Research Interests

Kathryn Higgins is a reader within the school of Social Science Education and Social Work Queen’s University Belfast. Kathryn has an established research reputation in the areas of substance use and addictive behavior and programme evaluation/implementation science. She continues to lead the now 18-year longitudinal study, known as the Belfast Youth Development Study, which has it has acted as a focal point for collaborations with external partners and for new, policy led research. In a field that changes rapidly Kathryn has stayed at the forefront of emerging issues; for example, she was recently funded by the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) to undertake research in the developing field of new psychoactive substances (legal highs). She has developed a cadre of work over the past ten years on Programme evaluation & implementation Science, evaluating interventions designed to improve child and adolescent development. These include RCTs of school- and community-based interventions, for example ‘Ready to Learn’ and ‘Parenting UR Teens, ‘Brook Sexual Health service’. Her research programmes, publications and international conference contributions have examined the policy and evidence base for interventions including substance misuse, mental health, alcohol prevention and the mechanisms for implementing evidence based practice and policy more generally.

Research output

Evidence for Public Health on novel psychoactive substances: a mixed method study

Public Health Evidence on Novel Psychoactive Substances -

The Use of Prescription Medication in Prisons in Northern Ireland

The longitudinal relationship of alcohol problems and depressive symptoms and the impact of externalising symptoms: findings from the Belfast Youth Developmental Study

A feasibility study of Barnardo’s Pharos group work programme to build resilience in children affected by parental substance abuse.

Variations and Determinants of Novel Psychoactive Substance Use -: Implications for Policy and Practice

Harmonising alcohol consumption, sales and related outcomes data across the UK & Ireland: An insurmountable barrier to policy evaluation?

The Belfast Youth Development Study (BYDS): a prospective cohort study of the initiation, persistence and desistance of substance use from adolescence to adulthood in Northern Ireland

**Variants and determinants of Novel Psychoactive Substance (NPS) use Potential implications for Policy and Practice**

**New Psychoactive Substances: preliminary findings from a mixed methods study**

**Participant Photography as a Research Tool: Ethical Issues and Practical Implementation**

**Health and Social Care Workers Perceptions of Novel Psychoactive substances In Northern Ireland**

**Keynote address Evidence Informed Practice in the Digital Era - what next?**
Higgins, K., 16 Nov 2016.

**Mobile Phones and Contact Arrangements for Children Living in Care**

**Cross-section and panel estimates of peer effects in early adolescent cannabis use: With a little help from my 'friends once removed'**

**Assessing elements of a family approach to reduce adolescent drinking frequency: parent-adolescent relationship, knowledge management, and keeping secrets**

**Parental alcohol use and resilience in young people: A study of family, peer and school processes. Short report.**

**The Smartphones Study: Using a Smartphone Application to Collect Longitudinal Data**

**Adolescent alcohol use and school disengagement. Alcohol Insight Number 129.**

**Effects of peer network interactions on adolescent cannabis use**

**Miss School Miss Out film: http://www.eani.org.uk/schools/miss-school-miss-out/**
Higgins, K., 2015

**Odyssey Parenting Your Teen: Bringing Together Research and Practice**

**Mapping the field in evidence-informed policy and practice: International perspectives. Evidence & Policy: A Journal of Research and Practice, 10(4), 489-495.**
Mobile Phones and Contact Arrangements for Children Living in Care

Response to the consultation on Delivering Social Change for Children and Young People

Meta-analysis on school level variables in a co-evolving network analyses of adolescent friendship and smoking behaviour

Adolescent ecstasy use and depression: cause and effect, or two outcomes of home environment?

The Belfast Youth Development Study video
Higgins, K., 01 Jun 2013

The Belfast Youth Development Study video: (www.QUB.ac.uk/BYDS).
Higgins, K., 2013

The Influence of Parental Monitoring and School Environment on Adolescent Alcohol Use

Social Networks and Adolescent Smoking: The Gender Difference

Higgins, K., Apr 2012.

School-related predictors of smoking, drinking and drug use: Evidence from the Belfast Youth Development Study

An exploration of sexual health competencies in young people in Northern Ireland

Parenting Ur Teen: A Randomised Trial of Implementation and Effectiveness

Peer Effects in Adolescent Cannabis Use: It's the Friends, Stupid

Selection , de selection and influence : three processes in the dynamics of adolescent social networks of alcohol and tobacco use

Self injury and help seeking behaviour among adolescents in Northern Ireland
Higgins, K., 2012, In : Adolescence. 1
Facing the Child Welfare and Mental Health Interface Challenges

Dynamics of smoking in adolescence and influence of social networks

Alcohol and the affluence paradox: A secondary analysis exploring the health disparities surrounding adolescent alcohol use and alcohol related harm in adulthood
Higgins, K., Perra, O., McCann, M., McCartan, C. & McLaughlin, A., May 2011, Alcohol Research UK.

