Recruiting new members and enhancing the value of membership for existing members were major topics at the Midwinter Board of Directors Meeting held January 14-15 in San Diego. Division 37 President Michael Roberts slated the first several hours for strategic planning, asking the Board to focus on ways to provide more value to members and increase members’ involvement. “I think our members join Division 37 because they resonate with child and family issues,” he said. “But members also join organizations to get value. And if they don’t get value, they don’t renew.” Board members spent more than six hours brainstorming ideas and activities to rejuvenate Division 37.

In addition to Michael Roberts, Division 37 board members in attendance included Karen Budd, John Lochman, Bill Rae, Bridget Biggs, Rich Puddy, Cindy Miller-Perrin, Amy Damashek, Maggie Stevenson, Mary Haskett, Emily Kessler, Carol Falender, Mindy Rosenberg, Amy Green, Karen Roberts, and Jen Kaminski. Board members Julie Cohen, Matt Jarrett, and Sara Stromeyer also joined portions of the meeting by phone.

Board members felt strongly that advocacy, which has historically been central to the Division’s identity, was an area to invest resources in this year. Several officers spoke of the popular advocacy trainings sponsored by APA and Division 37 that were done in the past, and urged the group to think about ways to revive the trainings. Carol Falender (Council Representative) reported having informally polled some of her students, who indicated a clear interest in being involved in policy. “But they didn’t know how to get started,” she lamented, noting that this is a clear knowledge gap that Division 37 could fill.

Possible venues for advocacy trainings included in-person trainings in conjunction with conferences or other meetings, an advocacy training curriculum, or trainings that could be recorded or webcast to reach a broader audience. Cindy Miller-Perrin (Member-at-Large for Advocacy) will be working with her Advocacy Committee to bring one or more of these ideas to action. In addition, it was reported that Anne Culp, a past president of Division 37, is currently editing an advocacy textbook under Division 37 auspices that is likely to be published in 2013. With these efforts, the Division 37 Board hopes to increase the number of members who are equipped to educate policymakers using the best available science.

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I am a Division 37 packrat--one who saves and savors materials from the organization through the years. I have an almost complete set of newsletters moving from a newspaper format to the present day electronic version of The Child and Family Policy and Practice Advocate, Division sponsored books on the significant issues of the day affecting children, copies of white papers, task force reports, and Congressional briefing sheets, the journal, and the Child and Family Policy and Practice Reviews. The value of the accumulated archives is the opportunity to dig back through the materials as an archeologist. This collection documents the importance of the concepts and the vibrancy of the organization founded on child, youth, and family service delivery and practice, policy, and advocacy. Sifting through the strata of artifacts (and dusting off some from the year of founding in 1978) emerges the excitement, commitment, and meaningfulness of purpose of earlier division leaders and those who contributed to its development over time. As 2012 President of the Division, I share those feelings, and a sense of responsibility to fulfill the legacy evident in these historical records.

At the meeting of the Division Board in January, I noted that the officers’ roles are as stewards of the Division resources and that our actions should add value and strength to the organization. I believe that members join this particular division because they resonate to the multitude of issues addressed by the diverse members of our organization; students, early career, and seasoned professionals identify with our mission and seek to contribute to the betterment of children and families. During this year, we aim to help all members find value in the division. For many, Division 37 is their primary identity; for others, this organization is often their favorite “second division.” I indicated to the board members that often members join to get the public policy and advocacy pieces that are missing from their other content divisions. The board worked hard at the meeting to identity some strategic initiatives and plans for the future development of the division.

We enter 2012 and succeeding years with the goal of rejuvenating and capturing the purpose, commitment, and value of the Society for Child and Family Policy and Practice that is so evident in the archeological artifacts. You will learn about many of the activities in this issue of The Advocate, and as the year progresses you will be invited to participate in many activities as they are formed. Keep alert to these opportunities through the listserv, the website, and this newsletter.

