



Introduction

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Social policy is defined as actions that affect the well-being of members of a society through shaping the distribution of and access to goods and resources. There are various disciplines (among them developmental sciences) and research groups studying which resources are needed to improve developmental pathways of humans and which strategies are effective, based on well-designed developmental and intervention studies. On the one hand, politicians often criticize researchers for being too theoretical and far away from practice, thus claiming a gap between research and social policy implications, for instance when planning to improve the situation of children and adolescents. On the other hand, researchers who work together with politicians dealing with social strategies complain about officials' resistance to change, the non-existing standards for a systematic long-term transfer of study results into practice, or their avoidance of support of (cost intensively) evidence-based longitudinal studies, needed to infuse solid research findings into practice. Consequently, attempts to build a connection between research and social policy and practice are urgently warranted.

The special section of this issue of the ISSBD Bulletin aims at presenting successful examples demonstrating a connection between both research on human development (in particular in the field of interventions), and social policy within different cultural contexts. Thereby, interventions focus on changing school contexts, are based within after-school and recreation programs, deal with juvenile corrections, or with therapy. In addition, recommendations are given for a successful interaction between researchers, politicians, and practice. We present four feature articles on research from Australia, the US, Austria, and Brazil introducing research programs in the area of interventions conducted in close cooperation with social policy (Sanson; Spiel et al.). Another paper (Dishion & van Ryzin) summarizes research on peer contagion (i.e., grouping together of deviant adolescents leads to so called "deviancy training" and an acceleration of problem behavior) with high relevance for programs trying to improve developmental outcomes of problematic adolescents. Finally, working with sexually abused youths in a therapeutic context is the focus of the final paper (Habigzang et al.). These papers are discussed by two outstanding experts in the field, Rainer K. Silbereisen, president of the International Union of Psychological Science, a society dedicated to the development, representation, and advancement of psychology as a basic and applied science, and Anne C. Petersen, who worked on social policy implications of research for many years. In

our reports from the lab, we introduce three papers, two of them focusing on research groups who attempt to improve the situation of children (Rao & Sun, Graham-Berman). The third lab report gives a nice example of an institution in Northern Ireland where research findings are translated into practice, for instance via public campaigns (Grossrau-Breen et al.).

Besides the interesting special section, this Bulletin includes a report on the research on human development in India, a country which is well represented among the members of the society. In addition, Wolfgang Schneider sends us his notes of the president, and Katariina Salmela-Aro reports on the last ISSBD EC meeting. Finally, in the news section we have a report of the early career representative and a report on the organization of the next ISSBD Biennial Meeting in 2012.

With the topic of this special section we seized on a suggestion of the respondents of the last membership survey to focus on social policy implications as the topic of a Bulletin's special section. We encourage more of such inputs to the bulletin and would be happy if the readers feed back to us what topics they would be interested in the future. Please email us at karina.weichold@uni-jena.de or deepali1sharma1@gmail.com—we are looking forward to discussing with you any ideas for improving the Bulletin and its reception by the members of ISSBD.

Building Bridges between Research and Social Policy: An Australian Perspective

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It is widely asserted that social policy should be based on scientific evidence, but 'evidence-based policy' is often more of an aspirational mantra than a reality. In this article I aim to share some recent Australian attempts to build stronger connections between research and policy for children and youth. It is a story that starts with frustration, but tells of mutual learning and ends with glimmers of hope. The frustration emanates from three main sources – firstly because Australia, a wealthy country, has far too many children and youth who are not doing well; secondly the common frustration of academics who want to 'make a difference' in their society, but whose scholarly research fails to elicit interest amongst policy makers or influence social policy; and linked to this, the frustration at the ubiquitous 'silo mentality' which limits interaction between researchers from different disciplinary backgrounds, practitioners on the ground, and policy-makers, even though successful efforts to improve child and youth wellbeing require collaboration amongst these players. I briefly discuss the factors behind each of these frustrations and their consequences, and describe some initiatives that attempt to overcome them. These examples come from first-hand experience with two major longitudinal studies, and with an umbrella organization founded in 2001 called the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth (ARACY, www.aracy.org.au). Fostering trusting working relationships and collaboration are central concepts in each of these initiatives.

The Status of Australian Children and Youth

Australia's wealth as a nation has increased markedly over the past 30 years. The first frustration arises from evidence that, despite this, there has been a disturbing lack of progress in improving the life chances of our young people. In Australia as elsewhere, this period has seen major social changes in the context of children's lives, including more mothers working outside the home and a concomitant increase in non-parental child care, high mobility resulting in less close contact with extended family, more lone-parent families, decreasing job security, and transformations in information technology. These changes are not necessarily detrimental, and on some health and educational indices Australian young people are doing reasonably well. However, many child and youth diseases, disabilities and difficulties remain at high and sometimes increasing prevalence. Some sample statistics serve to illustrate this. One in six children aged 4 to 12 years have a mental health problem that interferes with their daily life (Sawyer et al., 2001). Rates of mental health problems, obesity and sexually transmitted infections have all increased among youth (AIHW, 2007). Almost one-third of young people drink alcohol at high-risk levels. In the past 30 years, the suicide

rate among young men has quadrupled, and for young women it has doubled. Child homelessness increased by 22% from 2001 to 2006 (ABS, 2008). Between 2002 and 2006, child protection notifications almost doubled and numbers of children in out-of-home care increased by 35%, putting the child protection system under severe stress (ARACY, 2009).

There are strong socioeconomic gradients in such problems, with children and youth from financially disadvantaged families having worse outcomes (see, for example, Smart, Sanson, Baxter, Edwards, & Hayes, 2008). Young people from migrant backgrounds also tend to fare more poorly, while the statistics on the wellbeing of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and youth paint a particularly stark picture (ARACY, 2008). Despite our relative economic prosperity, a comparison to other OECD countries on multiple indicators of child and youth wellbeing revealed that Australia is generally placed in the bottom half or third of the distribution (ARACY, 2008). Such statistics have fueled determination to find better ways to influence social policy so as to improve the position of children and youth.

The Role of Evidence in Policy Making

Frustration over the high levels and persistence of problems such as those documented above is matched by frustration at the failure of much policy and practice to reflect the evidence base on how best to address them. Implementing evidence-based policy and practice – 'the conscientious, explicit, judicious use of current best evidence in making decisions' (Sackett, Rosenburg, Gray, Haynes & Richardson, 1996, p. 71) – is foundational to improving child and youth wellbeing (Head, 2010). Yet scientific evidence typically plays a small role in policy-making and in practice, leads to a large gap between what we 'know' and what we 'do' (Bammer, Michaux & Sanson, 2010).

Recognition of this 'know-do gap' was a major impetus in the formation of ARACY, whose 1500 organizational and individual members include researchers, policymakers and service providers from diverse backgrounds across Australia, working together to improve the wellbeing of children and young people. A major goal of ARACY is to advance national capacity for sharing and using knowledge in the child and youth field. Increasing our understanding of the mechanisms of knowledge exchange was the focus of one program of the ARACY Research Network, jointly funded from 2005 to 2010 by the Australian Research Council and National Health and Medical Research Council (and which I coordinated). The obstacles to the uptake of knowledge in policy-making which were identified in this program can be categorized as demand-side, supply-side and socio-cultural factors (see Bammer et al., 2010).

Demand-side issues include policy-makers' lack of awareness of the existence or relevance of research and limited interest in and/or capacity to absorb and use research knowledge. Without a belief that attention to research evidence will result in better policy and practice, it will not be taken up. Even when evidence is valued, the demands on policymakers and their high levels of mobility often mitigate against their capacity to master the evidence about the complex problems facing our children and youth.



A critical source of knowledge about 'what works' comes from the evaluation of interventions. However, until recently it was typical for little if any funding to be allocated to evaluation, and when it was undertaken it was often something of an after-thought or limited to relatively uninformative measures such as numbers of clients reached by an intervention and evidence of 'client satisfaction', with little assessment of long-term outcomes for program recipients. The Australian child and youth arena is littered with unevaluated short-term 'pilot' programs: when asked to engage in a new program, one remote Aboriginal community is known to have commented that they had 'a shed full of bomber jackets' from all the pilot programs that had 'flown in and flown out' (Sansone & Stanley, 2010). Funding decisions are often based on political considerations rather than evidence of program effectiveness, and wide dissemination and sustained implementation of effective programs is rare. Recent years have seen encouraging increases in awareness of the value of scientifically credible evaluation for policy purposes, but it is not yet a matter of course for evaluation to be planned for, appropriately funded and implemented, and taken seriously in decision-making.

Supply-side issues refer to the dearth of researchers who engage effectively with policy-makers, and lack of accessible and relevant research evidence. While it could be argued that engaging with policymakers ought to be a valued part of any scientist's role, most Australian research environments continue to place disincentives in the way of such engagement. Further, researchers often have poor understanding of the needs of policymakers and practitioners, such as their much tighter timelines and their generalist, rather than specialist, skill sets. The technical, lengthy and cautious modes of writing often adopted by researchers are not useful for policy and practice readers, who are time-poor and do not understand technical methodologies and jargon. Lacking training in communicating with these other sectors, researchers are often uncertain about how to safeguard the scientific merit of their work while enhancing its relevance and the likelihood of its uptake in policy.

'Silo' Mentalities

Perhaps the most important factors that mitigate against the uptake of evidence in policy and practice are socio-cultural issues. The 'disconnect' between researchers, practitioners and policymakers, and between health, education, treasury/finance, welfare and other such sectors, is widely acknowledged but seldom addressed. Each sector operates in its own 'silo', speaks a different 'language', has different constraints and operates with different time frames. This problem becomes more pressing as the challenges facing children and youth increasingly straddle the boundaries of government departments and require inputs from experts in many disciplines. The complexity of developmental processes, reflected for example in bio-ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), means that causal factors underlying many of the problems of children and youth range from 'upstream' influences such as social disadvantage and housing, through to 'downstream' factors such as parenting and teacher-child relationships. If such complex developmental pathways are

not understood by decision makers, they can opt for 'quick fixes' addressing discrete influences at the end of pathways – even if the evidence suggests that they will be costly and relatively ineffective. Examples of such approaches abound, such as boot camps for youth displaying antisocial behavior, and reliance on removal of children from families as a response to child protection issues. As the saying goes, 'to every complex problem always a simple answer –and it is always wrong'.

A more general manifestation of these phenomena is the reliance on crisis-end treatment rather than evidence-based prevention. Both demand-side and sociocultural obstacles play a role in this. Often the research points to long-term strategies such as prevention and early intervention where the benefits might not appear for many years – well beyond a budgetary cycle or term of government. Further, the benefits are often in portfolios other than those responsible for the initial policies or interventions. A well-known example of this is the Perry Preschool Program for disadvantaged children in the United States, where the long-term benefits appeared in areas such as finance (because program recipients held better-paying jobs and hence paid more tax), the criminal justice system (with fewer convictions and incarcerations), the education system (fewer recipients needed special programs at school) and the health system (with better physical and mental health) (Schweinhart et al., 2005). When government departments act as independent siloes, it can be difficult for policy-makers to use evidence to gain traction for a comprehensive prevention agenda.

Overcoming the Obstacles to Knowledge Sharing

A recurring theme in the literature on evidence-based policy and practice is the need for better dialogue, partnerships and collaboration across sectors (for example, Nutley, Walter, & Davies, 2007). The notion of unidirectional knowledge exchange, whereby knowledge is generated by researchers and drawn on by policy and practice, has proven to be overly simplistic and ineffective. Key factors leading to successful knowledge translation identified by Landry, Lamari and Amara (2003) include the strength of not only formal links between researchers and policy makers, but informal relationships characterized by respect and trust, and collaborative working relationships. This understanding has shaped ARACY's efforts to encourage and support a collaborative, cross-disciplinary and cross-sectoral approach to tackling the complex problems facing children and youth.

ARACY tries to address both demand-side and supply-side obstacles to the uptake of evidence in policy. For example, its Report Card (ARACY, 2008) cited above provided evidence of the status of Australian young people in a clear and non-technical form and was used as an impetus for action. Another example of its efforts to overcome 'supply-side' constraints is the New Investigators Network program established by the ARACY Research Network (see www.aracy.org.au). This program aims to build the capacity of the next generation of researchers to engage in effective knowledge transfer, as well as work together across disciplines and sectors. A diverse group of high-calibre

early career researchers, policymakers and practitioners from across Australia with a shared commitment to child and youth wellbeing are selected to work with a team of senior mentors and advisers over a period of two years. They develop policy-relevant collaborative research projects which can benefit from their various disciplinary perspectives and skills, and are encouraged to plan for knowledge exchange from the start of the project. This includes planning for communication with multiple audiences – not only scholarly journal papers but also brief plain-language reports, and even ‘elevator speeches’ (seizing the unexpected opportunity to convey one’s key message when in an elevator for 30 seconds with an influential decision maker!). The program aims to help develop future research leaders who can interface effectively with policy and practice.

To help clarify and strengthen the case for evidence-based prevention, ARACY commissioned economic analyses documenting the high cost of treatment for preventable adult conditions that have their roots in earlier life, and the substantial savings which could be accrued by shifting to a prevention agenda. Yet, the majority of resources continue to be channelled into responding to the problems rather than their causes. ARACY therefore established a network of researchers, policy-makers and practitioners interested in progressing prevention science in Australia (Sanson, Havighurst, & Zubrick, 2011). There are encouraging signs of a shift in policy directions, for example the recent establishment of a National Preventative Health Agency (<http://www.anpha.gov.au>), whose initial foci will be the high-profile and high-cost problems of alcohol, tobacco and obesity.

Building Relationships across Sectors

Evidence is accumulating about ways to facilitate closer cross-sectoral relationships. For example, secondments between academia, government and service-provider organisations can develop mutual understanding and connections that support knowledge transfer. There is evidence that a process of co-production of knowledge, in which all stakeholders (research, policy and practice) are engaged from the outset, contributing to the research questions, methodology, implementation, analysis and interpretation of research, increases the impact and take-up of the findings (Michaux, 2010). Two examples of research in which I have been involved illustrate this process. The first illustrates how a relatively traditional research program can shift its approach to become more responsive to and useful for policymaking, while in the second the governance structure for the research supports its uptake in policy.

The first example comes from the Australian Temperament Project, an ongoing large-scale longitudinal study which commenced in 1983 with a representative sample of Victorian infants (www.aifs.gov.au/atp). While the project was productive in terms of grant success and scientific publications, it had had limited uptake of findings in policy contexts until 1999 when my secondment from the University of Melbourne to the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS), a government research agency, opened new doors. This provided the opportunity for conversations with policy makers about the implications of our past findings and the potential for further policy-relevant research

using the dataset. Among several collaborative initiatives which arose from this was a 4-year project with Crime Prevention Victoria, an agency within the Victorian Department of Justice, which investigated developmental pathways to adolescent antisocial behavior. A key ingredient in the research was its multi-sectoral and multidisciplinary Project Advisory Group which helped devise research questions regarding early risk factors from different domains of the child’s life for different subtypes of antisocial behavior, links with other problems such as substance use and depression, and resilience and recovery from early conduct problems (e.g. Smart et al., 2005a). The Project Advisory Group was actively engaged throughout the project, helped analyze the policy implications of the findings, acted as a conduit of findings to their respective government departments, and facilitated interchange between the researchers and service providers including schools and the police. Although it is rarely possible to ascertain a direct link between research and policy, it appeared that the findings helped establish a policy direction away from punitive responses to youth offenders and towards early preventive measures. We have adopted a similar approach in further collaborative work, for example with the Victorian Traffic Accident Commission and a major car insurer in examining predictors and pathways involved in risky driving (e.g. Smart et al., 2005b). We have found that working in partnership with policymakers in this fashion does not preclude high quality journal publications, but effective knowledge translation into policy also requires targeted jargon-free reports and considerable face-to-face interaction – initially we underestimated the time and resources required for these knowledge exchange activities, but have found the investment very worthwhile.

The second example is the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children (also known as Growing Up in Australia; Sanson et al., 2002; www.aifs.gov.au/growingup). The federal government announced funding for this large national study in 2000, with its purpose being to provide the database for a comprehensive understanding of Australian children’s development in the current social, economic and cultural environment, and hence to become a major element in the evidence base for policy and practice regarding children and their families. The tender to design and implement the study was won by AIFS along with a consortium of experts from 12 institutions across Australia and covering disciplines including psychology, pediatrics, psychiatry, education, sociology, economics, and social policy, ensuring expertise in all aspects of children’s development and all levels of influence on development. Four biennial waves of data on the two cohorts of 5,000 children each have been collected to date, and the study is now conducted as a collaboration between the federal government (through the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs), the Australian Bureau of Statistics and AIFS with scientific input from the consortium. This governance structure ensures a joint focus on policy relevance and scientific rigor, and the publically available data are being used by well over 350 researchers to produce high-quality scientific outputs as well as reports commissioned by government (e.g. Zubrick et al., 2008) and service-providers (e.g. Smart et al., 2008). The productive interaction between the research community and social policy in this study is supported by its governance model.



Concluding Comments

I and my colleagues have undergone a slow process of learning through frustration and trial-and-error about how to help give research evidence a stronger voice in policymaking. Little in my formal training as a researcher prepared me for doing this. My hope is that these reflections may allow others to shortcut this laborious learning process. Understanding the obstacles to using evidence in policy-making is a first step to addressing them. Increasing the impact on policy can require some fundamental changes in the way research is conducted, shifting to a more collaborative model in which the 'end-users' of the research are integral partners. This requires investment in building and maintaining relationships with influential policymakers, and in understanding the constraints under which they work.

In Australia, there are grounds for optimism that a more evidence-based approach to policy-making in the child and youth sector may be emerging. Through ongoing collaborations, more researchers, policymakers and service providers are building trusting relationships and understanding about each other's worlds. Research funding agencies now seem to be more interested in supporting policy-relevant research; of note are grant schemes such as the one that supported the ARACY Research Network which has facilitated researchers working with policy and/or practice partners. Hopefully this will lead tertiary institutions to better reward efforts to engage in multidisciplinary and multisectoral collaboration. There is also a strong argument for integrating training in cross-sectoral knowledge exchange and collaboration into the education of the next generation of researchers in human development. With these developments, I believe we can hope for a more effective approach to tackling the 'big-picture' issues confronting our children and youth.

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Peer Contagion Dynamics in the Development of Problem Behavior and Violence: Implications for Intervention and Policy

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Peer relationships in general and friendships in particular contribute many benefits to social and emotional development (see Freud & Dann, 1975; Rubin, Bukowski, & Laursen, 2009). Evidence of the dark side of peer influence is even more compelling, however (Hartup, 1996). These “peer contagion” dynamics, if not attended to and managed, can disrupt the objectives of programs and interventions designed to promote education of youth, reduce mental health problems, and address youth criminal behavior (Dodge, Dishion, & Lansford, 2006). Salient evidence for peer contagion effects is briefly reviewed in this article and then extended to the problem of community violence. Recommendations are made for interventions and community policies intended to promote youth development in the hopes of reducing problem behavior and violence.

Peer contagion describes a mutual influence process that occurs between an individual and a peer and includes behaviors and emotions that potentially undermine development or cause harm to others. Examples of behaviors that are influenced by peer contagion processes include aggression, bullying, weapon carrying, disordered eating, drug use, and depression. The influence of peer contagion often occurs outside of awareness; participants may not intend to influence their peers, but they engage in relationship behaviors that satisfy immediate needs for an audience or for companionship, and these behaviors inadvertently influence peers’ behavior. Peer contagion occurs in natural settings that involve peer interaction; it can also develop in the context of intervention and educational programs that aggregate children and adolescents. Several mechanisms of peer contagion have been proposed (Dishion & Dodge, 2005). Among them is deviancy training (Dishion,

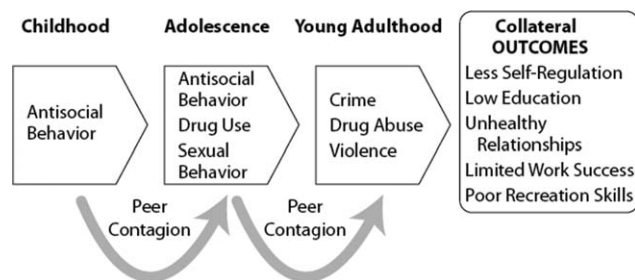


Figure 1.

Spracklen, Andrews, & Patterson, 1996; Snyder et al., 2005), which involves an interpersonal dynamic of mutual influence during which youth respond positively to deviant talk and behavior. The deviancy training process is characterized by give-and-take exchanges between friends that promote deviant actions (e.g., past stories of deviant acts, suggestions for future behavior, what ifs) and elicit positive responses, such as laughter. Figure 1 illustrates the peer contagion dynamic in deviancy training, during which the levels of deviant talk in a friendship interaction match the relative rate of reinforcement for such topics in a friendship (Dishion et al., 1996). Clearly, deviant talk is not a trivial behavior. Self-organization among children into peer groups that are unified by discussions and promotion of deviant norms begins in childhood and proceeds through young adulthood (see Figure 1), and is prognostic of increases in problem behavior over time.

Youth can influence one another to escalate to violent behavior, as has frequently been noted by criminologists who study gangs (Thornberry, 1998). Interesting analyses of peer social networks reveal that in some communities, carrying a weapon can be a source of connection and status among adolescent peers (Dijkstra et al., 2010). Recent observations of adolescent friendships revealed a process called *coercive joining* (Dishion, Van Ryzin, & Patterson, in preparation), which we noted in a sample of 650 multiethnic adolescents (age 16) in an urban community. Coercive joining, which is best measured through direct observation, emerges in friendships characterized by struggles for domination, promotion of violence and abuse toward others, and frequent use of obscenity. These interaction dynamics define an adolescent trajectory during which antisocial behavior amplifies into more serious forms of violence by age 24 (see Figure 2). As shown in Figure 2, young-adult arrest for violence, parental report of aggressive behavior in early adulthood, and self-report of violence and weapon carrying were predicted by observations of coercive joining in videotaped interactions with a friend at age 16, controlling for earlier antisocial behavior. Offenses by the males and females in this sample ranged from minor assault to rape and murder.

It is not surprising that the quality of adolescent friendships based on coercive joining is generally low. These youth themselves report lower levels of friendship quality, and, in general, there is a low intraclass correlation (see Figure 2 ICC) between each of their reports about friendship quality. These findings are reminiscent of earlier work with antisocial children and their friends (Brenghden, Little, & Krappman, 2000). In our study, we found a statistically reliable interaction between the friendship quality construct and coercive joining, in that adolescents with poor

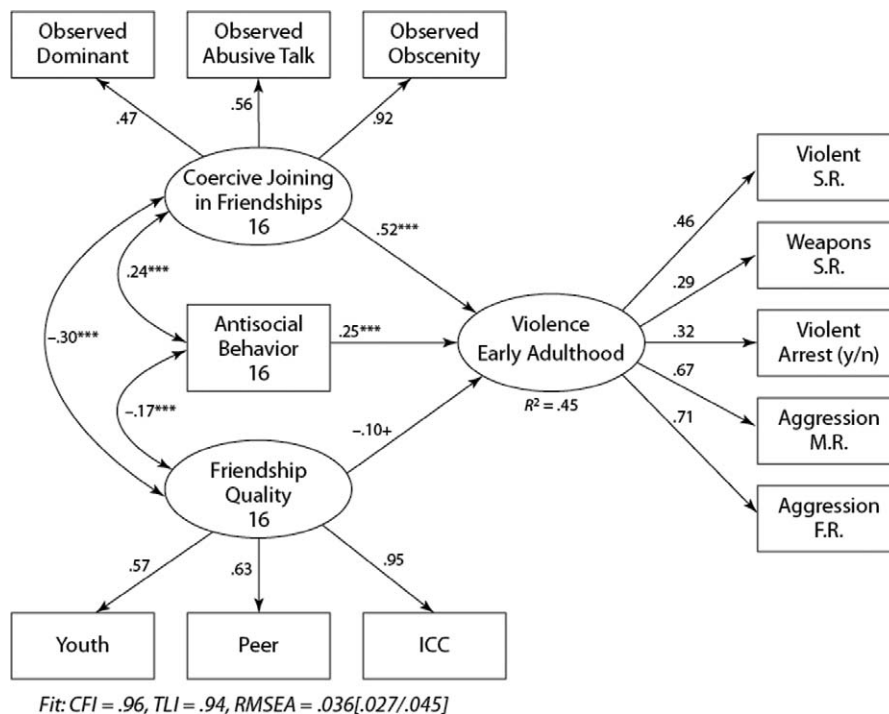


Figure 2.

quality friendships were the most likely to be affected by the coercive joining process. It is not surprising that youth with a history of peer rejection, marginalization in school, and gang involvement are those most prone to learn more serious forms of aggression in adolescent peer relationships (Dishion, Véronneau, & Myers, 2010). Thus, peer contagion dynamics at the friendship level and in social networks suggest that monitoring and management of peer groups in early adolescence is one strategy for preventing and reducing violence in communities.

