President’s Column
Sharon G. Portwood, J.D., Ph.D

In this volume of the newsletter, you will find a copy of the full report on Section activities that I presented to the Division 37 Executive Committee at the recent APA Annual Meeting in New Orleans. As you will see, there are many exciting Section activities underway; however, I wanted to take the opportunity to highlight the efforts of three task forces in an effort to illustrate not only the wonderful work being accomplished by our members, but also the many opportunities for Section involvement available to those of you interested in becoming more active in the Section.

The newest of the three task forces is only now being convened. This interdivisional task force, sponsored by Divisions 37 and 41 (American Psychology-Law Society) and the Section on Child Maltreatment is the product of discussions between past Section and Division Presidents Bette Bottoms and Gail Goodman, along with Joel Dvoskin, current President of Division 41, around the need to develop a task force that can serve as a central point of contact for all child abuse prevention activities across APA. In furtherance of its broader goal of addressing the prevention of child maltreatment, the group will begin by looking at strategies for uniting practice and research around the identification and dissemination of promising practices. Section members interested in being a part of this exciting initiative are encouraged to contact either me (sgportwo@email.uncc.edu) or Mary Haskett (mary_haskett@ncsu.edu), who will be serving as co-chairs of the Task Force.

The second task force is the Task Force for Child and Family Advocacy Training, a joint effort of Division 37 and the Section, working in partnership with the American Psychological Association’s Public Policy Office (PPO). Under the leadership of co-chairs Alison Redlich and Sandra Bishop-Josef, and with the editorial assistance of Madeline Modrak, the Task Force will soon be releasing *A Psychologists' Guide for Advocacy: Legislative Support for Children, Youth and Families*. This guidebook and accompanying materials are designed to build advocacy capacity and to advance the application of psychological knowledge to public policy affecting children, youth, and families. The “next steps” for this work involve engaging with APA State Psychological Associations to build on members’ existing advocacy expertise to take a more active role in the policy domain around children and family issues. Section members with interests in these areas are particularly encouraged to contact the Task Force co-chairs about how to become involved with this initiative.

The third Task Force will actually soon be completing its work. The Corporal Punishment Task Force was established in 2004 as a joint project of Division 37 and the Section on Child Maltreatment. This Task Force has been examining the current science on the issue of corporal punishment. Under the leadership of Sandra Graham-Bermann, the task force has completed a literature review, as well as a meta-analysis of current studies on spanking, and will soon be finalizing its report.

Together, these groups reflect the diversity of areas in which our Section members can contribute their valuable expertise to the advancement of science and practice in the field of child maltreatment. I hope that each of you will consider not only ways in which you can lend your talents to Section efforts, but also how you might involve other colleagues in this work. We would welcome new members, including students, who share an interest in addressing the important issues involved in child maltreatment.

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Case Notes

**Just What the Doctor Ordered:**
Medical and Psychological Expert Testimony in Child Abuse Cases

Angela M. Crossman, Ph.D.
*John Jay College of Criminal Justice-CUNY*

Medical and psychological experts have an important role to play in the prosecution and/or defense of alleged child abusers. Given the potentially ambiguous nature of evidence for sexual abuse, including psychological and even medical evidence, it is vital that the testimony provided by experts be as scientifically defensible as possible, for the sake of all parties involved.

A recent example of this is found in the case of Ben Gersten, who allegedly sexually abused his daughter for nearly a decade (*Gersten v. Senkowski*, 2005). Gersten’s conviction via bench trial was overturned by the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in October, 2005. The Court determined that the conviction rested on refutable medical and psychological testimony that defense counsel had failed to adequately contest. In particular, the Court found that medical evidence that appeared very strong at trial was discredited entirely by a subsequent medical expert for the defense and was then considered inconsistent with the long-term abuse that was alleged.

Expert psychological testimony was similarly refuted. This testimony relied heavily on Child Sexual Abuse Accommodation Syndrome (CSAAS), which does not withstand scientific scrutiny as a syndrome, nor is it considered diagnostic of abuse (Summit, 1992; for discussions, see London, Bruck, Ceci, & Shuman, 2005; Schaaf et al., 2002). Generally speaking, it is important to distinguish between explaining an alleged victim’s behavior as consistent with abuse, and claiming that CSAAS is indicative of abuse, which is an unwarranted claim. Moreover, use of CSAAS in court may be ill-advised pragmatically speaking, given the lack of empirical support for it as a syndrome and its consequent vulnerability to attack.

Another area of controversy in psychological testimony raised in this case deals with memory for abuse. Certainly the impact of trauma on memory has been a hotly debated issue, yet there seem to be a range of possible effects of trauma on memory, depending on victim and event characteristics (Howe, Toth, & Cicchetti, 2006; Schaaf et al., 2002). What is unique about incest, as opposed to many other types of trauma (e.g., natural disasters), is the likely repeated nature of the event. Findings suggest that repeated events can create strong memories for consistent information, due to script formation, with more accurate recall and less suggestibility for script-inconsistent event details (Powell & Thomson, 2003; Roberts & Powell, 2006). This can present difficulties for identifying individual incident details for the prosecution of long-term, patterned abuse, as in the Gersten case. The alleged victim was unable to provide details of her alleged abuse, which the psychological expert described as a memory “blending effect” and ascribed poor recall in part to the child’s trauma and resulting dissociation and repression efforts. A defense expert undermined the prosecution expert’s testimony primarily due to his representation of trauma as the relevant cause for the child’s poor memory and “memory blurring”. Indeed, it is not yet clear that trauma per se uniquely impacts the effect of repeated experiences on memory, nor is it clear that trauma alters fundamental memory processes, not even after sexual abuse (Howe et al., 2006; Schaaf et al., 2002).

