

Parent Blame: Where are we now?

15 September 2025

St Georges Centre
Leeds LS1 3DL
and online

10.00am	Registration
10.30am	Welcome Professor Anna Lawson
10.40am	Keynote Speaker Professor Sara Ryan
11.15am	Parent Blame in Health and Social Care Chair: Lucy Fullard Discussion & calls for action
12.30pm	Lunch break
2.00pm	Parent Blame in Education Chair: Louise Parker Engels Discussion & calls for action
3.15pm	Closing remarks
3.30pm	Close

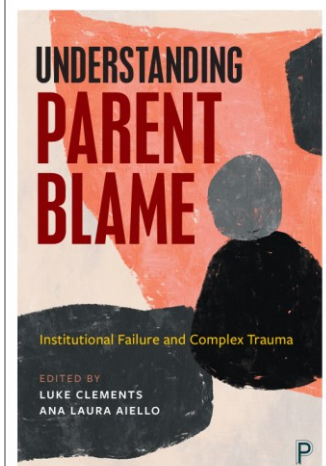
Book launch and discussion

'Understanding Parent Blame': edited by Luke Clements & Ana Laura Aiello, Policy Press 2025

Parent Blame: a standard response by many institutions when they fail to provide appropriate education, health and social care support for children in need and their families.

An event to discuss what can be done to challenge institutional policies and practices that, in the time of austerity, foster a culture of Parent Blame.

Bringing together parents and young people who have experienced the trauma of being caught up in the process of blame, together with practitioners, activists and researchers.



To book a place (to attend in person or online)
email A.L.Aiello@Leeds.ac.uk
(by 5th September 2025)

Speakers

- **Professor Sara Ryan** is the Professor of Social Care at Manchester Metropolitan University whose extensive research portfolio includes funded projects focusing on learning disabilities, autism, growing older, loneliness and the experiences of giving evidence at Fitness to Practice hearings. Sara's research is underpinned by scholarly activism and a commitment to research which makes a difference. She has authored many publications, including 'Justice for Laughing Boy: Connor Sparrowhawk - A Death by Indifference' (2017) and most recently Critical Health and Learning Disabilities. An Exploration of Erasure and Social Murder (Routledge 2025).
- **Professor Anna Lawson** is a Professor of law at the University of Leeds – becoming the UK's first blind woman law professor in 2013. She co-directs the Centre for Law and Social Justice and is a member of the Executive Committee of the University's interdisciplinary Centre for Disability Studies, which she co-directed from 2014 to 2024. Her work focuses on disability and social justice at international, European and national levels.
- **Lucy Fullard** is the CEO, Founder, and Director of the Parent and Carer Alliance – one of the most influential independent Parent Carer Groups in England. The Alliance is dedicated to supporting families with disabled children, working alongside them to transform the quality of their lives. The Parent and Carer Alliance offers trusted, independent emotional and practical support to parents and carers. At its heart is a welcoming, safe community where families can access accurate, up-to-date information from both national and local sources, as well as peer support from others with lived experience.
- **Louise Parker Engels** co-founded Define Fine, a team of professionals and parents with lived experience of school attendance difficulties. They are unique as a school attendance support-focused organisation, as in addition to their online group parent peer support, they offer direct one-to-one support and case management (free) to parent carers. They are a 'not for profit' and work alongside other charitable organisations across SEND and mental health who share their values and ethos. They also provide CPD training to local authorities and health and education professionals. Their training fees for this work, as well as grants and donations, fund their peer support.
- **Professor Luke Clements** is the Cerebra Professor of Law & Social Justice at the School of Law, the University of Leeds.
- **Dr Ana Laura Aiello** is the Postdoctoral Researcher on the Cerebra LEaP project at Leeds. Ana studied law and human rights in Argentina, Spain and in the UK (obtaining her PhD at Leeds University). She has worked for a number of international NGOs (including Amnesty International, Disability Rights International and CHANGE) and at universities in Argentina, Spain and the UK.