Why do some youth self-organize into groups that promote problem behavior and violence? For some time, it was clear that a history of antisocial behavior, peer rejection, and attenuated adult caregiving, such as poor parental monitoring and involvement, were predictors of a drift toward deviant peers in early adolescence (Dishion, Patterson, Stoolmiller, & Skinner, 1991; Laird, Criss, Pettit, Dodge, & Bates, 2008). More recently, an evolutionary framework was used to understand self-organized peer group formation in early adolescence (Dishion, Ha, & Véronneau, under review), and it was assumed that procreation is an implicit agenda in human behavior. It was found that youth who had been marginalized in the school context by teachers and peers, had low socioeconomic status, and were from disrupted families were the most likely to self-organize into deviant peer groups. We hypothesized that gang formation by age 14 was the best predictor of promiscuous sexual activity by age 16, including having multiple partners, frequently engaging in sexual activity, and engaging in high-risk sexual behavior. As expected, promiscuous sexual activity at age 16 was a strong predictor of procreation by age 24.

This finding is key to appreciating the powerful pull for youth to self-organize and to amplify deviant behavior, particularly when they have been placed in settings with other youth, some of whom are at high risk. This dynamic

is challenging to change once the group has formed, as confirmed by Malcolm Klein (2006), whose career as a criminology scholar focused on the etiology and prevention of adolescent delinquent gangs.

Programs and Interventions Affected by Peer Contagion

Clearly, self-organization into peer groups in adolescence does not occur in a vacuum—it is a direct outcome of fractured and disorganized social infrastructure of families, schools, neighborhoods, and even interventions intended to reduce problem behavior. Figure 3 provides a summary of intervention strategies that have been associated with increases in problem behavior despite adults' efforts to reduce or prevent such behavior. Studying peer contagion effects in education programs and intervention programs poses some methodological challenges. One, the programs rarely use random assignment, which could help reveal their potential negative effects. Two, statistical power is often limited because the unit of randomization has never been "risk for peer contagion," for obvious ethical reasons; thus, negative effects and their underlying mechanisms are difficult to study. Not all children respond alike to being aggregated with other children with problem behavior. Because the data clearly suggest that not all interventions or programs that aggregate children have negative effects, more research is needed on which children respond negatively to aggregation and what conditions are most likely to produce negative effects.

Following is a brief discussion of peer contagion relevant to schools, community programs, and juvenile correction for delinquent behavior. Previous publications provide more detailed literature review (see Dishion & Tipsord, 2011; Dodge et al., 2006).

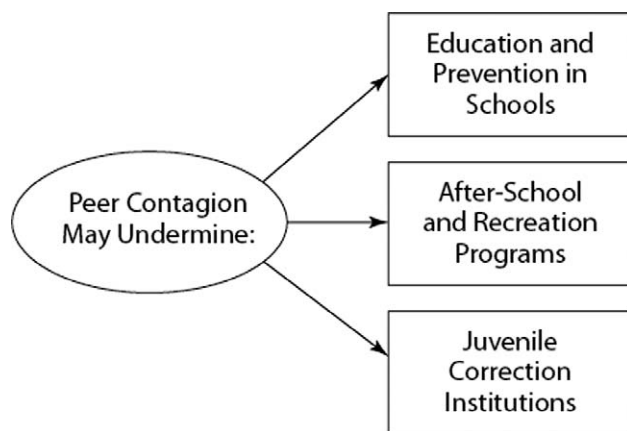


Figure 3.

Education and prevention in schools. Schools can have effects on peer contagion by their structure (or lack of it) and by a tendency to select out high-risk students for intervention programs. The effects begin as early as preschool, when children begin to spend more time interacting with peers than they do with adults (Ellis, Rogoff, & Cromer, 1981). Events on the school playground may have the largest influence on social development, but this setting is seldom attended to by adults. As early as 1930, direct observation studies of young children's play revealed ample opportunities to learn aggression on the playground (Dawe, 1934). Patterson's early observations of preschool playgrounds revealed how children learn aggression through negative reinforcement (Patterson, Littman, & Bricker, 1967). More recently, Snyder and colleagues directly observed children playing and found that deviancy training observed in public schools at age 5 was prognostic of growth in antisocial behavior in the following 2 years (Snyder et al., 2005). Similar effects have been observed in primary school classrooms (Warren, Schoppelrey, Moberg, & McDonald, 2005). Interventions such as the Good Behavior Game (Barrish, Saunders, & Wolf, 1969) support teachers' behavior management skills during the first year of school, which in turn, leads to long-term reductions in antisocial behavior among the highest risk students (Kellam, Ling, Merisca, Brown, & Ialongo, 1998). It is hypothesized that such a fundamental change in the classroom environment reduces peer contagion effects on aggression at a critical transition point in development.

Pulling high-risk children out of the mainstream and delivering intervention strategies to the aggregate appeals to teachers and school administrators because it appears to be cost effective with respect to personnel resources. However, such selective interventions can have dramatic iatrogenic effects on multiple forms of problem behavior, including delinquency, bullying, drug use, eating disorders, and sexual behavior (Dishion & Tipsord, 2011). The effects are observable throughout the educational age spectrum, including during college. Given the potential of peer contagion dynamics to undermine the goals and intentions of educational institutions, it is surprising that more research is not being conducted on this problem, as well as on systematic strategies that could be used by school personnel to promote positive peer influence and to reduce deviancy training.

After-school programs and recreation programs. With the shift in western nations to a work force in which both parents leave the home daily came a tendency for weak monitoring and involvement in children's lives and more opportunities for children to self-organize into problematic peer groups. One appealing solution to this modern problem is to create after-school and recreational programs for youth to spend time under the hired supervision of program staff. It is not incumbent on such programs to have educational benefits, but it is important that they do not afford opportunities to engage in behaviors that lead to amplification of deviance. It is often the case that the benefits of after-school and recreational programs are assumed and the potential for harm is not acknowledged.

The small amount of research that has been done with respect to these programs suggests that their effects are complex and variable and depend on the daily dynamics between the adults, the peers, and the community. For example, after-school programs vary in terms of benefits; some have less direct adult supervision and harbor more deviancy training dynamics (Gottfredson & Wilson, 2003). These programs provide an opportunity for young adolescents to congregate daily and to forge new relationships with peers who are involved in conflict and deviance in the community. For example, recreational programs in Sweden have been shown to amplify the problem behavior of adolescent girls because they provide an opportunity to meet older, more deviant boys (Mahoney, Larson, & Eccles, 2005). Findings in this important area of research suggest that programs that are defined by adult supervision, skills in managing youth, and positive involvement with youth best predict benefits and reduce risk through peer contagion dynamics.

Juvenile corrections. The evidence for peer influence on adolescent delinquency and criminal behavior is so overwhelming that criminologists have considered delinquency to be a team activity (Elliott, Huizinga, & Ageton, 1985; Gold, 1970; Reiss, 1986). It is not surprising, then, that adolescents placed in juvenile correction settings develop friendships and networks conducive to learning new forms of crime and strategies for manipulating law enforcement (Andrews, 1980; Bayer et al., 2009; Clarke-McLean, 1996). Random assignment to treatment foster care or to group residential corrections has revealed that the former is associated with reductions in problem behavior and the latter is associated with increases in problem behavior (Leve & Chamberlain, 2005). An analysis of the mediation effects revealed, as expected, that group care for delinquent youth had the highest levels of deviant peer interactions, which in turn accounted for the improved outcomes of treatment foster care.

The potential for peer contagion effects exists even in the most systematic, skillful, and empirically supported group residential programs for child and adolescent problem behavior. The Boys Town campus, widely known in the United States as a well-developed group residential program with positive effects, is vulnerable to peer contagion. For a small percentage of participants (7%), problem behavior increased over the course of the year, and the increase was observed to be associated with the density of deviant peers in the program (Lee & Thompson, 2009).

An important consideration is whether arrested youth placed in juvenile corrections are rehabilitated or whether



they actually learn to become more serious offenders during incarceration. Observational studies suggest that the ratio of peer to adult staff reinforcement for behavior is approximately 9 to 1, suggesting that adults in these settings have low leadership potential (Buehler, Patterson, & Furniss, 1966). Studies addressing this issue are difficult to conduct because they require longitudinal analysis of youth trajectories of problem behavior from early childhood, through adolescence, and into adulthood, with careful documenting and coding of juvenile justice contacts. In just such a study conducted in Montreal, it was found that, indeed, the intensity of juvenile justice interventions was associated with escalating problem behavior (Gatti, Tremblay, & Vitaro, 2009). "Intensity" was coded on a continuum, with residential placement regarded as the most intense, and it reflected the density of deviant peers in the intervention. Escalations in problem behavior associated with the juvenile justice interventions occurred regardless of the youth's level of deviance before being arrested.

The Embedded Ecology of Peer Contagion

According to reviews of the literature on moderator effects of peer contagion and problem behavior in the natural environment and in programs intended to promote youth development, adult leadership and caregiving is a key factor. Particularly essential are the motivation and skills of adults, such as parents, teachers, and youth leaders, to monitor, promote positive norms and learning experiences, and reduce peer contagion dynamics. When adults have had poor training in behavior management and their lives and professional roles are disrupted by poverty and lack of resources, their leadership is undermined. Communities and constituent networks characterized by fragmented infrastructure, low resources, and marginalized groups are the most likely to produce gangs in which problem behavior amplifies into violence (Sampson & Laub, 1994). In considering the tendency for poor, urban, and disorganized communities to cultivate high levels of gang involvement, crime and violence, it is apparent that the faces change, but the process remains the same. Inattention to the conditions underlying gang formation is a dangerous oversight that potentially damages the future of youth and their communities.

Promoting Prosocial Ecologies

Improving our understanding of the peer contagion process has considerable applied value in that the majority of education, community, drug use, and mental health interventions involve aggregating youth into groups of one form or another. Even in the context of a well-controlled, randomized intervention trial, peer contagion dynamics can undermine or reduce intervention effects (Dodge et al., 2006). By extension, it is reasonable to hypothesize that real-world programs that involve aggregating youth may be even more problematic because of limitations in funding and in the training of treatment or education staff and because of a general lack of resources. Given that the data on iatrogenic effects are mixed, it is clear that more research is needed to examine the associated processes and dynamics.

Allen and Antonishak (2008) suggest that peer influence is inevitable and thus, to reduce deviant peer influence society must promote nondeviant values and strengthen youths' positive connections to peers and adults. The characteristics of schools and communities and children's and adolescents' experiences within those domains have a significant impact on the rate of peer contagion. Many social contexts in which youth are embedded, such as public schools and neighborhoods, involve teasing, bullying, and potential violence. Under such circumstances, the average youth may be living in a threatening environment, and being outside of the group can increase the risk of humiliation and abuse. As such, the formation of friendships, having a place to sit with friends at lunch, a group to walk home with, and so forth, can be not only negatively reinforcing (relieves distress), but also rewarding. Future research might consider community-based interventions that focus on building nurturing contexts where desirable behavior is valued and reinforced (Biglan, Sprague, & Moore, 2006). Efforts should be made to increase the safety, peer acceptance, and prosocial nature of these social contexts, which likely would decrease problem behavior. Although programs exist that emphasize adult reinforcement of positive behaviors at school, and programs exist that focus on decreasing negative behavior such as bullying, rarely are the two intervention foci integrated to address the more fundamental problem of peer contagion.

In psychology, we inevitably emerge from an intensive focus on the individual to a renewed appreciation for the power of the ecology (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). Optimistically, the evidence is clear that interventions that prevent and treat problem behavior in children and adolescents have been empirically effective (for a summary, see Weisz & Kazdin, 2010). Moreover, many community and neighborhood interventions have been successful in reducing problem behaviors (see Biglan & Hinds, 2009, for a review). The compendium of findings suggests there is scientific value to shifting research from specific problematic outcomes to the shared contextual conditions that underlie many problems (e.g., aversive control, coercive behavior). During times of economic downturn, it is not difficult to evaluate the impact of deteriorating conditions on the quality of infrastructure that supports children and families, and eventually peer contagion. We look forward to the opportunity to evaluate focused investments in quality education and community supports that are both humane and science based and that target the conditions under which peer contagion dynamics are rendered less salient in the youths' development. Concomitantly, violence and destructive behavior are reduced at the level of the community.

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Cooperation among Researchers, Policy Makers, Administrators, and Practitioners: Challenges and Recommendations

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The evidence-based practice movement has gained importance in recent years, and standards for research leading to evidence-based practice have been defined (e.g., Flay et al., 2005). However, there are considerable differences in the implementation of evidence-based interventions and programs on the ground both among countries and among various public service areas (Nutley, Walter, & Davies, 2007): While in the U.S. and in the U.K., slogans like "what matters is what works" signal the intent to put an end to ideologically-based decision making in favor of evidence-based thinking (Nutley et al., 2007, p. 10), this is not the case

in most Central and Southern European countries. Especially in the field of education, the adoption of instructional programs and practices has still been driven more by ideology than by evidence, in contrast to other sectors of society such as medicine and agriculture (Slavin, 2008; see also Spiel, 2009a). Consequently, many research findings which have the potential to support policy makers in the field of education are still being ignored.

Spiel (2009b; see also Spiel, & Strohmeier, in press a) discussed four main reasons for this specific situation in the field of education: (1) the long-term orientation which often contrasts with politicians' need to score quick wins with the next elections in mind; (2) the lack of clear standards of evidence in the area of education which supports the influence of ideologies on political decisions; (3) the high costs and risks for the transfer of scientific knowledge to practice because of many possible inferences combined with relatively little to gain in terms of recognition in the scientific community in comparison to basic research; (4) the resistance to change among practitioners in order to protect self-worth; and (5) the lack of formal structures providing a systematic transfer from research to policy and practice.

In any case, a successful transfer of evidence to practice in the field of education requires intensive cooperation among researchers, politicians, administrators, and practitioners (see e.g., Roland, 2000; Spiel, & Strohmeier, in press a). The present paper focuses on challenges and problems that arise when these groups are working together. For illustration, two examples from our research are presented. In both cases a preventive intervention program financed by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education was developed on a theoretical basis, implemented in schools, and evaluated intensively. However, based on context factors, the structure and quality of the cooperation differed. Lessons learned from our experiences with these two projects for promoting research-based educational policy are discussed below.

Example 1: The TALK Program to Foster Teacher Competencies to Encourage Lifelong Learning

Educational policy has placed lifelong learning (LLL) at the center of an intensive ongoing political debate (European Commission, 2001). Consequently, even national governments promote LLL. We share the view of many other researchers (e.g., Prenzel, 1994) that school forms the foundation for LLL, inasmuch as people acquire their basic learning skills and develop their learning motivation and interests there. In 2001, we received a mandate from the Federal Ministry for Education to investigate the learning motivation and learning competencies of Austrian pupils. In line with studies from other countries, our results showed that average interest in learning decreases with increasing class level. Teachers assessed their self-efficacy to promote learning motivation and competencies in their students as very low (Spiel, 2006). This is not a surprise, considering that in-service courses and continuing education programs for teachers also rarely address LLL topics (Schober, Finsterwald, Wagner, & Spiel, 2009). If the aim of Austria is indeed the improvement of LLL competencies among their children/adolescents, there is a need

for action. In response to these disappointing results we were asked by the Federal Ministry for Education to prepare several project drafts about how to systematically promote LLL in schools. We offered four projects; the TALK program was selected by the responding official of the ministry.

TALK pursues the central goal of systematically promoting teachers' capacity to foster LLL among their pupils. The main target variables of the program result from the pertinent literature on common core factors for LLL (for a summary see e.g., Schober, Finsterwald, Wagner, Lüftenegger, Aysner, & Spiel, 2007): (1) enduring motivation for learning and (2) skills for self-regulated learning. In addition, social and cognitive skills are important accompanying factors for fostering motivation and self-regulated learning. TALK focuses on these four core factors. The program is characterized by the integration of relevant research approaches and a focus on ensuring sustainability and implementation in teachers' daily work life (for a detailed description of the theoretical base of TALK see Schober et al., 2007). TALK is designed for secondary school teachers. It is conducted within the framework of a three-semester course of study in a university setting and embraces a total of 130 hours.

However, TALK does not only focus on individual teachers but also on school development. Based on our previous research we have learned that single teacher trainings do not lead to sustainable changes in schools. Rather, the principal and a substantial portion of the teachers have to be involved. We actualized this concept in TALK. Furthermore, we tried to implement LLL in the whole school. While in the first two semesters, the participating teachers acquired knowledge about how to promote the four basic competencies for LLL (see for details Schober et al., 2007), in the third semester, the teachers were asked to initiate projects at their schools to include colleagues who did not attend the program. The teachers could choose a special focus of LLL to address points relevant to their individual schools. In this program phase, trainers functioned as supervisors rather than as teachers. It is important to mention that trainers were chosen by the program developers (based on their domain-specific knowledge and their previous experience in training teachers) and supervised during program implementation. One of the researchers also functioned as a trainer.

In sum, 40 teachers from 15 schools (Gymnasium and Compulsory Secondary School) participated, each with one class. Schools had to apply for participation in the TALK program – principals had to write a letter of motivation and enroll at least two teachers at their schools. During the program, special meetings for the principals were also held specifically to secure their support for the supervision phase of the program.

In order to assess the effectiveness of TALK, a complex evaluation model using a training-control-group design with four measurement points and a multi-method, multi-informant approach was applied (Schober et al., 2007; Wagner, Lüftenegger, Finsterwald, Schober & Spiel, in press). Furthermore, program implementation was accompanied by an intensive formative evaluation. The training group comprised 40 teachers and 780 students; the control group 62 teachers and 1,792 students. As random assignment could not be realized, a matching procedure was

applied (Spiel et al., 2008) to determine an appropriate control group.

A review of the evaluation study clearly indicates the effectiveness and sustainability of TALK with positive results in teachers and in their students (Wagner et al., in press). TALK teachers not only reported that they had learned a lot in the program; they also evinced more knowledge of how to design and arrange lessons and instructional processes, with the goal of achieving more learning motivation and self-regulation (Spiel, Lüftenegger, Wagner, Schober, & Finsterwald, in press; Wagner et al., in press). These changes in teachers' competencies were reflected e.g., in a higher perceived autonomy in learning reported by their pupils. Last but not least, results also showed that the TALK teachers effected changes in the LLL competencies of their students, namely in their learning motivation.

The participating teachers readily accepted the TALK program. During the whole training, there was a very high commitment from the teachers and principals without any dropout. Furthermore, teachers asked for a booster unit on their own, and requested that the Federal Ministry for Education establish the TALK contents in the basic teacher curriculum.

The cooperation with officials from the Federal Ministry was pleasant, and we were very free in program management and evaluation. However, we received no support in recruiting participants (e.g., there was no "call" from the Ministry to school inspectors or the schools themselves to attend to our program). The Federal Minister herself was not directly involved and engaged in the TALK program. The booster unit requested by the teachers was financed by the Ministry; however, so far, the sustainable implementation of the TALK contents via cooperation with the pedagogical universities (the organizations which are primarily responsible for teacher education in Austria) has not been possible. No further TALK training has been instituted despite several schools asking for it.

Example 2: The ViSC Program to Reduce Aggressive Behaviour and Bullying and to Foster Social and Intercultural Competencies in Schools

We started our research activities on the topic of violence prevention in Austrian schools in the mid-1990s. In 2003, as part of an EU project we prepared the Austrian national report summarizing existing initiatives to prevent violence in schools (Atria & Spiel, 2003). Results showed that they were neither evidence-based nor successful. At the beginning of 2007, the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education commissioned us to develop a national strategy for violence prevention in the Austrian public school system (Spiel & Strohmeier, in press b).

This strategy was developed between January and November 2007 and was presented to the public by the Federal Minister of Education in December 2007. Since 2008, the national strategy has been implemented step-wise, including the application of evidence-based programs in schools and kindergartens. In 2008, the national strategy became part of the coalition agreement between the two governing parties and has been extended and financially supported until 2013. Thus, the national strategy to prevent



violence in schools was a great success and its implementation worked very well. In particular, sustainable cooperation between researchers and officials at the Federal Ministry was established. As part of the Austrian national strategy, it was possible to implement the ViSC program (Atria & Spiel, 2007) in Austrian schools and to conduct a large-scale evaluation study.

In accordance with the national strategy, the main goals of the ViSC program are to reduce aggressive behavior and bullying as well as to foster social and intercultural competencies in schools. The ViSC program intends to instill the mission of the national strategy "Together Against Violence" as a commonly shared principle in schools. Consequently, the ViSC program is designed to approach the school as a whole and incorporates a systemic perspective. The prevention of aggression and bullying is defined as a comprehensive school development project over the duration of the school year. Activities are geared to operate on three different levels, namely the school as a whole, in classrooms, and on the individual level (for details see Spiel & Strohmeier, in press b). Within the framework of an in-school training for all teachers, basic knowledge on bully-victim behavior and its development is presented. Based on this shared knowledge, the school principal and all school teachers are encouraged to jointly develop (1) a commonly shared definition of aggression and bullying, (2) commonly shared principles on how to cope with aggression and bullying, and (3) commonly agreed measures to sustainably reduce aggression and bullying on the school level. Furthermore, in reaction to critical incidents teachers are trained to conduct serious talks with bullies, victims and their parents in accordance with commonly shared procedures. One particular feature of the ViSC program is that it includes a theoretically based project at the class level which was developed in recognition of the importance of the class context for the prevalence of bullying and victimization (for details see Atria, & Spiel, 2007; Spiel; & Strohmeier, in press b).

In December 2008, all secondary schools located in Vienna, the capital city of Austria, were invited to apply for the program. Out of 155 secondary schools, 34 schools applied for participation and 26 schools fulfilled the necessary requirements, including the willingness to take part in the evaluation study and to implement the class project in at least two classes, and the availability of computers for online data collection. From these 26 schools, 13 were randomly selected to complete the program and five schools agreed to serve as control schools. The implementation of the ViSC program in these schools took place from June 2009 to June 2010. To sustainably implement the ViSC program in the school system, a cascaded train-the-trainer model has been developed and applied: Scientists train multipliers; multipliers train teachers and teachers train their students.

The evaluation model of the ViSC school program contains both summative and formative sections. According to the cascaded train-the-trainer model, (1) scientists and ViSC coaches evaluate the quality of the ViSC course; (2) ViSC coaches and teachers rate the quality of the in-school-training-units, coaching and supervision; and (3) ViSC class teachers and students evaluate the quality of the ViSC class project. Preliminary analyses of the evaluation data showed promising results and support the effectiveness of the ViSC

program. Students from the ViSC schools ($n = 1377$) reported that after the program, they were less often victims of overt and relational aggression by bullies than before the program, while no changes were reported from the control schools' students ($n = 665$). Reduction in victimization after the ViSC program was also found in the peer nomination data while no changes were found in the control group (for details see Spiel et al., 2011).

The cooperation with the officials from the Federal Ministry worked very well. In addition, the Federal Minister herself was very much engaged in the national strategy and its results. The cooperation with the ViSC coaches and schools varied but was generally positive. Consequently, the quality of program implementation in schools also varied, as did the teachers' inclination to participate at the evaluation study. The lower commitment of some schools was due to the high requirements of the program which some schools were not able to achieve, while the lower cooperation with some of the ViSC coaches was due to their own insecure status in the public school system; some of them did not have permanent or full-time contracts and were thus not able to fully engage in the implementation of the program.

Lessons Learned for Promoting Research-Based Social Policy

The two examples presented above have many similarities in context, conditions and cooperation structures but also reveal differences with consequences for the implementation quality, the evaluation results, and the sustainability of the programs in the school system. In sum, the conditions of both programs led to advantages but also disadvantages.

In TALK, we directly worked with the targeted teachers and schools. This resulted in a high commitment to accomplishing the training tasks, high implementation quality, and a high commitment to filling out the evaluation instruments. Furthermore, results concerning the TALK program effectiveness are extremely good. In the ViSC program we did not directly work with the schools but trained ViSC coaches. This resulted in lower commitment from the schools and lower implementation quality. Results concerning ViSC program effectiveness are promising, but not all data have been analyzed so far. This means that direct cooperation with the training schools is an advantage regarding the implementation quality and the participants' commitment.