Finally, the timing of the victim’s disclosure during adolescence was an issue in this case. The timing of abuse disclosure has been examined in a number of research studies. There is no doubt that many victims of abuse delay disclosure for years, even decades, and some never disclose their abuse (London et al., 2005). Yet, the causes for such delay are less clear. Fear, shame, developmental inability to report their abuse, abuse-related characteristics, and lack of understanding of their situation might all contribute to rates of delayed and non-reporting (Schaaf et al., 2002). And yes, on occasion, an allegation might be ‘delayed’ because it is false. But in providing expert testimony in any case, for either side, psychologists must be clear in distinguishing what research can support from what they have observed or theorize from their experience. In the Gersten case, the expert suggested that children commonly delay abuse disclosures until adolescence because this is often when they develop greater awareness of their own sexuality and better understanding of sexual acts and their consequences. However, research on this point is inconclusive, and this opinion was later undermined as lacking scientific support.
The fact that courts might consider it ‘ineffective assistance of counsel’ for an attorney not to seek expert advice means that psychologists have a significant role to play in the prosecution of child maltreatment. But this role can cause significant harm if it is not carried out with great care. While clinical judgment is valuable, it must be qualified as such, or risk being discredited later for misrepresenting the scientific evidence. On the other hand, the goal is to protect children now, and the scientific evidence is not always sufficiently up to the challenge presented by a particular case. Hence, limits to knowledge are as important as certainty of knowledge. No one benefits when expert testimony over or understates the

“Psychologists have a significant role to play in the prosecution of child maltreatment”

scientific evidence about child sexual abuse, least of all the alleged victims. False convictions and overturned rightful convictions or acquittals harm all parties involved, as well as psychology as a discipline.

While there is no doubt that experts will continue to disagree in the interpretation of the evidence, a fundamental recognition of and appreciation for the complimentary contributions and limitations of research, theory and practice will benefit all.

References


Member’s Recent Books and Publications


This book examines both the therapist’s and the survivor’s perspectives on impact of sexual abuse and the process toward recovery. Written by a sexual abuse survivor (Olgiers) and her therapist (Oz), it is intended to help both victims and therapists. It describes child sexual abuse not only in theoretical terms but also from a first-person perspective from both the victim and the therapist. The book provides a developmental overview of the impact of child sexual abuse and the on-going impact on the across domains in the victim’s life. Individual chapters from the client’s perspective address different topics including the trauma of sexual abuse, intimate relationships, how to choose a therapist, and the stages of therapy. The second half of the book addresses therapeutic issues for those working with victims of sexual abuse, the therapeutic relationship and process.

Attention Section Authors/Editors New Books and New Publications
Members are invited to notify the President or the Newsletter Editor about your new publications. These will be listed in the newsletter.
Public Policy

In advance of the vote on the bill drafted by the Senate appropriations subcommittee he chairs, Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA) was quoted in Congressional Quarterly complaining that the bill constitutes “what I view as really the disintegration of the appropriate federal role in health, education and worker protections,” lamenting, “We don’t have money to appropriate anymore.” Even level funding, considering inflation, translates into a cut in support for services for families aimed at preventing child maltreatment and protecting children from further harm.

While the House and Senate Appropriations Committees have moved ahead with drafting the money bills for the coming 2007 fiscal year, the word from Capitol Hill is that none of the funding legislation will get wrapped up until after the November elections when Congress plans to return for a lame-duck session — to complete work on appropriations legislation.

The House Republican leadership postponed floor action on the FY 2007 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Bill after the bill passed the committee vote with a Democratic-backed provision to increase the minimum wage, which has not been raised in ten years. The money bill which funds labor, health, human services, and education programs was expected to move to the House floor after it passed the House Appropriations Committee in June, but Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD) successfully offered an amendment to the bill to raise the minimum wage from $5.15 to $7.25 an hour.

A recent report from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office (CBO) demonstrates the limitations on spending decisions available to Congress because of continued expenditures in Iraq and pressure to extend the administration’s tax cuts. CBO’s report issued in August estimates the federal deficit will rise to $286 billion in fiscal 2007, up from this year’s $260 billion projected deficit. The long-term outlook remains bleak, with total deficits over the next decade put at $1.7 trillion.

The CBO offers an analysis of the impact that the Iraq war would have on future deficit numbers based on different policy options Congress could adopt. The numbers make for a strong economic argument for redeployment of troops over a “stay the course” strategy. A phased withdrawal would save $416 billion on the deficit over the next four years and $1.28 trillion over the next decade. On the other hand, a strategy of “stay the course” would increase the deficit by $313 billion over the next four years and $1.3 trillion over the next decade. Because the CBO projections are based on current law, the estimates assume that current tax cuts will be allowed to expire. If projections were based on the tax cuts being made permanent, as President Bush proposes, the deficit would be even higher.

The U.S. Treasury Department released a report in July acknowledging that the federal government will need to either cut spending or raise taxes to pay in the future for extending President Bush’s tax cuts. Robert Carroll, the Treasury deputy assistant secretary for tax analysis, was quoted in the July 26 Washington Post, saying that the Treasury Department’s report reflects “a recognition the federal government has to finance the tax relief” to avoid an increase in the federal debt, taking a step back from the Administration’s standard claim that tax cuts energize the economy and pay for themselves.
**HOUSE AND SENATE MOVE TO EXTEND SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES PROGRAM**

With authorizing legislation for the Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) program due to expire September 30, 2006, Congress appears intent on reauthorizing the program before the due date at the end of the current fiscal year. The legislation first enacted in 1993 is the largest source of federal funds in child welfare dedicated for prevention services, with $434 million available to states in 2006 to use for family support services, family preservation services, reunification services, and adoption support services. Of the total amount available, $345 million is mandatory spending ($40 million more than last year), and Congress this year appropriated $89 million in discretionary spending out of $200 million authorized.

The House Ways and Means Committee on June 12 approved H.R.5640, the Child and Family Services Improvement Act of 2006, to reauthorize the program through 2011, and to target the $40 million in newly authorized mandated spending to go for supporting “monthly caseworker visits with children who are in foster care, consistent with the finding of a strong correlation between frequent caseworker visits with children and positive outcomes.” Recognizing the importance of capturing the increase in mandated spending newly provided in 2006 for the child welfare prevention services authorized by the Title IV(B-2) program, the House developed a bill directing the new funds divided among all states to the specific purpose of supporting activities designed to improve caseworker retention, recruitment, training, and ability to access the technology needed to improve capacity and quality of their work.

