

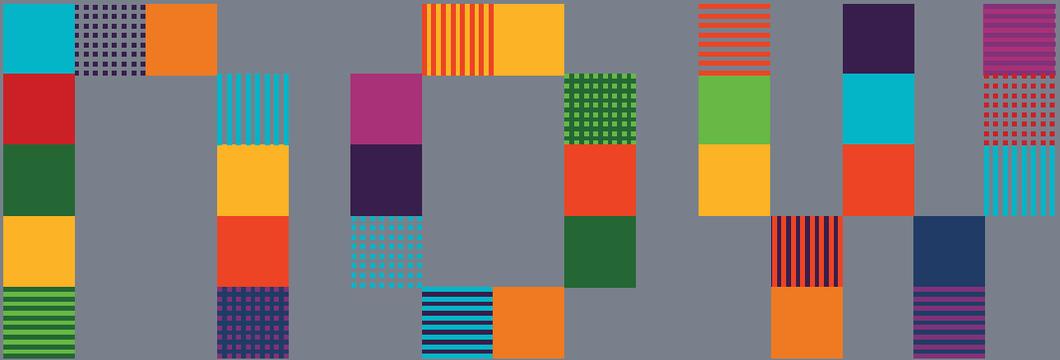


For Policy.
For Practice.
For Impact.

We bring new ways of thinking to complex problems,
to help advance social change.

Centre for Effective Services

Who we are and what we do





Introduction

We work with agencies, government departments and service providers throughout the island of Ireland. We are a non-profit organisation with skills and expertise in areas such as education, health, children and young people and social services.

We put evidence and implementation at the heart of what we do, whether its working with policy makers to design policy, or to support decision making in busy frontline services. We believe that research, people's experiences of public services, and the learning from frontline practice are forms of evidence that can improve services for people in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Who We Are

We founded the Centre for Effective Services, an independent, non-profit, all- island intermediary organisation in 2008. Our work is supported by a mix of funding from government departments, agencies and foundations.

We set out with the aim of connecting policy, research and practice, to help agencies and government bodies design and plan services for children and young people.

Ten years on, our team has grown and our work has reached into new sectors, such as health, social services and education. We are committed to sharing learning across the island of Ireland.



Who We Work With

We now work with a growing range of government departments and agencies, supporting them to design, implement and evaluate new and innovative approaches to complex social challenges.

We have worked with government departments and agencies in Ireland, supporting them to implement approaches such as using data in decision making, enhancing collaboration, and to implement change in services.

We have worked with senior leaders in Northern Ireland to develop leadership for new challenges and an increased focus on outcomes. We work with social workers, youth workers, teachers and others on the frontline, helping them to use evidence in their work with children, young people and families.

We bring new thinking from home and internationally; and co-design tools and resources which improve services, support change and make it sustainable.

'A linking organisation - speaking to government partners in the language of outcomes, and a connection with the services delivering on the ground.'

(CES 10 Year Review)

How We Work

Sometimes it takes an outsider to see what's going on inside

"What we have learned is that our work is most effective when we build capacity and expertise together over time, so that new thinking and approaches last." **Nuala Doherty, Director, CES**

In CES we have learned that no two projects are the same. So, we don't use assumptions, we use curiosity. We ask questions, seek out the evidence and look to our own jurisdiction and far beyond for innovative practices and approaches.

Our team is highly skilled and is based across three locations in Dublin and Belfast. We come from different backgrounds – including health, education, research, communications, youth work and social work. We draw from disciplines such as change management, programme management, implementation science and improvement science.

We provide technical and practical advisory services, engage in secondment arrangements and form partnerships.

'Better and more frequent use of evidence alongside techniques to focus attention on implementation, geared towards achieving better outcomes.'

(CES 10 Year Review)

What We Do

We work with agencies, government departments and organisations from initial policy development right through to improving practice.

We make evidence useful

We summarise and synthesise evidence and produce literature reviews. We design consultations, help organisations to understand and use data and develop practical tools and methods so that evidence informs policy and practice.



We connect resources and knowledge

We develop resources and approaches which join up organisations, sectors, disciplines and people. We facilitate networking and learning, to hear fresh perspectives, reflect on experience and broker relationships.



We build capacity to introduce change

Stronger leadership, better use of evidence and effective collaboration - all help to build capacity. We work with organisations to design training and produce tools and resources so that change is sustainable.



We support implementation of policy, programmes and services

How well a service or project is implemented will influence what it achieves. We work with government departments, foundations and agencies to support implementation of projects, programmes, and services.



We evaluate outcomes

We advise on and conduct evaluations of projects, programmes and services, and help build skills and capacity in self evaluation.



What We Believe In

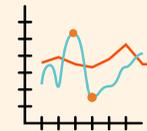
Everything we do connects to making peoples lives better

We contribute to the field, by organising networks, sharing our work and resources widely for others to use. We want our work to advance social change.



Evidence belongs at the heart of decision making

We believe that evidence takes many forms, including the experiences of citizens using services, the wisdom of people working on the frontline, good quality data and the learning emerging from research.



People deserve excellent public services

We are committed to working with organisations, agencies and departments in the sectors of health, education and other services so that they can provide social/human services at the standard the public deserves.



Peoples context shapes our work

Our work is grounded in the voice and experience of citizens. We work with others to develop the skills, capacity and behaviours needed to sustain change and make an impact.



We will learn and experiment together

We are always learning and testing new ways of thinking; with an eye for practical solutions fit for the real world and ways of working that last.



Diversity of thought and experience fuels new ideas

We seek out best practices at home and internationally. We are an all island organisation and are committed to sharing learning across Ireland and Northern Ireland.





Our Work For Practice

Improving outcomes for vulnerable families in Northern Ireland

In 2015, the Big Lottery Fund commissioned CES to work with the 'Reaching Out, Supporting Families Programme' in Northern Ireland. This is a seven-year programme which includes 36 different projects aimed at helping vulnerable families to deal with adversity and to be part of the communities where they live.

Each year we then design and deliver events, networking opportunities and Masterclasses, covering themes such as *Adverse Childhood Experiences* and *Supporting Parents* along with implementation and evaluation workshops.

Three years on, groups are very engaged with the support provided by CES. Staff and volunteers are developing their practice, using evaluation frameworks to capture their impact. This helps them to improve their projects and make a difference to the lives of vulnerable families in Northern Ireland.

Our Work For Policy

Using data to inform decision making

Government departments need a broad scope of data when designing policy and services - such as population trends, community needs analysis, data from services, and feedback from service users. Good quality data can help to target particular demographics, tell us what's working and help departments when engaging with elected officials and the media. But how do you ensure that you use data that is comprehensive, reliable and relevant? These are some of the questions which inform our work with the Department of Education, on a project which aims to improve the use of data.

We worked with their staff to create an online data map which brings together data sets from across the Department of Education and Skills and its agencies. We also produced case studies promoting the benefits of using data, which are being shared as examples of good practice. Finally, we will provide training and support to build confidence among staff to help them use data more widely in the Department.



**For Policy.
For Practice.
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The Centre for Effective Services (CES) is a Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in Ireland at 9 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2. Company registration number 451580; Charity number 19438.

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