



THE AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION FOR INFANT MENTAL HEALTH (Inc.)

AFFILIATED WITH THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR INFANT MENTAL HEALTH

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NEWSLETTER

Autumn 1992

From the Editor

Infant mental health professionals here in Australia and throughout the other affiliates of the International Association for Infant Mental Health face a new and exciting challenge over the next year. As will be presented in this edition of the NEWSLETTER, AAIMHI along with the rest of the IAIMH, is being asked to join in the proposed amalgamation with the World Association for Infant Psychiatry and Allied Disciplines (WAIPAD).

Such a proposal makes sense when you consider the similarities of purpose between the two organisations. Dr. David Lonie, a colleague of many AAIMHI members and currently Australasian Regional Vice President of WAIPAD, puts forth an interesting perspective on the amalgamation in the next pages. To accompany his article, we have included the latest summaries of the merger from both the WAIPAD and IAIMH directors.

This merger, which is a very large international undertaking, seems to reflect the growing interest amongst professionals from many disciplines in the needs of infants and their families. We hope that members of AAIMHI will take the time to consider what the merger will mean for them here in Australia, and we encourage you all to share with the Committee your ideas in the next year.

Meanwhile, things have been busy for AAIMHI here on the home front. A successful seminar was held in May on infant feeding skills at University of Western Sydney, Macarthur. Our thanks go once more to Sarah Starr of Westmead Dental Clinic for a top rate

presentation enjoyed by over 70 local professionals. We are also indebted to the Faculty of Education for their generous support and cooperation.

AAIMHI now has several other seminars coming up in the latter part of the year. Watch your mailbox for future seminar announcements! We are pleased to have on our committee Marija Radojevic, Lecturer at Macquarie University's Institute of Early Childhood, as the Coordinator of AAIMHI Seminars.

Owing to the lateness of this NEWSLETTER and the urgency of the amalgamation, the previously scheduled Special Edition "Australian Infants and Families in the 1990's: Promoting Infant Mental Health", will appear as the final edition for 1992. I therefore encourage you all to submit reports on your current research and programs. We look forward to hearing from you.

Kimberley Powell, Editor

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A Personal View on the Evolution of Infant Mental Health Organizations in Australia

by Dr. David Lonie

As the Australasian Regional Vice President of the World Association for Infant Psychiatry and Allied Disciplines (WAIPAD), I am pleased to have an opportunity to say something about the development of the interest in infant mental health in Australia for this edition of the AAIMHI Newsletter, and the relation of this to the international scene. At the next World Congress of WAIPAD in Chicago in September, a proposal to merge the two organisations, WAIPAD and the International Association for Infant Mental Health (IAIMH), will be discussed and in all likelihood implemented. The new organisation will be called the World Association for Infant Mental Health.

For us in Australia this will be a most important step, and it will allow us to work together more cohesively. At the Congress, there will be a number of papers presented by Australians, and I think quite a large Australian contingent. We will also be making a bid to host the 1996 World Congress in Sydney. There is a vigorous and growing interest in infant mental health in Australia as evidenced by the activities of AAIMHI, and our participation in the Congress should strengthen our chances to have the 1996 meeting in Australia. This will give us the opportunity both to show our wares and benefit from overseas experience.

Our regional remoteness in Australia from Europe and America, allows us the opportunity to develop our own contribution in the area of Infant Mental Health, and at the same time being equidistant, more or less, from those main influences, we can benefit from what is happening in both those areas. This can lead us to combine a number of approaches, which were we too closely identified with one, would

stultify growth. In a sense we can develop our own hybrid variety, and hybrids often show more vigorous growth than the parental stocks.

To illustrate what I mean let me simplify two of the major influences on infant mental health, one predominantly British and the other North American. I recognise that in this simplification, I am neglecting other important contributions from both continents. Naturalistic "infant observation" as it is taught in psychoanalysis and psychotherapy training programs was initially about the individual mother-infant dyad, and the unique contribution which each partner brings to this encounter. Laboratory research into infancy, particularly amongst researchers such as Tiffany Field, or clinical research from workers like Heidelise Als, Mary Main and Inge Bretherton, gives another view. If the infant mental health worker is caught up exclusively with either approach, the richness of an approach informed by both viewpoints is lost.