**“...a strong correlation between frequent caseworker visits with children and positive outcomes”**

The Senate on July 13 passed its version of a reauthorization bill, S.3525, the Improving Outcomes for Children Affected by Meth Act of 2006, which, like the House bill, targets the newly mandated $40 million in spending. However, in the Senate the money would go for competitive grants to provide interagency collaborations to increase services for children in the child welfare and child protection system whose parents or caretakers abuse methamphetamines. Both the House and Senate bill, in reauthorizing the Promoting Safe and Stable Families program would retain the four categories of service required to be addressed by the states in the basic program: family preservation, family support services, time-limited family reunifications services and adoption promotion and support. Once the House passes its reauthorization bill, a conference committee will have to work out a compromise version reconciling the diverse approaches taken by each chamber to target the $40 million in newly authorized entitlement spending.

The Senate’s bill responds to concerns expressed by the Finance Committee’s leadership, Sens. Charles Grassley (R-IA) and Max Baucus (D-MT) at hearings earlier this year focusing on the tremendous challenges facing child welfare services, in their states especially, because of the prevalence of meth drugs and the dangers posed to children in the care of users. At the hearings, Grassley suggested that “more funding should be available for substance abuse treatment,” and Baucus asserted that “meth is a primary factor 57 percent of the time” in foster care placements in Montana. Of the $345 million in mandatory funds authorized by the legislation, the bill allocates $40 million for competitive grants to promote interagency partnerships within states to improve outcomes for children of parents addicted to methamphetamines. Eligible services could include early intervention and prevention, parenting skills training, child and family counseling, and other family-based comprehensive services.

**PRESIDENT SIGNS SEX OFFENDER BILL WITH CHILD ABUSE NATIONAL REGISTRY AND STUDY**

Before adjourning for the August recess, the House and Senate passed the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006, and President Bush signed the bill in a ceremony at the White House on July 27, marking the 25th anniversary of the abduction and then murder of Adam Walsh, son of John Walsh, host of the television show “America’s Most Wanted.”

The thrust of the legislation is to mandate a national sex offender registry and to enhance federal criminal sentences for sex offenders. The bill also gives governmental social service agencies with child protection responsibilities access to national crime information data bases for the purpose of conducting background record checks in investigating or responding to reports of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

The new sex offender law also addresses provisions which had raised the concern of child advocates during congressional deliberations on the legislation: the inclusion of juveniles on the national sex offender registry, and the creation of a national registry of cases of child abuse or neglect.
In the compromise measure signed by the President, juveniles would be included on the national sex offender registry – but only, as Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT) explained on the Senate floor, “the most egregious juvenile offenders.” The law exempts from the registry most sexual offenses committed by juveniles, requiring registry listing only of juveniles convicted of a criminal sex offense committed at age 14 or older “comparable to or more severe than aggravated sexual abuse…or an attempt or conspiracy to commit such an offense.”

“To rush into the creation of such a national registry, without deliberate consideration and evaluation would be reckless”

The statute also retains the House-passed provision requiring the Secretary of Health and Human Services to create a national registry of substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect. When fully implemented over time, the registry is intended to enable child protective service agencies to identify an adult perpetrator’s past child maltreatment offenses in other states, without having to check all individual state child protective service central registries.

Not all states maintain the same registry information; some states no longer maintain registries at all. Without any new financial or technical assistance to the states to improve or standardize their child protective services case record keeping systems, or to support states in the added burden of preparing for, and transferring data to, a new national registry, the quality of the information collected would likely be uneven and at times unreliable.

Prompted by such concerns raised by child protection advocates about the national registry proposal, the Senate insisted that the final bill include provisions requiring HHS first to study the feasibility of establishing data collection standards for a national child abuse and neglect registry. While welcoming efforts to improve the ability of child serving agencies to collect information on prior cases of child maltreatment, advocates insisted that Congress should authorize an analysis of the components and costs of a reliable and credible system in order to study the establishment of a nationwide interstate tracking system of perpetrators of child maltreatment. The final measure authorizes $500,000 to fund the study, but no money is authorized to manage the registry.

Although Senate Judiciary Committee leaders, including chairman Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA) and the ranking Democrat Sen. Leahy, had opposed the national registry provision, pressure from Sen. Bill Frist (R-TN) to adopt the idea – and the insistence of the provision’s Senate sponsor, Sen. Jon Kyl (R-AZ), who had introduced a bill to establish a national child abuse registry – pushed the proposal into the final agreement bill passed by both chambers.

During Senate floor debate prior to final passage of the bill, Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT), commented on the importance of conducting a study on the development of a national child abuse registry: “Improving the ability of child protective service agencies to collect information on prior cases of child maltreatment by a named adult is a worthy objective. However, to rush into the creation of such a national registry, without deliberate consideration and evaluation first of the wide variation in how State child abuse and neglect data on substantiated cases identifies the perpetrator of the abuse or neglect and the specifics of their maltreatment—what the bill calls the nature of the substantiated case—would be reckless…It is important that the study on establishing data collection standards be completed before such a registry is established.”

In a similar vein, Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA), another Judiciary Committee member, said on the Senate floor that the child abuse registry “should not be implemented until Congress has a full understanding of its scope and effectiveness. The proposed registry raises serious implementation challenges and could create an additional and unnecessary burden for States… it is important that the study on establishing data collection standards be completed before such a registry is established.”
Best Practices

Treating Traumatized Children: A Trauma-Systems Approach

Julie B. Kaplow, Ph.D.  
Department of Psychology 
John Jay College of Criminal Justice (CUNY)  

B. Heidi Ellis, Ph.D.  
Center for Medical and Refugee Trauma 
Boston University Medical Center

For too many traumatized children, the “presenting problem” is often just the tip of the iceberg. Chronic stressors such as poverty, family and community violence, and an overburdened health care system present seemingly insurmountable barriers to treatment, including the implementation of existing trauma-informed evidence-based practice. For example, individuals in underserved communities often lack access to transportation, thereby limiting their ability to acquire needed mental health services. In addition, many of these families are seeking basic survival needs such as food and shelter, let alone mental health care.