However, concerning long-term implementation in the school system, the ViSC program might be the better model. It is also good training mode within basic teacher education, which forms part of the national strategy for violence prevention. In general, the Austrian national strategy for violence prevention provided a very helpful framework for the ViSC program and the implementation of sound measures for sustainability. The main reasons were that (a) money was devoted to the national strategy and to activities within the strategy, (b) standards for evidence were defined in advance before implementing the strategy, and (c) the officers of the Federal Ministry and the Federal Minister herself were very much engaged in the national strategy and very keen to get positive results (see Spiel & Strohmeier, in press a).

However, it has also to be mentioned that in both cases the Federal Ministry had commissioned the programs for

specific reasons: In the case of the ViSC program we were asked to develop the national strategy as a result of the public discussion on the high rates of bullying in Austria, and several spectacular events in schools; in the case of the TALK program, we were engaged because of the relatively poor results of the survey on learning motivation and LLL competences in students. That means exact planning of such projects by researchers is difficult. Furthermore, doing such applied research resulted in relatively few gains in terms of recognition in the scientific community in comparison to basic research.

To sum up, in our experience, the promotion of research-based educational policy is much easier if a nationwide strategy is established, building a framework for the implementation of evidence-based intervention and prevention programs. However, we recommend convincing politicians and officials that the first implementation of such programs should be done under the supervision of researchers and program developers. It is a continuing challenge to introduce the criteria for and the advantages of evidence-based practice to politicians, officers, school principals, and teachers on the one hand, and to promote the recognition of translational research in the scientific community on the other hand. From our perspective, the TALK and the ViSC programs have made significant contributions in both directions.

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Intersections between Scientific Research and Public Policies for Sexual Abuse

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Child and adolescent sexual abuse is a public health problem, due to its high epidemiologic indexes and negative consequences for the cognitive, affective and social development of the victims (Maniglio, 2009). Different psychological disorders can be triggered in consequence of this form of violence, which can last throughout the lifespan of the individual, generating prejudices in several areas (Holt, Buckley, & Whelan, 2008). Psychotherapeutic intervention for children and adolescents facing sexual abuse is complex and must be planned by considering its impact on the development of the victim and his/her family, the changes in the immediate environment, the availability of a social and emotional support network, and other protective and risk factors. As a psychotherapeutic approach, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) has demonstrated efficiency in reducing common symptoms in children and adolescents who have faced sexual abuse, such as depression, anxiety, posttraumatic stress disorder, distorted beliefs and attributions about violence (Cohen, Mannarino, & Knudsen, 2005; Compton et al., 2004). Similarly, the group format for psychotherapy has presented a higher cost-efficiency (McCrone et al., 2005), since it helps reduce feelings of stigmatization, allows learning about confrontation strategies with a group of peers and provides attendance for a bigger number of subjects, reducing the demand of cases and the waiting lists.

In Brazil, initiatives to protect sexually abused children and adolescent were formalized through the Child and Adolescent Statute (Brazil, 1990). This law made it mandatory to notify suspected or confirmed cases of mistreatment against children or adolescents. The ECA establishes that the child or adolescent with infringed rights has the right to have psychological treatment, with the goal of protection and promoting healthy conditions for his/her development. Nowadays, the preventive and protective approach to the sexual abuse issue is one of the principal foci of Brazil's youth public policies.

Considering the need to effectively contribute to the protection of children and adolescents, one might expect the psychological treatment to be evidence-based. However, in Brazil, only a few studies have evaluated the effectiveness of the psychological interventions in this population (Habigzang et al., 2009; Padilha & Gomide, 2004). Related to this gap is the lack of training among Brazilian psychologists to effectively identify, assess and intervene in cases of sexual abuse. For example, in 2009, the Brazilian Federal Psychology Council evaluated the perception of the psychologists working in public institutions responsible for attending to cases of sexual abuse. A third of the respondents explicitly stated that they felt unable to effectively implement the public policies (Federal Council of Psychology, 2009).

Although further development of effective strategies to adequately deal with the sexual violence in Brazil is still needed, some efforts have been made. Habigzang et al. (2009), for example, developed a cognitive-behavioral group therapy model dedicated to sexually abused children and adolescents. This intervention comprises 16 weekly sessions (in a total of 4 months) and has as objectives the identification and restructuring of dysfunctional thoughts and behaviors related to the sexual abuse, restructuring of the traumatic memory and construction of self-protection strategies aiming to reduce the risk of re-victimizations. The model also showed significant results in the reduction in symptoms of anxiety, stress and post-traumatic stress disorder (Habigzang et al., 2009).

The effectiveness of this model of intervention indicates the importance of its application in the public health network for child and adolescent victims of sexual abuse. Through the partnership between the Ministry of Health of Brazil and the Secretary of Justice and Social Development of Rio Grande do Sul (SJDS-RS), the Center of Psychological Studies on at Risk Populations (CEP-RUA) of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS) developed a professional training based on the Habigzang et al. (2009) model, aiming to contribute to the initiatives in psychotherapeutic treatment executed by the public network for protecting children and adolescents in Rio Grande do Sul State. The project was financed by the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq), and the Science and Technology Department (DECIT) of the Ministry of Health and Research Support Foundation of Rio Grande do Sul State (FAPERGS). This study has the objective to present an experiential report of this training program offered to psychologists who work in Brazilian public programs that provide psychotherapy to child and adolescent victims of sexual abuse.

The Creation and Implementation of the Professional Training Program

The professional training program was launched early in the year 2009. The main objectives of the program were: 1) To address conceptual aspects of sexual abuse, such as definitions, dynamics, consequences for development, community networking, and the ongoing advocacy required for the identified cases; 2) To present a model of psychological assessment to child victims of sexual abuse, using protocols of interviews and psychological instruments and offering training in its application; and 3) To present and offer training in the model of cognitive-behavioral group therapy for intervening on behalf of child and adolescent victims of sexual abuse developed by Habigzang et al. (2009).

Training Program Structure

The professional training program consisted of ten monthly meetings lasting an average of five hours (total of 50 hours). Of these ten meetings, six consisted of revealing theoretical-practical contents, and four of supervising clinical intercession by the professionals, after the instructional process. The theoretical-practical lessons used resources such as discussion of films, texts, and clinical cases, and

training in techniques of psychological assessment and cognitive-behavioral group therapy for child and adolescent victims of sexual abuse (Habigzang et al., 2009). This model of training was prepared for at most 20 participants, as the discussion of clinical cases and the role-play of the techniques of psychological assessment and group therapy were the key methods for the teaching-learning process.

The lessons were given by psychologists, masters and PhD students, members of CEP-RUA, with clinical experience in attending to child and adolescent victims of sexual abuse and in research on the effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral group therapy for this population. The didactic resources used were expositive lessons, presentations of videos and discussion of clinical cases. Initially, each participant received a CD for prior reading, containing articles related to each one of the six theoretical-practical lessons. The training in the techniques of assessment and cognitive-behavioral group therapy was executed through the *role-play* technique, which allowed the participants to gain experience in the intervention strategies. Each meeting was evaluated through qualitative protocols in terms of contents and didactics used.

Contents of the Training Program

Session I. At this meeting aspects of child development, parental styles, definitions and categories of sexual violence against children and adolescents, and the epidemiological indexes related to this type of violence, were explained and discussed. The main psychological disorders associated with sexual violence, as well as the possible behavioral, emotional, cognitive and physical alterations arising from this type of violence, were also presented.

Session II. This meeting looked at the dynamics of sexual abuse, risk and protective factors in the family, and the public service network. Characteristics of the victims, the aggressors and the families victimized were discussed, emphasizing intra-family sexual abuse, which is most likely to occur (Sanderson, 2004). Professional performance related to the need for legal, medical and psychological development through the identification of sexual abuse was also discussed. A clinical case was presented to the professionals who had the task of identifying indicators and risk factors of sexual abuse in the behavior of the child and the family and planning an intervention for the case considering the network existing in their municipalities.

Session III. This meeting was focused on training for the psychological assessment of child and adolescent victims of sexual abuse, which must be performed before, during and after each session. Thus, the protocols of the initial interview with the children/adolescents and with the non-offending caregivers were presented and the ethical care required for the interview was discussed. Such interviews aimed: a) to form the link of confidence with the child and his/her caregiver; b) study sociodemographic data; and c) explore the history and dynamics of the sexual abuse and identify any protective measures adopted (Habigzang, Dala Corte, Hatzenberger, Stroehrer, & Koller, 2008). After presenting the interview protocols, these assessment tools were rehearsed through role-plays. In the second part of this meeting, the psychological assessment instruments used, which aim to assess symptoms of stress, anxiety, depression,

post-traumatic stress disorder and dysfunctional beliefs related to the abuse—the main symptoms indicated as consequences of sexual abuse—were presented (Maniglio, 2009). The objectives and guidelines for the application and interpretation of each instrument were presented. After the theoretical exposition of the instruments, the participants were requested to interpret the results. The training team guided the participants in small groups to conduct the exercise. These instruments are applied to evaluate the effectiveness of the psychological intervention through the clinical evolution of the children, before, during and after the group therapy.

Session IV. This meeting was divided into three phases. Initially, the basic concepts of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy, as well as the central aspects of this psychotherapeutic approach, were presented. After a brief introduction, the specific assumptions of the group therapy were presented. This stage aimed to aid the professionals in constructing the groups, emphasizing such aspects as: the number of participants per group; grouping the children and adolescents according to such features as age and gender; the requirement of suitable physical space; the need to report, in writing, the session after the end of each meeting; etc. Then, the first stage of the model of cognitive-behavioral group therapy (psychoeducation and cognitive restructuring) was presented. The objectives of the first six sessions of the group process were as follows: presentation and promotion of cohesion and confidence in the group; therapeutic contract; psychoeducation concerning sexual abuse; psychoeducation regarding the cognitive-behavioral model; and identification and restructuring of dysfunctional thoughts and emotions related to sexual abuse (Habigzang et al., 2009).

Session V. This meeting presented the intervention stage referred to as the Stress Inoculation Training (SIT - Deffenbacher, 1996). This stage, composed of four sessions, has the following objectives: activate the traumatic memory; detail stimuli springing from intrusive memories; build alternative strategies to control intrusive memories and emotional reactions; practice relaxation; and undergo training in self-instruction of child/adolescent victims of sexual abuse (Habigzang et al., 2009). At first, the theoretical foundations of the SIT were presented. Then, the structure and dynamics of each session were explained and practiced through role-plays by the participating professionals.

Session VI. This meeting consisted of theoretical-practical work aiming to present to the participants the contents referring to the last six sessions of the group therapy (Preventing Relapse). The objectives of this stage are the following: psychoeducation about sexuality; psychoeducation about ECA; learning strategies of self-protection; adopting strategies to deal with memories of abuse; identification of expectations concerning the future; and self-assessment (Habigzang et al., 2009). Following an exposition of the concepts, the participants engaged in practice sessions through role-plays simulating therapeutic groups, in which the techniques were shown and taught by the participating professionals and capacitating team.

Supervising Clinical Attendances

The last four meetings, referring to the second stage of the training program, aimed to supervise the implementation



of the model of cognitive-behavioral group therapy by each professional in his/her working municipality. The evaluation of the cases, the grouping of the children and adolescents and the development of the therapeutic process were supervised by psychologists who had vast experience of attending to child and adolescent victims of sexual abuse.

For the queries which could arise concerning the supervision, a virtual group was created. Through this group, it was possible to exchange information between the participants and the training team, in a short space of time, favoring the communication and clarification of difficulties between all the members of the program. Throughout the supervision phase, the main queries of the participants were related to the evaluation of the cases of abuse; eliciting information from the children and adolescents during the initial interviews about the violence experienced; procedures and to ensure protection against new episodes of sexual abuse. Many aspects of the group therapy sessions were re-explained, due to queries about the conduct of sessions and use of some techniques presented in the training program.

In general, the psychologists displayed motivation for the work and engagement in the new intervention proposal. This was confirmed by the rich detail in reports about the sessions, satisfaction with the regular attendance of the children and adolescents in the program, perception of the clinical improvement of the children and adolescents attended to, and by the emails exchanged by supervisions and those participants with queries about some activities of the group therapy and the promotion of protection measures once they had identified those children who were still in a risk situation.

Results and Discussion

Preparing a training program for professionals from several municipalities generates some questions throughout the process, demanding good strategic planning from the organizers to enable them to handle possible hindrances. The training model and the diversified theoretical references presented prior to the start of the training program posed a challenge to many of the capacitated professionals during the training, as many of them did not fully know the cognitive-behavioral approach used in the intervention suggested by the course. The definition of sexual abuse, its dynamics and its cognitive, emotional and behavioral consequences for the development of children and adolescents were also a challenge when the participants had little knowledge on the topic. Nor did they have much knowledge about effective tools for psychological assessment and psychotherapeutic intervention, or about legal aspects and the advocacy required to induce qualified agencies to adopt protective measures.

The sexual abuse of children involves legal, medical, psychological and social aspects (Furniss, 1991). Due to the complexity of the phenomenon, it is found that the professionals find it difficult to deal with police reports, as they are unaware of the legal and ethical implications, as well as having difficulties in effectively conducting the psychological assessment and follow-up because they are not familiar with effective and evidence-based techniques (Federal Council of Psychology, 2009; Saywitz, Mannarino,

Berliner, & Cohen, 2000). These difficulties were identified by the professionals, who reported that much of the knowledge acquired was completely new.

Proposing and operationalizing group attendance for victims of sexual abuse was also a new experience for the capacitated professionals, as they had all previously used an individual format of attending to children. The operationalization of the groups was perceived as being necessary by the facilitators, due to the great demand of cases and numerous waiting lists of children for attendance in their municipalities. The lack of professional experience in coordinating therapeutic groups created a certain degree of anxiety in the participants, expressed throughout the supervisions. These supervisions, at the end of the training program, have been considered a fundamental tool to the improvement of the trained techniques and to the discussion of doubts, reducing the feelings of insecurity.

The large number of participants in the training program favored both interaction and theoretical-practical didactics, both of which were defined as being of a high priority for the training. Because of the adequate number of participants, all of them had the opportunity to take part in the role-plays and other practical aspects proposed. The training process was positively evaluated through qualitative protocols which assessed each meeting in terms of contents and didactics used. The training team, who already knew the reality of the protection network for sexually abused children and adolescents in different contexts, also reported new learning through the training interactions. This process of exchanging experiences between researchers and psychotherapists is of paramount importance for constructing practices based upon evidence of what really benefits children and adolescents victims of sexual abuse.

By now, 53 psychologists from 30 different municipalities of Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil) have been trained in three editions of the model described herein, and new groups of participants are being trained at this moment. In each edition of the program the necessity of articulations between research and practice becomes clearer, especially when focusing on public policies. Undoubtedly, this training program could not have occurred (at least with the support of public funds) if the academic research and the positive results of the trained model were not present. The junction of academic research and the evidence-based practice must prevail in most (if not all) professional practices, resulting in the strengthening of effective attendance politics.

Regarding the effectiveness evaluation of the training model, initial results (not published yet) have shown the model presented to be an adequate structure. At the end of each section (earlier described) the participants complete an evaluation protocol, considering several aspects of the training program, such as: theoretical and practical knowledge provided, quality of the teachers and the teaching material, topics not covered, positive and negatives aspects of the session, overall satisfaction, etc. The results are positive, demonstrating a large acceptance of the proposed training model. According to these data, the program favored the increase of theoretical and practical knowledge of the participants, fulfilling the objective of more effectively preventing and treating sexual abuse against children and adolescents. Impact evaluation is also proving to be adequate. Several trained professionals have already begun to implement cognitive-behavioral group therapy in their

municipalities. The majority of these processes are ongoing, and the effectiveness of the Habigzang et al. (2009) model, applied by the trained professionals, will be soon investigated. However, qualitative data demonstrated that, in general, after the training the professionals felt more secure in working with cases of sexual abuse, reporting positive outcomes from the operationalized sections.

Other interesting results have already been found. Impact evaluation of the model's indirect effects (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009) has shown that, in addition to theoretical and practical information, the participants of the training program obtain benefits to their own mental health. Compared to a non-randomized control group, the participants of the training program presented a reduction in the levels of burnout, whereas the control group (composed also of psychologists who work in public institutions, providing services to sexually abused girls) presented an increase of the symptoms of burnout, evaluated in a time-interval of six months.

In sum, the efforts briefly presented in this paper are encouraging. The effectiveness evaluation of this newly-developed training program must continue in order to improve and refine the program, resulting in a more effective attendance for the victimized children—the ones to whom this work is dedicated. We hope that similar studies will be executed in order to facilitate the improvement of the protection networks, making such interventions accessible on a larger scale to public policy professionals and managers in health and social assistance programs, especially in those countries in which the preventive and protective approach for sexually abused victims is not well-defined.

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Commentary Developmental Science and Social Policy: Living together Apart, and How One Can

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Scientific research and social policy have often been characterized as representing two very different cultures. Investigators attempt to explain the causes of behavior and behavioral change by carefully crafted empirical designs, and to communicate the results within the scientific community, but they are also interested in gaining recognition among their peers. Actors in the domain of social policy attempt to identify challenges and problems in the functioning of a society and therefore look for measures to ameliorate the mismatch between political goals and the situation faced by people. For their purposes, science is one of many sources of information and influence, and their main aim in intervention is to achieve a good cost-effect balance,



with equity for various stake holders in mind. Their activities depend on the public support for the policies, and ultimately on success in elections at various levels.

Another difference is that scientists are used to being persistent when pursuing a solution to a problem. Their work is a never-ending story of “more research is needed”, and the accumulation of evidence is the norm rather than a one-time breakthrough. In social policy, however, solutions have to be quick because of the short lifetime of political offices, and there is rarely the chance to undergo systematic trials to find out the best approach.

Certainly there are attempts to overcome this schism, and from a scientific point of view applied research and especially “translational” research is high on the agenda of those who want to improve the role of science and social policy. In essence, such endeavors mean that research of relevance for social policy should be informed by real life problems in the natural ecology (in the medical sciences, this means from bedside to lab rather than vice versa).

The current selection of interesting papers demonstrates what research has to offer, and how it can be transmitted to those who are responsible either for practice-adequate delivery or the formulation of social policies. The authors come from various parts of the world and the topics vary quite remarkably, but a common thread is the belief that ecologies play a strong role in the shaping of human behavior and development. This is certainly not new. However, in the perspective of relevance for social policies, the malleability of ecologies – be it physical features of playgrounds or the social composition of networks – is a possible lever for intervention.

In her paper, Ann Sanson provides a blueprint of the difficulties from the researcher’s point of view. She can rely on her many years of experience with large-scale longitudinal studies, ultimately conducted in collaboration with policymakers and government agencies, following an unhappy time of little outreach when this was not possible. She describes three main sources of disappointment about the recognition of research by social policy makers. The first is that relevant research is indeed often lacking. Obviously this can be traced back to many sources, including a lack of interest in applied research among scientists, a gap in communication between stakeholders in the political arena and researchers, as well as the thus far unexplored particularity of the problem at hand. Next, there may be a lack of awareness of relevant research at the policy end. Actually this is not so surprising given the fact that there are still too few scientists who care about the dissemination of their research to non-scientific audiences. To my knowledge, some graduate programs at research universities have realized that one needs to make young scientists familiar with research dissemination, but certainly more can be done.

Beyond the imbalance between the demand and supply of relevant research, investigators’ silo mentality, as Sanson calls it, may hamper cooperation between science and public policy. The various scientific and political dimensions of human behavior and development do not connect easily with each other. Without a diverse network of experts who trust one another and are motivated to relate to each other, we will never gain the attention our research deserves, at least by our own judgment.

Ann Sanson’s paper is also rich in practical suggestions – one has to plan, conduct, and analyze research in

collaboration, and this is best achieved by interdisciplinary teams and in particular by way of the appointment of scientists from their research establishment to posts in government institutions involved in research and policy (“secondment”). This is a great idea, and I know from my own experience in Germany that other social sciences, such as sociology, are much more eager and successful in placing their young investigators in relevant settings as a “taster course”, and this pays off later by less hesitation on the part of such scientists to take an occupational position that brings them into contact with policymakers.

The paper by Thomas Dishion uses research on peer contagion as a case where the awareness of relevant research and even the problem as such is widely missing from the vision of planners of interventions. His research group not only provides the insight, but has also evaluated existing programs regarding the risks involved. But first, what is peer contagion? It is the fact that, when a critical mass occurs, particular children and adolescents have a negative influence on each other in their friendships and social networks. The negative effect concerns aggression, bullying, drug use and other problem behaviors, and it is especially the young with a history of deficient parenting and peer rejection who tend to form such groups. If their immediate environment is unstructured in terms of adult supervision and program aims, then, as described in the paper, deviant talk and coercive joining takes place that reduces the threshold for problem behavior to occur and provides models for antisocial behavior and the ensuing reputation that can be gained among like peers.

The insight provided is not only that this exists, but that established programs for intervention against problem behaviors delivered in schools, after-school settings, and correction facilities are likely to produce “iatrogenic” effects due to their unintended provision of opportunities for such deviant talk and coercive joining. The examples are impressive, although one has to consider that other countries may, in part, have other programs less prone to contagion. But again, judged from own experience, it is quite likely that peer-guided prevention programs against substance use can do harm, because the peers involved are often less positive models than the program planners had anticipated.

What can one do? Well, increasing awareness about the possibility of peer contagion and evaluating existing programs in this regard is important (but often policymakers in many countries seem not to be so interested in evidence-based practice). Beyond that, suggestions are needed as to how group settings, which are often required for reasons of cost-effectiveness, can be insulated against negative effects. According to Thomas Dishion, the key seems to be the promotion of “nurturing contexts” where positive behaviors are reinforced. From reading his paper I got the feeling that further investigation is required in order to understand better how this can be achieved.

Christiane Spiel and her colleagues provide information on how the collaboration between scientists and policy makers can be made more fruitful. Expanding on the secondment approach suggested by Sanson, they stress that for any intervention effects to be sustained it is important to have top-down support starting at the government level. This is not to say that bottom-up is not required – quite the contrary, because otherwise an intervention would not be adequately planned and implemented. The examples

discussed refer to educational reforms, and it is clear that a national strategy needs to be implemented first (the case in point is Austria) in order to gain cooperation on the ground as well as sustainability by political action.

Finally, Luisa Habigzang and her colleagues look at the issues of psychology's policy relevance from a different point of view – how can one enable practitioners to carry out programs according to established policy decisions, which hopefully have been inspired by relevant and valid research? They report on a group therapy model aimed at helping victims of sexual abuse and about the training of psychologists, who were not especially knowledgeable about sexual abuse, to implement the program. Of particular interest for the current topic is the fact that the trainees had difficulties with the group format, which was introduced mainly due to cost reasons. I wonder whether Dishion's peer contagion topic could apply here, although it is evident from my reading that the sessions are clearly structured so that the risk should be minimal, at least in the therapeutic setting.

We live in times of rapid social change, and this implies economic shocks and political upheaval. This is not a situation especially promotive of new efforts for prevention of harm and promotion of human development. This is so because financial strains and weak political support correspond well with the general tendency of policymakers to rely on treatment after crises which is easier to evaluate in its success than prevention. On the other hand, the variation in the level at which individuals and communities are affected by social change provides rich opportunities to investigate the effect of changing ecologies and to utilize evidence-based measures to mitigate their effect. What is required, according to this set of interesting papers, is twofold. First, we need to identify research fields that are potentially of high relevance for social policy and here, as the peer contagion case illustrates, research on the role of ecologies in human development may be especially fruitful. The new field of epigenetics gives ecologies a prominent role in the genetic underpinnings of behavior and development; it certainly provides encouragement for this approach to social policy. Second, psychologists need to become acquainted with the real-life world of social issues, social policies and the associated leading actors from early on in their training. Taken together, and sustained over an extended period of time, a simultaneous focus on both key issues and key players may help to reduce the cultural gap between science and social policy with which I started my comments.

