



# MSc Adolescent Psychotherapy





**Dublin Counselling  
& Therapy Centre**

## **About...**

Dublin Counselling & Therapy Centre has been offering professional training in the field of counselling and psychotherapy since 1990 and continues to offer programmes to train suitable candidates who are seeking entry to the profession and programmes for qualified and accredited practitioners who wish to enhance their practice through further training in specialist areas. Degree programmes are offered through partnership with the University of Northampton.

In addition to being an established training school, DCTC also provides a professional counselling and psychotherapy service to support those who are experiencing personal, familial and social distress or difficulty. These services are aimed at promoting personal growth and well-being through attention to all aspects of the person's life – physical, emotional, social, psychological and spiritual.

DCTC is committed to making this service accessible to those who are economically marginalised and so offers a low-cost option so that those who have financial difficulty can avail of a service that is affordable for them.

The Centre is located in Dublin City Centre, fifteen minutes from Dublin Airport and is accessible using all public transport options – Dublin Bus, DART, Iarnród Éireann and LUAS.

# MSc Adolescent Psychotherapy

September 2023 –  
August 2025

**Course Duration:**  
Two Years

**Programme Director:**  
Bronagh Starrs MIAHIP

**Venue:**  
Dublin Counselling & Therapy Centre

41 Upper Gardiner Street  
Dublin 1

**Telephone:**  
(01) 8788 236

**Email:**  
info@dctc.ie

## INTRODUCTION

DCTC working in partnership with the University of Northampton, offers an academic degree combined with thorough practice-based professional training in adolescent psychotherapy at Masters Degree level. This innovative, research-based training programme offers an in-depth study of the developmental and clinical dynamics associated with adolescence. The training will support psychotherapists to develop deeper levels of competency in their work with adolescents who are experiencing psychological and developmental difficulties. During the two years, students will examine the theoretical perspectives that govern contemporary thinking about adolescence. Students will also systematically explore the therapeutic process in order to observe the unfolding of developmental process and understand the interplay of development and therapy. Teaching style will include lectures, demonstrations, learning lab exercises, supervised practicum training and process groups. Supervised clinical placement will provide students with a direct learning experience in the therapeutic setting.



## AWARD

The Programme is offered on a part-time basis over two years and is divided into eight modules totalling 180 credits. This includes a 50-credit dissertation module in the second year. Upon successful completion of all modules and all practical requirements the following postgraduate degree is awarded: **MSc Adolescent Psychotherapy**

For students who successfully complete all course requirements excluding the dissertation module the following postgraduate diploma is awarded: **PgDip Adolescent Psychotherapy**

The programme meets all of the standards as set out by IACP for accredited counsellors and psychotherapists who wish to work with minors (under 18s).

## PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this Programme, in relation to the specialised area of study, students will, with minimal/no guidance, be able to:

- Analyse and evaluate relevant theories of adolescent development, drawing heavily on current research, academic publications and clinical experience.
- Identify and explain conceptually complex issues and perspectives which relate to contemporary developmental process in adolescence, as they unfold in the clinical setting.
- Demonstrate understanding of and therapeutic sensibility to the unfolding of developmental process and the dynamic nature of its influence on the therapeutic space.
- Successfully apply innovative concepts of therapeutic contact at the forefront of this specialised area of professional practice in order to create developmentally-attuned psychotherapeutic contexts.

- Make informed therapeutic judgements and interventions in relation to developmentally complex lifespace situations and challenging contact episodes.
- Recognise, analyse and respond to the complexity of ethical and legal issues which arise within the field of adolescent psychotherapy.
- Engage in supervised ethically sound adolescent clinical practice in order to create positive impact on the mental health of adolescents and their families.
- Independently assess complex therapeutic situations and make evidence-based judgement to inform clinical interventions.
- Demonstrate relational and ethical sensitivity with all relevant stakeholders (adolescent clients, their families and allied professionals).

## PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

The programme is structured over two years and all students will take all modules listed below – summary details can be found in the next section:

### YEAR 1:

- Contact Assessment and Adolescent Development
- Therapeutic Contact and Case Management
- Adolescent Clinical Practice 1
- Research Methods

### YEAR 2:

- Creative Adjustment in Adolescence
- Broader Developmental Influences and Pathways in Adolescence
- Adolescent Clinical Practice 2
- Dissertation



# INTRODUCTION TO MODULES YEAR 1

## **Contact Assessment and Adolescent Development**

This module will involve critical analysis of the stages of adolescent development and will include exploration of the impact of trauma on developmental process. Students will learn the art of Contact Assessment with adolescent clients, which involves both the adolescent and parenting figures. Components of the assessment process will include clinical appraisal of the parent-adolescent relationship, the adolescent's developmental location, contact and configuration styles to inform the assessment and intervention process.