Trauma Systems Therapy, or TST, is a comprehensive intervention model that was developed specifically to be used in community settings with populations facing significant, ongoing stressors (Saxe, Ellis, & Kaplow, in press). TST is also designed to address the barriers that have repeatedly interfered with the dissemination of trauma-focused, evidence-based practice in front line services settings. The development of TST has focused on the principle of “disseminate-ability”, or the propensity of an intervention to be adaptable to different service sites. It is important to note that TST is not a structured, session-by-session, treatment for child traumatic stress. Rather, it is a specific framework for applying evidence-based practices to child traumatic stress given the real world barriers ubiquitous in the services system. TST incorporates specific intervention modules that are based on empirically-supported treatments (e.g. Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy; Cohen, Mannarino, Berliner, & Deblinger, 2000) and which are integrated into an overall treatment framework that focuses on diminishing barriers to seeking care, and working within the systems of care.

TST is designed for children aged 6 to 18, who are having difficulty regulating their emotions as a result of the interaction of a traumatic experience (e.g., child maltreatment) and the social environment (e.g., family, school, and/or neighborhood). The treatment is focused not only on the child, but on the systems that help to support (or harm) the child. The core assumption underlying the design of TST is that a child who experiences a traumatic event develops clinically significant mental health symptoms when there is a poor match between 1) the ability of the child to regulate his or her emotions and 2) the capacity of the child’s social environment and/or system of care to protect the child from threat and to help the child to regulate emotion. TST also assumes that, to be effective, trauma-oriented services must be family-focused, strength-based, and well-integrated with systems of care, and services must be specific, integrated, operationalized and delivered close to the source of the problem (e.g. home, school, neighborhood).

TST includes plans and procedures for engaging all service providers, specific treatment planning forms that can cross systems of care, and legal consultation when needed to help a family access services related to recovery from traumatic stress. Specific intervention modalities that are contained within the TST are home-based care, legal advocacy, emotional regulation skills training, cognitive processing skills, and psychopharmacology. The framework of TST places great emphasis, during the treatment planning process, on creating treatment plans that engage all relevant professionals and services systems. This framework is also very specific about engaging families in treatment. All families start TST with a treatment engagement module (called ‘Ready-set-go’). This treatment module specifies ways of building the treatment alliance and troubleshooting practical barriers to treatment engagement. A critical element of treatment engagement is the families’ culture-based understanding of emotion, mental health, and mental health intervention.

Empirical tests of the efficacy of TST are still in the beginning phases, but a recent open trial with 30 families demonstrated a reduction in traumatic stress symptoms and a decrease in family- and school-related problems over 3 months. The manual for TST will be published in book form in November, 2006 by Guilford Press. The developers of TST believe that this intervention model will greatly assist clinicians treating childhood trauma in the complex and often overwhelming contexts in which it occurs.

References:
After Hurricane Katrina, APA leadership and membership held to their commitment to hold the annual Convention in New Orleans. During the Convention, August 10-13, 2006, the over 7,000 attendees witnessed the spirit of hospitality, revitalization and resilience in the Crescent City. In addition, many participated in a number of volunteer activities and benefit functions to help in the city’s recovery.

Section on Child Maltreatment members also enjoyed valuable educational, networking and social opportunities at the 114th Annual APA Convention. A tremendous number of good submissions this year were received and reviewed. In addition to Division 37 President Anne Culp’s Presidential address and Section President Sharon Portwood’s Presidential Symposium, Violence in the Home: Integrating Approaches on Prevention and Intervention, the final program included informative, competitive symposia relevant to a broad spectrum of child maltreatment issues, including presentations by Section members, such as:

- Systems of Care: Focus on Child Safety, Permanency & Well-Being. Co-Chairs: Lisa Lunghofer PhD, Duren Banks PhD
- Responding Effectively to Child Abuse: Children’s Advocacy Centers’ Role. Chair: Theodore P. Cross PhD
- The Catholic Clergy Sex Abuse Crisis: Institutional Etiology and Systemic Interventions. Chair: David Marcotte, PhD
- Exploitation of Youth and Families: Perspectives on Unregulated Residential Treatment. Chair: Allison Pinto PhD
- Current Controversies in High-Risk Adoption from Foster Care. Chair: Jill Waterman PhD

Saturday’s poster session included over 40 posters by students eligible for a student poster award. To be included in the judging, posters must have been first-authored by an undergraduate student or pre-doctoral graduate student. Winners of the poster session awards were:

- Cynthia Najdowski B.A., Understanding Women’s Suspicions of Unremembered Childhood Sexual and Physical Abuse (co-author: Bette L. Bottoms, Ph.D.)
- Nicole Owings M.A., Peer Acceptance of Children with Autism in Inclusive School Settings (co-authors: Cynthia D. Baker, Ph.D & Kristen D. Holtz, Ph.D.)
- Farah Williams M.Ed., Evaluation of a Statewide Student Suicide Prevention Program (co-authors: Carli J. Hague, B.A. & Dewey G. Cornell, Ph.D.)
- Laura Young B.A., Effects of Parental Involvement on Children’s Academic Achievement (co-authors: Katherine Walker, B.A., Anna Yaros, B.A., Jamie Jones, B.A., & John Lochman, Ph.D.)

The Section/Division’s hospitality suite in the Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel was home to a number of Section meetings, receptions for Division/Section award winners, and a mentoring session and social hour for graduate students. In addition a special lunch presentation by Mariajose Romero from Child Care and Early Education Research Connections provided a forum in which knowledge was shared with members about this resource that promotes high quality research in child care and early education and the use of that research in policy making. For more information, see www.childcareresearch.org. Our hosts for the hospitality suite were Susan Hall, Section APA Program Chair and Amy Shadoin, Program Co-Chair.

