

JULY NEWSLETTER

Warm winter greetings to all our members and any guests who are now on our mailing list.

We will not be having a meeting this month, but we thought we would send out a newsletter anyway, as this seemed to be a good opportunity to reflect on the year so far, and outline some of the other speakers we have to look forward to in the second half of 2017.

Our first meeting of the year was held in February. We heard from Ros Vroom, a neonatal intensive care nurse and midwife, about the “Bringing Baby Home” program. She highlighted the importance of a stable and happy parental relationship for the well-being of the infant, as well as the loving involvement of the father. Both of which are sadly lacking in many homes in this country. Ros is actually moving back to Cape Town this month and will be working towards changing this situation through research and training programs. We wish her well and look forward to having her at some of our meetings. Please email Caroline if you wish to get in touch with Ros about this work.

At our March meeting, Nina Mensing (family and divorce mediator) gave us an enlightening look at the issue of divorce and separation and the benefits of mediation for young children caught in the middle of this often stormy process.

In April, Joan Raphael-Leff returned to speak to us, this time about all the factors that influence a woman’s experience of motherhood during the first 1000 days. Thanks to all those who attended this meeting for a particularly rich group discussion.

Professor Mark Tomlinson presented his recent research to us in May. He and his team have identified some interesting differences between the ways policy-makers, experts and members of the public understand early childhood development. We look forward to the next instalment in a few years’ time when they have hopefully been able to find ways to bridge these gaps to the benefit of babies and young children in this country.

And finally, special thanks to Meg Faure and those of our members who delayed their long weekend travel plans to join us for the June meeting. Meg has been busy trying to better understand infant self-regulation. It was fascinating to hear how this essential skill develops in babies and young children. I personally enjoyed hearing how she was even able to help her teenage son with self-regulation and hope she writes “Teenage Sense” before my own children reach that stage!

It has so far been a year of fascinating presentations by a range of experts in the infant mental health field, and of valuable discussions amongst our members, which we, as a committee, have particularly enjoyed. It has also been wonderful to welcome so many visitors to our meetings and we hope they will return.

The rest of 2017 is set to be equally interesting. Professor Barak Morgan will be talking to us in August about interdisciplinary developmental neuroscience – the influence of poverty on cognitive and behavioural development. In September we will hear from Judy Davies about Baby Watching, particularly in terms of the difficulties and ethical issues involved. Our final confirmed speaker for the year is Dr Karen Kaplan-Solms, who will be presenting in October. So there is plenty more to look forward to.

Finally, please see the attachment from Bea Wirz about the upcoming IPCP Child Development Course, which starts in August.

Our next meeting will take place at 7:30pm on Thursday 17th August at the Out-Patient Unit of the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (46 Sawkins Rd, Rondebosch). Please feel free to forward this newsletter on to any friends or colleagues who may be interested. Visitors are very welcome to attend (R50 visitors’ fee payable in cash at the meeting).

We wish those of you taking a holiday over July a warm and restful time, and look forward to seeing you all again in August.

Warm wishes,

Caroline and the WCAIMH Committee

Caroline (chairperson) caroline.sullivan20@gmail.com  
Jacqui (secretary) jcouper@lantic.net  
Barbara (treasurer) b.kantor@iafrica.com