



**Western Cape Association  
for Infant Mental Health**



## Last month

Greetings to all members and friends of WCAIMH.

We are very thankful to our June speaker, **Liz Senior**, who presented on Baby stimulation, interaction and the concept of serve and return. It was an interesting presentation that incorporated some of her work from the Clamber Club and how the current knowledge from neuroscience can be incorporated and encouraged in parent-infant dyads in a relatable and practical way. Three lucky attendees were the recipients of their very own complete set of educational DVDs on baby stimulation from birth to 9 months - we want to extend our heartfelt appreciation to Liz for her generosity.

## July speaker

Our upcoming talk on **Thursday 18 July** will be jointly presented by visiting clinical psychologists from the UK, **Dr. Meryl Forse** and **Dr. Rosie Dobel-Ober** who will be presenting on **Therapeutic Re-parenting**. Their talk will aim to provide an understanding of the TR-UST training course, how it was developed and how it informs their work at Gateway Psychology Ltd., Stoke-on-Trent, UK.

The TR-UST course is aimed at adopters, foster carers and residential caregivers and aims to provide participants with a better understanding of among other things, Attachment theory and it's role in child development, How attachment relationships develop between child and carer, The effect of early experiences on brain development, What can go wrong with attachment and it's effect on the child's behaviour and development, How to nurture positive attachments in children with attachment difficulties and How to manage challenging behaviour.

Their talk will focus on how the TR-UST course applies to children aged five and under. They will also consider the in-utero and early years effects of early adversity on the developing brain and the importance of developing strong and secure attachment, both in utero and in the first few years of life - ideally as a preventative measure.

**Dr. Forse** is the Clinical Director at Gateway Psychology and she has many years' experience in working with children, young people and their families. She has specialist knowledge and expertise in assessment and intervention for developmental trauma and provides teaching at Staffordschire University.

**Dr. Dobel-Ober** works as a highly specialist clinical psychologist at Gateway Psychology and has expertise in working with a wide range of complex difficulties, including mental health difficulties, neurodevelopmental conditions, attachment-related difficulties and learning disabilities. She has specialist knowledge of autism spectrum disorder assessment and intervention.

# WAIMH News

The upcoming WAIMH conference will be taking place in **Brisbane, Australia** from **7 to 11 June 2020** and the theme will be **Creating stories in Infant Mental Health: research, recovery and regeneration**. We encourage anyone interested in attending to visit their website <http://waimh2020.org/> and to consider submitting an abstract – the call is currently open. There are reduced registration fees for students and individuals from LMI countries. It would be wonderful if some of our WCAIMH members could attend!

There has recently been an interesting debate around the topic of culture bias in the field of attachment and early childhood, with Gaskins and colleagues challenging WAIMH's Position Paper on the [Rights of the Infant](#). WAIMH president, Kai von Klitzing responded in the first 2019 Edition of [Perspectives on Infant Mental Health](#) by making a case for cultural sensitivity rather than cultural relativism. He highlighted the importance of acknowledging Infant Rights, but notes that they need to be considered within the current knowledge base of developmental science and that variation that may depend on cultural context. Prof. Von Klitzing argued against cultural relativistic attitudes, but supports cultural sensitivity in the implementation of the rights of infants and children.

Suzanne Gaskins and Heidi Keller then responded to Prof. Von Klitzing in a paper titled [Learning about Children by Listening to Others and Thinking about Ourselves](#). In this article, they acknowledge that there may be differences between the perspectives of an international organization such as WAIMH and local, parental understandings. The authors pose the question “Who should decide what is best for children growing up in a culturally specific context when these two sets of commitments conflict?”. This debate appears to have definite relevance to our South African context.

# Membership

WCAIMH membership fee is currently **R375**

Banking information is as follows:

Account name: WCAIMH Standard Bank, Rondebosch

Account number: 274916401, Branch code: 051001

Please use your **name** and **surname** as a reference and email **proof of payment** to our treasurer, Barbara ([b.kantor@iafrica.com](mailto:b.kantor@iafrica.com)).

Please also consider joining the **World Association (WAIMH)** of which WCAIMH is an affiliate. Details to join can be found at [https://waimh.org/general/register\\_member\\_type.asp](https://waimh.org/general/register_member_type.asp)

# Making contact

As always, we look forward to seeing you all again from **7:00 for 7:30pm on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> of July** at the Outpatient Unit of the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (DCAP), situated in 46 Sawkins Rd, Rondebosch, entrance in Liesbeek Rd. **Visitors** are always welcome and can pay a fee of R60 (in an envelope marked with your name please). We also encourage you to forward your name and car registration details to Salisha Maharaj for access to parking within the security area.

We always welcome any suggestions and feedback, please get in touch with us via **email** or via our **Facebook** page.

[www.infantmentalhealth.co.za](http://www.infantmentalhealth.co.za)

