



IMHAANZ

INFANT MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND



IMHAANZ Website

Have you visited our website?

Visit www.imhaanz.org.nz and find out about the purpose of the Infant Mental Health Association of Aotearoa New Zealand, news and events related to infant mental health and contact information for the IMHAANZ committee and the regional coordinators.

Membership

We welcome new members.

IMHAANZ membership is open to practitioners and policy makers working with infants and their families.

IMHAANZ membership will keep you informed of relevant infant mental health information, training and research and the IMHAANZ Newsletter.

To become a member, download the membership form from www.imhaanz.org.nz/membership

PRESIDENTS WELCOME

On behalf of the IMHAANZ Executive, welcome to the IMHAANZ April-Easter newsletter.

Since our last newsletter our thoughts and support remain with our colleagues, friends and family in Christchurch. As part of our ongoing response, Executive members have written a second letter to parents with young children, this time focusing on sleep. This letter is enclosed in this issue.

We are also mindful of family and colleagues in Japan as their own environmental tragedy unfolds and impacts on every aspect of everyday life.

In addition there are three events coming up to keep an eye out for. First, in May, a number of IMHAANZ members will be heading to Perth to both present papers and participate in pre-conference training and the conference itself. We wish all those attending safe travel and a wonderful time enjoying what is always a wonderful rich feast of a conference. We will feature this conference in the next newsletter.

Second, is our own national conference being planned for February 2012. This is going to be an awesome event so please note the dates below and begin the funding seeking process. As an Executive we are well underway into planning this conference and we

already have three confirmed international speakers who will provide workshops as well as keynote presentations. In addition this is also an opportunity to celebrate our own work and efforts. To this end, information regarding submitting abstracts will be made available to you soon. We encourage you and or your team, to submit an abstract about your work.

Third, the WAIMH congress next year is to be held in South Africa, April 17 – 21. If you are thinking about presenting a paper here, please note that the registration date for abstracts opens on 1 May 2011 and closes September, 15, 2011.

Finally, Dr Kimberly Powell, (IMHAANZ, Past President) forwarded the following link for our review: To connect by live Webcast or Ontario Telemedicine Network (OTN) Videoconferencing. CONTACT imp.mail@sickkids.ca for webcast login information, or forward the completed OTN Videoconferencing Request Form (link to form) to IMHP by fax or email. Further information on OTN Videoconferencing and webcasting can be found at: <http://www.sickkids.ca/IMP/professional-education/Tele-Education/Tele-Education.html>

Warmest regards to you each,

MAREE FOLEY
President IMHAANZ

NATIONAL COMMITTEE

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Safe Sleep in Christchurch Introducing the Pepi-pod

For further information visit:

www.changeforourchildren.co.nz/safe_start_programme/pepi-pod

The aftermath of the Christchurch earthquake makes it more difficult for parents to provide safe sleeping environments for young vulnerable babies.

Aftershocks, displaced living circumstances, loss of possessions, fear and grief all contribute. Change for Our Children is providing 1000 pepi-pods to help parents protect their precious babies during this disruptive time.

The pepi-pod is a safe sleep option for babies more vulnerable to accidental suffocation and sudden infant death. Like its sister, the wahakura, the purpose of the pepi-pod is to enable babies to be close to a parent AND safe when sleeping in, or on, an adult bed, on a couch or away from home.

Who are our more vulnerable babies?

Babies born prematurely, of low birth weight, not breast fed, or babies exposed to smoking during pregnancy, are all more vulnerable to accidental suffocation in their first six months, and also to sudden infant death. Safe sleep conditions are critical for this group.

The Wahakura

The pepi pod is a sister to other safe sleep options such as the wahakura and waikawa, both hand woven from flax. The pepi-pod offers a low-cost, readily available option, that complements the wahakura.

The wahakura has been promoted in Maori communities for some time as a solution to the concerning smoking+bedsharing risk. It comes with clear rules of use, as does the pepi-pod.

Wahakura is a culturally rich concept that means 'holder of what is precious'. It is hand-woven from harekeke, or flax, and being hand-crafted, supply is limited. Not all babies who need extra protection have access to the protection of wahakura and its rules. Pepi-pods can fill this gap.

For more information about wahakura go to www.maorisids.org.nz.

Christchurch babies need your help

This project offers support for parents and protection for their babies.