Commentary Global Issues in Research and Social Policy

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This important and interesting set of papers (Dishion, Habigzang, Damasio, Hohendorff, & Koller, Sanson, Spiel, Shrober, Strohmeier, & Finsterwald) provides valuable lessons for those hoping to influence human development through practice and policy. Each of the four papers focuses on a different country (USA, Brazil, Australia, and Austria, respectively) and different issues (problem behavior/violence, sexual abuse, child/youth status more generally, and education, respectively.) The papers also vary in the extent to which they have attempted to influence policy and practice, ranging from conducting policy-relevant research (Dishion) to designing and evaluating programs for policymakers or practitioners (Spiel, et al.) to designing and evaluating training for professionals to implement policy directives (Habigzang, et al.) to having done all of the above (Sanson). The papers offer many specific and general lessons. Most important is the fact that the papers come from many countries of the world, and provide the basis for discussing global issues.

Interest in the policy (and practice) implications of developmental research appears to be increasing among developmental scientists, as demonstrated by this special issue focus. The explosion of infancy and early childhood research in the 1970s in the US, for example, generated many policy initiatives, with perhaps the most notable being the continuing efforts to provide universal early childhood education ("Head Start") (e.g., Zigler & Valentine, 1979). Some believe that there has never been greater opportunity to achieve policy impact because of the current emphasis on evidence-based results in many countries (e.g., McCall, 2009; Sanson, in press; Spiel, et al., in press).

All of the authors believe that developmental research should inform policy and practice. All also express frustration with the process, and provide recommendations consistent with those expressed by others (e.g., McCall, 2009; Petersen, 2006; Petersen, 2009). Policy, defined broadly to include public policy (e.g., laws) as well as institutional or organizational policy, is useful for sustaining improvements in human development and its contexts and systems (Petersen, 2006.) Practice is typically defined within specific fields of practice (e.g., education, social welfare), which helps identify which set of behaviors is considered appropriate. The minimum purpose of human development policy is to protect humans, especially when they are young, sometimes by constraining the behavior of others (e.g., gun control; smoking control).

Policy is influenced by societal norms and related cultural variations. Thus the few extant global policies are primarily related to war and conflict, such as "crimes against humanity." Similarly, global inferences about research affecting policy and practice are necessarily limited. Policy is typically made locally, at whatever level "local" is defined, and is highly influenced by relationships.



Petersen (2006) focuses on the importance of systems thinking for designing research that can have positive results for policy or practice. Effective policy development requires clear thinking about both means and ends, to achieve sustainable ends without unintended consequences. A systems approach requires explicit policy-relevant theory, hypotheses that are tested with systems change research, and feedback that provides learning. A key tenet of systems change is that if the changes are expected to be sustainable, the people intended as the beneficiaries must be engaged with the intervention, a point emphasized by Sanson (in press). Petersen (2006) discusses two systems archetypes that characterize many developmental interventions or programs: "Fixes that Fail" and "Shifting the Burden." "Fixes That Fail" involves a problem symptom quickly addressed by a "fix" which alleviates the symptom but ultimately produces unintended consequences that, after a delay, cause the original problem to return to its previous level or even get worse. Examples include simple exhortations such as "Just Say No" (to drugs, or sex) or attempts to frighten young people, as in the media campaign "This is your brain on drugs," showing fried eggs. When such interventions with symptoms are applied repeatedly, the "Shifting the Burden" archetype applies: as long as the underlying cause is not addressed early on, it becomes increasingly difficult for more effective interventions to even be introduced because of the cynicism generated.

Another critical point for considering policy-relevant research is that policymakers may not base their policies on research evidence (Petersen, 2006, 2009; Sanson, in press). Public policymakers are typically elected, thus interjecting politics and the related factors that influence them, such as beliefs (persona, cultural), most often reinforced through relationships. Policymakers in private organizations or institutions are subjected to similar kinds of influence. And even if research is used for making policy, the researcher typically loses control of the policy result once the research is released broadly, and may be dismayed to see the research used for evil intentions rather than for good ones (Spiel, et al., in press) were dismayed by what happened following their efforts; and even worse outcomes have been seen; see Petersen (2009) for examples).

Why are relationships important? Research on the power of persuasive messages demonstrates that a strong story is essential (Hamilton, 2006). Supporting data ("evidence") can help but it cannot succeed alone (Petersen, 2009). For effectiveness, then, in using research to affect policy, both researchers and policy makers must at least understand how each other work, and respect each other enough to find common ground on the evidence/story continuum so that they are not working at cross purposes (e.g., McCall, 2009; Sanson, in press.) Most policy researchers have learned the communication principle above and will use a compelling example that makes vivid to policy makers the inferences from the research data. Given the realities, it is usually up to scientists to learn to become effective communicators to policymakers, as the latter as seldom motivated to communicate with scientists.

Petersen (2009) emphasized the work of Bogenschneider (1996) who developed and implemented programs within one state in the US, primarily through local stakeholders (teachers, business people, youth, etc.) within 22 communities. Public and private policymakers within these

communities were making their decisions as much because of evidence that the approaches would work, as because of the web of inter-relationships within the community. Local implementation in several places is also helpful because it inevitably introduces variations grounded in the communities, and reduces the likelihood that research generalizations are misunderstood (e.g., Bogenschneider & Corbett, 2010.)

Sanson's paper (in press) documents a program of research and policy engagement in Australia that is probably unmatched elsewhere in the world, both for being consistently high quality and achieving policy outcomes. Sanson elucidates the process of achieving policy influence as the co-production of knowledge, in which all stakeholders from research, policy and practice are engaged from the outset to achieve sustainable policy outcomes. The work of Sanson and her colleagues provides a strong model for all of us hoping to achieve policy outcomes.

Dishion's research (in press) provides an excellent summary of research with significant practice and policy implications. While peers have been recognized as an important group for children and youth for some time, Dishion notes that youth in the US are even more peer-engaged because of several societal trends (e.g., increased single-parenthood, increased employment of women, increased geographic isolation of families from broader kin networks) that serve to reduce parental involvement and especially monitoring, key factors for positive child/youth development. Factors creating risk for involvement with deviant peer groups are marginalization in school by teachers and peers as well as low socioeconomic status and disrupted families. Peer contagion involves mutual influence between young people whose interaction serves needs for attention or companionship but may inadvertently increase negative behavior. Dishion also notes that well-intended efforts to assemble young people at risk for problem behavior in group programs run the risk of **increasing** rather than decreasing problem behavior because of peer contagion. Since group treatment is a common practice of child/youth programs, it should likely be discontinued or modified with effective approaches that help the adult leaders to promote positive peer influence and reduce deviancy training. Thus far, there appear to be few policy or practice efforts aimed at deterring peer contagion, although Dishion notes some efforts that are consistent with their research findings.

Dishion (in press) urges community programs to promote positive youth development. The number of such programs and good research on them has skyrocketed since the landmark publication from the US National Academy of Sciences (NRC & IOM, 2002) on *Community Programs to Promote Youth Development* calling for such programs. Reviews such as Mahoney, Harris, and Eccles (2006) as well as one by Lerner and Bower (in press) document the promising results of such programs. Conversely, Henggeler and Schoenwald (2011) reviewed programs that are effective in rehabilitating juvenile offenders and emphasized the importance of contextualizing the interventions within peer, family, and community relationships, especially important for the sustainability of improved behavior.

The Brazil study in this issue (Habigzang, et al., in press) emphasizes the importance of training, or preparing professionals who understand policy and know the most effective treatments. Their study of effective training

programs provides a significant contribution to this discussion of the connection between research, policy, and practice, for without well-trained professionals, sustainability is nearly impossible. This is especially true with very challenging public health and social policy issues, such as the one they address: child sexual abuse (also see Trickett, Noll, & Putnam, 2011.)

The fact that each of the papers in this issue, as well as others from around the world (e.g., Verma, 2008), highlight the importance of engaging all stakeholders in research intended to “make a difference” in practice or policy suggests that this might be a general principle for such work. This inference has face validity as it demonstrates respect, a basic value for engaging trust. Almost all who write on this topic, including the researchers writing for this issue, mention how frustrating the work is. Yes, but if we care about making a difference for human development, we will learn how to be effective.

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Reports from the Lab

Scaling-up Early Childhood Programs: Moving towards Evidence-based: Decision Making in Asia

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Systematically conducted empirical research indicates that participation in early childhood programs benefits children and that the quality of these programs matters for child development. This type of research should ideally inform educational and social policy that is relevant to children, and to some extent this has been the case with regard to early childhood services. There has been increased participation in early childhood programs in Asia (see Figure 1). However, less policy attention has been directed at the quality of these programs.

Three interrelated strands of research have led to an expansion of early childhood programs. First, research on brain architecture shows that the brain develops most rapidly in the first three years of life and that environmental stimulation positively affects the developing brain (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). Second, studies on the economic returns of government investment in education indicate higher returns to society when it is incurred in early childhood as compared to adulthood (Heckman, 2004; Lynch, 2004). Third, program evaluation research has shown that participation in early childhood programs promotes cognitive development and school success, and narrows the achievement gap between children from low-income families and their more advantaged peers. **However, most research into the influence of early childhood programs on child outcomes has been conducted in the developed world and has been used as evidence for expanding preschool in developing countries.** This is not surprising, as research into preschool attendance and child outcomes in the developing world is still scarce. Our work attempts to fill this gap and goes beyond analyzing statistics on access to services to considering the quality of early childhood programs.

Preschool Experiences and Learning Outcomes

There is now substantial evidence that children who have attended formal preschool programs in developed nations are more likely to exhibit positive developmental outcomes (Schweinhart et al., 2005; Sylva et al., 2006) compared to those who have not. Yet, less is known about the likely

impact of similar programs in developing countries. At the same time, because early Childhood Education (ECE) programs do provide strong foundations for subsequent development and learning, compensate for disadvantage and exclusion, and provide benefits for children, families, and societies (UNESCO, 2006), there has been a significant policy emphasis on promoting school-based, center-based and home-based ECE programs in developing countries. Therefore, evaluation research that counts the costs and benefits of preschool programs in developing countries is timely and provides important information on which types of programs should be scaled up.

Against this background, we report on studies conducted in three Asian countries that examined the early learning and development of children with different preschool experiences.

Cambodia

In Cambodia, there are three major types of preschool programs: State Preschools, Community Preschools and Home-Based Programs. Among these programs, State Preschools have professionally qualified teachers, the best facilities, the most financing, and are assumed to result in the best outcomes for children because of their access to resources and links with the formal education system. In Community Preschools, educational experiences for three- to five-year-olds are provided by a member of the village who has typically received 10 days of initial training and who participates in refresher training courses for three to six days a year. The costs are expected to be borne by the village and most classes are held under teachers' houses. Home-Based Programs are offered through mothers' groups formed in villages. Again, the government expects funding and resources for these groups to be found within the village by the local commune council. The groups are facilitated by a "core" mother in the village who has generally received a two-day training course in the use of Home-Based Program materials.

Our study included a randomized sample of 880 five-year-olds (55% girls) from six provinces in Cambodia who attended one of the three key preschool programs described above or no program at all. The Cambodian Developmental Assessment Test (CDAT), a culturally relevant measure, was used to evaluate developmental gains associated with each of the three programs. Children were assessed at the beginning and end of the school year. We further followed these children when they were in primary school for another three years (2007, 2008, and 2009) to track their school enrollment and progression through primary school.

Not surprisingly, children attending the relatively well resourced, formal State Preschools achieved better scores on the CDAT and were less likely to repeat grades than those attending Community Preschools and Home-Based Programs. However, it is interesting to note that, while the degree of impact is influenced by the type of program that

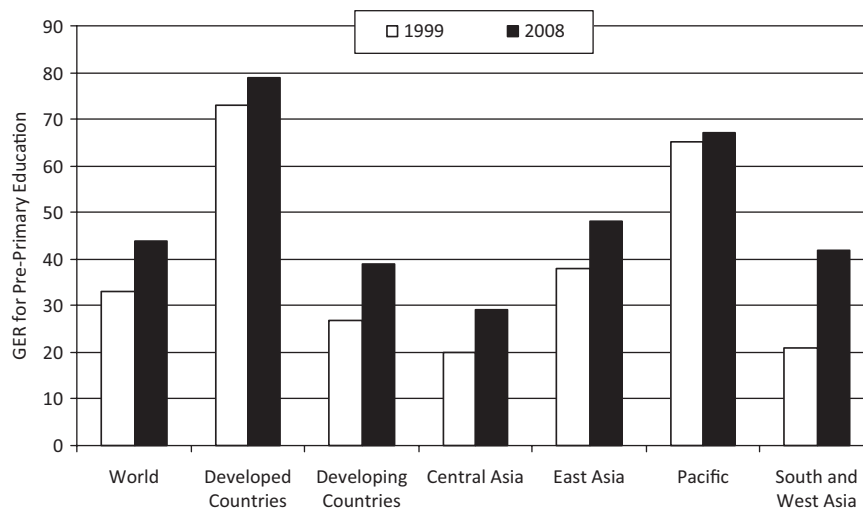


Figure 1. Gross enrollment ratios (GER) in pre-primary education
Source: UNESCO (2010).



Figure 2. Children in a Community Preschool in Cambodia

children attend, all three preschool programs are associated with better developmental outcomes, including school enrollment and grade promotion. It appears that some type of preschool experience is better than none at all (Rao et al., in press; Rao, 2011).

Rural China

We conducted a similar but more comprehensive study in Guizhou Province, China (Rao, Sun, Zhou, & Zhang, in press). Guizhou is considered a “backward” province compared to the provinces in eastern China. As in other parts of rural China, there are three different types of ECE services: kindergartens, “separate” pre-school classes, or Grade 1 classes that include preschool-aged children.

Kindergartens are managed by educational authorities or communities and provide formal ECE. They usually have child appropriate furnishings, toys, and educational materials, and adopt play-based methods in daily teaching. Kindergarten teachers normally have basic training in ECE. Many rural primary schools have a separate class for five- to six-year-olds to help them adapt to a formal school environment before enrollment in Grade 1. In these classes, elements of the Grade 1 syllabus form part of the curriculum and few toys are provided. Teachers in these classes do not typically have formal teaching qualifications for preschool children. Because of their accessibility and focus on enhancing rural children’s school-preparedness, separate pre-primary classes are an important form of ECE in rural China. Some rural primary schools allow children below seven years of age to “sit-in” on Grade 1 classes so that they



Figure 3. Children in a separate pre-primary class in rural China

can have some exposure to formal learning environments before they officially start Grade 1. These children receive the same instruction from the Grade 1 teacher and follow the same schedule as children officially enrolled in Grade 1.

We randomly selected children who had different preschool experiences (kindergarten, separate pre-primary class, “sitting-in” on a Grade 1 class, and no preschool experience) and examined their school preparedness at the beginning of Grade 1 and literacy and mathematics attainment during the school year. We also observed teaching activities in the three different types of programs. Our findings showed that those children with developmentally appropriate preschool experiences (kindergartens or separate pre-primary classes) had higher school readiness scores than the other children. Furthermore, children from the developmentally appropriate kindergarten programs showed higher mathematics and literacy achievement at the end of Grade 1 than children who merely “sat in” on Grade 1 classes or had no preschool experience. Observations of the classroom teaching episodes further indicated that kindergarten classes provided a relatively better learning environment for children than the other two types of preschool programs and the separate pre-primary classes were also more appropriate for preschool children than the Grade 1 classes.

Results from these two studies point to the need for research that is designed to delve more specifically into the particular goals, costs, and benefits of different prior-to-school programs in developing nations. For example, in Cambodia, community- and home-based programs may be more sustainable than the more resource-intensive, formal State Preschools. In rural China, it may be difficult to provide kindergartens in more remote rural areas and it may be more realistic to encourage the establishment of separate pre-primary classes in these areas and provide schools with more technical and professional support to establish a more child-friendly environment and enhance the quality of learning experiences offered to children.

India

The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme is a Head Start-type intervention designed to promote the early development of Indian children from economically disadvantaged families. Under this nationwide program, children up to the age of six benefit from a package of services that includes medical checks, immunizations, referral services, supplementary feeding, preschool education, and health and nutrition education. The program was initiated in 1975 and has been the Indian government’s major early childhood intervention strategy. In 1995, the government made a commitment to universalize the ICDS for all eligible beneficiaries. This has led to a marked expansion of the program, which now serves over 90 million children under the age of six (see Figure 4). Research based on national samples has indicated that the ICDS has improved the survival rate, health and nutritional status, and educational

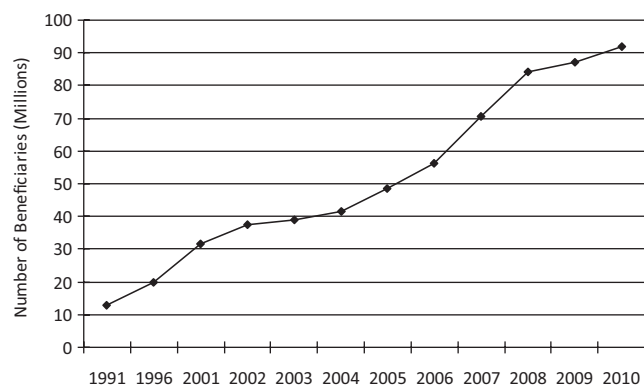


Figure 4. Expansion of the Integrated Child Development Service Scheme

Source: Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India (2011).



Figure 5. Children in an Anganwadi in India

outcomes of children from economically disadvantaged families (NCAER, 2001; NIPPCD, 1992, 2006). However, much research has also been critical of it (Citizens' Initiative for the Rights of Children under Six, 2006; NIPCCD, 2006).

Despite the size of the ICDS and the voluminous body of research on it, only one published study conducted in India has examined the relationship between preschool program quality and child outcomes (M. S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF), 2000). We conducted a small-scale study in the state of Andhra Pradesh that was the first in India to prospectively examine the relationship between the quality of ICDS centers and child developmental outcomes (Rao, 2010a & b; 2011). While our earlier work had shown that children who attended *Anganwadis* or ICDS centers had better school preparedness than children from a control group, this small-scale study showed that children from a higher quality ICDS center had better developmental outcomes than those from a lower quality center. The higher quality center was closer to the Project Office and we believe that the *Anganwadi* worker (early childhood educator) exposure to informal interactions with the Child Development Program Officer positively influenced her interactions with the children and her professional development.

Work-in-progress

We have recently developed the *EastAsia Pacific Early Child Development Scales* (Rao, Engle, & Sun, 2011) to evaluate the development of children ranging in age from three to six. The Scales are based on the Early Learning Development Standards of seven countries in the region (Cambodia, Laos, Mongolia, the Philippines, Thailand, Vanuatu, and Vietnam) and include seven important domains of development in preschool children: Approaches to Learning; Cognitive Development; Cultural Knowledge and Participation;

Language and Emergent Literacy; Gross and Fine Motor; Health, Hygiene, and Safety; and Socio-Emotional Development. Pilot tests are currently underway and we hope that we can have a valid measure of child development that can be used by researchers and policy makers for monitoring children's developmental progress, assessing the impact of various policies and programs/interventions, and reviewing the influences of cohort effects on early child development.

Limitations of our Studies

There have been several limitations in our studies. First, we are not able to draw causal conclusions between the quality of early preschool experiences and subsequent development and learning outcomes because we have not used randomized controlled trials. Second, the sample sizes in some of the studies have been relatively small and there might have been selection bias. Third, we have mainly focused on the effectiveness of different types of early childhood programs on child outcomes. Although we have controlled for maternal education in our statistical analyses we have given less attention to family background and practices. Further studies with larger samples and more robust research designs would have a greater impact on policy decision-making.

Conclusions: Research – Policy Intersections

"Science does not speak for itself" (Shonkoff, 2011) and HKU researchers are committed to using their own research and that conducted by others to promote child development in policies and practices throughout Asia. We also work closely with the Asia-Pacific Regional Network for Early Childhood (ARNEC), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). These collaborations have led to the preparation of reports



and briefs which have focused on translating research conducted in Asia for policy makers in Asia (Rao, 2007; Rao & Pearson, 2008; Rao & Sun, 2010). By providing data on differences in child development as a function of program type, parental education, urban/rural residence, and family wealth, we hope to provide evidence that will lead to targeted programs for the vulnerable as a first step toward universal access, and thereby drive equity in early childhood services.

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The Child Trauma Lab: Investigating Violence Exposure, Traumatic Stress, and Resilience in Childhood

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How does exposure to severe family violence affect school-age children? How do preschool-age children exposed to stressful events express trauma symptoms? Do trauma symptoms affect how children perceive emotional threats? Can intervention programs alleviate internalizing and externalizing behavioral problems for children exposed to threatening family environments?

These are among the questions that my research team has tackled this year – we are trying to understand the ways in which violence and stress affect children’s social, physical, and emotional adjustment in order to better assist them. This is translational research in clinical psychology that includes 1. Developing new ways of assessing the effects of exposure to multiple forms of violence in the lives of children, (including measures of children’s fears and worries, attitudes and beliefs about violence, and traumatic reactions to stress), 2. Carrying out field studies to describe the extent, the contexts, and the characteristics of multiple forms of violence in children’s lives, and using multivariate modeling, to identify who is most at-risk and why, and 3. Conducting clinical trials to test interventions in family violence based on the risk and resilience model developed in this research program.

Profiles of Adjustment

First we wanted to evaluate the social and emotional adjustment of 219 school-age children in families with varying levels of intimate partner violence (IPV) using a model of risk and protection and to explore factors that differentiated children with poor adjustment from those with resilience. Mothers who experienced IPV in the past year and their children ages 6–12 were interviewed. Standardized measures assessed family violence, parenting, family

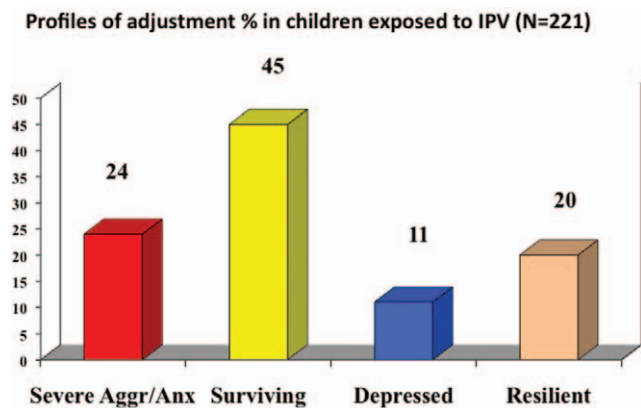


Figure 1. Profiles of adjustment % in children exposed to IPV (N = 221)

functioning, maternal mental health, and children’s adjustment and beliefs. Using cluster analysis, all cases with valid data on the Child Behavior Checklist, Child Depression Inventory, General Self-Worth and Social Self-Competence measures were described by four profiles of children’s adjustment: Severe Adjustment Problems (24%); children who were Struggling (45%); those with Depression Only (11%); and Resilient (20%) with high competence and low adjustment problems (Graham-Bermann, Gruber, Girz, & Howell, 2009; See Figure 1).

Multinomial logistic regression analyses showed children in the Severe Problems cluster witnessed more family violence and had mothers higher in depression and trauma symptoms than other children. Resilient and Struggling children had mothers with better parenting, more family strengths and no past violent partner. Parents of children with Severe Problems were lacking these attributes. The Depressed profile children witnessed less violence but had greater fears and worries about mother’s safety. In this study factors related to the child, to the mother and to the family distinguished different profiles of adjustment for children exposed to IPV who are living in the community. Resilient children had less violence exposure, fewer fears and worries, and mothers with better mental health and parenting skills, suggesting avenues for intervention with this population. More specifically, our findings imply that parent functioning largely influences child adjustment. Thus, services designed to assist children coping with family violence exposure should be targeted at both the child and the parent (in this case, with the mother).

Resilient Coping after Traumatic Events

A second study in our lab, by recent Ph.D. Katie Howell, examined why some preschool-age children exposed to intimate partner violence (IPV) showed deleterious outcomes while others appeared more resilient (Howell, Graham-Bermann, Czyz & Lilly, 2010). Here resilience was conceptualized as strengths in emotion regulation and prosocial skills, and evaluated using the Social Competence Scale developed by the Conduct Problem Prevention Research Group. The sample consisted of 56 mothers and their 4- to 6-year-old children exposed to IPV within the past 2 years. After controlling for relevant demographic factors, hierarchical regression analyses indicated that better parenting performance, fewer maternal mental health problems, and less severe violence exposure predicted better emotion regulation and prosocial skill scores, which in turn were negatively correlated with maladaptive child behaviors. This study has identified elements associated with more positive functioning in young children exposed to family violence. These findings are important and relevant in clinical work with children exposed to IPV. Rather than focusing on reducing psychopathology, clinical interventions might conceptualize treatment from a more positive, empowering perspective and build on the strengths of these families.

