

# WAIMH Affiliates News

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## Greetings to all WAIMH Affiliates.

Most recently some of us had an opportunity to meet in Prague at the 15th WAIMH Congress. The Congress was an extraordinary event featuring a rich array of infant mental health related practice and research. In addition, there were wonderful opportunities to connect and relax with each other. This congress in particular was unique in that it was an Israeli and Palestinian Congress hosted in Prague. The sheer logistics of such an endeavour were enormous and we would like to thank everybody that made the congress run smoothly. Especially we would like to thank the local organising committee (Miri Keren, Sam Tyano, Ghassan Abdullah and many other colleagues from Israel and Palestine), the WAIMH programme committee (Campbell Paul, Miri Keren, Kaija Puura, David Oppenheim and Mark Tomlinson), the congress secretariat (GUARANT International), the WAIMH Board and Executive officers and the WAIMH office.

This brief update has three foci: An overview of the Affiliate meetings recently held at the 15th WAIMH Congress; an update on the WAIMH Infant Rights statement; and plans for an Affiliate pre-congress event at the next WAIMH Congress in Italy, 2018.

### Affiliate Council meetings at the 15th WAIMH Congress, Prague

There were several main events that the Affiliate council hosted or co-hosted for some or all members. The first event was a reception for delegates whose attendance at the WAIMH Congress was supported by the WAIMH Sponsor a Delegate Program. WAIMH Board members, Astrid Berg and



WAIMH Affiliate Council biannual meetings in Prague 2016. (Photo by WAIMH)

Deborah Weatherston, WAIMH Affiliate Council Representatives, Maree Foley and Anna Huber, the Infant Mental Health Journal Editor-in-Chief, Paul Spicer, and WAIMH Central Office staff, Päivi Kaukonen and Minna Sorsa, were present to meet and welcome the delegates, all of whom appreciated the support provided to attend the 2016 Congress in Prague.

Each delegate introduced herself to the group after which WAIMH Board members expressed appreciation for their interest and commitment to the field of infant mental health and their shared goal of building infant mental health interest groups in their home countries, progressing the development of their groups to affiliate status and identifying ways in which WAIMH could support these developments. Countries represented included India, Ghana, Egypt, Ukraine, Nepal, Brazil, Palestine and China.

Next, the Affiliate Council provided an Administrative meeting for affiliate presidents and their executive members. The purpose of this meeting was to provide an opportunity to share affiliate administrative issues or concerns for discussion as a group. This type of get together had not been held before but was organised in response to the many queries that Maree and Anna and the WAIMH office

field from affiliate presidents between congresses. The meeting was very well attended. The room was full and because the meeting was not structured around a pre-determined agenda, there was plenty of time for people to introduce themselves, raise issues and share ideas and resources, in the interests of all members and aspiring members of the Affiliate Council. Members of the WAIMH office were also represented sharing in furthering understandings about member issues, concerns and suggestions. Affiliate Council presidents will receive a summary of the notes taken at this meeting to share with their executives.

Immediately following the Administration meeting the Affiliate Council with the WAIMH Board hosted a reception for presidents of affiliate associations. This reception was also extremely well attended and gave members an opportunity to get to know each other in a social context. It also provided an opportunity to informally share experiences and ideas from different local perspectives. Discussions included the joys and challenges of working in the world of infant mental health while also running a professional association to support this work.

Finally, the Affiliate Council biennial meeting was a more formal reporting back

to members on the work of the Council in the past two years. A full set of minutes will be sent to all Affiliate Presidents and their executives. In brief, the meeting began with a video from the Western Cape Association of Infant Mental Health that highlighted the growth and development within their affiliate following the WAIMH Congress held in Cape Town, South Africa, in 2012. This video will be available for viewing on the WAIMH website.

Results and recommendations to the WAIMH Board of the member survey on the Affiliate Council voting process were detailed (A full set of these results were previously sent to all Affiliates prior to the Congress). The WAIMH Board have approved these findings and the new voting process will be put into place for the 2018 elections. Also, the issue of supporting presidents to attend the biennial Affiliate Council meeting was presented to the board and is being considered as part of an overarching review of how WAIMH can further develop its practical support of the affiliates.

In addition, members were informed about the Board's plans to further progress the newly published Infant Rights Statement to Declaration status. Affiliates are seen as playing a key role in this process, by promoting and using the document, and giving feedback on their experiences to the board through the Affiliate Council.

Finally, members were presented with an overview of the WAIMH social media initiative by Minna Sorsa and Reija Latva. We were all encouraged to do the web based training in using social media which is available on the WAIMH website. Using various WAIMH social media channels, affiliates can play an important role in promoting awareness of Infant Mental Health and WAIMH by sharing research, clinical knowledge and experiences from around the world.

For those of you who were able to attend these events, your ideas and feedback have helped shape directions for both Affiliate Council and WAIMH Board work over the next two years. They have also provided invaluable information to the board about on the ground issues for WAIMH members and affiliates. For a relationship focused organisation, so much is gained by meeting in person, as so many of us did through these affiliate events in Prague.

## WAIMH Infant Rights Statement Survey 2017

The [WAIMH Infant Rights statement has been published online](#) and via WAIMH social media. The WAIMH Board encourage



Affiliate Council Chair Maree Foley in WAIMH Affiliate Administrative Meeting. (Photo by WAIMH)

each WAIMH member and each WAIMH Affiliate to use this statement within their local and national settings. Furthermore, the WAIMH Board have goals to further develop the statement. The development of this statement involves a multi-pronged approach. All levels of consideration, reflection and action are important. As such, the WAIMH Board are progressing with conversations with members within the United Nations. For example, they will be engaging with United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child.

In addition, the Affiliates Council in collaboration with the Board will invite WAIMH Affiliates and all WAIMH members to provide feedback on the statement. To this end, in April and May of 2017, all WAIMH Affiliate Presidents, WAIMH members, and WAIMH study group representatives will be invited to participate in an online survey. The survey will be brief and will invite you to share your experiences of using the current Infant Rights statement in your local and national context. Your expertise will also be sought with regard to any areas of the document that you consider could be strengthened, elaborated upon and or further developed.

### Projected timeframe:

April and May 2017: Online survey concerning current use and local feedback about the WAIMH Infant Rights Statement.

May 2017: Feedback summary report compiled for the WAIMH Board.

In the middle/late part of 2017 (Board meetings dates are currently being set):

The WAIMH Board will then discuss these findings and key outcomes from the survey process and Board discussion will be provided by email and WAIMH social media to the WAIMH Affiliates, Study Groups and WAIMH members.

## WAIMH Congress, Rome, Italy, 2018: Affiliate Council pre-congress event.

The Affiliates Council are planning to run a pre-congress event in Rome, 2018. The theme of this pre-congress will be established drawing on existing feedback from Affiliates who have requested support to engage more fully with issues concerning Infant Mental Health practice. Issues such as practice based competencies, reflective supervision and practice tools have been suggested.

We invite all Affiliate Presidents to consider if they would like to be part of an Affiliate Council pre-congress event organising committee. Planning will begin in September of this year. If you are interested please feel free to contact Maree and Anna.

Finally we wish you all the very best with your affiliate activities over the next months. We are always pleased to hear from you: your news, queries and challenges.