














CYPW Network: Building Connections



<p>Anna Adlam</p> 	<p>Anna Adlam is a clinical psychologist (HCPC registered, currently working with CoRaL Psychology Ltd) and a Professor of Clinical Neuropsychology (Personal Chair at the University of Exeter).</p> <p>Her research focuses on developing, evaluating, and implementing neuropsychological interventions to support children and young people who have had a brain injury. More recently her research has extended to co-adapting and evaluating interventions to support children with epilepsy, and adolescents with neurodivergent conditions, anxiety, or low mood who experience everyday executive function challenges. Her current roles at the University of Exeter include Director of Research & Evaluation for Cedar & Create, co-Lead for the Children & Young People Wellbeing Exeter Research Network, and the Research Lead for the Child & Adolescent Neuropsychology Clinic & Research group.</p> <p>Anna is an advisor for the Eden Dora Trust for children with encephalitis, and an Executive Committee member for the WFNR Neuropsychological Rehabilitation SIG. She is also co-Chair for the International Neuropsychological Society (INS) mid-year conference, Dublin, Ireland 2026.</p>
<p>Fatimah AlShahri</p>	<p>Fatimah is a PhD researcher at the University of Exeter, focusing on mental health and help-seeking behaviours among Saudi university students.. Her research explores barriers and facilitators to mental health help-seeking among Saudi university students studying in Saudi Arabia and the United Kingdom. The study aims to identify cultural, social, and institutional factors influencing help-seeking attitudes and behaviours, ultimately informing the development of culturally appropriate mental health interventions.</p> <p>Interest in Research Collaboration: Developing and evaluating culturally tailored mental health interventions for university students. I am interested in partnering with researchers experienced in cross-cultural psychology, intervention design, or digital mental health tools. Such a partnership could involve data sharing, joint publications, and future project proposals to improve access to support services among international students.</p>
<p>Lindsey Anderson</p>	<p>Lindsey Anderson is the Regional Engagement Manager in the Regional Engagement Team of the Exeter Innovation team at the University of Exeter. She works across the disciplines, supporting opportunities for academics and students to tackle societal challenges, by engaging with regional partners such as local authorities and voluntary sector organisations. She supports the delivery of the University's suite of Civic University Agreements (CUAs) which set out how the University will work in partnership with the region's other anchor institutions to tackle society's most pressing problems. Lindsey is the Exeter Innovation lead for the Exeter CUA mission to "Enhance the health and wellbeing of our citizens" which aims to improve the</p>





	University's collaboration and partnership working across the region's health and wellbeing providers and agencies. She works closely with the Engaged Research Manager to support community-based and participatory research at the University, and also oversee the Community Partnership Hub, which aims to connect public, voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) sector organisations with researchers and students at the University of Exeter.
Mike Balding & David Regis	<p>Mike Balding was previously a Secondary Maths teacher, Head of Maths and Head of Year. He joined the Schools Health Education Unit (SHEU) in 2024, to continue SHEU's work. SHEU report on the young people's responses to health and wellbeing questions, as well as habits of eating, physical activity and substance use. We produce an annual report of the students' responses combined.</p> <p>Mike is joined by SHEU Research Director David Regis.</p>
Alison Betts 	<p>Alison Betts is a Whole School SEND National Coordinator, with NASEN, bringing a wealth of experience from her extensive career in education. She has served as a class teacher, nurture teacher, SENCO, Deputy Headteacher, Head of a maintained Nursery School, and Head of Inclusion for Exeter Children's Federation. Since 2016, Alison has been a resolute board member of nurtureuk, driven by her passion for enhancing the educational and life opportunities for children from deprived or difficult backgrounds.</p> <p>Her commitment to supporting children with social, emotional, and mental health challenges led her to become a Specialist Leader in Education for regional teaching school hubs. In this role, she has played a key part in leading the Professional Community for SEND, advocating for and implementing nurturing principles in educational settings. Alison's firsthand experience with the positive impact of nurture in education underscores her dedication to fostering environments where all children can thrive.</p> <p>Interest in Research Collaboration: Regarding Universal SEND Services and collaborate to gain wider reach of funded resources to schools and colleges. I can also represent NASEN and potential further collaboration eg journal articles</p>
Gretchen Bjornstad 	<p>Gretchen Bjornstad is a Senior Lecturer and the Programme Manager for the Child Health and Maternity national priority programme in the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Applied Research Collaboration (ARC) South West Peninsula (PenARC). She leads the SPaCE study, examining the prevalence of mental health conditions in parent carers of children with special educational needs and disabilities, as well as the barriers and facilitators to accessing mental health support for parent carers. Gretchen's research is focused on the evaluation, implementation, and development of evidence-based interventions for improving the health and well-being of children and families.</p>
Doretta Caramaschi	<p>Doretta Caramaschi is a Lecturer (Education and Research). Her main focus is on neurodevelopment and epigenetics. She have a background in neuroscience and molecular epidemiology. In her research Doretta investigates neurodiversity and how it relates to mental health. She focuses on ADHD, autism, epilepsy, depression and anxiety in children and young people. She is passionate about understanding children's brain development. Doretta's studies involve epidemiological methods, including</p>



