



Social work lecture highlights legacy of ‘Baby P’

A packed lecture theatre welcomed keynote speaker Dr Ray Jones, Professor of Social Work and author of ‘The story of Baby P, setting the record straight,’ to Southampton Solent’s Itchen Lecture Theatre on Friday 13 March.

Addressing final year students and professionals already employed in the care sector, Dr Jones delivered a presentation based on his view of what happened to Baby P. He also pointed out the extraordinary effect the case has had on social work today, and in particular showed how the demand on child protection services has increased since the period 2009-2010 and 2013-2014 to such an extent that he now considered child protection to be at breaking point with:

- More section 47 investigations (up 60% to 142,500)
- More children subject to an initial child protection conference (up 49% to 65,200)
- More child protection plans in England (up 50% to 48,300)
- More care applications (1013 in July 2014, an increase of 104% since October 2008)

His view was echoed by Kerry Manhire, a qualified social worker who graduated from Southampton Solent University in 2010 and is now working in child protection/safeguarding children.

“Since graduation I can honestly say that we are now more overrun, more pressured and pushed than we have ever been” she says.

Despite this, Kerry has moved up from being a work-based supervisor for current students on work placement to being a practice educator.

“As well being good for the students it is also an effective way of keeping up-to-date with research and new ways of working”, she explains. “When you are caught up in the day-to-day you can lose that. I find students really quite interesting and rewarding to work with, and they have great enthusiasm.”

Some of the new ideas and enthusiasm could be seen immediately following the presentation by Dr Jones in the adjacent Test and Avon Conference Suite. Posters showcasing research ideas-in-progress were exhibited by third year students who were then able to engage in meaningful discussions with social work industry professionals and of course with Dr Jones.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT THE MEDIA OFFICE ON 023 8201 3098 or press.office@solent.ac.uk

About Southampton Solent University

Southampton Solent University offers more than 23,000 students over 200 qualifications ranging from HND to PhD, in subjects such as maritime education and training, fashion and design, media and television, music, health, sport and leisure, business, IT and technology. The University was awarded the 2013 Quality Assurance kitemark for quality and standards of teaching and learning. Solent was voted one of the most creative universities in the UK in a Which? University 2014 poll of students. Solent Business School has been awarded the Small Business Charter Award, which is supported by the Association of Business Schools and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and ‘gold approval’ by the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA).