

WAIMH membership and Affiliates membership renewal campaigns: Building synergy of action for 2013

By Maree Foley , New Zealand and Martin St-André , Canada

As the new year begins, it is time for many of us to renew our membership to various professional organizations. For infant mental health professionals, the offer seems at times a bit daunting: regional, national and international organizations; discipline-specific organizations, interdisciplinary organizations, clinically-oriented groups, academically-oriented groups. The diversity of our memberships reflects the richness of our affiliations and of our professional identity. But we sometimes end up feeling a bit torn between these various commitments, each organization claiming the importance of maintaining – and even increasing - its membership base for pursuing and developing its missions.

At the end of 2012, Affiliates presidents generously provided the Affiliates Council with their annual reports. Several observations emerge. First, Affiliates across the WAIMH family are broadening their repertoire of activities. They invest considerable effort to consolidate their organizational structure, and they create together hundreds of infant mental health educational and advocacy events in their various communities. Second, Affiliates report working very hard at renewing and even expanding their membership base. They report also the challenge of establishing new bridges among sub-

groups of infant mental health workers within their own community. For Affiliates, the challenge of maintaining membership is especially important in the economic context of most countries. For those of us living in neoliberal economies, it is more important than ever to emphasize the value of social solidarity and to protect society's most vulnerable members - including infants. A third observation gleaned from the Presidents' annual reports is that the mailing list of all the Affiliates totals near 15 000 persons and organizations. Hence Affiliates and their mailing lists provide a powerful vehicle for disseminating information and calling for actions across the WAIMH community.

For WAIMH and for the WAIMH Board, 2012 has been a watershed year for the enrichment of a bidirectional relationship with the Affiliates: supporting the necessary infrastructure of the Affiliates Council, prioritizing the discussion of Affiliates issues during Board meetings, catalyzing inter-Affiliates relationships, supporting the emergence of new Affiliates, and encouraging the creation of Affiliates-driven events for the next WAIMH World Congress. By deciding to provide free access to Perspectives in Infant Mental Health and by planning to facilitate the dissemination of conference material from the next World Congress, WAIMH has concretely demonstrated the extent of its prioritizing of Affiliates needs.

Why should you promote dual

membership to WAIMH and to your Affiliate in your Affiliate community?

By deciding to become a member of both WAIMH and of your Affiliate, you contribute directly to the expansion and to the enrichment of a reciprocal relationship between your Affiliate and WAIMH. You support the growth of your Affiliate by bringing in the scientific and transdisciplinary culture of WAIMH. You contribute directly to the nurturance of other Affiliates throughout the world and to the action of WAIMH for its Affiliates. And finally, you contribute to align the actions of WAIMH with the priorities that you notice from the perspective of your own community.

As 2013 gets under way, we wish you a most productive year for your Affiliate and we assure you of our ongoing commitment to support your input within the WAIMH community.

Contact information:

Maree Foley

Affiliates Council Representative

maree.foley@vuw.ac.nz

Martin St-André

Affiliates Council Chair

martin.st-andre@umontreal.ca

Save the date

WAIMH 2014 Congress at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre June 14 – 18 – Babies: Their Contribution, Our Responsibility