## **Therapeutic Contact & Case Management**

Students will evaluate the dynamics of establishing a developmentally attuned therapeutic space in which the adolescent's contact skills are supported and extended. Dialogic and creative techniques, including working therapeutically with art, sand and other media, will be analysed and applied to clinical practice in such a manner as to support expansion of the adolescent's life-space experience. Analysis of the dynamics of inter-professional contact will also be included to prepare the practitioner to engage with professional competence within a multidisciplinary setting.

## **Adolescent Clinical Practice 1**

This module enables practitioners to apply the knowledge and skills acquired thus far in the training programme in a placement context. Each student will undertake a supervised clinical placement accruing a minimum of 250 hours of psychotherapeutic work with adolescents over the course of the two years. Clinical work will typically involve intervention with parents, including assessment, parenting strategy work and joint parent-adolescent work. The use of clinical supervision, as a reflective space for growth and feedback, will be a key support in ongoing critical analysis of developmental and clinical issues as they emerge in the work.

## **Research Methods**

The research methods module is the beginning of the dissertation process. The module is a continuous process to ensure the student is equipped to undertake a research project. Students are introduced to both quantitative and qualitative research paradigms as relevant to the field of counselling and psychotherapy, and one of the key module outcomes is the production of a research proposal (and ethics application) for the final year dissertation.





# INTRODUCTION TO MODULES YEAR 2

## **Creative Adjustment in Adolescence**

This module will involve analysis of the principal creative adjustments made by adolescents who are struggling with psychological and developmental difficulties. Students will also explore the area of diagnosis, examining common mental health disorders and treatment implications within the therapeutic setting. Clinical symptoms will be understood as developmental field phenomena and intervention strategies which support the adolescent's phenomenological experience will be identified.

## **Broader Developmental Influences and Pathways in Adolescence**

This module promotes critical analysis of the contextual issues influencing adolescent developmental process. Students will develop therapeutic sensibility to the implications of significant life-space experiences for the adolescent's emerging sense of self including aspects of personal identity, family field and wider environmental dynamics. Clinical intervention skills will be taught through workshops, demonstrations, role plays and skills practice. The module also considers adolescence in the context of broader developmental pathways and will include analysis of the journey from conception to preadolescence.

## **Adolescent Clinical Practice 2**

Each student will undertake a supervised clinical placement accruing a minimum of 250 hours of psychotherapeutic work with adolescents over the course of the two years. The student will build on clinical experience gained during the initial year of study, applying knowledge and theories of creative adjustment and influence of wider life-space contexts on development to their own clinical practice. Students will develop a more extensive repertoire of assessment and therapeutic skills, utilising field approaches for designing clinical interventions. Clinical placement will be supported through a one-to-one supervisory process.

## **Dissertation**

The module provides an opportunity for the student to apply knowledge, concepts, and research methods to a question or problem relevant to the field of adolescent psychotherapy. The module enables students to develop expertise and understanding of the research process including research methodology, and skills to plan, conduct, analyse and write up their research. It will enable the student to work independently and apply the subject-specific research process.



## ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

### Academic Assessment:

Each module will include two assessment components including written assignments, group projects, individual presentations, reflexive logs and final dissertation.

### Mid-Year & End of Year Reviews

Individual feedback interviews will be arranged to offer students an opportunity to discuss their progress and receive feedback. This dialogue will be an opportunity to review each participant's progress in such areas as attendance and participation at tutorials, supervised clinical work, academic progress etc.

## TIME COMMITMENT

Lectures, tutorials, workshops and Supervised Practicum Sessions will take place over 18 weekends throughout a two year period, commencing in September 2022 and ending in June 2024. The daily training schedule will be 9.30am – 5.00pm on Saturday and 9.30am – 4.00pm on Sunday. Delivery will be principally face-to-face in Dublin Counselling and Therapy Centre, with some training delivered online. Additional time commitments will include regular meetings with an appointed research dissertation supervisor, ongoing psychotherapeutic work with adolescents and attendance at both clinical supervision and personal therapy. Further time is required for study and written work.

