

President's Perspective

There is no such thing as a clean war. In all ages wars are merciless to all civilians, especially to women and the youngest of children. This lack of mercy reached extreme dimensions during World War II, and even before in Armenia, and again in the Lake region of Africa. War shows no respect for the rights of infants not to be taken as hostage and to be isolated from the conflict and all of its consequences. However, threats to the rights of infants do not only come from war and civic disturbance.

In peaceful countries, we see that the increase in the overall stresses associated with everyday life that affect parents, are linked to increasing disorganization in infants. We see parental behaviors in parks, on the street, and in subways, that we were used to see only in the clinical population of parents with mental health disorders. So infant mental health scientists, clinicians, and practitioners have the responsibility to inform policy makers about these threats to infants and young children, and to propose that infants have the right to be physically safe and emotionally safe and secure.

At the recent Yokohama world congress, WAIMH officials met with officials from other world organizations and discussed development of a document that would clearly articulate

the Rights of Infants. I will have more information about this document in the months to come. Speaking about Yokohama, the world congress was a success, with an exceptional atmosphere and greeting, provided by the Local Organizing Committee (LOC), headed by Hisako Watanabe. The lavish opening reception party, translations from and into Japanese, richly diverse events around the congress, and nearly 2400 people in attendance, produced a wonderfully successful scientific and financial congress. Congratulations again to the LOC!

Now time has come for WAIMH members to make their nominations for their candidates to serve on the WAIMH Board of Directors. At the same time we have started the process for electing chairperson for the new Affiliate Council, who will represent the Affiliates in the Board of Directors. Each person who is willing to serve on the WAIMH Board

of Directors should ask for support and seek colleagues who will provide support for their nomination. Please all the members of WAIMH, go on with the process! After these elections, WAIMH will fully implement its new bylaws in 2010, with strong member input and Affiliate presence on the Board. Please nominate others, or nominate yourself, all are welcome to the election process.

Warmly:
Antoine Guedeney



Copyright(C) WAIMH 2008 LOC Japan
Photograph by KENTARO KUMON