

# News from the WAIMH Central Office

By Päivi Kaukonen, Executive Director,  
Tampere, Finland, [ed@waimh.org](mailto:ed@waimh.org),

Kaija Puura, Associate Executive Director,  
Tampere, Finland, [congress@waimh.org](mailto:congress@waimh.org)  
and

Minna Sorsa, Administrative Assistant,  
Tampere, Finland, [office@waimh.org](mailto:office@waimh.org)

Reija Latva, Social Media co-ordinator,  
Tampere, Finland, [reija.latva@pshp.fi](mailto:reija.latva@pshp.fi)

Dear Colleagues,

The 16th World Congress of the WAIMH in Rome 2018 is nearing and has its theme as the interplay between nature and nurture. This dilemma is not quite as ancient as the city of Rome, but it has been an intriguing question for clinicians and researchers for quite a while.

This time our congress plenaries will address both old and new aspects of nature-nurture interplay. Our plenarists for Rome 2018 include Professor Massimo Ammaniti (Italy), Professor Jay Belsky (USA), Professor Hasse Karlsson (Finland) and Professor Jenny Radesky (USA). The plenaries present new data on issues that have been under study for a long time, like prenatal stress and its effect on both the mother and the developing infant; how the use of smartphones, tablets and computers will affect child development during the early years; and, how our individual characteristics can affect our susceptibility to different environmental stressors. We have not forgotten the global changes in climate and world politics, as the Presidential Symposium will address the crises facing refugee infants and their families in so many countries around the world.

As a novelty for this Congress, the Programme Committee has created what they call a Plenary Interface of Research and Clinical Work, where a researcher and a clinician will present on the same subject and, with the help from a moderator, will create an interesting discussion. One these interfaces will address prenatal stress and another will discuss how fathers influence the development of their sons.

The Programme Committee again proposes a range of ways in which you may be able to present your research with infants and families, your clinical work and other innovations. We are keen to hear from as many of you as possible and to facilitate a lively and collegial exchange

of ideas. Based on the feedback from the previous Congress we have also tried to provide better structures for both clinical and scientific abstract submissions. So please, do feel welcome to submit your work to the 16th World Congress in Rome 2018 to be shared with your colleagues worldwide. The call for papers will be sent out and submission for abstracts start May 15, 2017. The deadline for submission of abstracts will be September 15, 2017. If you are not on our mailing list yet, please send an email to [office@waimh.org](mailto:office@waimh.org) and we will include you.

The WAIMH has worked really hard to learn how best to use social media for the benefit of the infant mental health community globally. As you may remember, we have engaged Dr. Reija Latva to assist the Central Office with this, as well as volunteer members of the WAIMH family. Please send us your ideas about how we can make the WAIMH Rome 2018 World Congress as visible and as useful as possible through social media.

Over the next months we will provide regular updates in our newsletters about the Congress, plenary keynote speakers, plenary interface presenters and [participants in the invited symposia. We all look forward to seeing you in 2018, and of course you are aware of the old saying: all roads lead to Rome!