	<p>surveys, genetic and epigenetic methods. She work with people with lived experience to inform and refine her research.</p> <p>Interest in Research Collaboration- Advisory input to design and projects, co-designing impact activities, help with public engagement, help with recruiting advisory stakeholders and with advertising public engagement events to stakeholders.</p>
<p>Thomas El-Hoss</p> 	<p>Thomas El-Hoss is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Department of Health and Community Sciences at the University of Exeter Medical School. His research focuses on the role social, economic, and cultural forces play in shaping child protection policy and practice. This has spanned work in coastal England, Lebanon and the wider Middle East and North African (MENA) region. His projects have focused on applied research that works with families, policy makers, and practitioners to improve service planning and delivery.</p> <p>Dr Thomas El-Hoss completed his PhD in Social and Policy Sciences at the University of Bath. His doctoral thesis examined the development of Lebanon's child protection system and how the government negotiated a role for community-based welfare organisations and the religious courts. Since September 2021, he has been hosted as an Embedded Researcher within Torbay Council's Children's Services and Public Health teams examining the key drivers for Torbay's high rates of children in care. During this time, he has worked closely with the Council, community groups, and parents to deliver improvements to local services.</p>
<p>Carolina Estevas</p> 	<p>Caroline Estevas serves as the Research & Evaluation Lead at BFB Labs, a company focused on developing digital therapeutic interventions for children's mental health. At BFB Labs, she leads research and evaluation efforts to assess the effectiveness and impact of their digital mental health tools, such as Lumi Nova for child anxiety. Dr Carolina's research focuses on the design, implementation, and evaluation of evidence-based interventions to improve health and social outcomes. She employs rigorous quantitative and qualitative methods to assess programme effectiveness and inform policy, with particular attention to the influence of context and stakeholder engagement.</p> <p>Interest in Research Collaboration: Research efforts for Lumi Nova (large comparative effectiveness study)</p>
<p>Molly Forbes</p> 	<p>Molly is the founder and Executive Director of The Body Happy Organisation CIC, a social enterprise focused on embedding body respect across education and health. Their work explores prevention, inclusion and how body image impacts wellbeing, participation and safeguarding. They are currently partnering with the University of Lincoln on a multi-year research programme.</p> <p>Her research focuses on how schools can act as protective environments against body dissatisfaction and appearance-based bullying. Through their Body Happy Schools Programme and partnership with the University of Lincoln, they are exploring prevention-focused approaches that embed "body respect" within curriculum, pastoral systems and whole-school culture. The work examines links between body image, wellbeing, inclusion and participation in learning, using a systems-change and mixed-methods lens.</p> <p>Interest in Research Collaboration: The Body Happy Organisation already has a formal research partnership with the University of Lincoln, where a fully funded PhD</p>