Not to be missed, our Child and Family Advocacy social hour was a success again this year, with over 50 people in attendance. A highlight of the evening included the announcement of several awards. Those honored included:

- Nicolas Hobbs Award Recipient: Karen J. Saywitz, Ph.D.
- Distinguished Contribution to Child Advocacy Award Recipient: Robin Kimbrough-Melton, J.D.
- Division 37 Student Dissertation Award Recipient: Richard W. Puddy, PhD, MPH, University of Kansas

Although not able to attend the Convention, Stephanie Block from the University of California, Davis, won the Section Dissertation award for her work with Gail Goodman on false memory in sexual abuse victims, and Kimberly Mitchell, Ph.D., from the University of New Hampshire Crimes Against Children Research Center was recognized with the Section on Child Maltreatment 2005 Early Career Award for Outstanding Contributions to Research for her work on internet victimization of youth.

Next year’s Convention will be held in San Francisco, California, August 17–20th. Watch for the Call For Papers in the October Advocate!
Student Mentoring Hour

The Child and Family Advocacy Social Hour
Report from the Section on Child Maltreatment

Sharon Portwood
Section President

July 31, 2006

This midyear report will summarize the activities of the Section on Child Maltreatment since the last report, dated January, 2006.

1. OFFICERS AND ELECTIONS
An updated list of current Section officers and their contact information is attached.

In December, 2005, Past-President Tom Lyon solicited nominees for the open Member-At-Large position. Sandra Graham-Bermann won the election (on a very close ballot, given the strengths of the three candidates.) Members also passed a resolution approving the extension of the current Treasurer’s term through December, 2006, such that the terms of the Section and Division treasurers will be “staggered.”

In January, Tom began disseminating the call for nominations for the three officer positions with terms ending in December: President-Elect, Treasurer, and Member-At-Large. Elections will be held this Fall.

Secretary Angela Crossman has been engaged in the process of revising the Section Officer’s Manual and Bylaws, in collaboration with Section President, Sharon Portwood, and with feedback from members of the Executive Committee. It is anticipated that final changes will be approved at the upcoming APA meeting.

2. MEMBERSHIP
According to APA’s records (as of May 30, 2006), membership totals thus far for 2006 are as follows: the Section has a total of 119 paid members (154 members, 18 affiliates, and 73 students). These figures are comparable to last year’s figures except for the new member categories, which are significantly lower this year. In May, 2005, the Section recruited 28 new members and 36 new students (compared to 18 and 20, respectively, for 2006).

One of the greatest challenges is to maintain memberships by encouraging past members to renew. In response to this challenge, Membership Chair Cindy Miller-Perrin sent out a postcard reminder to lapsed members in the Spring, as well as email notices to lapsed members from the past two years for whom she had email addresses. In addition, renewal reminders were sent out by APA Division Services. For the 2006 membership year, a special retention letter was mailed out to the membership, encouraging members to continue membership in the Section, on December 16. Membership numbers suggest that these efforts to retain members have been largely successful. Just 8 continuing students and members have not yet renewed for 2006, with 3 months remaining for dues collection.

| Paid Memberships: According to Membership Category for the Section over the past Four Years |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total 2006 (May) | Total 2005 | Total 2004 | Total 2003 |
| Affiliates | 18 | 18 | 18 | 18 |
| Students–continuing | 53 | 58 | 67 | 76 |
| Students–new | 20 | 43 | 49 | 47 |
| Members–continuing | 136 | 143 | 146 | 148 |
| Members–new | 18 | 43 | 34 | 40 |
| Total | 245 | 296 | 314 | 329 |

Overall, these figures suggest a slight decline in membership over the four-year period.
Another challenge is the recruitment of new members. We have not been as successful in recruiting new members this year, despite on-going membership initiatives. These initiatives include the following: (a) sending out brochures to Executive Committee members attending conferences at which new members might be recruited; (b) writing directly to professionals with interests in child maltreatment and inviting them to join; (c) responding to emails from professionals expressing interest in the Section; (d) circulating membership information via e-mail listserves and newsletters of organizations such as SRCD, the American Psychology-Law Society, APSAC, and IPSCAN.

This year, we also redesigned the Section brochure. The new brochures have only recently become available and should be distributed widely at the APA Convention. We hope that the new brochure will be helpful in recruiting new members.

Last year, a Division 37 Membership Task Force was established in an effort to increase both Division and Section membership. Cindy is serving as the Section’s representative on this Task Force. The Task Force is currently involved in the following recruitment activities: (a) establishing connections with the early career psychologists group within APA; (b) distributing flyers at the APA convention; and (c) establishing discount coupons for new members.

3. PUBLICATIONS

A. Newsletter

Three editions of the Section Newsletter were published during this reporting period - in Fall 2005, Winter 2006, and Spring 2006. The Fall 2005 newsletter was 12 pages long, and the two subsequent editions were each 8 pages in length. Each newsletter contained the President’s column, featuring current Section news; the Public Policy column, written by Tom Birch of the National Abuse Coalition; and the Case Notes column, edited by Brad McAuliff. The Fall 2005 edition featured a lead article contributed by Pamela Pine, Stop the Silence, as well as a report of Section Activities at the 2005 APA Convention in Washington D.C. (complete with a few photos). We also had our last Best Practices column with Mark Chaffin as editor. Since then, the newsletter has not had a Best Practices column.

Newsletter Editor Victoria Talwar has worked diligently to find someone to fill the post of Best Practices Column Editor, but as yet, no one has been identified. The position entails soliciting articles for the column and editing submissions. Approximately a dozen individuals have been approached, but all were unable to fill the position. If anyone knows of someone who might be interested, please pass his or her name on to Victoria.

Although the newsletter has been without the Best Practices column in the Winter 2006 and Spring 2006 editions, it featured a new addition – the student column, written by the Section’s Graduate Student Representative, Desi Vasquez. The Spring 2006 edition also contained a summary of the Section’s Hospitality Suite activities for the upcoming APA convention.

The Fall 2006 edition of the newsletter will be coming out in October. The deadline for submissions will be early September. Anyone who is interested in submitting an article should contact Victoria. In addition to articles, the newsletter will feature brief reports of member’s recent publications and other related news.