The pepi-pod project is a community-wide response to the urgent need to protect an estimated 1000 earthquake babies. To help or to get more information (including how to receive a pepi-pod), visit:

www.changeforourchildren.co.nz/safe_start_programme/pepi-pod

WAIMH PRESIDENTS COUNCIL NEWS

Following on from our first survey of the WAIMH Affiliates, in order to better understand the needs of Affiliates towards WAIMH and to facilitate the expansion of WAIMH's membership, the WAIMH Presidents Council have developed a second survey. The survey will be sent to all Affiliate executives and the data will be collated by Dr Martin St Andre and I and the WAIMH admin team in Finland.

To help with this process, over the next month you will receive an email from the IMHAANZ Executive inviting you to participate in a NZ/Aotearoa based survey. The questions in this survey will reflect the questions in the WAIMH survey such as:

1. What age groups best reflects the age of the children in the families with whom you work?
 - a) Peri-antenatal
 - b) 0 – 1 years
 - c) 2 - 3 years
 - d) 4 - 5 years
2. What type of WAIMH-coordinated training would members from your affiliate benefit most from? - Access to a WAIMH-sponsored 'clearing house' of available trainings:
 - Reflective Supervision
 - Parent-Infant work training
 - Parent-Preschooler work training
 - Perinatal mental health training
 - Networking with other affiliates training programmes
 - Culturally-sensitive infant mental health training.

As a result of your participating in this process, we will have some NZ/Aotearoa specific information for us each to review and to use for our own development as an organisation. In addition, your IMHAANZ Executive will be able to provide rich full answers to the WAIMH survey on your behalf.

Maree Foley

WAIMH Affiliate Council Representative



Media Release from MOH : 16 SEPTEMBER

POST QUAKE SAFETY - MAKE EVERY SLEEP A SAFE ONE FOR YOUR BABY

Following the Christchurch quakes, many babies will now be sleeping in makeshift beds away from their own homes. This means that some babies may be placed to sleep in dangerous places, such as on sofas or in a bed with other children or adults. Many parents will be tired as the aftershocks are preventing a good night's sleep.

A parent who is very tired or has consumed alcohol before going to bed should never share a bed with their baby. This is because they will sleep more heavily and will be less aware of the baby while they are asleep. This puts the baby at a high risk of being suffocated.

Dr Pat Tuohy, chief advisor child and youth health, said there are three things parents and caregivers should remember wherever and whenever baby sleeps: They should be face up, face clear and smoke free.

'This 'safety formula' will help keep baby safe and reduce the chances of a baby dying in their sleep.

Face up - Babies should sleep on their back. In this position it's easiest for them to breathe, and allows their strong gag and swallow reflexes to protect them if they spill. A clear face protects babies from suffocation.

Face clear - Babies need to be in a safe place, and shouldn't sleep on a couch or in a bed with bedding or pillows that could block their breathing.

Smoke free - Your baby was designed to grow and develop smokefree. All smoking harms babies, especially in pregnancy. Smoking takes oxygen and weakens vital systems (such as breathing) as babies develop. When born, such babies need extra protection - as do babies born early.

"Sudden unexpected death is extremely rare for babies protected by this safety formula," Dr Tuohy said. "The quakes have caused major disruption to the lives of many people - I'd like to make a plea to parents and caregivers to stick to this safety routine when putting their baby down to sleep."



Letter from the Infant Mental Health Association of Aotearoa New Zealand (IMHAANZ)

CHRISTCHURCH EARTHQUAKE

SENT MARCH 2011



DEAR PARENTS WITH BABIES AND TODDLERS,

We are so sorry that your lives have been turned upside down as a result of the recent earthquake in Christchurch. As if the previous earthquake in September wasn't enough. While many people are suffering, we wanted to write to you especially. To experience such tragedy and the ongoing stress of that while also being so deeply connected with the mind, soul and body of your children is an enormous challenge.

As you already know, your young child looks to you for guidance, reassurance and comfort; you make their world safe. They don't know that you can't control environmental events. From their perspective, you are the almighty magician who makes their world right. Your baby, even in the face of recent events, does not change this view. You are it. We are very much thinking about you as you help make sense for your baby of what has and is happening.

