



Press release - Thursday 22 June 2023

The Psychological Society of Ireland to host webinar exploring the impact of parental smartphone use in the presence of infants

The Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) is delighted to host an upcoming webinar entitled *Parental smartphone use in the presence of infants – the impact on relationships and child development*. The online event, which is being led by the PSI's Special Interest Group in Perinatal and Infant Mental Health (SIGPIMH), will explore parents' use of smartphones in the perinatal period and what support and strategies can be used to create healthy smartphone habits.

The webinar takes place on Tuesday 27 June via Zoom from 3pm to 4:30pm with a cost of €15 for members of the public to attend virtually. Miriam McCabe will present the online event which will look at the prevalence of smartphones and how, alongside all of their useful functions, there are some very real downsides. "Technoference" is one such downside – it is the name given to technological interruptions and interference in everyday family life. This can be inconvenient or upsetting for older family members, but for infants - born altricial, utterly reliant on responsive care for setting optimal developmental trajectories - chronically distracted care can have far-reaching implications. Research indicates most parents have not considered the benefits of avoiding 'mindless scrolling' in the perinatal period. With persuasive technologies and an attention economy competing with infants' needs, mothers and babies need support and strategies, in order to create healthy smartphone habits during the transition to parenthood.

Presenter Miriam McCaleb is a former kindergarten teacher who taught adults at Tennessee Tech University and the Christchurch College of Education in New Zealand. She writes for various parenting magazines and has contributed to journals as a writer and peer reviewer. Miriam also sporadically blogs at www.baby.geek.nz. She has presented at the *International Neurosequential Model Symposium* in Canada, and is due to share her research findings this July at the forthcoming *Congress for the World Association for Infant Mental Health* in Dublin. Miriam is a PhD candidate at the University of Canterbury, examining how best to support women's healthy smartphone habits during the transition to parenthood as a means to prioritise the parent-infant connection and, therefore, optimise child development.

To book a place at this event, see www.psychologicalsociety.ie.

ENDS.

For further information, or to arrange an interview, please contact:

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Points to note:

- The direct booking link for this event is [here](#).
- The Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI), with over 4,000 members, is the learned and professional body for the profession in the Republic of Ireland, with the primary objective of advancing psychology as an applied science in Ireland and elsewhere.
- Connect with the PSI through [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), and [LinkedIn](#).
- The Special Interest Group in Perinatal and Infant Mental Health (SIGPIMH) promotes the clinical practice, education, and research regarding the health and development of parents and infants from conception and pregnancy through to five years postpartum, within both the discipline of psychology in addition to interdisciplinary cooperation with other medical and allied health professions. Connect with SIGPIMH through their social media accounts on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Instagram](#).