

# The World in WAIMH

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The World in WAIMH is a column intended to generate reflection and dialogue about infancy and infant mental health within our global community. Joshua Sparrow, Director of Planning, Strategy and Program Development at the Brazelton Touchpoints Center (Boston Children's Hospital/Harvard Medical School) conceived of this column in 2013. What follows is a list of articles that have been published in this column to date. They represent diverse perspectives and challenge all of us to think in a variety of ways about infants, families and communities:

Perspectives in Infant Mental Health Vol. 21 No. 3 (Summer 2013)  
Child Justice, Caregiver Empowerment, and Community Self-Determination (Excerpts), J. Sparrow

Perspectives in Infant Mental Health Vol. 21 No. 4 (Fall 2013)  
Finding a Place for Early Child Development in the Hierarchy of Needs (Excerpts), N. Kendall-Taylor & M. Baran

Perspectives in Infant Mental Health Vol. 22 No. 1 (Spring 2014)  
A Community Service Clinical Psychologist Reflects on a Parenting Skills Workshop in Nolongile Clinic in Khayelitsha, Cape Town, T. Dube

Perspectives in Infant Mental Health Vol. 22 No. 2-3 (Summer 2014)  
Los Momentos Magicos: A practical Model for Child Mental Health Professionals to Volunteer by Supporting Caregivers in Institutions in Developing Countries, A. Harrison

Perspectives in Infant Mental Health Vol. 22 No. 4 (Fall 2014)  
Connecting with South Africa, (Excerpts), A. Berg

Our shared hope is that this will offer space for challenge and interdisciplinary discussion. We are asking the WAIMH community for commentary, field reports, case studies, research articles, book

reviews, new submissions and (when proper permission can be obtained) adaptations of previously published articles that may be of interest.

This issue's World in WAIMH column features a fascinating reflection by psychologist, Niels Rygaard, founder of [fairstartglobal.com](http://fairstartglobal.com) on global and urban trends affecting infants, parents, and the caregiving environments in which they grow and develop. His piece is a challenging and thought-provoking one, and offered with the generous spirit of sparking dialogue among WAIMH members and beyond. We welcome your comments and reactions to Infant Mental Health in the Global Village and look forward to publishing them in future issues of Perspectives.

## INFANT MENTAL HEALTH IN THE GLOBAL VILLAGE.

### An invitation to reader's debate: Emerging infant environments, and future research

By Niels P. Rygaard

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Niels P. Rygaard is a private consultant psychologist in the areas of attachment, deprivation and adoption. By means of advanced technology - such as the Harvard/MIT EdX platform - he created a network to transform child research into the design of open source online training programs for foster care and orphanage systems worldwide.

#### Introduction

This essay aims to identify some hotspots of future infant research. It was inspired by the 2014 WAIMH Edinburgh conference, and the author's observations from developing international online educations for orphanage and foster care systems. Focusing on risk factors, the text projects current global and urban trends, pointing to possible future environments for infants, in a world where the organization of daily care is undergoing rapid change. The urban infant environment is reflected upon from several perspectives: how may the altering patterns of reproduction, migration and social mobility affect the organization of the family, daily infant care, government child policies, and the abandonment of children? To highlight

the impacts of urbanization on family life, Danish examples representative of global statistics are used. The discussion pertains to the areas of theoretical concepts, possible new designs of studies, and the use of technology to disseminate results and professional dialogue with global audiences. (Topics for debate are in italics).

#### Urbanization, Migration, and Infant Environments

The development of infants reflects their utter dependency of the immediate environment. Thus, to some extent, a short overview of demographic changes in infant environments may encircle future