Task Force Activities:
I have appointed two new task forces with an eye to enhancing Division 37 as a leadership organization taking pro-action on issues important to children and their families: Task Force on Health Promotion for Children and Adolescents and their Families, chaired by Ric Steele, and Task Force on Children and Adolescents with Serious Emotional Disturbance and their Families, chaired by Linda A. Reddy. Each of these task forces includes interdivisional representation; I am particularly pleased with the purposeful commitment of the task force members and chairs to have work products prepared for dissemination within this year. The Section on Child Maltreatment, with Mary Haskett as President, has many worthwhile activities, including the spearheading of the Interdivisional Task Force on Promoting Positive Parenting in the Context of Homelessness.

Publications:
Many of you participated last year in the survey of Division 37 members about the potential of a journal/publication on policy and practice issues. The results indicated significant interest in having more publication resources and a strong branded identity for the Society of Child and Family Policy and Practice in advocacy information and policy pieces across various topics. The board discussed a wide range of options, including starting up a new journal or adopting an existing journal with member subscriptions, creating special issues of articles in a variety of specialty journals on Division topics and acquiring print or digital versions for our members, participating in a digital set of briefing papers, etc. Financing for these publication options remains a concern and the board will not enter a commitment without due diligence. Past Division 37 president Anne Culp has a contract with Springer Publishing Corporation for a division-
This has been a very “eventful” time for colleagues in the field of child maltreatment. The recent scandal at Penn State has stimulated a national conversation about a range of issues related to abuse and neglect, and Section members have been active in the conversation. In December 2011, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Subcommittee on Children and Families held a hearing on Breaking the Silence on Child Abuse: Protection, Prevention, Intervention, and Deterrence. Staff members in APA’s Public Interest Government Relations Office and Science Government Relations Office worked with Section past president Tony Mannarino to submit written testimony to the committee. The testimony (see http://www.apa.org/about/gr/issues/cyf/mannarino-statement.pdf) addressed effects of abuse on children, mandatory reporting requirements, and the importance of evidence-based treatment to help children and families recover from the trauma of abuse. Tony called for legislation formed on the basis of sound research and action that goes beyond issues of mandated reporting. I encourage you to listen to the webcast of the hearing on the HELP Committee website: http://help.senate.gov/hearings/hearing/?id=12f577531-5056-9502-5d46-d6c877eaa515. In the most recent issue of the Section newsletter (Winter, 2012), articles by Tom Birch, Cindy Miller-Perrin, and Kerry Bolger provide additional information about the national response to the Penn State crisis.

The Section is also working to make the voice of psychologists heard through three current task forces designed to (a) improve epidemiology of child maltreatment, (b) promote positive parenting in the context of family homelessness, and (c) enhance understanding of children’s mental health among child welfare services professionals. If you are interested in learning more about these task forces or have ideas for additional challenges in child maltreatment that we should be addressing, please contact me. We welcome your involvement. The Section is thriving and growing and there is room for every existing and new member to be actively involved. I am thrilled to report that membership in the Section is UP, thanks to the efforts of our amazing Membership Committee led by Maggie Stevenson. If you’d like more information about the Section, contact Maggie at ms446@evansville.edu.

In closing, I would like to introduce several new Section Board members, including Yo Jackson as Member at Large, Katreena Scott as newsletter editor, Brittany Reyes as Student Representative-Elect, and Lauren Stokes and Barbara Oudekerk as Co-chairs of our new Early Career Psychologist Committee. This year we will be electing a new Treasurer, Member at Large, and President Elect. If you have interest in running for any of these positions on our Board, please step up and self-nominate! The Section is experiencing a very productive and dynamic period, so now is the perfect time to join and become an active member.

Note from the Editor
My goal as Editor of The Advocate is to increase our publication’s timeliness, relevance, and interest to members. In this issue of The Advocate, we are pleased to debut a new feature called Profiles in Advocacy (p. 14); a feature called Members Making News, in which we highlight Division 37 members whose work has recently been cited in the media (p. 23); and a calendar of upcoming conferences (p. 23). We also have a new Editorial Policy, which can be found on the Division 37 website in the Publications section. Please contact me at jcohen@key.org if you would like to submit an article to The Advocate, provide information about an upcoming conference or award opportunity, or share your comments and suggestions about the newsletter. I look forward to serving as your Editor for the next three years.