B. Special Issue of the Division 37 Newsletter

Section President Sharon Portwood and former Social Policy Committee Chair Sandra Bishop Josef edited the Winter 2006 issue of the Division 37 newsletter, Child and Family Policy Review and Practice Review. The issue was entitled “A Tribute to Edward Zigler: Products of a Lifetime of Work to Improve the Lives of Children through Research and Policy,” and featured articles contributed by Ed’s students representing the five decades of his career dedicated to the field of child, youth, and family services.

C. Child Maltreatment Curriculum Guide

The Executive Committee of the Section appointed an ad hoc committee to create a new curriculum guide on the topic of child maltreatment. Cindy Miller-Perrin and Lindsay Malloy have been working together and have combined the Section’s previous curriculum guides (previously, there was a separate guide for undergraduate and graduate curriculums), updated the references, and introduced a few new sections. A first draft of the curriculum guide was submitted to the Executive Committee just prior to the its meeting at APA in August, 2005. The Executive Committee provided feedback, which was incorporated into a second draft of the curriculum guide, and the guide received final approval this past spring. The curriculum guide is being disseminated via several methods, including: (1) announcements highlighting the curriculum guide in the Section Newsletter, The Division Dialogue, the Communiqué (the newsletter for the Office of Ethnic Minority Affairs), and CYF News; (2) posting on the Section website; (3) consideration of the guide for a feature article in the APA Monitor; and 4) consideration of the guide for inclusion in IPSCAN’s database of training materials. The editorial board of Child Maltreatment is also discussing publishing the guide in that journal.

D. Section Internship Guide

Member-at-Large Jane Silovsky continues to lead efforts to update the Section Internship Guide. The internship survey
has been finalized and received approval from the EC. Jane and her committee have obtained the e-mail addresses for all APA-approved internship sites to facilitate the collection of information for the survey. Jane hopes that the survey will be ready for distribution to the internship directors in August.

E. Website
For several years, the Section has enjoyed the assistance of Nathalie Carrick, a graduate student working with Section Treasurer Jodi Quas, in updating our website. In June, Joy Reeves took over as website manager and has already proven helpful in keeping the website up-to-date and informative.

F. Section Alert and Careers in Child Maltreatment Website
At last year’s APA meeting, the EC determined that responsibility for the Section Alert and the Careers in Child Maltreatment website should be tied to one of the member-at-large positions. Accordingly, newly elected Member-at-Large Sandra Graham Bermann will be taking on this role. Sandra is reviewing what is needed to move forward and the responsibilities involved.

G. Intimate Partner Violence Book
Sarah Giacomoni and Member-at-Large Kathy Kendall Tackett are in the final stages of completing editing of their book, *Intimate Partner Violence*. This book includes state-of-the-art research on IPV, including several chapters on teen dating violence, and several chapters on the impact of IPV on children. It will be released early next year.

4. SOCIAL POLICY ACTIVITIES
Member-at-Large Kathy Kendall Tackett continues to chair the Section’s Public Policy Committee. In addition to Sandra Bishop-Josef, who is representing the Section as a co-chair, other committee members are participating on the Joint Section-Division 37 Advocacy Task Force, which has been working to develop an advocacy training program that can be used to engage psychologists in child and family advocacy at the state level. A presentation featuring the task force’s goals and activities to date will be held at the APA Annual Meeting.

Continuing his work in regard to Section contributions to amicus curiae briefs, in late 2005 and 2006, Past President Tom Lyon worked to obtain APA approval for an amicus brief in the US Supreme Court cases *Hammon v. Indiana* and *Davis v. Washington*, which involved the admissibility of hearsay statements to the police in criminal cases when the hearsay declarants fail to show at trial. We were not able to obtain approval, apparently because of concerns that APA should not take a position on mandatory prosecution of domestic violence (which is facilitated by a liberal rule of admissibility). Tom ultimately assisted the National Association of Counsel for Children in submitting a brief, which discussed the difficulties of child abuse prosecution due to the reluctance of victims to testify.

5. OTHER SECTION PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES
A. Corporal Punishment Task Force
The Task Force on Child Corporal Punishment, chaired by Sandra Graham Bermann, met at the last APA convention and has been active via email with revisions of the report. The Task Force has added one new member, Andrew Grogan-Kaylor, Ph.D., who has already made a significant contribution through his comments on the revision.

The Task Force will present its conclusions and recommendations to members of the Section and Division 37 Executive Committee members at the APA Convention in New Orleans.

B. APA Convention
The foundation has been laid for an exciting 2006 APA Convention in New Orleans! Susan Hall, the Section’s 2005-06 APA Program Chair, working with her Program Co-Chair, Sofia Kluch, to assisted the Division 37 Program Chair, Mario Hernandez, in putting together this year’s convention program. Owing to a job change, Sofia needed to resign as Section APA Program Co-chair in July, 2006; however, Amy Shadoin has moved into this position and will be working with Susan at the Convention. Amy will “step up” to serve as Program Chair for 2006-2007.

This year’s APA program presents an opportunity to highlight the Section’s mission, as Division President Anne Culp will be focusing on child abuse prevention as part of her Presidential initiative. Anne’s Presidential address will be held on Thursday, August 10, 4-4:50 PM, in the New Orleans Marriott Hotel—Mardi Gras Ballroom C.

Sharon will be hosting a Presidential Symposium for the Section on Child Maltreatment instead of a Presidential Address. Entitled, *Violence in the Home: Integrating Approaches on Prevention and Intervention*, the symposium will be held Sat. 3-4:50 PM in the Hilton New Orleans Riverside Hotel—Grand Salon 13. Presenters include: Gwendolyn Puryear Keita PhD, BA, Sharon G. Portwood PhD, JD, Patrick H. Tolan PhD, and Mary A. Dutton PhD, with Discussant: Janet Saul PhD. Section award recipients will be recognized at the symposium, so please plan to attend.
The final program also includes four informative, competitive symposia relevant to a broad spectrum of child maltreatment issues, including presentations by Section members:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Symposium</th>
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| Sat. 8-9:50 AM | Symposium: Systems of Care: Focus on Child Safety, Permanency & Well-Being.  
MCC Rm 337. Co-Chairs: Lisa Lunghofer PhD, Duren Banks PhD |
| Sat. 10-10:50 AM | Symposium: Responding Effectively to Child Abuse: Children’s Advocacy Centers’ Role.  
MCC Rm 336. Chair: Theodore P. Cross PhD |
MCC 240; Chair: David Marcotte, PhD |
| Sat. 12-12:50 PM | Symposium: Exploitation of Youth and Families: Perspectives on Unregulated Residential Treatment.  
MCC Rm. 336. Chair: Allison Pinto PhD |
| Sat. 1-1:50 PM  | Symposium: Current Controversies in High-Risk Adoption from Foster Care.  
MCC Rm 241. Chair: Jill Waterman PhD |

…as well as child maltreatment posters in the Division’s poster session on Saturday from 2-2:50 PM.

