

# Preventing the inter-generational transfer of violence (the neuroscience, psychology, and lived experience)

Wednesday 7 February 2024 9am to 3.30pm (via Zoom)

From all the advances in brain science and psychology we now know so much about why some people grow up to be violent or the opposite, why some people grow up being very kind and compassionate to others. So there really is hope for societal change.

This day will focus on prevention of violence in Wales, informed by fascinating eye-opening materials including: brain scans of impulsive murderers; what verbal and/or physical violence does to child's developing brain; the anti-aggression chemicals that lie dormant in the brains of perpetually angry people and how to awaken them; the neuroscience of why hurt people hurt people; the psychology of the compulsion to repeat the cruelty we've known.

Prevention will focus on what schools, services and communities can do to enable hurt people to make that vital shift from distress excited to distress averse (the latter meaning you are pained by someone else's pain and so act to help them). Specifically, the day will provide practical skills and vital relational interactions that can bring transformational change to people locked in rage and hate (children, teenagers and adults) resulting in healing for self and society.

**Dr Margot Sunderland:** Leading psychologist and neuroscience researcher. Author of over 20 books in mental health including the BMA award winning book: Science of Parenting. Director of Innovation and Research Trauma Informed Schools

**Siobhan Garrett:** Lead consultant for several Violence Reduction Unit projects supporting schools and colleges to recognise and address the link between school exclusions and youth violence. Former Headteacher of a specialist school for Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties. Over 20 years experience as a qualified teacher in supporting children and young people with social, emotional and mental health

**James Docherty:** (from lived experience of victim of violence to violent offender to Development Officer in Violence Reduction Unit) Extreme adverse childhood experiences left James passionate to help others. Works on VRU projects, mentoring people with convictions seeking to re-create their lives. Also worked with a leading children's

charity on diversion programmes with young people on the cusp of organised crime. Both professional and personal experience of the care and criminal justice systems.

**Tanayah Sam:** Works with young people in schools and prisons who are part of, or at risk of, joining gang culture, as well as those vulnerable to extremist influences. He brings to his work vital lived experience. Expelled from school for stabbing a schoolmate with a screwdriver, he spent years running with gangs, carrying guns and knives, and dealing drugs and served time in 11 different prisons. He truly knows that solutions to violent crime and extremism can be found.