-Julie Cohen
Advocacy Committee has potential to impact policy in wake of Penn State scandal

By Cindy Miller-Perrin, Ph.D.: Member-At-Large for Advocacy

Former Penn State assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky was arrested in November of 2011 and is being charged with 40 criminal counts of engaging in serial child sexual abuse of minors. Sandusky is suspected of repeatedly sexually abusing eight young boys over nearly two decades. Equally disturbing are allegations that top Penn State administrators failed to report the suspected abuse to appropriate authorities. The Penn State scandal has spurred policymakers from across the country to consider what they can do to protect children from abuse and neglect. Members of Division 37 and the Section on Child Maltreatment are actively involved in informing legislators on prevention, treatment, and research priorities related to child maltreatment which has the potential to impact policy decisions.

In response to the Penn State scandal, legislators have focused much of their attention on mandatory reporting. In Congress, seven different bills have been introduced to broaden mandatory reporting requirements (for example, by making all adults mandatory reporters) and to increase punishments for not reporting (for instance, by making failure to report abuse a felony, or by prohibiting federal funding to any institution of higher education if one of its employees fails to report). Bills on child abuse reporting have also been introduced in 25 states during the 2012 legislative session, according to the National Council of State Legislatures. Some advocates have argued, however, that increasing mandatory reporting requirements is not an evidence-based policy and that such a policy does not address important prevention and treatment priorities for children who experience abuse. For example, most children who are abused or neglected do not receive mental health services that can help them heal from these experiences.

The Division 37 Advocacy Committee has been in communication with the APA Public Interest and Science Government Relations Offices and has accepted an invitation to work with them and other stakeholders to update APA’s federal policy recommendations on child abuse and neglect. Committee members are currently reviewing proposed legislation and developing policy recommendations to continue to provide policymakers with priorities informed by experts in the field of child maltreatment. If interested in joining this effort, you may contact Cindy Miller-Perrin, Division 37 Member-At-Large for Advocacy and Section past president (cindy.perrin@pepperdine.edu).

FROM THE PRESIDENT, continued from page 2: sponsored book, Child and Family Advocacy: Bridging the Gaps Among Research, Practice and Policy, with a superb list of contributors. Division members and representatives continue to advocate for the proposed APA resolution on the physical punishment of children.

Policy Work:

The Child Caucus of the APA Council of Representatives, chaired by Division 37 Representative Carol Falender, focuses APA’s attention on children’s issues that arise in official APA actions and policy. The Interdivisional Task Force on Children’s Mental Health (IDTF), chaired by Division member Mary Ann McCabe, has been an active group within and outside of APA. Division 37 continues to be a leader in IDTF and the Child Caucus, by initiating significant activities and being vigilant about the continuing challenges to children’s mental and physical health and development.

The Board of Directors:

I appreciate all the members of the Board who serve as volunteers contributing their talents and energies to our division. These and others are bringing their immense energy and thoughtfulness to the tasks serving you as members. This issue of The Advocate and throughout the year will provide more details and highlight members and volunteers who are contributing to an active and relevant Division.

We invite your participation. We hope to fulfill the mission of the Division articulated at its founding and as continued through the decades so that future psychology archeologists will sift through some dusty archives and determine that this Division 37 civilization made a difference.
In 2011, the focus of the Division 37 Member-At-Large for Task Forces/ Liaisons and Diversity was on taking stock and establishing procedures for generating and establishing new task forces. That activity has been most productive for our current President, Michael Roberts because at the beginning of his term, he initiated two unique task forces that are now up and running.