	<p>is examining our Body Happy Schools Programme through a systems-change lens. Further collaboration could add value through shared learning, comparative studies or applied research exploring implementation, wellbeing outcomes and educational equity. I'm particularly interested in partnerships that connect academic research with practice, enabling co-produced insights, cross-sector dialogue and stronger translation of evidence into policy and school practice.</p>
Hollie Gay	<p>Hollie Gay is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow at University of Exeter within the Clinical Education Development and Research (CEDAR) department. https://cedar-create.com/</p>
Kate Goldie Townsend 	<p>Kate Goldie Townsend is the Director of Undergraduate Studies for Politics and International Relations in the department of Social and Political Sciences, Philosophy, and Anthropology at the University of Exeter. She teaches modules in applied political theory that she has designed out of her research area and interests, and with a focus on the body.</p> <p>Kate has published in Clinical Ethics, Philosophy and Social Criticism, Nature's International Journal of Impotence Research: Your Sexual Medicine Journal, and Res Publica. My doctoral dissertation defended the idea that all children have a right to genital integrity, whatever their cultural background, sex trait category, or age. She examined moral and legal inconsistency in the real-world treatment of child genital cutting practices and argued that all children have an interest in having their external conditions for exercising and developing sexual autonomy protected: http://hdl.handle.net/10871/125329.</p>
Laura Hattersley 	<p>Laura Hattersley is the founder and director of the CASK Research Foundation, a charity established in 2022 to advance research into CASK gene mutations—a rare neurological disorder affecting her daughter, Sarah. With a background in biological sciences and experience teaching genetics and biotechnology, Laura redirected her career after Sarah's diagnosis with MICPCH, caused by a CASK mutation. Recognizing the need for greater research and support, she used her scientific expertise to build the foundation, uniting global researchers and rare disease organisations. Under her leadership, the charity has fostered international partnerships, raised critical funding, and advanced promising gene therapy research, turning a personal challenge into a worldwide effort to improve outcomes for children with CASK disorders. Current research undertaken and supported by the charity are Xi activation of the CASK gene as a curative therapeutic; clinical registry of patients with CASK mutations; translational research platform using drosophila.</p> <p>Interest in Research Collaboration: We are looking for partners to harness the data we will be collecting from our UK patient population. We aim to soon start collecting clinical data and biosamples. There are currently no targeted treatments for CASK disorders and no known biomarkers. There is also limited research into CASK-related epilepsy, which is often intractable.</p>
Katie Howard	<p>Katie Howard is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Education at Exeter. Her research interests meet at the intersection between bilingualism, neurodiversity, and children and young people's mental health. In particular, she am interested in how multilingual families make decisions about which (and how many) languages to speak when their children have neurodevelopmental conditions like autism, ADHD and developmental language disorder.</p>

	<p>Katie is applying for an ESRC New Investigators grant (Autumn 2025) for a project on bilingualism in the context of ADHD. Research questions will include: how do young people with ADHD experience being multilingual? How do families make decisions about which (and how many) languages to use when their child is diagnosed with ADHD? Is bilingualism an ‘added burden’ for children with ADHD? The study will take a qualitative and international approach with comparisons drawn across three linguistically diverse settings: England, Wales and Norway.</p> <p>Interest in Research Collaboration: I have two academic collaborators in Norway and Wales and am looking for one or two non-HEI research partners with practical and professional experience working with either children and young people with ADHD or with multilingual families, including those with migrant backgrounds. I envisage that a collaboration with organisations related to ADHD and migration/multilingualism would lead to greater relevance in terms of shaping the research aims, reaching and working with suitable families, and sharing the study’s findings with those who would most benefit from this research (e.g. schools, community groups, clinicians).</p>
<p>David Humphreys & Jacqui Xerri</p>	<p>David Humphreys, previously manager of CYP family therapy centre, taught CYP Middlesex University and others, currently FT in primary care since 1999 involved in development of neurodiversity pathway, Dr Sian Stanley GP Clinical Director of PCN recently presented to National Primary CYP Medical Directorate NHS England on CYP Neurodiversity Pathway, Jacqui Xerri OT and CYP neurodiversity specialist developing primary care pathway.</p> <p>The growing demand for ADHD and autism assessments in England has led to long waiting lists, delaying essential support for children and families. This pilot study aims to explore the impact of timely assessments on effective intervention by engaging parents, professionals, schools, and service providers in focus groups. The research seeks to identify key priorities, barriers, and strategies to improve assessment timelines and strengthen support systems for neurodivergent children within the NHS and educational settings.</p> <p>Interest in Research Collaboration: We need research expertise and knowledge, knowledge and experience of working with NHS clinical settings, and contacts in the wider NHS primary care community.</p>
<p>Anna Johnson</p> 	<p>Anna is the Director of Development at Pathways Community Trust, where she leads on partnerships and investment to scale trauma-informed, high-quality SEND provision for young people at risk of falling out of education and becoming NEET. She has over 13 years’ experience in senior roles across partnerships and philanthropy, including at the University of Oxford, the University of Exeter, and Health Innovation South West. Anna’s work is grounded in a deep commitment to health equity and educational access, with a focus on strategic fundraising, cross-sector collaboration, and unlocking long-term support for the most underserved young people.</p> <p>Interest in Research Collaboration: To ensure our approach is evidence-led and impact-driven, we are seeking a research and learning partner to co-develop our logic model, define critical success factors, and build an evaluation framework that captures both immediate and long-term impact. This will underpin our strategy to scale with integrity. We are looking for a research partner who can help us test, learn and adapt across our interventions — ensuring they respond to real need and deliver meaningful, measurable change.</p>