Having been at a number of overseas Meetings, I have found myself both excited by what is going on overseas, but also very aware of what we already know - there is a danger of an antipodean cringe, but on the other hand an equal danger of not hearing what others have to offer because of this, and a risk that we do not offer what we ourselves know. I have, however, been surprised to find that one "school" or one tradition is often unaware of what the other has to offer. A major example of this for me was in a number of meetings in the early 1980's, when the North Americans seemed barely to have heard of Winnicott, and the British workers not to have heard of Sander and Stern. Our equidistance allows us to hear both, and to work towards a synthesis.

There seems to me to be an important need to learn from overseas work, but also to offer in those arenas something about our own experience, and our synthesis or differing points of view.

IAIMH AND WAIPAD MERGER: The IAIMH Perspective

The following is a summary of information recently made available to members of the International Association for Infant Mental Health by the Executive Director, Dr. Hiram Fitzgerald, through the International Newsletter.

IAIMH: Background

The International Association for Infant Mental Health (IAIMH) was incorporated in 1979 and currently is composed of 800 members, many of who also belong to affiliate organizations. The IAIMH membership is composed primarily of social workers, nurses, early childhood educators and psychologists, although when last surveyed, 13 disciplines were represented. Members are predominantly from the United States, Canada, Australia, and Mexico.

IAIMH co-sponsors the Infant Mental Health Journal with WAIPAD, publishes a quarterly newsletter to promote interdisciplinary and international networking, promotes the establishment of regionally based Affiliates, and conducts a biennial conference for the exchange of scientific and clinical information related to infant mental health.

Throughout its existence IAIMH has maintained extraordinarily low member dues, and operated on an annual budget, rarely exceeding \$5000.00 (U.S.). Although IAIMH has enjoyed success far beyond its limited resources, the task of stimulating national and international growth and development in the field of infant mental health demands far more resources than are available to IAIMH.

WAIPAD: Background

WAIPAD was organized in 1980 at its first world congress, received its current name at the world congress in France in 1983, and formally became a membership organization in

1989. WAIPAD currently is composed of 400 members, over 80% of whom are physicians or psychologists. WAIPAD is also an international organization, but unlike IAIMH, about 58% of its members reside outside the United States and Canada. WAIPAD actively promotes programs devoted to the promotion of training and education in infant mental health. Besides regional and international scientific meetings and study groups, WAIPAD is committed to issues related to high risk and isolated families in both developing and developed countries.

The IAIMH and WAIPAD Merger

Discussions and negotiations for the merger of the two organizations has now been under way since 1986. The initial commitment to sharing resources and ideas has been reflected in the joint sponsorship of the now renowned international periodical, the Infant Mental Health Journal that now has over 1100 subscribers. Representatives from both organizations have continued to negotiate the amalgamation, and have emphasized the common objectives related to teaching, training and research.

The proposed merger, it is argued, would increase the number of participants at world and regional conferences, and facilitate the development of new regional Affiliate associations. It would facilitate the development of new scientific activities, and stimulate initiatives with disadvantaged populations in developing countries and East Europe as well as high risk populations in developed countries. Finally, it would strengthen the interdisciplinary and international character of all of these activities by bringing the respective memberships into one unified scientific and professional organization.

The final details of the merger will be presented and voted on at the joint IAIMH/WAIPAD Conference in Chicago in September,

1992. Key features of the proposal are that the new organization will be known as the World Association for Infant Mental Health (WAIMH), and the Affiliate organizations will retain the structure of those currently associated with IAIMH. It is expected that this will enable the organization to continue responding to the regional needs of its members and the populations they serve.

THE IAIMH AND WAIPAD MERGER: The WAIPAD Perspective

The following excerpt is from a letter from Serge Lebovici, President of WAIPAD, from the Spring 1991 Newsletter.

