma towards mental health disorders during childhood and adolescence.



Caroline Heary graduated with a BA from the University College Dublin (UCD), after which she completed a Masters of Psychological Science in Health Psychology in NUI, Galway. She subsequently returned to UCD, where she completed her PhD on the development of an instrument to assess children's satisfaction with hospital services. Having worked as a researcher in the Children's Research Centre, Trinity College Dublin, she then obtained a post-doctoral research fellowship

from the National Children's Office. She was appointed to her post in NUI, Galway in November 2003.

Caroline is currently engaged in a collaborative programme of research with Dr. Eilis Hennessy (Department of Psychology, University College Dublin) and Dr. Lorraine Swords (Children's Research Centre, TCD) on children's understanding of psychological difficulties in peers, understanding the acceptance of children with mental health difficulties (and the stigma that these children can experience) and understanding help-seeking for psychological issues during adolescence and young adulthood. This research team have been successful in receiving funding from the Irish Research Council for Humanities and Social Sciences and the Millennium Research Fund, National University of Ireland, Galway. More recently Caroline Heary & Eilis Hennessy received a Health Research Award from the Health Research Board to carry out research on the stigmatization of psychological difficulties in children: An exploration of self and public stigma.

Abstract:

Many adults have very negative opinions of people with mental health problems (such as depression or schizophrenia) and, in turn, people with these problems often report that they are discriminated against (e.g. in work) when people know about their problems. Although many children also have mental health problems very little research has been done on their experiences. A project on the stigmatization of psychological difficulties in children: An exploration of self and public stigma, involves a series of studies that will improve people's understanding of what it is like to be a child with a mental health problem.