Trauma Symptoms in Preschoolers

Our research shows that traumatic events, such as exposure to severe violence at home, can seriously disrupt the



Figure 2. Example of a trial in the probe detection task.

physical and emotional development of children (Graham-Bermann & Levendosky, 2011). Even young children are exposed to more than one type of traumatic event early in their lives (Graham-Bermann, Sularz & Howell, 2011). Yet few studies have captured developmentally specific examples of traumas and the expression of distress for this age group. In another study, mothers and teachers of 138 Head Start preschoolers from low-income families were interviewed about traumatic events and completed a new measure assessing their child's traumatic stress symptoms (Graham-Bermann, Howell, Habarth, Krishnan, Loree & Bermann, 2008). They reported the most common traumatic events as the death of a person, death of a pet, family violence, high conflict divorce, sudden family loss, and accident or injury. Using responses to the Preschool Posttraumatic Stress Symptoms Inventory (PPSSI) (Graham-Bermann, 2001), we factor analyzed 17 trauma symptoms and revealed three internally consistent and valid scales: Intrusions, Emotional Reactivity, and Fears, plus a Total omnibus score. Traumatic stress symptoms varied by the type of event. Scores were higher for traumatic events involving close family members than for distal events. Given the trajectory of possible dysfunction for children diagnosed with PTSD (inclusive of comorbid delinquency, substance abuse, eating disorders, and major depressive episodes), there is a need to identify dysfunction in children at early ages. The preliminary findings of this study suggest one way of evaluating young children after disastrous or traumatic events. The types of symptoms shown by the children in this study to various traumatic events also suggest the need for mastery, information, and work with parents to help improve the child's adjustment. Being able to identify children with serious symptoms and to intervene early in the life of the child would seem to be invaluable. Measures such as the PPSSI may play a role in assessing trauma symptoms in preschool-age children.

Attention Bias to Violent Threat

While children exposed to intimate partner violence (IPV) are at increased risk for negative mental health outcomes, including the development of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), little was known about the cognitive mechanisms

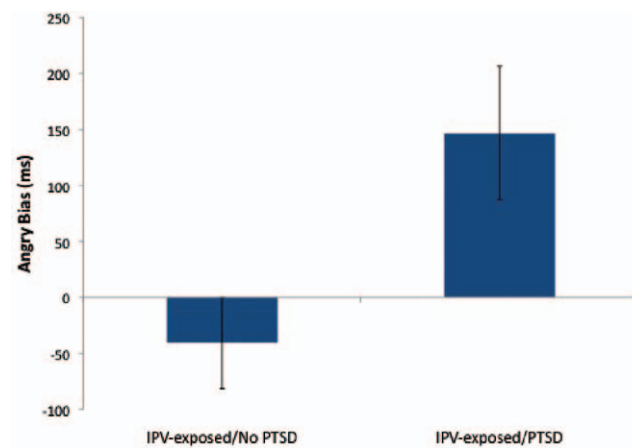


Figure 3. Attention bias scores (in ms) for angry faces in IPV-exposed children with and without a diagnosis of PTSD.

that mediate the development of PTSD after IPV exposure (Graham-Bermann, Howell, Miller, Kwek, & Lilly, 2010). The goal of this study by Johnna Swartz, M.S., was to test whether attention bias to threat was associated with a diagnosis of PTSD in young children (4 to 6 years old) exposed to IPV (Swartz, Graham-Bermann, Mogg, Bradley & Monk, 2011). The probe detection task, which uses reaction times in response to probes to assess attention orientation to emotional faces, was administered to IPV-exposed children to measure their attention bias to angry and happy faces, relative to neutral faces. The task was administered to children on a laptop, and a button box was used to respond. During the task, children were first presented with a fixation cross and then a pair of faces then a dot. Stimuli always consisted of a pair of neutral and angry or a pair of neutral and happy faces (See Figure 2).

Reaction times were measured. The results indicated that IPV-exposed children with PTSD had greater attention bias toward angry faces than IPV-exposed children without PTSD (see Figure 3). This suggests that attention bias to threat is associated with the development of PTSD in children exposed to IPV.

Some new interventions have been designed to alter attention bias and are being tested with non-clinical adolescent and adult populations. Perhaps the inclusion of

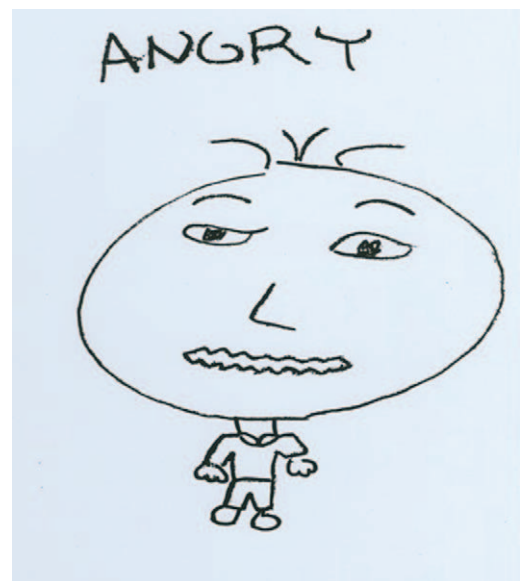
attention training in existing programs designed to help young children exposed to IPV could enhance coping and help to alleviate the symptoms of anxiety in children with PTSD.

Cognitive Appraisals of Violence and Threat

We have also considered what factors contribute to the development of mental health problems for children above and beyond their exposure to family violence (Miller, Howell, & Graham-Bermann, in press). Research has recently indicated that school-age children's *cognitive appraisals* of their parents' conflict, that is, how they perceive and interpret the violence they witness, may influence the likelihood of developing mental health problems. Specifically, school-age children's perceptions of the amount of violence that is occurring, whether it feels threatening, and whether or not they blame themselves for their parents' conflict are found to be related to psychological functioning. However, this research has primarily examined children above the age of eight, but as research has advanced it has become clear that young children may be at particular risk for the negative effects of exposure to IPV because of their inability to selectively remove themselves from the home during conflicts and their limited ability to understand events. Thus, we sought to gain a better understanding of how children under the age of eight perceive and evaluate their parents' conflicts and what the psychological consequences of these appraisals are. These cognitive appraisals about violence were systematically evaluated by Laura Miller, M.S., with measurement of children's beliefs about conflict in three domains: conflict properties, self-blame, and threat. This study examined preschoolers' beliefs about their parents' conflicts in depth and considered the mental health consequences of these beliefs, as well as how these cognitive appraisals developed over time. Results showed that children as young as four were able to report on and to evaluate the violence that they had witnessed. Given these findings, clinical interventions would do well to help young children to regulate their feelings of threat and blame and to provide for their safety.

Evaluating Interventions to Enhance Resilient Coping

Based on the successful results of a randomized control trial for school-age children funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Graham-Bermann, Lynch, Banyard, Devoe, & Halabu, 2007), a similar program was designed and tested to enhance the adjustment of preschool-age children exposed to severe domestic violence. In the first study, a community-based intervention program was tested with 181 children ages 6-12 and their mothers exposed to intimate partner violence during the past year. A sequential assignment procedure allocated participants to 3 conditions: child-only intervention, child-plus-mother intervention (CM), and a wait-list comparison. A 2-level hierarchical linear model consisting of repeated observations within individuals and individuals assigned to conditions was used to evaluate the effects of time from baseline to post intervention comparing the 3 conditions and from



Figures 4, 5, and 6. Children's drawings depicting emotions associated with domestic violence



post intervention to 8-month follow-up for both intervention conditions. Outcomes were individual children's externalizing and internalizing behavior problems and attitudes about violence. Of the 3 conditions, CM children showed the greatest improvement over time in externalizing problems and attitudes about violence. There were 79% fewer children with clinical range externalizing scores and 77% fewer children with clinical range internalizing scores from baseline to follow-up for CM children. Children whose participating mothers improved in mental health and parenting skills did better (Graham-Bermann, Howell, Lilly & Devoe, 2011), as did those children who spontaneously disclosed the violence in group therapy (Graham-Bermann, Kulkarni & Kanukollu, 2011). Children's drawings depicting emotions associated with domestic violence are shown in Figures 4, 5, and 6.

The evidence from the RCT suggests that to best reduce problems for young children exposed to intimate partner violence, intervention programs should be designed to provide affordable services, to address the child's exposure to violence and beliefs concerning violence, and work to enhance parenting skills and improve the mother's emotional functioning. However, it is not clear that the same kind of program would work as well for the preschool children and mothers. We are currently testing a modified version of this program with 120 families, with funding by the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan Foundation, and the James A. and Faith Knight Foundation. Our study aims to: 1] compare the efficacy of a group intervention program to a comparison group of mothers and preschool-age children in woman-abusing families, and 2] via post-hoc analysis of risk and protective factors discover which mothers and which children were best served by the program. In this way we can identify whether the intervention proved successful in reducing problem behaviors for the child, changing attitudes toward violence and enhancing the mothers' coping and parenting skill. By identifying the constellation of maternal and child variables that best predict success in each program, the efficacy of these interventions can be then be increased.

Intersections between Research and Policy

Children's exposure to violence is widespread and has serious social and economic consequences with great implications for social policy and clinical practice. The work of this research lab is centered on identifying the ways in which children of different ages are affected by violence exposure, on expanding our theoretical understanding of the effects of violence exposure, and on developing more sophisticated ways of assessing these effects. All of the information that is gleaned through this work is applied in clinical practice through the development and testing of programs designed to assist these families. Research results have been presented in publications, conference presentations, and workshops for community professionals in diverse fields, such as law enforcement, social work, medicine, courts, shelters, and schools. Training manuals and training workshops have also been developed. As a result, the programs for school-age children have now been implemented in 26 states and six countries.

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Working in Public Health in Northern Ireland: Turning Research into Policy and Practice

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As in many countries, the burden of ill health, both physical and mental, is considerable in Northern Ireland (NI). This burden is not shared equally in the population and some sections suffer disproportionately (NISRA, 2010). The Public Health Agency (PHA, www.publichealth.hscni.net) is the major regional organization for health protection and health and social wellbeing improvement. The Agency provides public health support to commissioning and policy development and hosts the Health and Social Care (HSC) Research and Development office. A major aim of the PHA's work is to address the underlying causes of poor health and to reduce health inequalities. This requires working at the level of the individual (e.g. behavior change, signposting services), community/society (e.g. changing climate: increasing acceptability of breastfeeding, reducing stigma of mental health), and service provision (e.g. health care models, specific interventions).

As a multi-disciplinary and multi-professional body, the PHA works at both local and regional levels. To fulfil its mandate, the Agency has strong links with local government, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS), and the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB). Further partners include statutory, community, and voluntary organizations and other government departments (e.g. education). The Agency is structured in three directorates – Public Health, Nursing and Allied Health, and Operations – reflecting its wide remit (please see website for further detail).

Health Intelligence (HI)

Within a framework of evidence-based practice, the Health Intelligence Unit (HIU), located within the Operations directorate, supports the wide-ranging functions of the PHA. The HIU has a core team of 11 members from diverse backgrounds and with broad skill sets in information analysis and interpretation (e.g. routine monitoring data, health indicators, etc.), research and evaluation, and critical appraisal of evidence. The unit's activities fall within three broad areas: determining what works, disseminating information to where it is needed, and conducting research (evaluation and development of programs/projects/campaigns). The following subsections explore these three areas in more depth, using examples from our¹ work that are particularly relevant to child and adolescent development. As such, it reflects only a small window of our work which covers all sections of the population, diverse settings (e.g. schools, prisons), and public health issues in their broadest sense (e.g. lifestyle factors such as smoking, alcohol use, and healthy eating; chronic and acute physical conditions such as obesity and stroke; mental health and suicide; health protection issues including screening;

improving health and wellbeing by maximizing access to services, grants and benefits in rural areas).

Determining what Works: Review and Evaluation

Evidence should provide the basis for implementing interventions. HI staff conduct research to inform program direction, review the evidence for particular approaches or interventions, and evaluate, or advise on evaluating, specific interventions or projects. To fulfil our role we draw on methods and approaches from social science, epidemiological research, and market research.

In 2010, HIU conducted a rapid review of evidence to identify approaches/interventions to prevent teenage pregnancy. Teenage pregnancy has been associated with numerous negative outcomes for the mother, the father, and the child (e.g. lower educational attainment, poor employment status, increased reliance on benefits; Oringanje, Meremikwu, Eko, Esu, Meremikwu, & Ehiri, 2009; Pilgrim, Hernandez Alava, Blank, Payne, Guillaume & Baxter, 2010). With a higher teenage birth rate in NI than in other European countries such as the Netherlands and Germany², there is strong commitment to address this issue. The aim was to identify, critically appraise, collate, and present key findings to a range of stakeholders working in the area of sexual health, highlighting those interventions with strong evidence of effectiveness or ineffectiveness and those where the evidence was limited but promising. The review included studies relating to children and families (including early childhood interventions), young people (education in school and community settings), and vulnerable young people (e.g. looked after children and young people, young people with learning disabilities).

The review found that the majority of studies had been conducted in the United States, highlighting possible limitations to their applicability within the UK/NI context, and an overall lack of UK evidence. Another issue raised was the need for program fidelity in replication studies. The current evidence indicates that abstinence only programs are ineffective in reducing sexual risk behaviors. This finding provides challenges in itself for implementing public health initiatives in NI where the abstinence approach is traditionally advocated. Current evidence promotes a multifaceted approach incorporating education, skills building and contraception promotion; however, further studies are required (Oringanje et al., 2009). While the current evidence is limited, early childhood interventions and youth development programs show potential.

In addition, HI staff also evaluate and review policy and legislation. In 2007, NI introduced a 'smoking ban' for all public places to protect non-smokers and children from the harmful effects of environmental (second-hand) tobacco smoke (ETS). This followed an extensive period of anti-tobacco campaigning which the Health Promotion Agency (a predecessor of the PHA) had continued since 2000. Research with the public in 2005 highlighted strong public support for a ban on smoking in public places. It further highlighted issues that required improved public education/awareness. Thus the focus for public information campaigns (PICs) changed to passive smoking, highlighting its negative health effects (e.g. even when smoking in a



different room from children) which helped build support for the legislation. HI staff designed a full evaluation framework covering all areas affected by this legislation (population groups, hospitality sector, health service). Our own interest focused very much on the effects on those who live with smokers and, in particular, children.

As any intervention can have iatrogenic effects, one major concern was that children's exposure to ETS may increase in their own homes following the introduction of this legislation. Repeat cross-sectional surveys of primary seven pupils (aged 10-11; included the collection of saliva samples to examine cotinine levels) before and one year after the introduction of legislation showed that there was no increase in such exposure. However, children growing up with a mother or both parents smoking were at greatest risk of exposure to ETS at both measurement times (HPA, 2009). One recommendation from this evaluation was to further concentrate efforts on parental smoking to protect children from the detrimental biological (i.e. ETS) and psychosocial impact (e.g. modeling of smoking behavior).

The recent review of the NI breastfeeding strategy (Gossrau-Breen, Gilmore, & MacDonald, 2010) provides another example of policy evaluation. Breastfeeding rates in NI have been lower than in Great Britain (The NHS Information Centre and IFF Research, 2011). Breastfeeding offers many health benefits to mother and child and improves children's psychosocial development (Heikkilä, Sacker, Kelly, Renfrew, & Quigley, 2010; Kramer & Kakuma, 2001; Oddy, Robinson, Kendall, Li, Zubrick, & Stanley, 2011), which makes increasing breastfeeding rates an important public health intervention (WHO & UNICEF, 2003). A consultation with all stakeholders involved in the delivery of the strategy and mothers (service user perspective) was undertaken to demonstrate the progress made. Among the greatest achievements were the introduction of breastfeeding coordinators in most maternity units offering highly specialist support, wide-spread implementation of the UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI), a shift in attitudes towards breastfeeding following public information campaigns, provision of information resources independent from the infant formula industry, and the establishment of the human milk bank (specifically for ill and pre-term babies). In addition, numerous gaps were identified, e.g., resourcing staff training and BFI accreditation in all maternity units, problems in collecting reliable breastfeeding data regionally, the need for flexible working for breastfeeding mothers returning to work and for additional voluntary peer support mothers, particularly in areas of high deprivation. The new strategy, currently being developed, will address these gaps, while focusing specifically on reasons for early cessation of breastfeeding and its prevention.

Disseminating Evidence and Information

As information is a vital resource for the PHA and its partner organizations, HIU works to ensure that it is available and fit for purpose. We work collaboratively with various partners (HSCB, DHSSPS, Centre of Excellence in Queens University Belfast, NISRA, etc.) to disseminate information and develop new or existing sources of information on

public health. We provide information support to PHA public relations and to local health and wellbeing offices on public health topics or projects; for research and evaluation of PICs (please see below), resource development (e.g. websites, leaflets), and key statistical data in the form of 'Core Tables' to accompany the Director of Public Health annual report. A recent development are specific briefings on topics such as breastfeeding, suicide, trends in births, the all island Traveller study, alcohol and life expectancy. These briefings help identify:

- Local areas of greatest need, e.g. for targeting and tailoring breastfeeding support in areas with low breastfeeding rates, increasing provision of maternity services;
- High risk population groups, e.g. trends in young male suicides; and
- Key findings for policy makers, e.g. Irish Travellers: Inequalities and subjectively and objectively experienced exclusion (e.g. mortality, education, access to services).

Research Projects and Campaign Support

At any one point a small number of research projects are conducted, generally focusing on areas where there are gaps in knowledge. For example, in 2009 the PHA conducted the first NI survey into sexual health knowledge and behavior. Its findings (unpublished), combined with the early findings from the EMIS study³, have highlighted a lack of knowledge of how to protect oneself from sexually transmitted infections (STI) during oral and anal intercourse. To date local focus has been on the gay community, yet findings demonstrate the need to re-orientate this to the general population and men who have sex with men (MSM) who do not identify as homosexual. Policy makers and health workers have been encouraged to broaden their focus when targeting sexual health information and services.

HI has a key role in the development and evaluation of any campaign. PICs are used to highlight risks to individuals' health posed by lifestyle factors (e.g. smoking, unprotected sex); provide information to identify symptoms of life threatening illness and how to act (e.g. stroke); and signpost screening, prevention, and intervention services (e.g. vaccination programs, suicide crisis helpline).

Some research projects may directly link to campaign work in that primary research (survey, qualitative) has highlighted the need for a PIC and directed the campaign message and targeting. For example, in response to concern about a growing alcohol problem and alcohol experimentation by young people, secondary analysis of a regular young people's survey highlighted the increasing prevalence of girls drinking and the level of drunkenness among young people aged 11 to 16 (HPA, 2005). This work also indicated that parents were one of the main factors in introducing a good proportion of young people to alcohol. Previous research on adults' drinking patterns (HPA, 2002) highlighted the issue of weekend binge drinking among adults, high levels of consumption in one session, and people drinking regularly in excess of government guidelines.

In an attempt to explore the issue further, qualitative research with parents was undertaken which revealed the lack of knowledge among adults as regards safe drinking levels for both themselves and their children. In particular, most parents held the belief that they were introducing a responsible approach to alcohol use, similar to Mediterranean drinking patterns, to their children while they themselves were part of a Northern European binge drinking culture. These findings led to a series of PICs for adult drinkers to address the adult drinking culture. Work was also conducted in collaboration with partner organizations (e.g. police, community safety and councils) to develop a specific campaign targeting parents, providing advice and highlighting the impact of alcohol use on children and young people. Television advertising was accompanied by a leaflet, *You your child and alcohol*, which supported the *Draft Guidance on the Consumption of Alcohol by Children and Young People* from the Chief Medical Officers of England, Wales and Northern Ireland in 2009.

Campaigns are sometimes indicated as actions within government strategies. In this scenario campaign related research involves two steps: first, an evidence review of what has been done elsewhere and what approaches appear to work best; second, local research into issues to establish the current attitudes or level of knowledge among the public. This helps to focus the campaign and is used in evaluating its impact. The team commissions (i.e. develops briefs and assesses tenders) and manages market research companies in relation to background research, the testing of concepts for campaigns, and again in the post-campaign evaluation. An example of this includes the request for a suicide prevention campaign in 2006. A review of academic literature identified no solid evidence for a specific suicide prevention PIC. Moreover, evidence around media presentations on the issue of suicide highlighted concern around normalizing suicide and suggested that any PIC to tackle the issue should take a longer term and broader mental health approach. Such an approach was taken⁴ despite pressure for a specific suicide prevention campaign.

HI staff was also heavily involved in preparations for the introduction of the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination program in NI. HPV infection is a STI which has been related to almost all cases of cervical cancer (Walboomers, Jacobs, Manos, Bosch, Kummer, et al., 1999), yet it does not require sexual intercourse for transmission. For the vaccine to be most effective it must be administered to adolescent girls before they become sexually active which suggests a window of ages 10-13 to achieve a sufficient level of 'herd immunity' (e.g. among 15-year-olds in NI, 12.1% reported having had sexual intercourse, unpublished). Research in the US and England, scoping the acceptance of a HPV vaccination program, had shown some degree of parental concern about exposing young girls to sexual health messages (Brabin, Roberts, Farzaneh, & Kitchener, 2006, Constantine & Jerman, 2007, Waller, Marlow, & Wardle, 2006). In particular, parents were concerned that receiving the vaccination may lead to earlier initiation of sexual intercourse and promiscuity. Our task was to examine a) the focus which a PIC should take to achieve the highest level of parental support for the vaccination program and b) the knowledge and attitudes of health professionals delivering the vaccination program regarding HPV and sexual health. Health professionals' attitudes were considered

vital in achieving acceptance of the vaccination program among adolescent girls and their parents (Zimet, Liddon, Rosenthal, Lazcano-Ponce, & Allen, 2006). Focus groups with parents indicated that a focus on health protection (i.e. preventing cervical cancer) was preferred over a sexual health message (e.g. STI prevention) and this was applied in the design and development of a TV campaign and information leaflet for adolescent girls and their parents. Findings from the consultation with health professionals were used by DHSSPS to inform a training program and support materials for health care staff.

Conclusion

Working on the intersection between policy and research often demands a cautious approach to highly politicized issues. Anecdotal evidence and political demand can at times be strong competitors to an evidence-based approach. To maintain our standard, we are always looking for further evidence on effective and promising interventions to improve the human experience. With the growing evidence base in developmental science and neuroscience and a shifting political focus on intervening earlier, one area for us to explore in more depth is the area of early childhood interventions. For example, the PHA is currently piloting an approach based on the *Family Nurse Partnership* and the *Roots of Empathy* program – we are looking forward to the evaluation findings.

Notes

1. In his article, "we/our" is used in reference to the HIU and not only to represent the three authors.
2. For comparison rates see: <http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Default.aspx>
3. <http://www.sigmaresearch.org.uk/go.php?/projects/gay/project46/>
4. See the <http://www.mindingyourhead.info/home/campaign>

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Country Focus

Human Development and Psychology in India

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Psychology and Human Development (read also Developmental Psychology) are overlapping disciplines. In India, both disciplines have followed a similar trajectory of western origins, periods of unease arising from dissonance in application to Indian reality, critique of the “received” perspectives, and finally the process of evolving a culturally grounded identity. Although the major trends and pathways of the two disciplines run in tandem comprising overlapping themes of research, psychology has evolved with a more theoretical orientation and firm disciplinary boundaries and contents, whereas human development has been more socially grounded with indistinct boundaries and across-the-board content. Human Development has a broader focus and its hybrid identity and leaning toward social applications distinguish it as an applied interdisciplinary field. While this characteristic frees the field from disciplinary confines thereby allowing it to straddle and span multiple issues, it also leads to identity confusion (Verma, 1988).

The essence of Human Development is well captured by Anandalakshmy in the following observation: “If each of the social science disciplines can be considered a country, we, of the Human Development and Child and Family Studies, have visa papers to enter them all. But our . . . discipline still has no real passport. It has only a virtual passport, with a rainbow hologram on the first page. But since we have a universal visa, valid for perpetuity, we can wander happily through all territories: anthropology, psychology, psychiatry, and sociology, social work, special education, preschool and primary education, communication media and so on. That makes gypsies of us all!” (Anandalakshmy, 2009).

In the early fifties there was a lack of well-established curriculum of Child Development in India. This impelled Indian scholars to draw heavily from academic institutes in the United States, thereby imparting a Western flavor to the field and also contributing to its “patch-work quilt” characteristic (Verma, 1988). In accordance with the shifting contours of curricula in departments of Child Development across India, the nomenclature of the discipline was changed to Human Development and Family Studies (/Family Relations/Childhood Studies). The change strengthened research efforts toward holistic understanding of the child/individual across the life span in the context of family and society.

