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Affiliates Corner

September 2012

Facebook

By Maree Foley and Martin St-André

It is autumn and spring. This shared geographical reality captures something of the experience of creating, of growing, and of consolidating as a WAIMH affiliate. Being a WAIMH affiliate is a dance between working locally while sustaining connections with other affiliates, and to WAIMH. As WAIMH affiliates we are paradoxically part of an international family; while we co-create evolving local WAIMH Affiliate families. In turn, we straddle a plethora of relationships with WAIMH, the Affiliates Council and our Affiliates. Further, each group reflects a unique stage of development as an organisation whereby each group brings unique needs and offerings to the relationship/s. Consequently, amidst grass-roots living, it is a challenge to hold the interplay of these relationships in mind.

To support our experience of being and becoming a WAIMH family we have been working on ways to keep in mind our connectedness with each other. As a result, we are in the early stages of piloting the use of Facebook. Facebook offers us a unique opportunity to experience our connectedness in a new way; and to reflect on this experience of social engagement. That is, Facebook is a technological form of social engagement, and social engagement is of interest to us in our day-to-day work with infants and their families.

A team of council members, including Catarina Furmack (Nordic Affiliate) and Lynn Priddis (Australia) are currently working on a project, initially aimed at the leadership teams of each affiliate as a way to bridge their connections with each other. We will provide updates as this pilot programme develops.

Finally, the creation of the Affiliates Council provides a rich opportunity for Affiliates to have a real input into WAIMH's activities and projects. As a result, the Affiliates Council is "becoming" a lively place for generating ideas and actions within infant mental groups. Thank you to all WAIMH members and presidents for your ongoing participation in our "spring-autumn WAIMH family".

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