<p>Robin Jakob</p> 	<p>Robin Jakob is Head of Service for Research and Impact at Co-Lab. Robin is a researcher and public health practitioner with 15 years of experience in the charity and public sectors. He is driven by a passion for working with people and organisations to generate evidence-based insights into health inequalities and injustices, and to use that knowledge to challenge decision-makers to listen to and act on the needs of their communities.</p> <p>His work has focused on amplifying the voices of those most often excluded from traditional health and social services, while tackling complex and stigmatised public health issues. Robin has held roles in sexual health and HIV, public mental health, and suicide prevention. He has worked in a wide variety of roles; as a sexual health worker and campaigner, managing an information service, as a public health practitioner and as a researcher.</p>
<p>Hannah Jones McVey</p> 	<p>Hannah Jones McVey is the Countryside Discovery Residentials Manager & Sustaining Impact Lead at the Country Trust. The Country Trust is the UK's leading national educational charity connecting children from areas of high social and economic disadvantage with the land that sustains us all. Working for The Country Trust brings together many years of time spent inspiring young people outdoors in her roles with the National Trust and The Wildlife Trust and her most recent role working for Teach First.</p> <p>Hannah is passionate about the fireworks display of potential that is set off when a child understands and connects with a landscape, and committed to breaking down barriers to ensure equitable, meaningful access to these opportunities and spaces. She sits on a range of committees relating to food, farm, and nature education, including Nature Premium, Countryside Classroom, and the Food Education Network.</p> <p>Interest in Research Collaboration: As an organisation, we are seeking to strengthen our engagement with the academic community as part of our new strategic plan. We aim to better understand how to connect, collaborate, and contribute to meaningful research and policy discussions that drive lasting change. We are particularly interested in exploring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How farming and food can deepen children's connection with nature. • How to measure and communicate the wider impacts of our work through robust research. • How different interventions—from single-day visits to year-long programmes— affect children's wellbeing. • How unequal access to food, farming, and nature experiences shapes childhood inequalities. <p>We bring large-scale delivery experience, practitioner insight, and access to schools and children, and seek research partners offering academic rigour and analytical expertise. We are open to co-designing studies, hosting placements, sharing data and case studies, and developing collaborations that are both academically robust and practically valuable.</p>
<p>Rosalie Jones McVey</p>	<p>Rosie Jones McVey is a social and medical anthropologist and Research Fellow at Wellcome Centre for Cultures and Environments of Health at the University of Exeter. Her research focuses on ethics, morality and power in relation to the different ways that people think about the concept of 'mind'. This includes the minds of others, such</p>

	<p>as animals, children, and those who are mentally ill or neurodivergent. She is interested in the way understandings of ‘mind’ shift through time and across different places, transforming as they move through different cultural contexts, but also shifting in relation to different technologies and tools for recording and measuring minds. These different understandings of mind play out in real-world impacts in systems of training, education, treatment, management and care.</p>
<p>Claire Lunn</p>	<p>Claire Lunn is the Head of Student Experience, Careers and Tutoring at Exeter College. Her role at Exeter College is all centred around the Student Experience of 16-19 year old students (her remit encompasses our wellbeing provision).</p> <p>Interest in Research Collaboration: I would be interested in finding out more about the research that is being conducted to see if there are opportunities for us to work together.</p>
<p>Silvana Mareva</p> 	<p>Silvana Mareva is a Lecturer in Clinical Psychology with background in developmental cognitive neuroscience and transdiagnostic approaches to neurodevelopment and a researcher interested in neurodiversity and children and young people’s mental health. Her research explores how children and young people’s neurodivergence and mental health can be understood beyond traditional diagnostic labels. Her aim is to help create education and healthcare systems that are more flexible, inclusive, and responsive to individual needs rather than being limited by diagnostic thresholds.</p>
<p>Georgie Marks</p>	<p>Georgie Marks is the Building Babies Brains Service Project Lead for Action for Children and has a NIHR Pre-doctoral local authority fellowship at the University of Exeter.</p>
<p>Gemma Mendham</p> 	<p>Gemma is the Business Development Manager for Health and Wellness at the University of Exeter. Her focus is on supporting academics to explore opportunities for external collaborations with an interest in physical activity, mental health and nutrition. She is responsible for creating mutually beneficial partnerships to generate value and impact with partners from SMEs to large, multinational corporations.</p> <p>An experienced commercial professional with a focus on marketing and communications across a number of private sectors, including most recently in Primary Care with First Databank (FDB), she has a wealth of experience to help build partnerships between academia and external industry and third party providers.</p>
<p>Joanna Merrett</p> 	<p>Joanna Merrett is a Doctoral Researcher in the School of Education at the University of Exeter. Her research focuses on Home education, alternative education, education outside mainstream schooling, informal education/learning, SEND and school difficulties.</p> <p>Her research looks at the experiences of home-educated young people in England as they work towards qualifications and move on to college, university, or work. She is especially interested in how policies affect their opportunities and how families and young people navigate the systems in place. By listening directly to young people and parents, and by looking at how schools, colleges, and universities interpret the rules,</p>

	<p>my work aims to highlight both the barriers and the creative solutions that support positive futures. She has a key focus on opportunities and access to education for children educated outside the school system.</p> <p>Interest in Research Collaboration: any partners that are interested offering educational opportunities and wellbeing services or support to marginalised communities</p>
<p>Emma Norman</p> 	<p>Emma Norman is the Learning and Pilots Manager at the University of Exeter. She is looking to start a PhD in women's late diagnosis of ADHD. In her current role she has researched how to improve a sense of belonging in underrepresented students particularly mature and disabled students, including how student-student mentoring can do this. Emma wants to research how women's romantic relationships are impacted by a late ADHD diagnosis, and the mental health and identity issues arising from this for them and their partners.</p> <p>Interest in Research Collaboration: I am looking to build a PhD proposal to apply to study this as a PhD and would value the opportunity to connect with others in the field.</p>
<p>Lisa Price</p> 	<p>Lisa Price is a Lecturer in Physical activity and Health at the University of Exeter, teaching on both undergraduate and postgraduate modules. Her main research area focus on improving physical activity measurement methods in childhood populations and assessing the impact of measurement upon psychological well-being variables in children. Lisa completed her PhD at the University of Exeter prior to undertaking a post-doctoral position within the University of Exeter Medical School. During her post-doc she was involved in the Healthy Lifestyles Programme (HeLP), a novel school-based obesity prevention trial; her main role within the trial was to undertake the physical activity measurement and analysis of activity data. Lisa became a lecturer within Sport and Health Sciences in 2014.</p>
<p>Molly Southwood</p>	<p>Molly Southwood is the Chief Executive Officer, Exeter Leukaemia Fund (ELF). ELF supports blood cancer patients of all ages across Devon. Her professional background prior to this role is in fundraising and engagement in higher education. Molly has an interest in improving impact through meaningful collaboration, and at ELF have worked with several partners at the University of Exeter (Medical School, MBA, and Careers/Employability) to improve their offering to patients.</p> <p>ELF has focused on support for adult patients to date and are looking at ways to better support children and young people affected by blood cancer, those who are either patients themselves or the children/grandchildren of patients who are typically unable to access support through other channels.</p> <p>Interest in Research Collaboration: Understanding how to prioritise our approach, particularly where to direct our limited resource to have the biggest impact on young people would be very valuable.</p>
<p>Grace Williams</p>	<p>Grace is the Strengthening Communities Trust Leader at the Ted Wragg Trust. She leads the community engagement strategy in the Trust of 18 schools across Exeter, Plymouth and East Devon. An engagement professional, Grace is passionate about</p>



schools being deeply rooted in their communities and working in collaboration with them for the benefit of children, young people and their families.

Katie Wood



[Katie Wood](#) is a Postdoctoral Research Associate working on the Wellcome Trust funded project "Understanding the mechanisms driving the reduction of repetitive negative thought". This project seeks to delineate the causal mechanisms that underpin reductions in repetitive negative thought (worry and rumination). Additionally, this project aims to outline the active ingredients in Rumination-Focused Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (RF-CBT) that effectively manipulate these mechanisms, thereby reducing repetitive negative thought.

Katie previously worked in the Children and Young People's mental Health (ChYMe) research collaboration in the University of Exeter Medical school. Previous research projects include the ADaPT trial, a cross-sector pilot implementation of trauma-focused CBT for care-experienced young people with posttraumatic stress disorder, and the Stand Together trial, which evaluated the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of KiVa (a Finnish school based anti-bullying programme) to reduce bullying in primary schools.