We want to invite you to hold onto your baby's view. We encourage you, in the chaos and rubble, to linger with your baby. Take a few more seconds to watch their face, listen to their chatter. Even if they don't talk yet, take

more time to listen to their babble, and then to wonder what they are saying to you.

After listening, talk a little bit more to them. You can talk about what you are doing, where you are going, what's happening next. You might tell your young child about how you're feeling and wonder about their feelings. If you are not so practiced at this, a good way to start is to ask yourself "when my child looks at me, what do they see, what might they be thinking?"

For example, if you hear an ambulance or a police car, or a loud noise that makes you jump, makes you frightened, your baby will most likely also become frightened or unsettled. You are their emotional map. We know even if you wish not to respond like this, these involuntary frights are going to happen for a while. However, what you can do at these times is to begin to talk very gently to your baby, use a soothing voice and say something like – "oh yes mummy/daddy did a big jump and got scared with that noise, you might have felt scared too. It's ok now". Keep the message simple and based on the here and now moment.

It may be that it seems you are just talking to yourself and your baby isn't listening. It could just be that they are still coming back from getting a fright. You may have to wait a bit for them to turn to you. Let them know that you

are there, gently talking, let your voice be an anchor for them, telling them (and yourself) that it is ok, it was a scary memory. If they could speak they might say "thanks for waiting for me, I did get scared... thanks for telling me it's ok now". With practice their return to you will be faster.

That you patiently wait for them to return to the relationship with you is a cue to them, that even in this time of trauma and recovery, you can be focused on them. Your connection with them is important to your young child. Given space and support, even at these times, they can continue to grow healthy with you.

Your baby / toddler is healing with you and healing of this kind takes a lot of listening and waiting. We so want you to know that every day as you walk through this mess and this unfolding tragedy, there are people thinking especially about you and your babies.

©Foley, M., Guy, D., & Zwimpfer, L. (2011). Dear parents with babies and toddlers: Letter one. Infant Mental Health Association of Aotearoa new Zealand (IMHAANZ).



AFTER A DISASTER : Helping Young Children Heal

Young children, toddlers, and preschoolers — even babies — know when bad things happen, and they remember what they have been through. After a scary event, we often see changes in their behavior. They may cry more, become clingy and not want us to leave, have temper tantrums, hit others, have problems sleeping, become afraid of things that didn't bother them before, lose skills. . . . Changes like these are a sign that they need help. Here are some ways you can help them.

Safety – Focus on safety first. Your young child feels safe when you. . .

- Hold him or let him stay close to you.
- Tell her you will take care of her when things are scary or difficult. With children who are learning to talk, use simple words, like saying “Daddy’s here.”
- Keep him away from frightening TV images and scary conversations.
- Do familiar things, like singing a song you both like or telling a story.
- Let him know what will happen next (to the degree that you know).
- Have a predictable routine, at least for bedtime: a story, a prayer, cuddle time.
- Leave her with familiar people when you have to be away.
- Tell him where you are going and when you will come back.

Allow expression of feelings

- Young children often “behave badly” when they are worried or scared. Children can “act out” as a way of asking for help. Remember! Difficult feelings=Difficult behavior.
- Help your child name how she feels: “scared,” “happy,” “angry,” “sad”. Tell her it’s OK to feel that way.
- Show your child the right way to behave, like saying “It’s OK to be angry but it’s not OK to hit me.”
- Help your child express anger in ways that won’t hurt, using words, play, or drawings.
- Talk about the things that are going well to help you and your child feel good.

Follow your child’s lead

- Different children need different things. Some children need to run around, others need to be held.
- Listen to your child and watch his behavior to figure out what he needs.

Enable your child to tell the story of what happened during and after the disaster.

- Having a story helps your child make sense of what happened and cope better with it.
- Children use play to tell their story. For example, they may throw blocks to show what the disaster was like. They may separate toy animals to show how they were separated from you.
- Join your child in showing and telling not only what happened, step by step, but also how you both felt.
- As you tell the story, follow your child’s lead. When the story is difficult, your young child may need breaks: running around, being held, playing something else. This is OK. He will come back to the story when he is ready.
- It can be hard to watch your children’s play or listen to their stories. Get support if it is too hard for you to listen without becoming upset.

Ties — Reconnect with supportive people, community, culture and rituals

- Simple things like a familiar bedtime story, a song, a prayer, or family traditions remind you and your child of your way of life and offer hope.
- If you belong to a group, like a church, try to find ways of reconnecting with them.
- You can help your child best when you take care of yourself. Get support from others when you need it.