Invited Key note (2010) Evidence informed Practice 'Facing the Child Welfare and mental health interface –focus on drug and alcohol use 'University of Toronto 2010/PART

Confirmatory factor analysis of the adolescent self-report strengths and difficulties questionnaire

Substance Use among Young People Living in Residential State Care

Keynote address Closing the Loop - Connecting Child Care Research Policy and Practice + Organiser
Higgins, K., 01 Dec 2007.

School exclusion drug use and antisocial behaviour at 15/16 years: Implications for youth transitions

Frequent Cannabis Use Among 14/15 Year Olds in Northern Ireland

Drug use amongst young people attending emotional and behavioural difficulty units during adolescence: A longitudinal analysis

Exclusion and Marginalisation in Adolescence: The Experience of School Exclusion on Drug Use and Antisocial Behaviour

The Cost of Drug Use in Adolescence: Young People, Money and Substance Abuse.

Substance use behaviors of young people with a moderate learning disability: A longitudinal analysis

Substance Use Behaviours of Young People with A Moderate Learning Disability: A longitudinal analysis

School exclusion, drug use and delinquency in adolescence

Drug use amongst 12 and 13 year olds attending emotional and behavioural difficulties units in Belfast
Adolescent Substance abuse among young people excluded from school in Belfast

Substance abuse among 12 and 13-year-old young people in belfast at high risk of developing problem drug use

The impact of paramilitary violence against a heroin-user community in Northern Ireland: A qualitative analysis

Substance abuse among 12 and 13 year olds at high risk of developing problem drug use

Belfast Youth Development Study: Technical Report 2004

Secular Trends in Substance Use: The Conflict and Young People in Northern Ireland

Belfast Youth Development Study: Research Update for Schools Issue 4

Belfast Youth Development Study: Research Update for Schools Issue 3
Percy, A., McCrystal, P. & Higgins, K., 2003, Institute of Child Care Research, QUB : ICCR.


Percy, A., McCrystal, P. & Higgins, K., 2003, Institute of Child Care Research, QUB : ICCR.

Emerging patterns of adolescent drug use: The Belfast Youth Development Study 2000-2002

United Kingdom

Belfast Youth Development Study: The High Risk Booster Sample

Youth Development Study: Main Report
Percy, A., McCrystal, P. & Higgins, K., 2002, Institute of Child Care Research, QUB : ICCR.

Youth development Study: Research Update for Schools Issue 2
McCrystal, P., Percy, A. & Higgins, K., 2002, Institute of Child Care Research, QUB : ICCR.

Youth Development Study: Research Update for Schools Issue 1

Measuring social exclusion: a lifespan approach

The trouble with peace: The ceasefires and their impact on drug use among youth in Northern Ireland

Does Ulster still say no? Drugs, politics and propaganda in Northern Ireland

Awards

Projects

R2158CHC: Adolescent alcohol use and school disengagement: investigating alcohol use patterns in adolescence and pathways to being NEET (Not In Employment Education or Training)
O'Neill, T., Higgins, K., McCartan, C. & McLaughlin, A.
02/10/2014 → 31/03/2016

R4747CHC: Harmonising alcohol-related outcomes
Higgins, K.
18/02/2016 → 31/03/2018

R3337CHC: Offending Behaviour amongst Young People in NI: A Study of Neighbourhood, Family, School and Peer Processes
Higgins, K., McCann, M., McCartan, C., McLaughlin, A. & Perra, O.
01/08/2011 → 30/09/2015

R4604CHC: Parental Alcohol Use and Resilience
McLaughlin, A., Higgins, K., Percy, A. & Perra, O.
01/08/2012 → 11/12/2019

R4749CHC: Promoting resilience in children and young people affected by parental substance misuse (PSM): a feasibility study of the Pharos group work programme
18/02/2016 → 30/11/2016

R1328CHC: Using smartphone applications to enhance longitudinal survey methods
Macdonald, G., Ell, P. S., Higgins, K., McCann, M., Miller, R., Sezer, S. & Tully, M.
01/08/2012 → 30/11/2014

R4731CHC: Variation and Determinants of Novel Psychoactive Substance (NPS) use
Higgins, K., Campbell, A., Clarke, M., O'Hara, L., O'Neill, T., O'Neill, N. & O'Neill, F.
18/09/2015 → …