Compared to human development, the genesis of psychology in India occurred much earlier. Scientific psychology was introduced in India with the establishment of the first laboratory in 1915 in Calcutta University. The contours and contents of the discipline were shaped along the Western paradigm of psychology and this perspective persisted almost until the time of independence. Four distinct phases of evolution can be traced (Sinha, 1986): The first was the pre-independence phase essentially consisting of imitative research, with little original or socially relevant input. The second phase was the post-independence phase of expansion and in consonance with the surge of national pride and consciousness, efforts to link Western psychology to the Indian context began to emerge. Topics popular in the west were imported and attempts were made to relate them to Indian social reality; the nature of research being largely theoretical and academic. The third phase of problem-oriented research steered research attention toward social problems and underscored the need to break away from the dependence on Western concepts and perspectives. The necessity of grounding research in the sociocultural context was more strongly articulated, paving the way for the emergence of a new identity. This trend gave the impetus for the fourth phase: the indigenization phase. Ecological and cultural variables and the importance of family experience were emphasized. Overall the effort to go beyond western theories and evolve conceptual frameworks rooted in Indian social reality was clearly evident.

The following account presents in broad strokes the themes of research addressed across the last fifty years. It draws largely from the decade-by-decade reviews of research in psychology and human development commissioned by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) (Misra, 2009a, 2009b; 2010; 2011; Mitra, 1972; Pandey, 1988, 2000-2004; Pareek, 1980, 1981), supplemented with individual studies as exemplars.

The fifties and sixties era reflected a wide diversity of topics in most sub-disciplines of psychology; however, research essentially mirrored the Western context in terms of topics as well as methodology, thereby assuming a decontextualized character. No broad themes of research addressing problems systematically were evident (Mitra, 1972). Also, there were very few studies with a developmental orientation (Parameswaran, 1972). Through the seventies, studies continued to address a range of topics in thematic areas (superimposed in the review) like culture and personality, developmental processes, cognitive processes, counseling, and therapy. Nevertheless, the issue of the conceptual, methodological and socio-cultural relevance of psychology to real world issues and the lack of interdisciplinary linkages remained (Pareek 1981).

Human development research during the sixties and seventies focused on age-related changes in behavior and development and the processes therein. Notwithstanding certain drawbacks in the nature of research (e.g.,

convenience samples of school and college students and atheoretical research) there emerged a body of work originating in socially relevant issues based on the assumption of continuity and predictability in development and the antecedent-consequent links in lifespan development. Much research in human development concentrated on children, leading to a substantive database in early child development. Research focused on establishing developmental norms of children in India, and normative studies on physical development covering preschool, school and college age groups were conducted. Noteworthy examples are a large-scale study of children in the age range 2 1/2 – 5 years sponsored by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), a longitudinal study on the motor and mental development of infants at the Department of Child Development (now Human Development and Family Studies) at Baroda, and yet another large-scale longitudinal study in New Delhi following 6,000 infants from the prenatal stage to 6 years, focusing on physical growth and health status and cognitive assessment in association with socio-economic status and family size (Anandalakshmy, 1980).

Socialization was another broad theme of research and has remained to this day a primary interest area in human development. Early topics included methods and practices of child care (e.g., feeding, weaning, and toilet training) in different socioeconomic, regional (urban, rural and tribal), and religious groups and relating to independent variables such as family type, mother's employment, and home environment and stimulation. Parental disciplinary techniques and their relation to variables such as aggression, dependence and achievement were also studied. Studies were done in naturalistic settings adopting a model rooted in the social realities of the child's context with parental occupation as the independent variable and competence as the dependent variable (Anandalakshmy, 1980).

During the problem-oriented research phase of the late seventies to mid-eighties, psychology turned its attention to areas of national concern such as poverty, deprivation and inequality, thereby expanding its contours to embrace issues of social change. Applied social psychology highlighted the uniqueness of Indian problems, and areas of research included development and change, family planning and fertility behavior, health behavior and social disadvantage, and poverty and deprivation. In addition, research adopted a more holistic approach to the individual, and the role of social institutions and culture in the development of personality was discussed (Pandey, 1988). The emergence of a socially grounded facet in psychology began to be clearly evident.

Around this time human development research continued to reflect diversity, comprehensiveness and an interdisciplinary orientation. In addition to normative studies on physical development, research also focused on cognitive development. Studies in this area were based on Piagetian ideas of cognitive development, undertaking psychometric measures of intelligence, learning and memory. Cross-cultural research was undertaken and aspects such as tester effects and access to western forms of education as confounding variables in performance were highlighted. The period witnessed an increase in ethnographic and anthropological approaches in the study of child socialization in naturalistic environments. Two significant studies in this

genre are the study on socialization for competence in a community pursuing traditional crafts and a series of studies on the daily life of children from poor rural and urban slum communities highlighting distinct gender differences in goals of socialization (Saraswathi & Dutta, 1988).

During the eighties and early nineties the emphasis in psychological research was on understanding phenomena in their cultural context. A number of studies were conducted on intelligence and cognition highlighting Indian perspectives. For example, the Indian view on intelligence (*buddhi*) was unraveled to highlight its comprehensive meaning encompassing almost all cognitive processes along with motivation and emotion (Tripathi & Babu, 2009). Language development research focused on bilingualism and multilingualism as sociocultural phenomena and examined these in the context of the linguistic diversity of India (Mohanty, Panda, & Misra, 1999). Personality research focused on elucidating Indian perspectives in achievement, intrinsic motivation, psychosocial competence and self-concept, self-disclosure, locus of control, and life events stress (Pandey, 2000-2004).

Human development research focused on the effects of environmental factors on development, particularly the cumulative effects of poverty. In the same vein studies on risk and resilience among children growing up in difficult circumstances and contexts, including street children, children of commercial sex workers and women prisoners, and children in institutions (many of which include social support intervention programs), have been conducted (e.g., Mathur, 1992-1994; Verma, 1999). Studies comparing children from different religions, regions, castes and classes, as well as "normal" children with children with special needs were carried out to highlight group differences; nevertheless, limited attention was paid to the processes influencing development or the dynamic nature of group affiliation (Kaur, Menon & Konantambigi, 2001).

In line with the developmental orientation of the field, many studies were conducted on the effect of individual variables such as age/grade or gender on physical, cognitive and personal-social development, as well as on the relationships between various aspects of development. The theme of socialization gathered further momentum with research tapping different ecocultural contexts. For example, a series of studies were done to describe the play patterns of school-age children in urban, rural and tribal settings (Mohite, 1997). Sensitivity to issues of national relevance was evident from a nationwide study to understand the situation of the Indian girl child (7-18 years) from poorer sections of society, revealing a rather grim picture of gender discrimination (Anandalakshmy, 1994 cited in Kaur et al., 2001).

Gender as a theme of research has largely remained on the periphery of mainstream Indian psychology and has yet to make firm inroads in the discipline. Beginning around the eighties research in psychology and human development has focused on themes like sexuality, marital satisfaction, women's employment, sex stereotypes and sex roles, identity of women, work-family linkages, the psychosocial dynamics of dowry, women's mental health, violence against women, the psychosocial parameters of women's empowerment, reproductive health and psychological well being, and developmental research addressing such themes as midlife and aging, marriage, motherhood and widowhood (Bharat, 2001; Vindhya, 2007).



Health psychology, a new theme, has made a significant contribution in understanding indigenous health beliefs and practices. For example, the concept and causal meaning of illness in indigenous health systems, and the role of yoga and meditation in the treatment of chronic health problems have been examined. Research on mental health has revealed complex Indian classifications comprising interactions between body, mind and environment, presenting a contrast to western taxonomic frameworks (Misra, 2010).

Certain Unique Themes Germane to Human Development

Early childhood education (ECE) or preschool education is a significant theme of research. In addition to individual studies, the NCERT and the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPPCD) have been actively involved in ECE research and training. Studies during the seventies comprised surveys to map preschool services for children, investigations of the views of teachers regarding child development training, studies on curriculum development, and comparisons of different types of preschool programs in terms of their impact on children's cognitive development. With the aim to enhance ECE and the concern for children who were not yet reached, special interventions have been implemented such as readiness programs for first-grade children, the training of preschool teachers, home-based mother education programs, and also the development of context-appropriate educational materials. Numerous studies have been conducted on the effect of preschool experience on child development, particularly in the context of the quality of the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), one of the largest nationwide programs in the world for early childhood care and education (ECCE). Some research linking two significant contexts of socialization, home and school, was also done highlighting the potential discontinuities and their implications (Kaur et al., 2001; Mistry, 1985; Mohite, 1993; Muralidharan & Kaul, 1993).

The family as a context of development was studied to know the relation between familial variables and developmental outcomes. Some examples are linguistic environment and child's language development, parental support and school achievement, maternal employment and child development. The impact of changing family structure and function on child development has also evoked research interest (Kaur et al., 2001). In the nineties, fathering as a theme of research was initiated with a series of studies exploring different facets such as ideology, difficulties and barriers in the fathering process, and developmental outcomes of the fathering experience (e.g., Sriram, 2011).

Starting as early as the sixties human development research made forays into the area of children with special needs. Research topics include inclusive education, intervention programs for infants with cerebral palsy and mental retardation, the role of NGOs in empowerment of families with special children, and best practices for mainstreaming (Sharma, D. 2008; Sharma, 2010). In response to the high failure rate of children in schools, issues of learning disabilities and difficulties have also been addressed (Mistry, 1985; Mohite, 1997). Infancy as a life stage received attention in terms of motor and mental stimulation programs

for infants at risk and caretaker-infant interactions in daily life contexts (Bhargava, 2004).

Research with adolescents began in the form of family life education programs for school-going and out-of-school adolescents (Saraswathi, 1986). With the acknowledgement of cultural diversity in the construction of adolescence, the spread of HIV/AIDS and the burgeoning youth population in India, the stage of adolescence and youth has started to receive increasing attention. Life skills interventions for urban and rural adolescents are implemented. Stemming from the continuing concern about the development of the girl child, research has focused on psychosocial aspects such as the education and identity of the female adolescent (Sharma, 1996). Research has highlighted the positive family experiences of the Indian adolescent, emphasizing the need for family connection in contrast with the disengagement typical in western societies (Kapadia, 2005; Larson, Verma, & Dworkin, 2003). Studies have also focused on peer groups, friendships, and stress and coping, the latter in response to the increasing levels of stress experienced by high school students in the contemporary context (Sharma, D. 2008; Verma & Saraswathi, 2002; Verma, Sharma, & Larson, 2002).

In consonance with the lifespan perspective of the discipline and the growing population of older persons, research on ageing started to receive attention in the early nineties. Studies include documentation of the status of older persons, living arrangements and their implications for socioemotional development, familial roles and care of older persons from the perspectives of the caregivers, views on successful ageing and a large-scale project on the situation of older persons in families where children have migrated—a trend that is increasingly seen in contemporary India (e.g., Dave & Mehta, 2008).

Increasingly, both psychology and human development display a convergence of research interests with the shared intention of contributing to social development, both in terms of understanding the Indian paradigms as well as addressing context-relevant issues. The phase from the early nineties to early 2000 reflects an attempt to integrate knowledge from different areas of specialization to enable more comprehensive understanding of the individual in a real-life context. Scholars are making conscious efforts to interweave integrative perspectives, for example, the integration of biological and ecological approaches. A broad range of research in basic and applied cognitive psychology is being conducted incorporating contributions from neuroscience, cognitive science, and cultural psychology. In tandem with the trend of culturally grounded understanding, attempts are being made to relate cognitive phenomena to indigenous concepts and practices such as yoga and meditation (Misra, 2009a).

Significant theorizing has occurred on the notion of the Indian self-highlighting of its complex, socially embedded character shaped by the psychosocial orientation of interconnectedness and affiliation (in departure from the individuation-separation assumption in the Western contexts) (Chaudhary, 2008; Mishra, Akoijam, & Misra, 2009). In the same vein, studies on morality, values and emotions involving children and adolescents are being carried out with the aim of unearthing cultural meanings (Kapadia & Bhangaokar, 2009; Sharma, D. 2011; Sharma & Chaudhary, 2009). Much work has been done in elucidating Indian



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constructions of the different stages of the life span. The unique features of socialization in the Indian family such as group care and multiple mothering, the influences of social change on family forms and functions and on child development are brought to light (Sharma & Chaudhary, 2009). Contemporary topics such as corruption, health, environmental and related developmental issues, school education problems like curriculum overload and systems of evaluation, media, Internet, acculturation, communalism and assertion of regional identities are also being studied (Mishra, et al., 2009; Singh, 2009).

There is also a shift in the methodology of research. While earlier research predominantly used quantitative approaches (largely tool-driven rather than theory-driven), qualitative research methods or mixed research methods are gradually advancing. The individualistic, universal model of development is giving way to collective and socio cultural processes of development. There is also a shift from the micro level analysis of an individual toward analysis of the individual-in-context, highlighting the role of environmental processes involved in shaping behavior. Scholars are drawing attention to methodological challenges such as resistance to absolutist positions, over-objectification of human nature and the importance of holistic viewpoints to understand the dynamics of development (Misra & Kumar, 2011; Sharma & Chaudhary, 2009).

The expanding boundaries of psychology are reflected in the evolution of sub-branches such as feminist psychology, environmental psychology, critical, social and cultural psychology, and cultural psychoanalysis as well as an expansion of clinical and health psychology to incorporate areas such as the psychology of disabled people and geropsychology (Misra, 2010). The innumerable debates, discussions, and critical self-reflections have resulted in the genesis of a sub-discipline of Indian Psychology, derived from Indian systems of thought and behavior. It is not only well-suited to understanding issues and concerns of the

Indian people but also offers psychological models and theories of panhuman interest (Rao, 2008). It is argued that the model based on Eastern philosophy may well serve as an alternative to the Western model with its capitalistic orientation (Dalal & Misra, 2010).

In general, psychology and human development in contemporary India are characterized by two distinct features: one is the interweaving of culture and indigenous elements in research, and the second is the efforts toward enhancing applications to real world problems. Voices urging interface between non-government organizations (NGOs) and academic scholarship are increasingly heard. Strong reservations are also raised about the teaching methodology of psychology, with recommendations for periodic curriculum workshops, writing workshops, and multi-centric research (Misra & Kumar, 2011).

The trend of eliciting concepts and frameworks rooted in the diverse Indian traditions of knowledge is indeed a positive and much longed-for development. In our euphoria regarding the “emancipation” from years of adopting and adapting western paradigms, however, we must be mindful about sustaining and transferring our criticality to the emerging indigenous paradigms (Kapadia, 1999). Importantly, the space for addressing and understanding diversity and plurality in human development must be reviewed in all applications deriving from traditional outlooks. To strengthen our role as change agents it is especially necessary to interweave gender, class and caste perspectives. A closely related factor is the need to connect indigenous perspectives with contemporary changing contexts, a difficult task considering the complexities of Indian society. Scholars from the “inside” and the “outside” need to be particularly cautious about attributing explanations to broad independent variables (e.g., caste) without reference to how these are playing out in the contemporary context (Anandalakshmy, 2008). Further, to capture the complexities it is imperative to evolve, and even borrow



from other disciplines, concepts and methodological approaches that are suitable to explain change - a sine qua non in the study of human development. Human development and psychology may be well served by the gypsy metaphor à la Anandalakshmy. After all, what better way to navigate the intricacies innate to India?

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Notes from The President

When I wrote my last notes about 8 months ago, Past President Anne Petersen, Ulman Lindenberger and I worked on a proposal for a new "Jacobs-ISSBD Mentored Fellowship Program for Early Career Scholars." This allows for a long-term support contract with Jacobs Foundation which secures funding for several of ISSBD's young scientist activities, including travel grants for ISSBD preconference workshops and the attendance of International Regional Workshops. Two different Early Career Scholarship Programs, one open to applicants from all countries in the world, the second focusing on early career scholars from "currency restricted" countries were conceptualized, with the aim of recruiting doctoral students in two "waves" or cohorts, the first starting in January, 2012.

We were very excited to learn about the positive outcome of our efforts in April, 2011. Gelgia Fetz and Simon Sommer from Jacobs Foundation informed us that the proposal was approved by the Scientific Board of the Foundation. We are very grateful to Gelgia and Simon for their continuing support and valuable advice in this complicated matter. As a main result, a total of 20 early career scientists will be supported by the Jacobs-ISSBD program over a 6-year period. Stipend advertisements were posted at several sites from early June on. The deadline for applications was August 31, 2011. The Early Career Development Committee chaired by Ulman Lindenberger will select the candidates. Ulman will organize the selection process, with administrative support by his coworker Anke Klingebiel. The fellowships will be transferred to the successful applicants' home institutions in all parts of the world, and then will commence in January 2012. It is required that applicants hold, or anticipate receiving very soon a master's degree, diploma or equivalent in one of the relevant fields, and that they plan a doctoral project in developmental research. Half of the fellowships are reserved for students from currency-restricted countries. We very much look forward to starting an exciting new ISSBD-Jacobs early career scientist program very soon. Please check Josafá Cunha's ISSBD E-News from August 2011 for more details regarding the application procedure.

There is also good news about the ISSBD Developmental Country Fellowship program organized by Peter K. Smith. As you may know, 2010 was the first active year of the Developing Country Fellowships scheme. From a strong field of applicants, finally three candidates (Noel Malanda from Kenya, Lauren Wild from South Africa, and Bestern Kaani from Zambia) were selected and offered a Fellowship in January 2010. All three accepted. Each fellow was awarded free registration and a travel/subsistence allowance for the ISSBD conference in Lusaka, July 2010, and they all presented their research in a Poster Workshop. Peter Smith informed me that the progress reports delivered by the Fellows and documenting the work carried out during the first year of the fellowship look very promising, and that continuation for a second year is likely, depending on positive evaluations of the DCF committee.

Possibilities to increase the number of fellowships from three to six were discussed at our EC meeting in Montreal earlier this year. Although a final decision was postponed to the next EC meeting in Edmonton, Canada, July 2012, it looks like we will be able to increase the number of fellowships.

Another important issue discussed at our last EC meeting in Montreal was the next biennial ISSBD meeting in Edmonton, Canada, in July 2012. It was obvious from these discussions that Nancy Galambos, Lisa Strohschein, Jeff Bisanz, and their team are working very hard to prepare an excellent scientific program for the meeting. We have had continuous exchange about important planning steps and decisions since then, and I agree with the conference organizers that the invited program for

ISSBD 2012 is rounding into excellent shape, promising to offer stimulating contributions from developmental scientists in multiple disciplines and from many continents of the globe. The local organizers submitted a number of proposals for grants and other forms of funding, and came up with innovative ideas to secure sponsorships. Given the problem that travelling to Edmonton from continents such as Africa, Asia, and Australia is rather expensive, we hope that the request submitted by the organizers to Star Alliance (one of the largest associations of international airlines) for discounted airline rates will be eventually successful. I look forward to an exciting and truly rewarding scientific meeting in Canada next year. Please contact the ISSBD 2012 website (<http://www.issbd2012.com/>) for more information on the conference.

Please note that ISSBD just announced its call for award nominations to be celebrated at the ISSBD 2012 meeting. More details about the four awards can be found in the August issue of the ISSBD E-News. Toni Antonucci, the chair of our Awards committee, looks forward to receiving many nominations. The deadline for applications is December 31, 2011.

When this report is published, the ISSBD regional workshop on "Risk, Protection, and Resiliency among Children-at risk: Research and Action Plans", organized by Suman Verma and Deepali Sharma and held at the University of Chandigarh, India, will have just taken place. Suman and Deepali did a great job and put a lot of effort into preparing the workshop and mastering various administrative problems, including immense government formalities. They came up with a very attractive program dealing with important topics such as contexts and environments responsible for risky outcomes, successful coping and resilience, and ways of linking research on these issues with policy and practice. Given the high scientific quality of presenters at the workshop, I have no doubt that this event managed to foster international discourse on generally relevant topics and helped to significantly improve early career scientists' knowledge about these issues.

A similar event will take place in Africa later this month. Esther Foluke Akinsola and her team from the University of Lagos, Nigeria, will organize the 9th African regional workshop to be hosted by the department of psychology, University of Lagos, and to be held from November 28-30, 2011. The theme is "Consolidating and extending African early career scholars' research capacity across the life span." Given the fact that currently very few African scholars receive advanced training in research methods that would allow such research to be conducted and effectively disseminated, it seems important to organize an event having experts report on the options regarding this issue. Early career scholars will be trained in existing and innovative methods of planning, executing and managing qualitative and quantitative cross-sectional and longitudinal research in human development across the lifespan. Also, an international journal editor will be invited to provide insight about publication in international journals and tips about what editors look for in a manuscript to make it acceptable for publication.

From the very beginning of my presidency on, the development of international membership has been a major concern. During the last couple of months, the membership secretary Xinyin Chen and I sent out numerous reminder letters to members who had not yet renewed their membership, asking for reasons and advertising the advantages of ISSBD membership. We also contacted our Regional Coordinators in this regard, asking them to intensify membership recruitment strategies and to inform target scientists about the advantages of ISSBD membership. We do hope that these measures will be effective, even though it may still be too early to judge the outcome. It seems

important to note that Nancy Galambos and her team are promoting membership prior to the next ISSBD conference. There is a direct link to JOIN ISSBD on every page of the ISSBD2012 website, reminding registrants that they get a reduced conference registration fee if they become an ISSBD member. Given that we still offer a free membership for the first year, we are confident that our efforts will be successful in the long run. We also hope that the regional workshops in India and Nigeria will help in increasing membership in these countries.

Related to the membership issue, the EC members recently discussed the issue of whether we should offer hard copies of our membership directory. The EC members agreed that we should keep the electronic version, given that Kerry Barner and her team at SAGE have done a very good job with improving the member report on our website (please log into the secure site of our homepage to access these reports). On the other hand, however, several EC members saw a need to provide all those who do not have ready and continuous access to the internet with a hard copy, preferably a PDF document. A decision about this issue will be made soon.

As I already indicated in my last notes, there are plans to reactivate and reorganize the ISSBD archives located in the North Holland Archive at Haarlem, The Netherlands. At our last EC meeting, our Dutch member and IJBD editor proposed the following plan: All previous officers of the Society (presidents, secretaries, treasurers, editors) will be contacted and asked to indicate whether they already sent their materials to the North Holland Archive. All those who still keep relevant materials in their offices will be asked to submit these materials to the archives. New officers will be encouraged to do the same. Marcel will hire an assistant (paid by ISSBD) who should go through the files, categorize the materials, and also identify core documents. According to our estimates, this task should take about a year. We will then try to find suitable ways of electronic archiving of the most important documents. I very much thank Marcel for taking the lead in this business.

A final comment concerns our financial situation. First of all, it seems fair to state that our finances continue to be healthy.

Despite previous financial turbulence in the global market, the finances of the Society are solid, and we were able to make a profit in comparison to last year. No changes were made in the investment portfolios, and we have recovered nearly all of the losses we suffered in 2008/9 as a result of the global banking crisis. We will, however, rethink our investment strategies, and make sure our money brings good returns. Currently the Finance Committee is considering new investment opportunities, with the priority of maintaining a secure financial base for the society. One of our major problems with regard to finances is that neither the President nor the Treasurer can have direct access to our (American) bank accounts because they are not US citizens. Both Ingrid Schoon and I cannot act as authorized persons on our US accounts and are unable to directly influence our investments. To solve this problem, Anne Petersen created an ISSBD financial office in the US during her presidency, which has been managed by Rick Burdick since January 2010. Rick collects monthly statements of all accounts, provides quarterly updates of the accounts, and initiates payments following approval by the Treasurer and the President. Ingrid and I are grateful to Rick for the very good job he has done so far, and also to Anne who made all this possible. Thanks are also due to Liz Susman, chair of our Finance committee, who is willing to work with Rick as an authorized individual on behalf of ISSBD, and to support Rick with regard to carrying out our investment plans. With the new financial office in place, the Society can look forward to the future – being effective and prosperous in its activities.

When I write these notes, it is late August, and most of you are back from a well-deserved summer break. I hope that you are still in a good mood when you read my notes, and as optimistic as I am regarding the future of our Society. My exchanges with ISSBD members and committees continue to be very positive, and I am very impressed with the good spirits shown by all. Thank you for your continued support.