## PERSONAL THERAPY

Students are expected to engage in a minimum of 15 hours personal therapy during each academic year.

## SUPERVISION

The ratio of practice to supervision will be one hour of individual supervision for every eight client hours. Attendance at clinical supervision will be the responsibility of the student. Adolescent psychotherapists often encounter complex therapeutic, professional, ethical and legal situations. Supervisors should have training and qualifications relevant to working with adolescents. If the supervisor has no formal adolescent psychotherapy training, then they should have substantial experience of working psychotherapeutically with adolescents. Supervisors must have a thorough understanding of current child protection and the legal and ethical issues that pertain to adolescents. Reports will be completed by clinical supervisors during each academic year, outlining the student's progress in relation to clinical proficiency and development as an adolescent therapist.



## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

This programme is open to practitioners who have successfully completed a core psychotherapy training course (in either adult-oriented or child-oriented psychotherapy) and who are accredited (or working towards accreditation) with an accrediting body such as IAHIP, IACP, BACP, PSI or equivalent.

The programme is also open to school counsellors and chaplains who have undertaken counselling training, either within their guidance counselling/chaplaincy training or otherwise, and who are currently engaged in counselling work with adolescents.

This programme does not constitute an entry-to-profession (core) training for the purposes of acquiring professional body accreditation as a psychotherapist.

### Applicants should be able to evidence:

- Interpersonal Skills. These may be demonstrated through contact made during presentation of self at personal interview.
- Commitment and motivation to furthering their own personal and professional development. This may be demonstrated through previous and/or current engagement in personal development work, attendance at personal therapy, other self-reflective/ self-development activities.
- Knowledge of general counselling and psychotherapy process. This will be demonstrated through prior completion of a core counselling/psychotherapy training programme.
- Interest in the practices of counselling and psychotherapy with young people. This may be demonstrated through previous studies, work experience in related disciplines, previous education/ training.
- Recent experience of professional development. This will be demonstrated through personal statement and at interview.

## APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Application forms are available to download from our website: [www.dctc.ie](http://www.dctc.ie)

### Application Fee: €150

Return completed application form together with references and application fee to:

**The Administrator  
Dublin Counselling & Therapy Centre  
41 Upper Gardiner Street  
Dublin D01 C788**

Closing Date for applications:  
30th April 2023

- Eligible applicants will be invited to a personal interview. Places are offered following interviews.
- Maximum number of places: 18
- Late applications will be accepted after initial interviewing if any places remain unfilled.

## COURSE COST

### ANNUAL COURSE FEE: €4550

This fee covers all tuition, mentoring and research supervision. Applicants who are offered a place are required to forward a non-refundable booking deposit of €500 in order to secure their place. The remainder of Year 1 fees (€4050) are payable on or before the first day of the course in September.

Year 2 fees (€4550) are payable on or before the first day of Year 2 of the course.

Students may request to pay fees in instalments. In such cases fees must be paid in full by the end of February for each academic year.





# TRAINING DATES (2022-2024)

## YEAR 1

01/02/03 September 2023
30 Sep/01 Oct 2023
04/05 November 2023
24/25/26 November 2023 (Online)
20/21 January 2024
10/11 February 2024
02/03 March 2024
20/21 April 2024
18/19 May 2024
14/15/16 June 2024 (Online)

## YEAR 2

06/07/08 September 2024
05/06 October 2024
09/10 November 2024
01/02 February 2025
01/02 March 2025
05/06 April 2025
10/11 May 2025
20/21/22 June 2025



## MEET THE TEAM

### PROGRAMME DIRECTOR



#### **BRONAGH STARRS**

Bronagh Starrs is Programme Director for the MSc Adolescent Psychotherapy in Dublin Counselling & Therapy Centre, in partnership with the University of Northampton, UK and Founder & Director of Blackfort Adolescent Gestalt Institute.

She maintains a private practice in Omagh, Northern Ireland, as a psychotherapist, clinical supervisor, writer, presenter and trainer, specialising in working with adolescents. As well as her work as a parenting consultant with many families, schools and agencies, she is also an experienced therapist working with children, adults and groups.

Bronagh is a renowned adolescent development specialist and has considerable experience teaching and presenting throughout Ireland and internationally on the developmental implication of trauma on the adolescent journey. Her approach to therapeutic intervention with adolescents is both innovative and deeply relational.