The Executive Committee of WAIPAD is proposing a collaborative effort with the International Association for Infant Mental Health. [There are] numerous advantages to this cooperation: our participation in the development of psychiatry for the very young child and the support of mental health for the infant and family will be made easier. Whatever our field of interests or our functions [whether in] care, nursing, theoretical or clinical research, we can more easily work on the national level and especially in the regional and international field...If this collaboration is approved at the Chicago Congress, we are certain that our efforts to promote mental health assistance for children in trouble could be the subject of serious reflection and discussion, whether the families in need of assistance are in countries with Famine and civil war or in the so-called rich countries.

Infant Feeding Skills Workshop A Success

The first of what is hoped will be a series of professional development workshops in Sydney's Southwest was held May 13 at the University of Western Sydney, Macarthur. An evening of skills in the observation, assessment and management of infant feeding was presented by Sarah Starr, Speech Pathologist in the Dental Clinic at Westmead Hospital. The workshop, attended by over 70 participants, was co-sponsored by the AAIMHI and the University's Faculty of Education. Those in attendance were welcomed by the Faculty Dean, Don Williams, who has been one of the main supporters of such AAIMHI projects now under way in the Southwest. The workshop focussed on the development of feeding skills in children, and the implications for children whose feeding is interrupted due to medical or genetic conditions.

Sarah Starr effectively used a combination of videos and slides to illustrate the types of assessments and interventions often used with children referred to the Westmead Clinic. Sarah also presented a variety of feeding equipment for the audience to examine.

Any participants interested in perhaps attending some future follow-up seminars to examine the issues raised by Sarah Starr in more detail should contact Kim Powell at (02) 772-9200. AAIMHI would like to thank Sarah for a most informative presentation.

AAIMHI AND CAFHNA SEMINARS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD HEALTH NURSES

Three seminars on the psycho-social aspects of parenting are to be presented June 29, July 27, and August 31 at Rozelle Hospital from 2-4 p.m. The series will examine the infant taking it's place in the family, the inner world of the pregnant parents, and the impact on the couple and family of the baby's arrival. The seminars are presented by Dr. David Lonie, Dr. Bryanne Barnett and Dr. Beulah Warren. The cost for all three presentations is \$30.00. To obtain a registration form and more information, contact Trish Gornall or Pam Fikar on (02) 568-3633.

Forthcoming Events

The following list of events relevant to the infant mental health professions is provided to give members an overview of international and local developments in the field. Members are encouraged to make enquiries about conference abstracts, papers and proceedings. In addition, AAIMHI welcomes any reports from members attending any of the sessions listed, or any other infant mental health events. For information about conference reports, or any of the events listed below, please contact the Editor.

July 8-10, 1992

Royal College of Nursing - Australia Human Caring: A Global Agenda.

Venue: Hilton, Melbourne VIC
Enquiries: Sandie Bredemeyer
Fax: 550-4375

July 12-15, 1992

Conference of the International Society for Adolescent Psychiatry - "Current Conflicts of Adolescence"

Venue: Chicago, Illinois
Enquiries: ISAP Congress
2101 Sth Arlington Hgts. Rd.
Arlington Heights, IL 60005
Tel: 708-290-6313

August 28-30, 1992

Australian Perinatal Society Annual Conference

Venue: Coolumb, Queensland
Enquiries: Ann Ashe, Wyeth
CMS 6357144

September 9-13, 1992

World Association of Infant Psychiatry and Allied Disciplines, Fifth World Congress - "A Future for Babies: Opportunities and Obstacles."

Venue: Chicago, Illinois USA
Enquiries: Charles Zeanah, M.D.
Brown University
101 Dudley St.
Providence RI 02905
Tel: 401-274-1100

October 1-3, 1992

8th Annual Paediatric Nursing Conference

Venue: Washington, D.C.
Enquiries: Gus Ostrum
tel: 609-589-2319

October 1-3, 1992

National Conference of the Australian Association of Childbirth Educators

Venue: Brisbane
Enquiries: AACE Conference Committee
(07) 266 9573

October 22-24, 1992

Australian Early Intervention Association Conference: "Being an Early Interventionist - A Professional Approach."

