



Western Cape Association  
for Infant Mental Health



## Last month

Greetings to all members and friends of WCAIMH!

Our speakers last month, **Brenda Cowley** and **Prof. Astrid Berg** shared with us the outcomes and experiences from Brenda's study on the quality of father-infant interaction and their involvement with Theatre for Babies. This novel approach provides fathers with the opportunity to experience and discover their infants in a playful setting. A video providing background to the Theatre and the infant mental health context as it relates to the performance, was also shown.

Our discussion touched on the importance of fathers' robust play and how it assists infants in becoming accustomed to being 'surprised' and how this experience enhances infant development in a different way than the traditionally more nurturing interactions with female caregivers. Through their participation in the study, fathers reflected on their appreciation for the experience as it also provided those who traditionally has not been as involved in the care of their infants, a valuable opportunity to go beyond their accustomed father roles. It was indeed a very enjoyable and informative talk!

## November meeting

We would like to invite all members and interested parties to attend our **Annual General Meeting (AGM)** on **Thursday 21 November**, which will also be our last meeting for 2019. This is an opportunity to reflect on the year that has passed and also for discussion of plans for WCAIMH for 2020.

An important topic for discussion is the proposed creation of a **National Association for Infant Mental Health (SA-AIMH)**, of which WCAIMH and our Gauteng counterpart (GAIMH) would be subsidiary bodies. It is proposed that WCAIMH will still retain its position as a representative association without being wholly subsumed by the national body.

The two main reasons for the establishment of SA-AIMH is to:

- 1) establish a national body for **advocacy for infant mental health** in SA and
- 2) to **include** and **support** individuals located **outside** of the Western Cape or Gauteng.

In order to apply for recognition and affiliation to the World Association (WAIMH), a national **constitution** would need to be adopted, which is one of the **decisions** for the WCAIMH AGM. We would like to encourage all WCAIMH members to attend the upcoming AGM so that we can have a robust discussion about the proposal. The WCAIMH constitution is available on request.

## Perspectives special Issue: ACES and IMH

Look out for upcoming special edition in *Perspectives* which focuses on **Adverse Childhood Events and Infant Mental Health**. Perspectives is a free online journal hosted by the World Association of Infant Mental Health. It is an excellent source of information, journal articles and news from around the world pertaining to Infant Mental Health.

Salisha Maharaj has been appointed as an Intern on the Perspectives Editorial Team and has made a contribution to the special edition on ACES and IMH by putting together an online resource list. Holding in mind that subscriptions to journals and reading through academic literature is often a costly and time-consuming exercise, her goal was to find resources that can be accessed for free and provide reliable content as evidenced by references to salient research in the field.

Some of these resources are:

- TED Talk on ACEs by Dr. Nadine Burke-Harris entitled “How Childhood Trauma Affects Health across a Lifetime”
- CDC website - Adverse Childhood Experiences Presentation Graphics. Includes a snapshot of the prevalence of ACEs by Category for CDC-Kaiser ACE Study Participants, Waves 1 and Waves 2
- WHO page on Violence and Injury Prevention that include the ACEs International Questionnaire

Look out for the Special Edition coming up later this month.

Visit the Perspectives website on <https://perspectives.waimh.org/>

## Other agenda points for AGM

- Discussion of our budget and proposed funding for 2020
- Constitutional court ruling and ways of supporting parents in finding alternative discipline practices
- WCAIMH committee position for **Social media and website development**
- **Feedback** from the recent SAPC meeting

## Making contact

We look forward to seeing you all at our last meeting for the year from **7:00 for 7:30pm on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> of November** 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.

There is a **vacancy** on the **WCAIMH committee** for **Social media and website development**. If anyone is interested in taking up this position, please **email** Juané Voges.

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