Wolfgang Schneider



Minutes of the ISSBD Executive Committee Meeting

Montreal, Canada 2011

Site: Sheraton Le Centre Sheraton Montreal, 1201 Boulevard Rene-Levesque West • Montreal • Quebec H3B 2L7 • Canada • Phone: (514) 8782000.

Salon Joyce (on Level A, one floor below the Lobby)

Secretary General, Katariina Salmela-Aro

University of Helsinki, Finland, katariina.salmela-aro@helsinki.fi

March 30th, 9.00-17.30

Members of the EC present:

Toni Antonucci (EC Member)
 Xinyin Chen (Membership Secretary)
 Silvia Koller (EC Member)
 Brett Laursen (EC Member)
 Ulman Lindenberger (EC Member)
 Anne C. Petersen (Past-President)
 Katariina Salmela-Aro (Secretary General)
 Wolfgang Schneider (President)
 Ingrid Schoon (Treasurer)
 Robert Serpell (EC Member)

Editors present:

Marcel van Aken (Editor IJBD) 11.30-15.30
 Kerry Barner (SAGE)
 Josafá Cunha (e-news)

Present for specific issues:

Rich Burdick
 Jeff Bisanz (22nd Biennial Meeting)
 Andrew Collins (Publications Committee)

Apologizes, absent:

Margarita Azmitia (Member)
 Jaap Denissen (Young Scholar)
 Márta Fülöp (Coordinator, Hungary workshop)
 Elena Grigorenko (appointed EC member)
 Bame Nsamenang (EC Member)
 Ann Sanson (EC Member)
 Deepali Sharma (Bulletin)
 Peter Smith (Developing Country Fellowship)
 Liz Susman (Finance)
 Karina Weichold (Bulletin)
 Suman Verma (EC Member)
 Liqi Zhu (Appointed EC Member)

I. Opening

By President Wolfgang Schneider

2. Approval of the ISSBD Executive Committee Meetings Minutes in Lusaka, 2010, Secretary Katariina Salmela-Aro

ACTION: Approved the Second Minutes.

3. Report of the President Wolfgang Schneider

The President warmly welcomed all present and in particular thanked Past President Anne Petersen and Kerry Barner from SAGE for their continuous support. He introduced his visions for the next years. First of all, he thinks that the issue of membership should be attended to more closely. It is obvious from membership statistics that some parts of the world are less well represented than others, and that the number of ISSBD members has stagnated for quite a while. He has recruited several new regional coordinators in areas where we definitively need more members such as Valérie Camos from the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, Martá Fülöp from Hungary, several regional coordinators in various parts of Africa, and Elena Grigorenko from Yale University as an EC member.

A further issue related to membership concerns membership fees for regional members. A related issue of major interest is to build capacity for the study of human development in the developing world. In order to fulfill this part of its mission, ISSBD has always been active in organizing regional workshops and conferences. There is good news from Suman Verma and Deepali Sharma who are in the process of organizing an ISSBD regional workshop on "Risk, Protection, and Resilience among Children-at risk: Research and Action Plans", to be held at the University of Chandigarh, India, in early October, 2011. There were some problems regarding financial transfer issues. However, these problems can be overcome by the help of Rick Burdick who serves as our financial expert, and whose support has been extremely important for our Society.

There will be another regional workshop in Africa organized by Esther Foluke Akinsola. The workshop theme will be "Consolidating and Extending African Early Career Scholars' Research Capacity across the Life Span", and will take place at the University of Lagos, Lagos, Nigeria, November 28-30, 2011.

One major task that Anne Petersen, Ulman Lindenberger and the President worked on together with many other EC members during the period from November 2010 until January 2011 concerned a proposal for a new "Jacobs-ISSBD Mentored Fellowship Program for Early Career Scholars". This allows for a long-term support contract with the Foundation which secures funding for several of ISSBD's young scientist activities, including travel grants for ISSBD preconference workshops and the attendance of International Regional Workshops. Two different Early Career Scholarship Programs, one open to applicants from all countries in the world, the second focusing on early career scholars from "currency restricted" countries will be opened up. The aim is to recruit doctoral students in two "waves" or cohorts, the first probably starting in September 2011. If our proposal is successful (NOW WE KNOW THAT IT IS!), a total of 20 young scientists will be supported by the Jacobs-ISSBD program over a 6-year period. EC discussed possible implications of the proposal (we now know the proposal was supported from the JF). A third issue the President raised concerned the early career scholars. As can be seen from Jaap Denissen's Early Career Scholar Status Report, this interest group tackles many problems relevant to the Society. There is now a very promising team of early career scholars (a total of 14 representatives) working on various issues. The President mentioned Josafá Cunha's great engagement as editor of the ISSBD E-newsletter and his merits as Jaap's partner organizing and coordinating early career scholar activities. They all deserve our deepest respect and recognition!

The President pointed out that while we are still raving about fascinating impressions and insights from our biennial meeting in Lusaka, Zambia, last summer, we are now getting ready for the next ISSBD meeting. Nancy Galambos, Jeff Bisanz, Lisa Strohschein, and their team are working very hard to prepare an excellent scientific program for the upcoming meeting in Edmonton, Canada, in the summer of 2012. So there is good reason to look forward to an exciting and truly rewarding scientific meeting in Edmonton next year. There is also good news regarding the ISSBD meeting to be held in Shanghai, China, in 2014. Prof. Biao Sang and his team provided a report on their planning activities which seems very promising. Also, options for 2016 in Norway and Prague were discussed but no proposals have yet been received (MEANWHILE WE ALSO RECEIVED ONE FROM PRAGUE).

Finally, another issue on his agenda concerns archiving historically important developments within our Society. The archiving issue is not new. We have known for some time that Jan de Wit, ISSBD's second president, was instrumental in establishing the ISSBD Archives within the Netherlands Academy of Sciences in Haarlem. Our Dutch member and IJBD editor Marcel van Aken recently located the archives in the "Noord Holland Archief", where a separate branch for scientific archives is established. The responsible person at the Archives told us that ISSBD materials cover about 31 meters, and that nothing is categorized

but still kept in boxes. Unfortunately, nothing is documented, but everything seems in good condition and stored systematically. Marcel came up with the following plan: compile a list of all officers of the Society (president, secretary, treasurer, editor). After completion of this list, all of these people should be approached and asked to indicate whether they sent their materials to Haarlem. If this action is successful, we could assume that the archives are complete. New officers should be encouraged to do the same. One big open issue is what to do with all the documents. Categorizing everything would probably take more than a year of work for an assistant. EC discussed this issue very carefully. It probably would help if we could identify core documents (e.g., minutes of EC meetings) in the boxes and then try to find a way to digitalize these materials. We all owe a lot to Marcel who took the initiative and carefully figured out the situation at the "Archief". Many thanks go to Marcel!

4. Report of the Secretary General Katariina Salmela-Aro

The Secretary's office has been involved in many activities in running the Society. The main activities have been writing the Minutes of the EC 2010 meeting, preparing the 2011 Executive Committee Meeting, preparing agendas for the meetings and organizing the meetings. Second, the Secretary's office has been answering a variety of questions from the members of the Society such as possible proposals for the next Biennial Meetings, the Society's system for on-line voting, being involved in the new e-mail system in the University of Jyväskylä and challenges related to it, disseminating information about the Society to other societies and international volumes, providing the organizers of the Biennial Meetings with information about the Society, and furnishing the President and other officers with information concerning the Society's By-laws, previous decisions and other organizational matters. The Secretary has also arranged the nominations for the EC Candidates for President 2014-2018, EC member candidates (three) 2012-2018 and EC Young Scholar Candidate 2012-2016. Online voting will begin October 1st 2011.

Many thanks for President Wolfgang Schneider, Hely Innanen and Kerry Barner for giving their support.

5. Report of the Membership Secretary Xinyin Chen

Xinyin Chen thanked Kerry, Gloria, Anne, and Wolfgang for their support for various activities related to membership issues, including soliciting regional coordinators, making decisions about membership maintenance and recruitment, and communicating with members. SAGE has been taking care of most ordinary tasks for renewal and retention of members. Chen has been largely dealing with specific cases and working with regional coordinators.

Our current membership (830) is about the same as in 2007 and 2009, but lower than 2008 (1048) when the meeting was held in Germany. There is a reduction in membership in many countries, particularly China, which may be due to



the transition of the regional office. Nevertheless, China remains the country/region with the second largest membership in the society, behind the United States. Significant increases in membership, not surprisingly, were observed for African countries including Cameroon, Kenya, Nigeria, and Zambia. ISSBD has Regional Offices with a Coordinator in each office in China: Liqi Zhu; India: Shagufa Kapadia; Lithuania: Rita Zukauskienė; Russia: Tatiana Ryabova; and Latin America: Silvia Koller. We have also successfully recruited several new coordinators in Africa: Paul Oburu (Kenya), Esther Akinsola (Nigeria), Peter Baguma (Uganda), Jacqueline Jere-Folotiya (Zambia), Mambwe Kasese-Hara (South Africa); Therese Tchombe (Cameroon); and Patricia Mawusi Hogrey (Ghana). In addition, we have recently recruited regional coordinators in France and Switzerland: Valerie Camos, and Hungary: Márta Fülöp. Professor Shagufa Kapadia replaced Suman Verma in India, and Professor Liqi Zhu replaced Huichang Chen in China after the Zambia meeting.

It was discussed that transparency is important. 1) The bank in India requires a variety of documents and procedures, which makes fund transfers practically impossible. Other regional coordinators may experience similar difficulties in the transfer of membership fees to ISSBD. This is now handled by Rick Burdick who serves as our financial expert.

2) Paul Oburu in Kenya sent \$60 of membership fees to ISSBD, with \$17 for the bank service. This was discussed, and it was concluded that it does not make sense to ask regional coordinators to transfer membership fees to ISSBD in such situations, but to keep them in their offices for regional activities. 3) Some scholars from low-income countries would like to join ISSBD. However, there is often no regional coordinator in their country, and it is practically impossible for them to pay directly to ISSBD. This problem was also discussed at some length. Spousal membership was discussed but it was agreed that this is very seldom needed. Free lifetime membership for honorary persons was also discussed.

ACTION: Free lifetime membership for honorary persons was agreed upon. A list of those members should be sent to Kerry at SAGE.

6. Report of the Treasurer Ingrid Schoon on Finances and budget (Rick Burdick)

Ingrid noted that thanks are due to the Institute of Education at the University of London for providing space, infrastructure, and staff support for the work of the acting treasurer. Thanks to Wendy Robins and Clare Sullivan for their assistance in preparing the treasurer's report. As from January 2010 an ISSBD financial office has been created. The office is managed by Rick Burdick (2950 S. State Street, Suite 401; Ann Arbor MI. 48104, 734-926-0620), who collects monthly statements of all accounts, provides quarterly updates of the accounts, and initiates payments following approval by the treasurer and the President. Ingrid wanted to thank Past-President Anne Petersen for all her

help and support in making this new arrangement possible. With the new financial office in place, the society can look forward to the future – being effective and prosperous in its activities.

At the time of this report (March 2011), ISSBD had the following accounts:

Current US Accounts

Keybank, Ann Arbor, MI (Account: 229681004029) Checking
 Keybank, Ann Arbor, MI (Account: 229681004037) Saving
 T. Rowe Price Mutual Fund Account Mutual Fund Portfolio
 (118289732) Investor Number 520471050 Merryll Lynch Wealth Management (WCMA Account nr: 7K5-02029). Previously, until October 2009, this was our Bank of America Investment Services Account (W19-160687).

Current UK Accounts

HSBC Community Account, London (GB43MIDL40060721609564) Checking.

Despite financial turbulence in the global market, the finances of the Society are solid, and we were able to make a profit in comparison to last year. No changes were made in the investment portfolios, and we have recovered nearly all of the losses we made in 2008/9 as a result of the global banking crisis. We must, however, rethink our investment strategies, and make sure our money brings good returns. Currently the Finance Committee is considering new investment opportunities, with the priority of maintaining a secure financial base for the society. We might want to monitor our income, expenditure, and investments more closely during times of economic instability. A financial review and audit would be helpful to gain a better understanding of our financial dealings and options. We have to update our investment strategy to make sure we get better returns. We discussed the monitoring and we will wait for the costs but it was viewed as welcome.

It was agreed to pay the insurance.

Appendix D: Income and Expenditure Overview

	2008	2009	2010
Income			
Membership	57,673.82	313,871.30	26,877.48
Royalties	227,880.57	162,344.01	217,962.10
Investment	-104,510.02	85,693.08	59,911.98
Donations/Grants	22,584.09	3,315.91	152,230.00
Total Income	217,921.46	285,224.30	456,981.56
Expenditure			
Honararia	40,000.00	35,500.00	52,500.00
Reimbursements	9,420.84	2,702.19	8,532.58
Young Scholars	11,553.47	3,315.91	118,043.54
Conferences	76,000.00	51,500.00	
Miscellaneous	12,085.38	3,693.97	15,727.67
Total	149,059.68	95,712.07	194,803.79
Expenditure			
Net movement	68,861.76	189,512.23	262,177.77
Net Funds	1,260,777.77#	1,450,290.00#	1,712,467.77#

Note: # includes UK accounts

APPENDIX E: ISSBD Budget 2011 (in dollars)

Projected Income:	
Membership fees	25,000
Royalties	200,000
Investments	50,000
Donations and Grants	
Jacobs Foundation	50,000
NSF	
Total Income	325,000.00

Projected expenses

Stipends	
President	2,500
Secrgen	2,500
Treasurer	2,500
Membership Secr	2,500
IJBD	34,500
Newsl_1	3,000
Newsl_2	3,000
e-news(Josafá Cunha)	1,000
Stipends total	51,500
Executive Meeting (room hire, refreshments, lunch)	3,000
International Fellowship	7,500
Management Fees	
Financial office	10,000
Audit of accounts	5,000
Miscellaneous (tax return, insurance, etc.)	2,000
Account charges	400
Subtotal management fees	17,400
Workshops and Conferences	
Workshops	40,000
2012 Conference loan	30,000
Subtotal	70,000
Total Expenses	149,400

Projected Net Result 2011 \$ 175,600

ACTION: It was agreed to pay the insurance. It was agreed that an Audit is important and should be carried out soon.

The Treasurer's report was approved.

7. Publications

7.1. Report of the Editor IJBD, Marcel van Aken

Period: Submissions from January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2010.

Original Submissions

Manuscript Type	Number	Percentage
Original manuscripts	162	86.6 %
Methodological manuscripts	20	10.7 %
Reviews	5	2.7 %
Total	187	

The greatest number of submissions came from Canada, Germany and the UK. After receipt of the submissions, the first decision was: Immediate Reject 29.6 %, Major Revision 25.7 %, Minor Revision 5.1 % and Reject 35.2 %. Immediate rejections are handled by the editor and one associate editor. The average number of days to First Decision is 52.97. One special section appeared in 2010: In 34(2), March 2010, there was a special section on Adolescent Romantic Relationships across the Globe, consisting of 6 papers, edited by Inge Seiffge-Krenke and Jennifer Connolly. Five issues contained a Methods and Measures section, edited by Brett Laursen. In 34(3), May 2010, there was a review on Adoption Research, written by Jesús Palacios and David Brodzinsky. The focus of Associate Editors is as follows: Jaap Denissen: Social/personality development; Nathan Fox: Biological aspect of development; Silvia Sörenson: Life-span development, aging; Olivier Pascalis: Development in infancy and preschool; and Susie Lamborn: Adolescence. The EC thanked Marcel and his team and asked them to keep up the good work.

7.2. Report of Publisher, Kerry Barner, SAGE

Kerry Barner gave an excellent report.

SAGE attended the Biennial Meeting in Zambia and was proud to co-sponsor the Welcome Reception in Lusaka. It was very encouraging to see the growth in membership representation in the global south and an increase in the number of regional coordinators around the world. Kerry reported that the member renewal campaign for 2011 is still underway, but we have seen a drop in membership over the past two years. A meeting had been arranged at SRCD to discuss the issue in more detail, but she welcomes suggestions on how to increase membership in the long run. The publication of the e-newsletter was a result of the membership survey in 2009. We would like to thank Josafá Cunha for his fantastic contribution in terms of delivering timely and professional communications to our members. The website continues to develop, and we were pleased to see the successful completion of the first online election. Further developmental work is planned in 2011 to improve the early career scholar resources page, membership data and the bulk email facility. The ISSBD Bulletin continues to flourish under Karina's leadership, and we are very pleased to welcome Deepali Sharma as co-Editor.

IJBD update from SAGE: 2010 was an excellent year for IJBD. International Journal of Behavioral Development articles were downloaded 111,492 times in 2010. The most-downloaded article in 2010 was Jesus Palacios's review article, Adoption research: Trends, topics, outcomes, with 1,230 downloads. With 5,758 downloads, Utrecht University Library was the institution that downloaded International Journal of Behavioral Development's articles most frequently in 2010. The number of ToC alert registrants had reached 5,481 by the end of 2010, a 14% increase over the previous year. The 2009 Impact Factor for the International Journal of Behavioral Development was 1,416, placing the journal at rank 31 out of 59 in Developmental Psychology journals. The 2010 Impact Factor is expected to be released around June 2011. The most highly cited paper published

in the International Journal of Behavioral Development since the beginning of 2002 is T. D. Little et al, 'Disentangling the "whys" from the "whats" of aggressive behaviour', which has been cited 119 times to date. All papers published in the International Journal of Behavioral Development between 2002 and 2005 have been cited.

Business cards were produced for the International Journal of Behavioral Development in 2010. These were for use by the Editor and Associate Editors when networking at conferences and events. All issues were published on time in 2010 with Online First progressing particularly well since its launch in December 2008. In the last six months, we have published 25 articles ahead of print, reducing the backlog of *IJBD* entirely. Marcel van Aken and his team were praised for the impact factor and excellent work on in the *IJBD*.

SAGE's social media strategy aims to increase the visibility of content by ensuring a focus on where the user wants to start the search, establishing a presence there and building on that visibility by encouraging users to engage with the relevant content. SAGE Insight blog and twitter – supports the role of academic publishing in policy making by helping readers keep up-to-date with SAGE articles which discuss key policy issues. Please let Kerry to know if there are articles you're about to publish that they could blog about.

7.3. Report of Bulletin Editors, Karina Weichold and Deepali Sharma (absent)

Deepali Sharma has started as co-editor of the Bulletin. The third person is copy editor Lucy Hahn. This has been a very fruitful and harmonious cooperation. The issue of the ISSBD Bulletin in November 2010 focused on "Mobility, Migration, and Acculturation." As to the ISSBD Bulletin for May 2011, the special section is entitled "Dealing with Stress, Adversities, and Trauma: Resilience Research across Cultures." For the November 2011 issue, the interface between research and practice (and social policy) will be made explicit. Thus, the special section in November will focus on "Intersections between Research and Social Policy." Finally, Bulletin editors wanted to thank E-newsletter editor Josafá Cunha, the President, and SAGE. The EC thanked Karina and Deepali for their great work.

7.4. Report of E-Newsletter Editor, Josafá Cunha

This is the second year of existence for the ISSBD E-Newsletter, which has been used to deliver constant updates to ISSBD members about the activities of the society. Currently the list contains 937 electronic addresses and, on average, 34.2% of that number have opened recent issues. While most of the links included in the e-newsletter are visited by at least one member, the most clicked messages are those related to the 2012 Biennial Meeting and the link to the *IJBD* issue. As noted by Josafá, the support provided by Kerry Barner from SAGE who reviews materials and constantly suggests ways to improve the e-newsletter, and the support of the President have been invaluable.

8. Report of the Young Scientist Representative Jaap Denissen (given by Josafá Cunha)

The EC discussed the survey conducted by the Young Scholars. The main points of the survey were: (1) Networking opportunities are an important reason for early career scholars to join ISSBD. But early career scholars desire more networking: 13% say ISSBD meets that need, whereas 9% say that it does not. (2) It is believed that ISSBD could do more in order to make itself noted, for example, by advertising, and also by letting senior members talk to (graduate) students. We may increase membership this way. (3) Mentoring by senior scholars is seen as an important need: 12% of early career scholars want more of this; e.g., an early career scholar said "assigning us to mentors will help some of us very well." (4) Many early career scholars want more information (e.g., about early career scholar activities, and also about teaching resources) being made available on the website. For example, an early career scholar desired "more resources on the website for us to access and to know what's happening". (5) For the 2012 meeting, early career scholars request the continuation of the workshop program, especially on methodology and writing.

Early Scholar representatives:

Last name	First name	Country	Committee
Bowker	Julie	USA	Facebook
Chen	Bin-Bin	China	Regional Workshop
Cunha	Josafá	Brazil	E-Newsletter
Gayles	Joche	USA	Young Scholars' Corner
Hoglund*	Wendy	Canada	2012 Meeting
Chow*	Angela	Canada/Finland	2012 Meeting
Rasa*	Erentaite	Lithuania	Finance
Mukaída*	Kumiko	Japan	Awards
Zinkeng*	Martina	Cameroon	International Fellowship
Poorthuis	Astrid	Netherlands	Membership
Santo	Jonathan	Canada	Publications
Sharma	Deepali	India	Email Listserve
Solomontos-Kountouri	Olga	Cyprus	Membership
Ozdemir*	Metin	Turkey	Web/Publications

*new early career scholar member

Changing the name and focusing on the definition of "early career scholar" seems important. During the previous EC meeting, some criticisms were voiced about the name "young scholar". This term is not always appropriate since PhD candidates can have any age. To eliminate this bias, the alternative name "early career scholar" was established and is now consistently used. This category is defined according to PhD graduation: Early career scholars are either still working toward a PhD or have obtained one within the previous 7 years. Although more sophisticated definitions are possible (e.g., not having a tenured position yet), they have proven to be difficult to agree on, so Jaap's suggestion is to opt to continue using the <7 years criterion. One important question concerns the acceptance of predoctoral researchers as ISSBD members. This is currently impossible as Article 3 of the ISSBD constitution restricts membership to active researchers with a PhD. It is proposed to change this clause.

In cooperation with Kerry Barner of SAGE, the membership form of ISSBD now includes a question about the acquisition of the PhD, so that members can automatically (using the criterion mentioned under #2) be registered as early career scholars. Jaap has now defined 4 pillars of early career scholar activities: a) representing early career scholars in ISSBD committees, b) organizing workshops, c) distributing information via a newsletter, and d) collecting and disseminating resources for early career scholars. Jaap asked the EC to consider a re-run of the workshops on publishing, professional development and grant writing, think about better timing for the Early career scholar meeting in Edmonton than in Lusaka, and to think carefully about the JF support for Early career scholars. All this was discussed and promised to be taken seriously into account.

ACTIONS: EC discussed issue of the term "young scholar." Now the term is Early Career Scholar, and the related committee is now the Early Career Development Committee (ECDC).

9. Archiving of ISSBD materials, Marcel van Aken (See pages 4 and 5)

ACTION: ISSBD considers using US\$ 20,000 for archiving.

10. Biennial meetings

10.1. Report on the 2010 conference:

Robert Serpell gave a report from the ISSBD 2010 meeting during the meeting. The 21st ISSBD Biennial Meeting 2010 was held at the University of Zambia in Lusaka. It was unique in that it was the first time the ISSBD Biennial Meeting had been held on the African continent and, equally significant, it was the first time that the capital city of Lusaka had held a conference on this scale. The EC thanked Professor Robert Serpell, Jackie Jere-Folotiya and their organizing team for making the Biennial Meeting such a success against the odds. Zambia is country with great natural beauty but some definite challenges. There were problems with the finances in the meeting such as no-shows and gala dinner hiccups. Accordingly only about \$2000 of the original ISSBD loan can be paid back to ISSBD. Despite these problems, the warmth and hospitality of the organizing team beamed through, emphasizing the fact that ISSBD is a truly international organization.

ACTION: The EC approved the report given by Robert Serpell from the ISSBD Lusaka meeting 2010.

10.2. Report on the 2012 conference: Edmonton, Canada: Nancy Galambos (absent) (Jeff Bisanz present)

Greetings from Nancy Galambos. The 2012 upcoming conference now has a new website (www.issbd2012.com) as the URL for the conference website. Thanks go to the technical staff at the University of Alberta's Department of Psychology who planned and designed the website. Several issues were discussed, such as the problem of no-shows. To minimize this problem one author per article needs to register by June 1st. Authors need to be told that they have

to register to get into the program. Jeff asked the EC to help with identifying scholars from the majority world to be invited. It was discussed that the program committees need to be clear regarding the rules concerning the invited speakers, preconference speakers, etc. Anne Petersen volunteered to help in the prescreening of early career scholars.

