



# BRAIN & BEHAVIOUR ENHANCEMENT



reconnecting neural pathways.....

## Linking early adversity to later school engagement

An information evening with Dr Mary F. O' Connor

The Connacht Hotel, Renmore, Galway

**Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> October, 8 pm**

Cost €10 (Pre-booking essential)

### **Purpose:**

- To provide a brief outline of evidence based challenges which children adopted from overseas may encounter in the classroom and offer some evidence of supportive management strategies.

### **Introduction and background:**

- Why there appears to be a need to research this topic?

### **Body of presentation:**

- Linking early life adversity to later development
- Social interaction in school
- Engaging with school based activities
- Support strategies identified by both teachers and parents
- Future concerns identified by parents and teachers
- Examples of resilience despite adverse early environments

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Mary F. O'Connor is a Neuro-Developmental Practitioner based in Galway. Since 1995 she has worked with children who have specific learning challenges, by devising an individualised sensory motor programme combined with a therapeutic childcare approach.

Through her work, Mary first came in contact with a number of children adopted from Romania in 1997. This group of children appeared to have some unique and extra challenges, compared to the specific challenges seen in the children she was used to working with. As a result she began researching the broader literature on intercountry adopted children. Her own research concentrated on early childhood adversity and its later effects on social interaction and school engagement. Previous research focused on the experiences of adoptive parents in the process of intercountry adoption.

In addition to over twenty years practical experience working with children with specific challenges, Mary has a PhD (Professional) in Education, an MA (Hons.) in Advanced Therapeutic Childcare, and a diploma in both Physiology and Sociology. She is a strong advocate of fostering evidence-based, rather than opinion-based, educational initiatives. She is particularly committed to raising awareness of the effects of early childhood adversity in later life, and offering suggestions for effective management strategies in the classroom.

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