Your Child Needs You! This is the most important thing to remember.

- Reassure your child that you will be together.
- It is common for children to be clingy and worried about being away from you.
- If you need to leave your child, let her know for how long and when you are coming back. If possible, leave something that belongs to you, or a picture that your child can have.
- Just being with your child, even when you can’t fix things, helps your child.

By Chandra Ghosh Ippen, Alicia F. Lieberman, & Patricia Van Horn; Copyright 2005. Reproduced here with permission.
For more information, please visit the National Child Traumatic Stress Network Web site at www.NCTSN.org.



CHRISTCHURCH

Letter from the Infant Mental Health Association of Aotearoa New Zealand (IMHAANZ)

YOUNG CHILDREN, TRAUMA AND SLEEP

SENT APRIL 2011



DEAR PARENTS WITH BABIES AND TODDLERS

We want to let you know that we are still thinking of you in Christchurch and around the country, wherever you may be seeking refuge. We also imagine that your young children might still be finding it difficult to settle during this time of upheaval for you and your family, especially when it comes to sleeping.

What About Sleep?

Following a natural disaster

We want to talk to you a little bit about sleep following a natural disaster. Often families find that their little ones may be managing really well during the day, but finding it really hard to go to sleep at nighttime. At these times, difficulty getting off to sleep or frequently waking in the night are ways that babies and toddlers let us know that they are still frightened. Letting them know that you are there and that you will keep them safe through the night will help them feel safe, reassured and more trusting that it is safe to sleep.

We understand, for parents and caregivers sleep deprivation is hard enough to deal with under usual circumstances, let alone when you are already on edge with limited basic resources and during ongoing aftershocks. The last thing you need is more broken sleep! This may have been going on for some weeks or perhaps has just started to happen. As you grow in your strength and resilience, your young children also grow in their confidence to share with you their fears and worries.

Natural disasters interfere with young children's natural sleep rhythms.

We encourage you not to try and 'teach' your children how to manage on their own at this time. When children are frightened they are unable to learn new things because their brain

is working so hard trying to make sense of what they are fearful of. The learning happens when they are calm. Responding to them in a comforting way when they need it will help them to learn to manage better on their own and eventually they will not need you so often.

If they could speak your baby or toddler might say to you "I woke up and it's dark and I am scared to be on my own so I'm calling out to you mummy and daddy. Once I know you are with me I will be ok but I just need to know that you are there while I am feeling like this". You might reassure them by telling them "It's ok, I know you are waking up because everything is different and hard to understand right now. But one thing is the same, I am here and I will keep you safe".

Young children re-find their sleep rhythm best when this is a shared venture.

Every time your child calls out to you and you respond in a way that calms them down, they get another internal building block of security. This building block is like an inside photo that your young child develops. Over time this inside picture of you will be so clear and strong that your young child will draw strength from this and not need your physical presence so much.

Whatever your philosophy on sleeping, whether your baby sleeps with you or in a room of their own, think about what it is that will help reassure this particular child. Some children may need frequent cuddles during the night, others may just need your voice to comfort them. They may need you to sleep in their room with them for a while or it might be that you choose to bring them into your bed. You will know what it is that your child needs and we want you to know that it will not be this way forever, but it may take some time for your young children to feel secure

enough to return to their usual sleeping patterns.

Young children grow the capacity to be alone, such as to sleep, when their needs are met by people they love.

Now is not the time to let them cry it out. They need you more than ever right now. We encourage you to let your child's need for more of you right now guide what you do. However, you might be worried if you do this that you will be spoiling them, or that they never grow through this and you will end up raising a needy child. While these fears are understandable, we want you to know that children who have been frightened will return to their previous normal, settled state quicker when you meet their need for comfort. Responding to this need does not increase it.

We also know and appreciate that you too have needs and of course one of these is for your young children to sleep. This may seem the long way to go about it. However, while they are expressing their worry and need for comfort, you can trust that they will grow their security to sleep more quickly with your help, rather than on their own. They will learn best to be alone when in your presence.

Finally, we know that to offer this extra special parenting at this time also increases your own need for support and care. We encourage you to seek this for yourself during the day when you can, so when it comes to the nighttime, you come self-fueled and ready. We are thinking about you and wish you all the best.