Venue: Holme Building,
University of Sydney
Papers: c/o Joan Craven
The Therapy Centre
Bexley NSW 2207

November 14, 1992

UWS-Infant Mental Health Working Party's 2nd Annual Symposium - "Families in the '90s"

Venue: UWS Nepean, Kingswood
Enquiries: Alison Hine 047-360-222
Kim Powell 02-772-9200

December 2-6, 1992

International Early Childhood Conference on Children with Special Needs - "Eliminating Boundaries"

Venue: Washington D.C.
Enquiries: Council for Exceptional
Children,
1920 Association Dr.
Reston, VA 22091-1589

Ongoing - EIP Education Days for Professionals and Students

Venue: Royal Hospital for Women
Paddington NSW
Enquiries: Beulah Warren
(02) 339 4440

July 24 or August 24, 1992

Grief Counselling and Therapy Workshop with Margaret Nicol - "Transformations: New Developments in Understanding Maternal Grief"

Venue: YWCA, Darlinghurst NSW
Enquiries: Margaret Nicol or John Gregory,
362 4790 and 327 8620 respectively

Book Review:

Coping with Postnatal Depression

Dr. Bryanne Barnett

What a pleasure to read a book on such a complex subject which explains in simple common sense terms many of the issues facing mothers and families. To me, it was not surprising as I have always found Bryanne Barnett empathetic and full of practical suggestions.

The diagnosis of post natal depression has increased since the mid 1970's. This has caused increased concern to community health professionals, hospital staff and specialists, and in particular, for the women and their families where such depression can cause much personal and family distress.

Many women who have suffered from this condition have said they thought they were going mad, but were fearful of telling anyone in case they lost their baby. These feelings are indicative of the perception of postnatal depression in the community.

Using examples with which women can easily identify, Dr. Barnett briefly describes the condition, and then proceeds to emphasize the importance of early help and support - a theme throughout the book. The chapter on "Becoming a Mother" describes Erikson's theory of human development that makes clear and simple links between physical and emotional development. Erikson suggests that there are critical times when resolution of major life issues should occur. Pregnancy and becoming a mother is one of those critical times, and the book describes how women "review and modify old relationships" - a difficult task for some women.

It is from this background that the author develops her discussion on motherhood. "Mothering" means acting as a female psychological parent, and can be performed by

someone other than the natural mother. "Motherliness", on the other hand, is a "capacity for creativity." The author comments that, although some women may decide to be creative in different ways other than having children, other women need to bear and rear children to feel fulfilled. This complex situation is often not understood or even thought about by many couples. Dr. Barnett discusses the "institution of motherhood", and the major concern of many women about their ability to perform the many tasks required to be a mother.

The author also discusses how important it is to support men and women who want to become parents - in particular, migrant women who are often alone, in poor health and may have difficulties using English. Even though we do not know who will experience postnatal mood disorders, some women seem more at risk. Dr. Barnett emphasizes the importance of early identification of depression from the antenatal period through the first and often difficult post natal year.

From her vast experience dealing with postnatal mood problems, the author describes the three types of postnatal depression and their severity on a scale of 1-10. "Baby Blues" (1-3) are described as a mild, transient disorder which affects up to 80% of new mothers. Symptoms include mood swings, sadness and bliss. "Postnatal Depression" (4-7) is described as a disorder of varying duration and may produce extreme periods of anxiety resulting in panic attacks, loss of confidence and feelings of going mad. Affecting 10-40% of women, this depression can greatly affect the mother, her baby, and her partner. Finally, "Post Partum Psychosis" (8-10) is outlined as being a severe illness affecting less than 1% of new mothers. It is a very serious conditions involving disorganization of thoughts and feelings, and often involves the experience of delusions. The severity of this illness sometimes threatens the life of the mother and infant.

The causes of these types of depression, asserts the author, are not yet fully known. Yet, when one considers the amount of change that occurs during pregnancy, childbirth, and becoming a parent, the stress of such great emotional adjustments is not surprising.

It is the section relating client stories which gives us a feeling of great empathy for these mothers, and some understanding of the devastation caused by this illness to women, babies and their families. I have lent this book to several mothers who are suffering from postnatal depression, and some of the comments heard were: "I really found it interesting, particularly the part about becoming a mother." Another mother found "Louise's" hints very helpful.

This book is an excellent resource for mothers, their families and friends providing them with understandable explanations about this debilitating condition. It is also a most welcome book for professionals who are offering support and encouragement to these mothers and their families - a must for your library!

[Bryanne Barnett's book was released in 1991 by Lothian Press, and is available in most Australian bookshops. Proceeds from the sales will go towards health research in Sydney's South west.]

Reviewed by Barbara Craven, Clinical Nurse Consultant and Acting Regional Coordinator for Child and Family Health Services, Orana and Far West Region N.S.W.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Submissions to the Newsletter are welcome from all members of AAIMHI and our colleagues. Reports of program activities, workshops, research and upcoming events are appreciated. Please contact The Editor, Kim Powell at (02) 772-9200 or (02) 520-6497.

AAIMHI Committee Elected October 29, 1991

PRESIDENT	Dr. Bryanne Barnett M.D., F.R.A.N.Z.C.P.
VICE PRESIDENT	Beulah Warren M.A.(Hons), M.A.Ps.S.
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Forthcoming Symposium

The University of Western Sydney/ Infant Mental Health Working Party is pleased to announce that Dr. Frank Oberklaid, Paediatrician, researcher and regular guest on ABC's "Offspring" Program, will be the Keynote Speaker at the 2nd Annual Symposium entitled, "Families in the '90's." The venue will again be the Kingswood Campus of UWS-Nepean on November 14, and registration forms will be sent to AAIMHI members.

Professor Michael Lewis Seminars

The Department of Psychiatry, Westmead Hospital and the Australia and New Zealand Association of Psychiatry will host four seminars on August 29 and September 5, 12, and 19 at Westmead Hospital on the emotional development of the child. Dr.Lewis is a major researcher in the field of developmental psychology, and specializes in the development children's emotions such as shame, anger and deception. The cost is \$200 for the series, or \$55 for each seminar with a student discount on request. CALL: R.Mountford 633-6687

NOTICE TO AAIMHI MEMBERS

The end of the financial year is close at hand! We would like to thank you or your past support of AAIMHI, and we urge you to continue that support by renewing your annual subscription of \$55.00 for the financial year 1992-1993. AAIMHI members will be informed of the status of their memberships pending the final arrangements for the amalgamation of WAIPAD and IAIMH later in 1992. It is expected that members joining in 1992 will become members of the Australian Affiliate of the World Association for Infant Mental Health.

CALL FOR NEW MEMBERS

The Australian Association for Infant Mental Health (AAIMHI) invites new members to join the network of professionals across Australia currently working towards the improvement of infant mental health services for infants and their families in our communities. Members receive the quarterly AAIMHI Newsletter and notification of upcoming AAIMHI events. Members can also join the International Association for Infant Mental Health, one of its affiliated members being AAIMHI along with chapters from the USA, Mexico, and Canada.

**FILL OUT THE ATTACHED MEMBERSHIP FORM TODAY, AND JOIN US IN
THE PROMOTION OF INFANT MENTAL HEALTH ACROSS AUSTRALIA!**

AAIMHI STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

Pursuant to Section 19 of the
Associations Incorporation Act 1984

The Australian Association for Infant Mental Health Incorporated (AAIMHI) is a professional organization that seeks to:

1. improve professional and public recognition that infancy is an important period in psycho-social development,
2. improve awareness that psychological and biological developmental processes are interrelated,
3. provide a forum for multi-disciplinary interaction and cooperation,
4. establish and maintain discussion and exchange of information on both national and international levels,
5. provide members with access to the latest research findings and observations on development in infancy,
6. facilitate the integration of such findings into clinical practice and community life,
7. work for the improvement of the mental health and development of all infants and families,
8. provide reports and submissions to Governments, other Authorities, organisations and individuals on matters relating to infant and family health and welfare,
9. pursue other objectives as the Association shall approve by special resolution at a general meeting.

The Newsletter is published quarterly by the Australian Association for Infant Mental Health.
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