10.3. Report on the 2014 conference: Shanghai, China: Biao Sang (absent) Proposal for the 23th Biennial Meetings of ISSBD, July 12th -17th, 2014, Shanghai, China.

As emphasized in Biao Sang's report, Shanghai is the Wonderland of China and an excellent place for the ISSBD meeting. The combination of modern technology, historical architecture, and natural elements offers each one visiting Shanghai a fantastic experience of both living and traveling. The organizers expect 1,000 participants for the meeting. The EC was very pleased and excited when given this excellent opportunity and the convincing proposal.

ACTION: The proposal for the 2014 conference in Shanghai, China, was approved.

10.4. Report on the 2016 conference:

The proposal for Prague, Czech Republic, by Dr. Solc and Professor Blatny was announced but did not arrive in time. Approval was postponed to the next meeting. (NOW WE HAVE RECEIVED IT).

11. Workshops

11.1. Chandigarh, India, 2011: Suman Verma (absent)

As previously approved, the "Risk, Protection, and Resilience among Children at-Risk: Research and Action Plans" ISSBD Regional Workshop (South East Asia Region) will take place October 13-15, 2011, in Chandigarh, India. As mentioned in an earlier update, there have been several unforeseen government procedural constraints in accessing foreign funding for organization of the workshop. However, this has now been successfully arranged. The organizers hope to fund about 25 to 30 young scholars from within the country. The EC was very grateful to Suman and Deepali for organizing the workshop.

11.2. Nigeria, Lagos, 2011, Esther Foluke Akinsola (absent)

The 9th African regional workshop will take place from 28th to 30th November, 2011, to be hosted by the department of psychology, University of Lagos, Lagos Nigeria. The theme is "Consolidating and extending African early career scholars research capacity across the life span." Currently very few African scholars receive advanced training in research methods that would allow such research to be conducted and effectively disseminated. In addition, it is rare for African perspectives on human development and African research on developmental



issues to find a home in international publications. This impoverishes international developmental science as well as hindering the development of individual African scholars. Ten (10) experts (7 Africans and 3 international) will be invited to train the early career scholars on existing and innovative methods involved in planning, executing and managing qualitative and quantitative cross-sectional and longitudinal research in human development across the lifespan. In addition to the ten (10) experts, an international journal editor will be invited to provide insight about publication in international journals and tips about what editors look for in a manuscript to make it acceptable for publication. The focus of the workshop will be 60 African early career scholars in the field of human development and development-related areas. Thirty-five (35) of these participants will be from Nigeria, and the rest will come from other areas in Africa.

ACTION: The EC approved \$40,000 for the workshop.

11.3. Proposal for Budapest, Hungary, 2013, Márta Fülöp (absent)

The proposal was discussed briefly, and it looked good to the EC members. However, it will be further discussed in the next EC meeting.

12. Committees

12.1. Nominations, Past President Anne C. Petersen

On behalf of the Nominations Committee (Wolfgang and Anne), Anne Petersen was pleased to forward the slate of candidates willing to be candidates for ISSBD Office. There were 39 nominations for President, 37 for EC Members, and 31 for Early Career Scholar Representative.

President (President-Elect 2012-2014, President 2014-2018, Past-President 2018-2020)

Toni Antonucci
Xinyin Chen
Brett Laursen

Executive Committee (2012-2018, 3 positions)

Nancy Galambos
Elena Grigerenko
Silvia Koller
Bame Nsamengang
Paul Oburu
Julie Robinson
Rita Zukauskiene

Early Career Scholar (2012-2014 plus 2014-2016 as Deputy Rep)

Julie Bowker
Josafá Cunha
Deepali Sharma

12.2. Awards Committee, Toni Antonucci

The senior members of the ISSBD Awards committee have been asked to continue serving on the committee. These are Avi Sagi, University of Haifa, Israel and Jeanette Lawrence, University of Melbourne, Australia. They have both indicated a willingness to do so. A new student member will be named. Depending on the number of nominations, we may wish to expand the committee. Toni intends to begin to advertise and solicit awards in September, 2011, with the deadline for nomination being December 1st. Unless she is overwhelmed with nominations she will send out a reminder in November, 2011. The committee will begin reviewing applications in March with an announcement concerning of the awards by April 1st.

Several EC members thought we should be more active in nominating candidates for the Klaus J. Jacobs Research Prize which awards outstanding scientific contributions of individuals from all disciplines aiming at the improvement of young people's development and perspectives worldwide. The president asked Toni, as chair of the Awards Committee, to help with the nominations, and she agreed. As you may recall, the President sent a message to all EC members and members of the Awards Committee, asking for names of suitable candidates. Several candidates were considered. We decided to nominate Marcel van Aken. The president prepared a first draft of the nomination and asked Toni to review it; she did so and returned it to him for official submission by the March 15th deadline.

As you read this report, please begin to think of eligible candidates for ISSBD awards. For your convenience, Toni has included below a recent announcement about and description of the award categories: ISSBD is pleased to announce its biennial call for award nominations in an effort to recognize the distinguished contributions of Society members. You will find below a description of the four awards to be made at the 2012 Biennial Meetings of ISSBD in Edmonton, Canada.

1) The ISSBD Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award honors a single individual who has made distinguished theoretical or empirical contributions to basic research, student training, and other scholarly endeavors in Behavioral Development.

Evaluations are based on the scientific merit of the individual's work, and the significance of this work for generating new empirical or theoretical areas in the study of Behavioral Development.

2) The ISSBD Distinguished Scientific Award for the Applications of Behavioral Development Theory and Research honors researchers who have made distinguished theoretical or empirical advances in Behavioral Development leading to the understanding or amelioration of important practical problems. The award is for an individual whose work has contributed not only to the science of Behavioral Development, but who has also worked to the benefit of the application of science to society. The individual's contributions may have been made through advocacy, direct service, influencing public policy or education, or through any other routes that enable the science of Behavioral Development to improve the welfare of children and/or adults, and/or families.

3) The ISSBD Award for Distinguished Contributions to the International

Advancement of Research and Theory in Behavioral Development honors distinguished and enduring lifetime contributions to international cooperation and advancement of knowledge. The ISSBD Young Scientist Award recognizes a young scientist who has made a distinguished theoretical contribution to the study of Behavioral Development, has conducted programmatic research of distinction, or has made a distinguished contribution to the dissemination of developmental science. The award is for continued efforts rather than a single outstanding work. Scientists who are within seven years after completion of the doctoral degree are eligible, and for the 2012 award, nominees should have received their degrees in 2005 or later. The Young Scientist Award will also include travel money, free registration and a stipend (\$500.00).

Great job Toni!

12.3. Finance Committee, Liz Susman (absent)

The committee has not been active since July as it seemed prudent to wait until the audit of our funds was completed. The audit is now in process. The recommendations of the Finance Committee to EC, which have not changed substantially from the last meeting, are: 1) Work with the EC in formulating and finalizing a long-term financial policy (e.g. What percent of our resources should be in long-term investments versus cash? What percent of ISSBD's resources should be used for programming?); 2) In the July 2010 report from the Finance Committee the following was recommended: Continue to work with Mr. Burdick to manage the ISSBD account; work with a professional investment entity to invest funds that are currently in low-yield Accounts, or make specific recommendations to the treasurer/responsible person for where to invest current funds. It was discussed that we need to think more carefully about what we want the investments to achieve, so that they benefit our members.

12.4. Membership Committee, Ann Sanson (absent)

There have been no formal meetings of the Committee since July 2010, but Ann had email correspondence with individual committee members. All previous members of the Committee have been asked to remain on the committee to July 2012, and most have accepted. Current membership is: Margarita Azmitia (USA), Charissa Cheah (USA), Serdar Degirmencioglu (Turkey), Carolina Lisboa (Brazil), Paul Oburu (Kenya), Astrid Poorthuis (The Netherlands), Olga Solomontos-Kountouri (Cyprus), and ex officio, Anne Petersen (Past President), Wolfgang Schneider (President), Xinyin Chen (Membership Secretary), and Kerry Barner (SAGE).

The Committee's role, as summarized on the website, is to: "work with the Membership Secretary (Xinyin Chen) on membership recruitment strategies, including better coverage of the lifespan; greater diversity of fields; improved recruitment of human development scholars beyond the US, Canada, and Europe, while retaining these traditional members; and more young scholars. This committee also works with the Membership Secretary to develop policy

about membership fees for regional members; at this point there is a large variation in fee levels, no longer in alignment with the UN categories." At the July 2010 meeting, a motion was passed that membership fees for regional members should be aligned with 2007 World Bank rankings. At the Membership Committee meeting following the Executive Committee meeting, Astrid Poorthuis kindly agreed to revise our earlier work on this, and to provide up-to-date listings of countries in the three 'reduced fees' categories. She has provided this material (the Excel file is attached, and the summary for the website is appended to this report) but due to some ongoing concerns about raising the fees for some members, this has not yet been implemented. Wolfgang Schneider and Jaap Denissen have agreed to come up with a proposal regarding membership fees that may deviate somewhat from World Bank categories but could be seen as a fair compromise by the Executive Committee. Ann Sanson has undertaken to keep the Membership committee apprised of further developments. The committee will work on the following issues in the period to July 2012: 1) develop further strategies for encouraging new members, especially early career researchers and those in developing countries; 2) further strategies for retaining current members; and devise strategies for further expanding the network of regional coordinators and supporting them in increasing membership in their countries or regions.

12.5. International Fellowship Awards, Peter Smith (absent)

2010 was the first active year of the Developing Country Fellowships scheme. The scheme was advertised through the ISSBD website, the ISSBD Newsletter, and through email networks, in 2008-09. By the deadline of end August 2009 we had 20 eligible applications, which were sent to the 6 members of the panel. From a strong field, finally three candidates were selected, and offered a Fellowship, in January 2010. All three accepted. The three successful candidates, their titles, and ISSBD mentors, were (1) Noel Malanda, Maseno University, Kenya. Intervention promotion strategies for HIV/AIDS prevention among the youth in secondary schools in Emuhaya district, Kenya. Mentors: Suman Verma, Anne Petersen. (2) Bestern Kaani, University of Zambia, Zambia. Reading in transparent and opaque orthographies: Effects of English and Chitonga languages on reading outcomes in Zambia. Mentor: Malt Joshi (3) Lauren Gail Wild, University of Cape Town, South Africa. Grandparental involvement and adolescent adjustment in South Africa. Mentor: Peter Smith. Each Fellow was awarded free registration and a travel/subsistence allowance for the ISSBD conference in Lusaka, July 2010; and gave a presentation in a Poster Workshop. The Fellowship then provides a support grant of \$1,500 per annum for the duration of the Fellowship (normally 2 years). Projects are now underway. The possibilities to increase the number of fellowships from three to six was discussed. A decision was postponed until the next meeting.

12.6. Young Scientist Committee, Ulman Lindenberger

Now renamed as Early Career Development Committee. Wolfgang Schneider and Anne Petersen took the initiative



in preparing an application to the Jacobs Foundation, Switzerland, for funding a young scholarship program that aims at recruiting and promoting very promising young scholars from all over the world. There was a lively and productive email exchange among ISSBD EC members on appropriate funding schemes and the degree of structure such a program should provide. The results of these discussions and further comments were incorporated in a final version of the application, which Wolfgang Schneider, Anne Petersen, and Ulman Lindenberger submitted to the Jacobs Foundation on January, 24, 2011. The application consists of three elements: (a) a young scholar program, with sufficient funding for about 20 young scholars over a 6-year period, \$900,000; (b) travel grants for young scholars, \$300,000; (c) regional workshops, \$150,000. The total volume of the application: \$1,350,000, distributed over six years. The Jacobs Foundation is expected to decide on the application by mid April, 2011.

As we know by now, the application was successful, and the dissemination of the program and the selection process will be handled by the Early Career Development Committee. The committee will co-opt suitable ad-hoc reviewers in case its members lack domain knowledge in the field of a promising young applicant. A small number of doctoral students working on topics addressed in the International Max Planck Research School on the Life Course (LIFE; organized by the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in cooperation with the Free University of Berlin, the Humboldt University of Berlin, the University of Michigan, the University of Virginia, and the University of Zurich) may be invited to one or more of the biannual LIFE academies. Dissemination strategies were discussed.

12.7. Publications Committee, Andy Collins

ISSBD publications are in a period of healthy and effective functioning. As is apparent from the reports from the editors and from Kerry Barner, on behalf of SAGE, the flow of manuscripts submitted to IJBD is excellent and usage is better than ever. The Bulletin continues to serve the Society well, and the new e-newsletter has been widely accessed and very well received. The committee extends congratulations and thanks to the editors and associate editors of these publications and their staff members. In the coming year, the committee has begun to formulate an agenda with editors and hopes to do the same with the Executive Committee. New communication possibilities and challenges arise continuously, it seems, and the committee wishes to respond in helpful ways. The Society is fortunate to have the guidance of the superb staff at SAGE in identifying the most potentially useful ways to use the Internet to meet the Society's needs. The chair appreciates the opportunity to serve, and thanks committee members, editors, and SAGE for their contributions.

12.8. ISSBD 2010 Pre-Conference Workshop, Suman Verma (absent).

ISSBD 2012 Pre-Conference Workshop Committee Members

Suman Verma (Chair)
Anne C Petersen

Toni Antonucci
Marcel van Aken
Robert Serpell
Nancy Galambos
Jaap Denissen

Workshop topics beneficial for young scholars from different geographic regions: Focus to be on the most important topics in developmental science for education of young scholars such as: developmental methodology, statistical data analysis, an R-workshop for beginners, scientific writing/grant proposal writing, cross-cultural issues in research.

Workshop organizers:

Invite senior scholars who are best suited to lead the topics for such educational sessions. The presenters, in addition to being credible scientists, need to be effective teachers as well. Planning for two to three pre-conference workshops with an average participation by 30 young scholars in each.

Writing of grant proposals:

Our aim is to fund about 80 to 90 young scholars for the pre-conference workshops. Toni Antonucci will be taking the lead in writing the grant proposals to the National Science Foundation, and APA. Nancy Galambos will be tapping into additional funding opportunities for early career scholars such as the China Institute, which "works with various partners at the U of A and around the world to organize academic conferences, forums and workshops regularly." We welcome input on other funding sources that will facilitate early career scholars to attend the workshops and the meetings.

Selection criteria for young scholars. Eligibility:

An early-career scholar is defined as someone with a PhD degree that is younger than 7 years. This definition includes PhD students as well. The most practical way to assess eligibility is to include a question about the highest degree in the abstract submission system, together with the year of obtaining it. Those who select "Masters" or "Bachelor" degree count as early career scholar, as well as those who select PhD and indicate they have obtained it in 2004 or earlier. To apply for funding, the scholars are required to submit their request along with their CV, a letter of reference from a mentor focusing on their research, and any presentations they submitted. The EC recommended open sign-ups for the workshops. Scholars applying for funding as well as those who do not need funding are eligible to attend the workshops.

Submissions:

If potential early career scholars are part of a symposium, it gets complicated because the eligibility question(s) would have to be answered for every author in that symposium. This could slow down the submission process and possibly be frustrating for Chairs – since the symposium Chair is going to be responsible for entering all information and abstracts. The same concern would apply to poster workshops. Given the above-mentioned concerns, do we want to be doing expedited reviews on symposia in which most authors are probably not early career scholars? Two questions that we need to deliberate upon: (1) are early career scholars doing posters only, or is it possible that they could be submitting as part of a symposium?; (2) do early career scholars have to be first author on a presentation or is it possible they could be second or later authors?

Review Process: It seems necessary to develop a mechanism by which one can integrate the two screening processes: (1) evaluations of abstracts submitted for inclusion in the scientific program of the congress and (2) rank ordering those applying for 237 travel grants. The criteria for these two processes are logically linked but not identical. For instance, an early career scholar based at a low-resource institution may need a bit more assistance (which ideally can be provided within the framework of the abstract review process in formulating a satisfactory proposal, but may be ranked higher than one based at a higher-resourced institution in deserving the award of a travel grant (since doing so may advance ISSBD's agenda of broadening participation in its affairs to include more budding scholars in the less resourced regions of the world). Alternatively, one could plan a time-line that advertises an earlier deadline for submitting proposals (a) for those wishing to be considered for a travel grant, and (b) for allowing a generous window of time for the evaluation of proposals before the travel grant committee starts its work. According to the abstract manager Ruedi, who is designing the conference abstract review system, "we can add any number of questions/checkboxes and program it so that the abstract gets a tag (or not) depending on the outcome of these questions/checkboxes. We could separate these on the administrative portion into a separate export for expedited review etc." According to Nancy Galambos, "if we had a series of questions or a question that would cover all the criteria for being a potential early career scholar who

could be eligible and apply for workshop funding – then the abstract would get flagged for expedited review. Perhaps the expedited reviews could be done by our committee (or a differently constituted committee with some of us on it), separate from the regular review panels. I'm suggesting moving away from the regular review panels because they are going to have a lot of work to do and, with a separate committee to handle early career scholars, we could then allow revision of their abstracts (if necessary) – something we don't actually want to build into the system for everyone else."

Jaap was included on this committee.

13. No other issues raised

14. Next meeting, ISSBD Edmonton, on the day of the beginning of the conference, July 8th, 2012. Motion: It was agreed that it will be a half-day meeting.

Secretary General
Katariina Salmela-Aro

News

News from the Early Career Representative

Jaap Denissen

Humboldt-University, Berlin, Germany
E-mail: jjadenissen@gmail.com

A number of Early Career Scholar activities took place in the previous months. For example, a special section for Early Career Scholars was added to the <http://www.issbd.org/> website. This section describes what Early Career Scholars are and what ISSBD does for them. It also includes a list of the current team of Early Career Scholar representatives serving on the various ISSBD committees. Another activity is that ISSBD has begun to register members as Early Career Scholars if they are either currently pursuing their PhD or have obtained their PhD within the past 7 years. ISSBD members who have not yet registered as Early Career Scholars are encouraged to do so, which would allow a more targeted dissemination of news and information that are especially relevant for this group. Finally, Josafá Cunha conducted a survey of Early Career Scholars and found that many members of this group expressed the need for more extensive networking and mentoring opportunities within ISSBD. Ideas and suggestions to achieve this goal are highly welcome and can be sent to: jjadenissen@gmail.com

One Year and Counting: ISSBD 2012 (July 8 - 12)

Lisa Strohschein

University of Alberta, Canada
E-mail: lisa.strohschein@ualberta.ca

Since 2009 when Edmonton, Alberta, Canada was announced as the site of ISSBD 2012, conference organizers Nancy Galambos (Chair, ISSBD 2012) and Jeff Bisanz (Vice-Chair), both from the Department of Psychology at the University of Alberta, and Lisa Strohschein (Vice-Chair) from the Department of Sociology, have been busy planning. They are getting help from the 11-person Local Organizing Committee (including faculty members from Psychology, Human Ecology, Physical Education and Recreation, Speech Pathology and Audiology, and Educational Psychology) and the 20-member National Advisory Committee. Expert technical assistance is provided by Lauren McCoy (webmaster) and Lisa Smithson (graduate student) from Psychology and Barb Robinson from University of Alberta's Conference Services.

"We are thrilled that the world's leading scholars on human development will be coming to Edmonton," says Nancy Galambos. The conference features keynote speakers

Michael Meaney, a Canadian researcher conducting groundbreaking studies on epigenetics and development, as well as Jeanne Brooks-Gunn (USA), Kaarin Anstey (Australia), Marinus van IJzendoorn (Netherlands) and Ellen Bialystok (Canada). In addition, the conference will feature 11 invited addresses by speakers from Chile, China, Finland, Germany, Israel, Japan, Turkey, and USA. Other conference highlights include invited symposia, a banquet to be held at historic Fort Edmonton Park and a reception hosted by SAGE.

July is an ideal time to visit Edmonton. The city (with a metro population of over 1 million) receives approximately 17 hours of light a day in the summer and is one of Canada's sunniest cities. The conference will coincide with the International Street Performers festival and conference-goers will also have their choice of a wide range of local and regional tour packages.

One important aspect of ISSBD 2012 will be the workshops for Early Career Scholars and the pre-conference workshops. Lisa Strohschein notes that ISSBD takes seriously its mandate to mentor the next generation of researchers. "ISSBD not only brings together researchers from around the world, with a specific aim to reach scholars who work in financially disadvantaged regions, but it also provides numerous opportunities for early career scholars to meet with experts and senior researchers."

Researchers who are interested in submitting a proposal for one of the 19 different topic areas are welcome to do so. The topics are diverse and cover the entire spectrum of human development (infancy to late life) from the brain (and other biological processes) to society (cultural and social processes). Proposals will be accepted until the deadline of September 30th.

In the meantime, the conference organizers are committed to making the conference a success. "We are proud of our city and the University of Alberta" says Jeff Bisanz "and we can't wait to showcase what we have to the rest of the world."

More information on the conference and how to submit a proposal can be found at www.issbd2012.com.



Pictured from left to right: Barb Robinson, Jeff Bisanz, Nancy Galambos, Lisa Strohschein and Lisa Smithson.

ISSBD Awards

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ISSBD is pleased to announce its biennial call for award nominations in an effort to recognize the distinguished contributions of Society members. You will find below a description of the four awards to be made at the 2012 Biennial Meetings of ISSBD in Edmonton, Canada.

- 1) The ISSBD Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award honors a single individual who has made distinguished theoretical or empirical contributions to basic research, student training, and other scholarly endeavors in Behavioral Development. Evaluations are based on the scientific merit of the individual's work, and the significance of this work for generating new empirical or theoretical areas in the study of Behavioral Development.
- 2) The ISSBD Distinguished Scientific Award for the Applications of Behavioral Development Theory and Research honors researchers who have made distinguished theoretical or empirical advances in Behavioral Development leading to the understanding or amelioration of important practical problems. The award is for an individual whose work has contributed not only to the science of Behavioral Development, but who has also worked to the benefit of the application of science to society. The individual's contributions may have been made through advocacy, direct service, influencing public policy or education, or through any other routes that enable the science of Behavioral Development to improve the welfare of children and/or adults, and/or families.
- 3) The ISSBD Award for Distinguished Contributions to the International Advancement of Research and Theory in Behavioral Development honors distinguished and enduring lifetime contributions to international cooperation and advancement of knowledge. For these three awards, the nominee should be an ISSBD member. Nominators should include in the letter of nomination a statement addressing the following questions:

1. What are the general themes of the nominee's research program?
 2. What important research findings are attributed to the nominee?
 3. To what extent have the nominee's theoretical contributions generated research in the field?
 4. What has been the significant and enduring influence of the nominee's research?
 5. What influence has the nominee had on students and others in the same field of study? If possible, please identify the nominee's former (and current, if relevant) graduate students and post-doctoral fellows. Nominations must include a letter of nomination; a current curriculum vita; up to five representative reprints; and the names, addresses, and e-mail addresses of several scientists familiar with the nominee's research and theoretical writings.
- 4) The ISSBD Young Scientist Award recognizes a young scientist who has made a distinguished theoretical contribution to the study of Behavioral Development, has conducted programmatic research of distinction, or has made a distinguished contribution to the dissemination of developmental science. The award is for continued efforts rather than a single outstanding work. Scientists who are within seven years of completion of the doctoral degree are eligible, and for the 2012 award, nominees should have received their degrees in 2007 or later. The Young Scientist Award will include also travel money, free registration and a stipend (\$500.00).

For this award, nominations must include a letter of nomination; a current curriculum vita; up to five representative reprints; and the names, addresses, and e-mail addresses of several scientists familiar with the nominee's research and theoretical writings.

Members of the Awards Committee are excluded as possible nominees.

The President and President-Elect of ISSBD are ineligible for nomination.

Nominations are being accepted until December 1st and should be sent by e-mail to: Toni C. Antonucci: tca@umich.edu



MAJOR CONFERENCES OF INTEREST

2012 March 8–10

Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research on Adolescence

Location: Vancouver, Canada

Website: www.s-r-a.org

2012 August 29–September 1

Biennial Conference of the European Association for Research on Adolescence

Location: Island of Spetses, Greece

Website: www.eara2012.gr

2012 July 8–12

Biennial Meeting of the International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development

Location: Edmonton, Canada

Website: www.issbd2012.com

2012 July 22–27

30th International Congress of Psychology (ICP)

Location: Cape Town, South Africa

Website: www.icp2012.com

