

From the Editors

By Deborah Weatherston and Hiram E. Fitzgerald, Editors, Michigan, USA

Dear colleagues:

During the past 50 years infant mental health has emerged as a significant approach to the promotion of social and emotional wellbeing in infancy, as well as a preventive-intervention approach to treatment when significant risks to the infant or young child, the parent and the relationship are identified. Within this same time frame, the infant mental health movement has expanded to a global network of professionals from many disciplines, research faculty, and policy advocates, all of whom share the common goal of enhancing the quality of relationships that infants and young children have with their parents and other caregivers. The global reach of infant mental health demands attention to the cultural context in which a child and family lives, as well as critical attention to issues that affect child development, child health, child mental health, parental mental health and early relationship development.

We invite all members of the World Association for Infant Mental Health and all members of its 50 international Affiliates to contribute to WAIMH's international publication, newly named by the WAIMH Board, «Perspectives in Infant Mental Health,» where views about infant mental health can be shared, discussed, and indeed, even debated. We welcome your articles, brief commentaries, case studies, program descriptions, and descriptions of evidence-based practices.

Articles will be reviewed by the editors and members of the Editorial Board, all of whom are committed to identifying authors from around the world and assisting them to best prepare their papers for publication.

In the spirit of sharing new perspectives, we welcome your manuscripts,

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President's page

By Miri Keren, WAIMH President, Israel

«The Signal» has a new name: «Perspectives in Infant Mental Health.» Giving a name, is, as we know very well from our clinical work, a part of entry into our wishes, conscious as well as unconscious. Indeed, the idea of changing the name of our Newsletter from «The Signal» to «Perspectives in Infant Mental Health,» reflects our- conscious - wish to make the name fit the changes that have gradually occurred in the last years, i.e from an information-based Newsletter to a more scientific format with emphasis on the collection of clinical studies, program descriptions and sharing of experiences in the field.

This present Issue is indeed a collection of various aspects of infant mental health all around the world, from Pakistan to Germany, with a special emphasis on the complex interplay between societal changes, such as father's role in the family in Pakistan and our clinical practice. The WAIMH recommendations for ensuring good enough quality of Day Care is also an expression of our members' deep commitment and active involvement in their own society. This document, as well as Catherine McGuire about the position paper on Infant Mental Health Policy in Ireland (see previous Issue), are very helpful for our in-process task to prepare the Infant's Rights document. I strongly encourage any one of you who are involved in this kind of activity to send us

your thoughts and recommendations.

The Infant's Right to grow up in a good-enough family, sounds so obvious. Still, the more we work with infants, the more we are facing high- risk families, where exposure to trauma and major parental psychopathology create a tough dilemma between the adult's best interest and the infant's, as it is vividly described in this Issue. Countertransference issues are major, our own feelings of failure are difficult to handle, and one is often tempted to give the therapeutic trial up. Ethical and clinical issues are numerous and must be dealt with among ourselves. Cross-cultural adoptions, recomposed families, same-sex parenthood, single parenthood, financial adversities and parental unemployment are issues that involve many professional fields - sociology, anthropology, social work, education, as well as psychology and psychiatry. As a professional association, WAIMH has the task of formulating guidelines to help all of us make clear recommendations on behalf of babies and families to health and social service policy makers and family courts.

Intensive work is going on around the preparation of our next WAIMH congress in the UK. As announced in Capetown, the theme will be around Babies in Families. Though we still have time ahead of us, please start thinking about your presentations!

Very cordially to all of you.