©Zwimpfer, L., Foley, M., & Porter, L. (2011). Dear parents with babies and toddlers... Letter two: A letter about young children, trauma and sleep. Infant Mental Health Association of Aotearoa New Zealand (IMHAANZ) www.imhaanz.org.nz



Conference Updates WHATS ON...



The Infant Mental Health Association of Aotearoa New Zealand (IMHAANZ)
An Affiliate of WAIMH

Conference

Infant Mental Health: Relational and Reflective Practice Tools for Professionals

February 27, 28 & 29, 2012
Te Papa Museum, Wellington

Social workers, early childhood providers, teachers, nannies, nurses, paediatricians, GP's, psychotherapists, psychologists and family support workers are all in unique positions to be able to support and/or intervene effectively in the mental health and wellbeing of infants.

The question on peoples lips at the moment though, is how? What does this look like? How can we translate the research into programmes and interventions? And how can we incorporate these interventions into our core work, essential childcare services and family life?

We invite you to join us, alongside a number of internationally recognised infant mental health specialists from the US, the UK and Australia for three stimulating days in order to hear about what is being done in New Zealand and around the world, in a variety of institutions and settings, to work with infants and their families at risk of emotional rupture/disturbance in the early years.

Hawke's Bay Regional IMHAANZ Group

There is a new regional IMHAANZ group up and running in Hawke's Bay with around 20 members and plans to meet quarterly. The initial focus of the group is to map out who does what and where - with a longer term focus on providing support to each other, share knowledge and promote infant mental health in the community.

If you are interested in finding out more or attending the next meeting on Monday 18 May, please contact judy.hunter@porse.co.nz

Circle of Security Parenting Training© DVD

The Auditorium,
Auckland City Hospital,
Clinical Education Centre,
Level 5, Building 32.

Park Road, Auckland, New Zealand.

Cost: NZ\$980.00

Circle of Security Parenting Training© is a newly developed DVD parent education program offering the core components of the evidence-based and internationally acclaimed COS® protocol.

At the end of the 4-Day training, participants will receive:

- Circle of Security Parenting© DVD
- Circle of Security Parenting Training© Manual
- Parent Hand outs

License to use the above materials to teach Circle of Security Parenting© to caregivers. This DVD may only be used by those who have completed the 4-Day training. Completion of the 4-Day training does not grant permission to train others in the use of the DVD.

THIS FOUR DAY SEMINAR TRAINS PROFESSIONALS TO USE AN EIGHT CHAPTER DVD TO EDUCATE CAREGIVERS.

The program presents video examples of secure and difficult parent/child interaction, healthy options in caregiving, and animated graphics designed to clarify principles central to COS®. Circle of Security Parenting© implements decades of attachment research in an accessible step-by-step process for use in group settings, home visitation, or individual counselling.

The 4-Day training will promote the following skills:

- Understanding the theoretical foundation of the Circle of Security®
- Building a secure base/safe haven relationship with caregivers.
- Shifting caregiver focus from behaviour management to enhancing the quality of relationship.
- Specific steps for building self-reflection in caregivers.
- Use of video examples to support increased empathy in caregivers.
- Offering new options to help caregivers manage emotions.
- Step-by-step approaches for promoting secure attachment in children.

Are you involved in infant mental health related research in New Zealand?

IF SO, THEN WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU.

We have recently established an IMHAANZ Research Network, a group of NZ based researchers investigating all aspects of Infant Mental Health including, but certainly not restricted to; attachment, trauma and stress in infancy, parental mental health, infants with special needs, NICU experiences and early childhood education research.

IMHAANZ supports and celebrates NZ research in this exciting field and are offering our members an opportunity to connect with fellow researchers around the country.

For further information and to join our IMHAANZ Research Network, contact our Research Co-ordinator:

Lucie Zwimpfer

lucie.zwimpfer@xtra.co.nz

LUCIE IS A REGISTERED PARENT INFANT PSYCHOTHERAPIST AND THE NEWEST MEMBER OF OUR EXECUTIVE. SHE IS JUST BEGINNING HER PHD IN THE AREA OF PREMATURE BABIES AND IS LOOKING AT USEFUL PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTIONS TO LESSEN THE STRESS FOR BABIES IN THE NEONATAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT.