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The School of Psychology at Bangor University continues to build on its national and international reputation of excellent teaching and delivery of high quality research outputs. This newsletter highlights our successes in terms of the IMPACT our work has on the world beyond the University, for example in terms of effects on individual health behaviour, on educational and business practice, and on clinical and social care.

Mindfulness conferences attract worldwide attention to Bangor

Mindfulness is growing in popularity as an approach for managing a range of mental and physical health disorders in a variety of settings. The Centre for Mindfulness Research and Practice (CMRP) at Bangor University has been at the forefront of mindfulness research for clinical populations since the early 1990’s when Professor Mark Williams developed Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), and was at the forefront of a national mental health campaign on mindfulness led by the Mental Health Foundation.

MBCT is an integration of Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction (MBSR), and contemporary psychological understanding developed from Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). The Centre is working with local communities to extend the availability and application of mindfulness to populations such as parents, the unemployed, those vulnerable to stress at work, cancer patients and carers, primary school children, etc. A number of research projects are on-going e.g. as part of a ‘Fit for Work’ programme, aimed at helping long term unemployed or those at risk of unemployment. Mindfulness for foster parents, for parents of children with intellectual disability, and work is underway in primary schools. The CMRP is leading the field in developing standards of training for teachers of mindfulness based approaches, investigating methods of assessing competency of mindfulness-based teachers, promoting the implementation of MBCT in the National Health Service. The CMRP hosts a bi-annual conference, which draws in delegates from across the world. Their 2011 ‘Mindfulness Now’ conference was a huge success with over 200 delegates in attendance. The conference consisted of keynotes, workshops, mindfulness practice sessions and research forums, as well as offering an opportunity for networking. See their website for details of the 2013 conference of which the key note speaker is the founding father, and world leader of mindfulness Professor Jon Kabat-Zinn

www.bangor.ac.uk/mindfulness/
Changing children's eating habits for life

Since the 1990’s the Bangor Food and Activity Research Unit (BFARU) has conducted a programme of work using a range of behaviour change procedures to improve children’s health. They have developed an intervention that uses Role-modeling, Rewards and Repeated tasting, to bring about large scale and long lasting increases in children’s consumption of fruit and vegetables. This programme is known as The Food Dudes. By increasing children’s consumption of fruit and vegetables and reducing unhealthy snacking behaviour, the Programme makes a key contribution to the fight against obesity and brings a range of other health benefits. It has been recognised for its success in the prevention of health problems, including obesity, and has won the Chief Medical Officer’s Gold Medal Award, as well as awards from the World Health Organisation, and the Caroline Walker Trust. In recognition of the worldwide impact of the programme, Dr Pauline Horne and Professor Fergus Lowe were recently given the Scientific Translation Award of the Society for the Advancement of Behavioural Analysis. The Food Dudes Programme is currently being introduced into all primary schools in Ireland (450,000 children), is being rolled out in several regions of England, and is being trialled in the USA, Italy and other countries. The programme has benefitted from the support of a range of industry collaborations (horticultural, consumer goods, and retail) and has, in turn, served to increase economic activity in these domains. To ensure the Programme reaches it’s full global potential, a new Social Enterprise Company- Food Dudes Health Limited- is now being established as a joint venture with Bangor University.

To find out if Food Dudes are coming to your country or to a school near you visit: www.fooddudes.co.uk/en/

Inspirational work by child behaviourist

Since 1976 Professor Judy Hutchings has been helping children, parents and teachers prevent and treat conduct disorder in children and young people. Since 1998 Judy has been using the evidence based intervention ‘the Incredible Years programme’, developed in Seattle. Judy and her team have evaluated this programme and trained staff, to support hundreds of children, parents and teachers locally, nationally and internationally. In March 2011 the centre was renamed the Centre for Evidence Based Early Intervention (CEBEI) as a natural extension of their work. The Centre maintains an active programme of training events and holds Annual Conferences in North and South Wales. Judy’s excellent leadership was recognised in 2011 with her being awarded an OBE for services to children and families, only one year after receiving the first Inspire Wales Educator award. She has recently been joined by Dr Helen Henningham who has come from the University of the West Indies, Jamaica, where she is researching the teacher programme giving an international dimension to the team’s work.

Visit their website to learn more about the brilliant work of this team: www.incredibleyearswales.co.uk/
Working together for workplace success

Bangor University has a long history of the assessment and support of a spectrum of reading disorders, including dyslexia. The mainly self-financed Miles Dyslexia Centre (renamed in 2009 in honour of Professor Tim Miles OBE, centre co-founder) supports primary and secondary school children, teachers, parents and LEA’s, as well as University students and adults in the work place. The Centre also educates and informs the public with a series of activities including the annual T.R. Miles Memorial Public Lecture. Current research at the MDC includes an important collaboration with Remploy, one of the UK’s leading providers of employment services, to revise the Bangor Dyslexia Test, in order to help identify and support people with dyslexia in the work place. Fundraising for the centre’s activity requires innovative thinking. In addition to bids for external funding, the team holds an annual sponsored bike ride to raise money for after school tuition from which many local school children derive educational benefit. Please visit the Miles Dyslexia Centre website for details of their recently held information day for teachers and parents, other services and future activity: www.dyslexia.bangor.ac.uk/

Headsprout reading programme benefits teenager

“Headsprout is exciting and innovative, and this research with the University has changed the way we teach children to read. The children love the characters and we love the progress”.

Donna Roberts
Headteacher of Ysgol Hafod Lon, Pwllheli

A research team led by Dr Carl Hughes, Professor Richard Hastings, Emily Tyler and Michael Beverley at the School of Psychology have been working in collaboration with schools and teachers in North Wales, and a local Speech and Language Therapist, Bethan Mair Williams, to help improve children’s reading skills through innovative computer-based internet reading programmes called Headsprout. One of these children is a 14 year old girl called Alex with severe Cerebral Palsy who attends Ty Aran Special Needs Unit, Ysgol y Gader, Dolgellau, and who recently started using a communication aid known as an ‘Ecopoint’ that operates by eye gaze alone. Using Headsprout alongside other activities her teacher, Janet Griffiths, has been helping her to build up spelling and typing skills; Alex is making valuable progress in literacy skills.

The team is continuing the research in collaboration with Headsprout and have hosted a visit from one of the founders of Headsprout and a leading world expert in reading instruction, Professor Janet Twyman from Seattle.

Contact Dr Carl Hughes for more information about Headsprout: c.hughes@bangor.ac.uk
Is 3-D viewing a good thing?

Dr Simon Watt, Senior Lecturer and Vision Scientist in the School, recently presented findings on the effects of viewing 3-D movies, television, and other displays at IBC, a broadcast industry meeting in Amsterdam attended by 50,000 delegates and 1300 companies. He discussed perhaps controversial but timely evidence about the potential ‘perceptual’ problems that can arise from viewing 3-D media. Because the real world is three-dimensional, viewing 3-D media is often thought to be more natural than viewing conventional cinema etc. In fact, however, 3-D displays present a stimulus to our visual systems that differs from natural viewing in significant ways, and these differences have been shown to have a number of unpleasant side effects, including poor or distorted depth perception, artefacts like juddering motion, fatigue and eyestrain. Simon’s work will continue to attract lots of interest as he conducts further cutting edge research.

We suggest you watch this space www.bangor.ac.uk/vision

Can Cognitive Psychology explain consumer choice?

Professor Jane Raymond is a Cognitive Psychologist working in the area of consumer behaviour and decision-making. Jane has some very impressive research collaborations having worked in partnership with the Bank of England, Millward Brown and the Royal Mail. Her work in the science of consumer psychology has helped inform the design of new bank notes and given the Royal Mail and its clients a better understanding of the effectiveness of direct advertisement. Other research projects have helped with the design of packaging of food and other products so that they better communicate to consumers the product’s unique benefits and how advertisements should be optimally positioned on a website [in terms of how to be minimally annoying and maximally helpful]. The impact of Jane’s work was recognised with a Google-WPP-Marketing Research Award. Out of 11 award winners in 2010, Bangor’s Professor Raymond was the only European.

www.bangor.ac.uk/consumer
Ageing research helps shape Welsh policy and services

The School of Psychology at Bangor University has achieved international recognition for its research on dementia care, led by Professors Linda Clare and Bob Woods as part of The Wales Dementia Services Development Centre (DSDC). The DSDC became a member of the Global Ageing Research Network in 2011 and its dissemination programme includes the Wales Dementia Care Training Initiative, which has been funded by the Welsh Government to provide a major boost to dementia care training capacity in Wales. The Centre plays an active role in shaping policy on dementia care in Wales, and also provides advice to dementia care services, including on the design of care facilities. In 2011 Professor Woods became the first recipient from outside the USA of the Barry Reisberg Award for Alzheimer’s Research. Therapeutic interventions such as reminiscence and life story work and cognitive rehabilitation have been developed and evaluated in Bangor. In 2012 a major review of cognitive stimulation was published, indicating that it may slow decline and improve well being in dementia patients. Fund-raising for vital services for people with dementia and their carers is on going; for example DSDC Wales staff joined forces with the team of NISCHR CRC (National Institute for Social Care and Health Clinical Research Centre) to organise a Time for a Cuppa cake sale in order to raise funds for the Dementia UK charity.

www.bangor.ac.uk/dementia

Visit Val’s web page to see other ways she has been using psychology to aid health and wellbeing: www.bangor.ac.uk/val

The cost of not taking medicine

Dr Val Morrison, Reader in Health Psychology, has been working in collaboration with the Centre for Health Economics and Medicine Evaluations to identify factors associated with adherence to medication, the cost of non-adherence and interventions to improve medication adherence. The research team recently presented their findings at the European Parliament in Brussels.

Visit Val’s web page to see other ways she has been using psychology to aid health and wellbeing: www.bangor.ac.uk/val
Knowledge Transfer Days

Following the success of previous Knowledge Transfer (KT) days opened by Ieuan Wyn Jones, AM, Mr Iwan Trefor Jones, Chairman of Gwynedd Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership, and Dame Carol Black, UK National Director for Health and Work (see photo), we are now planning our next event. So far our KT days have been attended by representatives of the education, social and health sectors as well as the general public.

Please check our website for further details on this year’s event: www.bangor.ac.uk/psychology/research/events

Get Involved

There are numerous ways that businesses, local employers and the public can get involved. From student placements and collaborative research projects to consultancy services, please see our website or contact us to discuss how our research could benefit you.

www.bangor.ac.uk/psychology/research/impact

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Some of the external organisations that the School of Psychology has had recent research involvement with include:

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