C. Joint Division 37 & Division 41 Task Force on Child Abuse Prevention
Past Section Presidents Bette Bottoms and Gail Goodman have joined with Joel Dvoskin, President of Division 41, the American Psychology-Law Society (APLS), to lay the foundation for an interdivisional task force on the Prevention of Child Maltreatment. The organizers’ goal is for this task force to become the center of all child maltreatment prevention activities within APA. Current Section President Sharon Portwood and Mary Haskett have agreed to co-chair the committee, which will be having a preliminary organizational meeting at the convention in New Orleans.

D. Maltreatment of Children with Disabilities
Member-at-Large Kathy Kendall Tackett has continued to collaborate with APA’s Committee on Disability Issues in Psychology (CDIP) around the issue of maltreatment of children with disabilities, although work has slowed on this issue.

E. Trauma Psychology Division
Kathy Kendall Tackett has recently been appointed to the Executive Committee of the new Division of Trauma Psychology. She hopes to represent the child maltreatment perspective in this new capacity.

F. ACT Against Violence
Sharon Portwood has been asked to work with a team of researchers organized by APA to develop an evaluation of the ACT (Adults and Children Together) Against Violence program, developed through APA. The group will have its initial meeting in August.

6. GRADUATE STUDENT ACTIVITIES
Graduate Student Representative Desi Vasquez has made a tremendous contribution to the Section through his work to expand our graduate student activities. Desi’s overarching goal for this term was to create an infrastructure of communication between students, and between students and faculty, with the purpose of encouraging interplay of actions and ideas between faculty and students.

Realizing this goal took several forms of action. The first was to assess the present state of student membership in the Section via APA resources. An accurate picture of student membership in terms of demographics and contact information would allow Section officers to communicate to student members for drumming up student action such as political initiatives, organizing student recruitment efforts, and for surveying students regarding their needs and ideas for Section. Working with the membership chair, Dr. Cindy Miller-Perrin, Desi contacted APA regarding the records kept of student members and their contact information. Unfortunately, he has not received that information from APA. In the next year, it is Desi’s hope that this snapshot of student membership can be obtained and utilized.

The next form of action taken was based on the need to consider the relatively obvious professional needs of students. In this case, Member-At-Large Dr. Jane Silovsky felt
that students would benefit from being able to access resources listing internship sites that offer training in clinical practice and research within the area of child maltreatment. Together with post-doctoral fellow Dr. Erika McElroy, Jane and Desi developed an internship survey that polled internship site directors regarding the training offered in the area of child maltreatment. Each Section officer was encouraged to give feedback regarding the survey. This survey was to be completed online. At the present time, the IT services at the University of Oklahoma Health and Sciences Center (OUHSC) are working on developing an appropriate system for hosting the survey online and storing responses. The team hopes to have a running version of the survey released by the next internship cycle ’07-’08.

Although electronic communication between students and between students and faculty has been hampered due to a lack of contact information for students, the Section has worked with the Division to provide opportunities for student professional growth in the area of networking and mentorship. Faculty and students are encouraged to participate in a student membership session at the APA meeting, organized by Division Graduate Student Representatives Kelly Kinnison, Tisha Wiley, and Maggie Stevenson. This will allow students and faculty to initiate relationships that can bear fruit, both personally and professionally.

7. AWARDS
In January, as chair of the Section’s Awards Committee, Past President Tom Lyon solicited nominations for the two Section awards - the Early Career Award for Contribution to Practice, and the Dissertation Award. In addition to posting the call in the Section newsletter, Tom posted it on the listserves for Child Abuse researchers and ISPCAN. He also sent an Early Career Award notice to the listserv for the National Association of Counsel for Children (because of its emphasis on practice). We received four nominations for the Dissertation award, but none for the Early Career Award.

In July, the Awards committee (Tom, President Sharon Portwood, and President-Elect Tony Mannarino) selected Stephanie Block, University of California Irvine (sdblock@ucdavis.edu), as the winner. The specific aim of her proposed study is to examine different types of false memory in sexually abused and nonabused adolescents and adults and to investigate the effects of trauma on memory. Trauma-related (e.g., CSA, neglect) and nontrauma-related (e.g., negative, positive) DRM lists were developed (e.g., based on undergraduates’ backward associative norms, undergraduates’ clinicians’ valence ratings). The lists were presented to adolescents and adults with versus without histories of CSA. Preliminary results indicated that maltreated adults produced fewer false memories to critical lures than did nonmaltreated adults on emotionally valenced lists (e.g., CSA, Positive, Negative lists). In contrast, maltreated adults produced more false alarms to critical lures than did nonmaltreated adults on neutral lists.

