

Perspectives in Infant Mental Health

Professional Publication of the World Association for Infant Mental Health



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President's Reflections

By Miri Keren, M.D., WAIMH President, Israel, ofkeren@zahav.net.il

Dear WAIMH members and friends,

It is time now to update you on the major activities our WAIMH Board members have been working on since our last WAIMH Conference in Edinburgh. Indeed, considering the distances we live from one another around the world, we have achieved quite a lot in-between our face-to-face meetings at our biennial conferences. Advanced communication techniques, combined with a very highly motivated Board, have made it possible to work on many things.

We are currently working in parallel on three main projects: the Infant's Rights Declaration, the revision of the DC0-3R classification system, and the preparation of the 2016 Conference. Let me update you, one by one.

The Infant's Rights Declaration

Those who attended the Presidential Symposium at the 2014 Edinburgh Conference heard about the rationale and the process that led to the decision to compose an Infant's Rights Declaration. The draft document has also been circulated for comment among the membership. There has been a very lively, on-going discussion about the need for a declaration of our own, an Infant's Rights Declaration, in addition to the declaration that has already been prepared for the Children's Rights Convention.

When creating WAIMH, we could have asked the same kind of question: Why did we need to create an association of our own for infants when there were already professional associations who

dealt with child and adolescent mental health (IACAPAP, ESCAP) or educational or pediatric associations?!

We need WAIMH to give voice to the uniqueness of the infancy period. Hence, we see ourselves obliged to provide a document that reflects and articulates WAIMH's values, its sense of the policies and practices that will produce the outcomes defined in the principles. The main aim of the Infant's Rights document is to provide a clear voice and direction to everyone who belongs to WAIMH and its Affiliates. Of course, we support the Children's Rights Convention. The final version of the Infant's Rights document, which we are working on these very days, will make clear what is special about infants, their needs and rights. The last step will be to try to establish this statement as an addendum to the Children's Rights Convention.

Revision of the DC 0-3R

The revision of DC-0-3R, the *Diagnostic Classification for Emotional and Developmental Disorders in Infancy and Early Childhood*, has been initiated by ZERO TO THREE (ZTT), under the leadership of Charley Zeanah Jr., and has become a joint ZTT / WAIMH venture. The DC-0-3R Task Force, made of clinicians and researchers in the field of infant and preschool mental health (Charley Zeanah, Alicia Lieberman, Alice Carter, Helen Egger, Mary Margaret Gleason, Miri Keren) is working very intensively, through international videoconferences and in-person meetings, on each of the diagnostic categories, reviewing the relevant studies that have been published in the last 10 years, as well as bringing in their own clinical experience. Although it requires a very big number of work hours, this is an extremely dynamic and



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interesting process. We will be happy to share it with you during the conference in Prague, just a few months before sending it to ZERO TO THREE for publication. Stay tuned!

WAIMH 2016 Conference: Infant Mental Health in a Rapidly Changing World: Conflict, Adversity and Resilience.

As most of you already know, the 2016 WAIMH Conference has been transferred from Tel Aviv to Prague, for reasons we

have explained in detail in a previous issue of Perspectives. The Scientific Committee and the Local Committee are already working at full speed and the first Call for Papers will be launched by the end of this month. Creativity and flexibility are needed to organize this conference in unusual circumstances, and this, in itself, has become an adventure. We hope to get as many abstracts as we got for the enormously successful Conference in Edinburgh!

Thank you for the work you are each doing in your own corner of the world.

Very warm regards to all of you, Miri Keren, WAIMH President

From the Editors

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This Issue has been put together with great enthusiasm and an abundance of care. The editorial staff provided lots of suggestions and feedback; the authors submitted papers that represent a great deal of hard work, provoking us to think more deeply about research, community, policy and practice focusing on the developmental and relationship needs of infants and very young children. We thank them for their contributions.

Miri Keren, discusses the policy work that WAIMH has been engaged in for the past 3 months in her President's Column. The World in WAIMH introduces Niels Rygaard, a Danish consulting psychologist who raises important questions about infancy research in his article, "Infant Mental Health in the Global Village." Connie Lillas, a family therapist and analyst from Southern California and Mary Ann Marchel, research faculty from the University of Minnesota Duluth, challenge traditional research assumptions and practices in their paper in which they look at dynamic systems theory and its influence on

research, cultural disparities, and shifts that support the IMH field. Kaija Puura, Associate Director, provides a window into her recent journey to Fukushima where she discovered again the power of community to support the healing process. Maree Foley and Ana Huber, Affiliates Council Chair and Representative, respectively, bring news about affiliates around the world. Angela McLaughlin features the work of masters and doctoral students in infant mental health research. Finally, in recognition of the Infant Mental Health Journal and its contributions to our work, and with permission, we invite readers to read one article from the first issue of the IMHJ, Through the Eyes of a New Dad: Experiences of First-Time Fathers of Late-Preterm Infants; Karen M Benzie, University of Calgary, Canada and Joyce Magill-Evans, University of Alberta, Canada *Infant Mental Health Journal*, Vol. 36(1), 78-87 (2015).

Clearly, WAIMH's perspective is worldwide. An inclusive organization working on behalf of the wellbeing of all babies, their families and communities, we invite comments and contributions from all over the world. Be sure to share *WAIMH Perspectives*, an open source document, with others in your social media networks.