She has authored numerous articles and chapters on the subject, and has contributed to the collected volume: *Relational Child: Relational Brain* (Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group/Gestalt Press). Her recently published book *Adolescent Psychotherapy - A Radical Relational Approach* (Routledge 2019) has received international acclaim.

### DCTC CENTRE DIRECTOR



#### **PAUL O'DONOGHUE**

Paul is a psychologist and psychotherapist. He has an academic background in psychology and philosophy and has trained in humanistic and integrative psychotherapy. He is a member of the Psychological Society of Ireland and is accredited as a psychotherapist and psychotherapy supervisor by IAHIP.

He has been involved in the training of counsellors and psychotherapists since 1990 alongside his continuing practice as a psychotherapist and clinical supervisor. He is the Centre's Clinical Director and is also Programme Director for the Centre's Core Psychotherapy training programme (MSc Counselling & Psychotherapy).

### VISITING TUTOR



#### **MARK MCCONVILLE**

Mark McConville Ph.D. is a visiting tutor with the MSc Adolescent Psychotherapy programme. He is a Clinical Psychologist in private practice in Beachwood, Ohio, specialising in adult, adolescent, emerging adult, and family psychology.

His book *Adolescence: Psychotherapy and the Emergent Self* (Jossey-Bass, 1995) was awarded the 1995 Nevis Prize for Outstanding Contribution to Gestalt Therapy theory. He is the author of the *Counselling Feedback Report*, an innovative and widely used adolescent assessment tool, and is co-editor of *The Heart of Development: Gestalt Approaches to Childhood and Adolescence*, Vols. I & II, (The Analytic Press, 2001).

Mark's new book *Failure to Launch: Why Your Twenty-something hasn't Grown Up, and What You Can Do About It.* (Putnam/Random House) has recently been published.



## ACADEMIC AND TEACHING STAFF



### JENNIFER FORAN

Jennifer is a Co-Founder of Leinster Adolescent Psychotherapy and Counselling Centre (LAPCC) and has extensive clinical experience as an adolescent psychotherapist working in her private practice in Naas & Celbridge. She also works closely with adolescents' families and as well as with adult clients. Jennifer is a group facilitator and regularly presents workshops for secondary school students. She has completed the Certificate in Supervision from the Centre for Supervision and Team Development (CSTD) in London and offers supervisory support to adolescent psychotherapists. Jennifer is an accredited member of IAHIP and is a registered psychotherapist with the European Association of Psychotherapists (EAP).



### ANNE RANDOLPH

Anne is Co-Founder of Leinster Adolescent Psychotherapy and Counselling Centre (LAPCC) in Dundrum, Dublin 14. She is an experienced adolescent psychotherapist working with young people between 11 and 24 years of age and their parents in her private practice in Bray, Co. Wicklow. Anne is an experienced presenter and delivers adolescent development programmes to students, schools and parents groups. Having undertaken clinical supervision training with CSTD London, she offers specialist adolescent psychotherapy supervision. She is accredited with Irish Association of Humanistic & Integrative Psychotherapy (IAHIP), and registered with the European Association for Psychotherapy (EAP).



### ANNE MORAN

Anne maintains a private practice in Dunboyne, Co. Meath where she works as an adolescent psychotherapist and offers clinical supervision to counsellors/psychotherapists who also work with young people. Having completed her advanced training in adolescent psychotherapy, Anne has developed a specialism in the area of adoption for the adolescent and his/her parents. She has a background in education, having spent eighteen years as a teacher working with children and adolescents with intellectual difficulties. During this time she devised and implemented programmes focusing on relationships and sexuality development. She is a clinical assessor and an experienced group facilitator. Anne also works in schools in her capacity as a psychotherapist and has in addition delivered parent education evenings and youth leadership programmes.

There is an ordinariness to the relationship, the dialogue, the learning, that conceals the power of the enterprise. When we look back over our own developmental journeys through adolescence and identify what we received from the adult world that helped us get through (or what was missing that would have made a difference), we nearly always discover something simple and largely unintentional, but, by the same token, something profoundly human and reassuring. Some senior member of the tribe stopped and took us in, got interested in us, and thereby got us interested in ourselves, in ways we had not quite expected. Someone sought us out, found us wandering and alone, took us by the hand (however momentarily), and led us to the light.

Mark McConville

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Northampton

Working in partnership with



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