Last year’s winner Early Career Award Winner (for Research) (not previously reported) was Dr. Kimberly Mitchell, University of New Hampshire (kjm4@cisunix.unh.edu). Kimberly is a research assistant professor of Psychology at the Crimes against Children Research Center (CCRC), located at the University of New Hampshire. Her areas of research include youth Internet victimization, juvenile prostitution, and child abduction. She has directed and/or co-directed several projects including the First and Second Youth Internet Safety Studies, the Survey of Internet Mental Health Issues, the National Juvenile Online Victimization Study, and the National Juvenile Prostitution Study. She is the author of several peer-reviewed papers in her field and has spoken at numerous national conferences. Dr. Mitchell also reviews manuscripts for several peer-reviewed journals, including Child Abuse & Neglect, Developmental Psychology, Crime and Justice Research, the Journal of Forensic Psychology Practice, the Journal of Interpersonal Violence, and the Journal of Family Communication. She received her Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology from the University of Rhode Island in December of 1998 under the mentorship of Dr. Lisa Harlow. Dr. Mitchell’s graduate research focused on women’s health, family violence, and quantitative methods. Specifically, she was involved in the Women’s Health and Lifestyle Study which was a longitudinal study that examined HIV-risk in a sample of community and college women. She was also involved in research conducted at the Women’s Facility at the Rhode Island Department of Corrections that studied the impact of program participation on breaking the cycle of recidivism. In January of 1999 she began a two-year post-doctoral fellowship with David Finkelhor at the Crimes against Children Research Center at the University of New Hampshire. During that time, her work focused on youth Internet victimization and exposure to violence.

Both Ms. Block and Dr. Mitchell have received formal invitations to the APA convention and will be presented with a plaque.

8. FINANCES
A. Financial Activity 2005
At the close of 2005, the Section was doing well financially. Membership was holding steady, and many of our larger expenses in previous years (most notably the Convention costs) were substantially lower. The reasons for the lower Convention costs were due to several factors.: First, the prior year was in Hawaii, which is notoriously expensive in terms of hotel and other costs. Second, in 2005, the hospitality suite
was split between Division 37 and Division 7. Thus, instead of paying the usual 50% of the hotel, the Section paid 25% of the hotel. Third, we did not create any flyers for the convention. Costs of the newsletter for some reason were artificially low in 2004 (at $1229). However, like 2003 (during which annual costs were $2023), the 2005 costs were higher, at $2111. In 2005, the Section provided $2000 to the Task Force on Children’s Mental Health, a task force sponsored by Division 37. Even with this expense, our net income was in the black, that is, our income exceeded expenses by $2784. This positive outcome is consistent with the two prior years (although the overall amount our income exceeded expenses dropped from the approximate 5000 of the prior years).

B. Financial Activity 2006
Through mid-year of 2006, our membership has dropped in all categories, with the most notable drop occurring in graduate student members. This drop in membership has reduced our annual income by $1300, which is a substantial decrease and is quite noteworthy given that membership has been holding steady for several years. We do not, however, have any significant new costs anticipated this year (with the exception of approximately $300 in flyers for the APA convention). Moreover, it is likely that the section will continue to be financially secure and will most likely continue to be in a situation where our income exceeds our expenses. Thus, although the decrease in membership should raise some concerns, we also continue to be in a position where we can fund projects and support initiatives, at least in moderate amounts, that advance the mission of the Section.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon G. Portwood, J.D., Ph.D.

An exciting new interdivisional Task Force is being formed to address the prevention of child maltreatment. Sponsored by Divisions 37 (Child, Youth, and Family Services) and 41 (American Psychology-Law Society), the Task Force will consider the current state of science on child maltreatment prevention and work to identify and disseminate promising programs and strategies. With this knowledge, the Task Force will be in a position to develop initiatives to reach out to practitioners – across the disciplines of law and psychology, as well as others - who work with parents, children, and families. An initial planning group met at the APA Annual Meeting in New Orleans to discuss the potential structure and objectives of the Task Force. The overall goal of the Task Force developers, Bette Bottoms, Gail Goodman, and Joel Dvoskin, is for the Task Force to provide a central point of contact for all child abuse prevention activities across APA. With that in mind, the group’s initial focus will be on unifying practice and research, which could take many forms (e.g., direct service, program development, meetings, publications for “front line” professionals). Division 37 and/or Section 1 members who are interested in participating on the Task Force should contact the Chairs, Sharon Portwood (sgportwo@email.uncc.edu) or Mary Haskett (mary_haskett@ncsu.edu).

We invite our members to contribute to the newsletter! If you have suggestions for the newsletter, comments about the articles and issues discussed, or would like to contribute an article or details of recent publications to be included in future newsletters, please contact the editor at the following address along with your contact information.

Victoria Talwar
McGill University
Dept. Educational & Counselling Psychology
3700 McTavish Street
Montreal, Quebec H3A 1Y2

Email: victoria.talwar@mcgill.ca
Fax: (514) 398-6968
Section Executive Committee

President
Sharon G. Portwood, J.D., Ph.D.
Institute for Social Capital
University of North Carolina Charlotte
sgportwo@email.uncc.edu

President-Elect
Anthony Mannarino, Ph.D.
Department of Psychiatry
Drexel University College of Medicine
amannari@wpahs.org

Past-President
Thomas D. Lyon, J.D., Ph.D.
University of Southern California
Law School
tlyon@law.usc.edu

Secretary
Angela M. Crossman, Ph.D.
Department of Psychology
John Jay College of Criminal Justice
The City University of New York
acrossman@jjay-cuny.edu

Treasurer
Jodi A. Quas, Ph.D.
Department of Psychology and Social Behavior
University of California, Irvine
jquas@uci.edu

Member-At-Large
Kathleen Kendall-Tackett, Ph.D.
Family Research Lab
University of New Hampshire
kkendallt@aol.com

Member-At-Large
Jane Silovsky, Ph.D.
Center on Child Abuse and Neglect
University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center
Department of Pediatrics
jane-silovsky@ouhsc.edu

Member-At-Large
Sandra Graham-Bermann, Ph.D.
Dept. of Psychology
University of Michigan
sandragb@umich.edu

Membership Chair
Cindy Miller-Perrin, Ph.D.
Social Science Division
Pepperdine University
cperrin@pepperdine.edu

Section Program Chair
Susan Hall, J.D., Ph.D.
Pepperdine University
Susan.Hall@pepperdine.edu

Newsletter Editor
Victoria Talwar, Ph.D.
Educational & Counselling Psychology
McGill University
victoria.talwar@mcgill.ca

Newsletter of the Section on Child Maltreatment
Division 37 Administrative Office
American Psychological Association
750 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002-4242