The first is the Task Force on Health Promotion for Children and Adolescents and their Families, chaired by Ric Steele, Ph.D., of the University of Kansas. The special charge to this task force is to develop a review of the pediatric, public health, and psychological literature on health promotion, barriers, and opportunities, and make recommendations for addressing these vital and timely issues, e.g. summarize recent articulations of health promotion initiatives (such as the National Prevention Strategy) for a psychology readership, identify roles of interdisciplinary contributions, consider a research agenda to meet needs of children for promotion of health and prevention of problems, explore a set of recommendations for addressing the health promotion needs of children and adolescents in different contexts and settings, at different levels of approach, and/or develop an outline of resources needed to be developed for practitioners and investigators. Primary products of this group could range from a white paper suitable for journal publication to the development of recommendations for APA to foster implementation concerning health promotion in children and adolescents. Task Force members include: Maureen Black, Ph.D. - University of Maryland School of Medicine; Bernard Fuemmeler, Ph.D., MPH - Duke University; Terry Huang, Ph.D., MPH - University of Nebraska Medical Center; Elizabeth McQuaid, Ph.D. - Director of the Brown Clinical Psychology Training Consortium; Dawn Wilson, Ph.D. - University of South Carolina; and Jennifer Wyatt Kaminski, Ph.D. - Special Consultant to the Task Force.

The second effort is actually an Interdivisional Task Force on Children and Adolescents with Serious Emotional Disturbance and their Families, chaired by Linda A. Reddy, Ph.D. of Rutgers University. The special charge of this task force is to be a necessary and important sequel to the recent APA Task Force on Adult Serious Mental Illness. That requires this task force to first critically examine the current scientific literature on the utility of assessing (screening, diagnostic, and progress monitoring) prevention interventions, as well as treatment intervention programs for children and adolescents with serious emotional disturbance and their families. Second, the task force will identify barriers and facilitators for access to appropriate educational, mental health, and health-related services. Third, the task force will identify evidence-based practices (assessment, prevention interventions, and treatment interventions) for this population. Finally, the task force will propose future directions for advocacy (policy), research, training, and practice. Primary products will range from a white paper suitable for journal publication to the development of guidelines for service implementation concerning youth with serious emotional disturbance as a resolution for possible review and approval by the APA Board of Directors and the Council of Representatives. Distinguished members of the Task Force include Camille Randall, Ph.D. - Hope Institute; Cynthia Riccio, Ph.D. - TAMU; Sharon Hoover Stephen, Ph.D. – University of Maryland; and Nancy Lever, Ph.D. – University of Maryland.

Chairs of both task forces have already begun meeting individually with their respective task force committees as well as with each other to explore alignment of activities, products, and to share lessons learned. I look forward to providing future updates on these task forces and other activities of the various Division 37 Liaisons to other APA Divisions and Committees. If you have any questions, please contact me at rpuddy@cdc.gov.
Dear Scott,

In a few years I'll be graduating with my PhD in developmental psychology. I'm trying to figure out how to decide between a career in academia, think tanks, or the government. I like doing research, and I enjoy collaborating with other people. I would like to do policy relevant work. Here are my questions...

Do you think the first job out of college determines the rest of your life (for example, if you get a government job will it be hard to go back to academia)?

How should one decide what type of job to take right out of grad school (given the job qualities that I like, described above)?

Sincerely,

Unsure

Dear Unsure,

Sometimes we think that our next step will dictate our future and that making one move over another could lead to regret. For many young professionals, the opportunity to leave graduate school is anticipated with optimism. For others, thinking about life after graduate school may seem quite daunting and overwhelming. Most people have ambivalence, with the combined excitement of finally being done with school and getting a “real” job along with the nervousness about what lies ahead. I asked a few psychologists who have made transitions between various sectors (e.g., academic, governmental, non-governmental) to respond to your questions. Both people were optimistic about transitioning into and out of academia, and each offered advice for thinking about your career fit as well as how to be successful for a potential transition.

Both of our experts offered suggestions that might help you in taking your first steps after receiving your Ph.D. Because you already know what an academic setting is like, you will obviously have been exposed to its positive and negative characteristics. There are many non-academic jobs out there with a diverse array of experiences. Non-academic jobs can offer tremendous opportunities for collaboration and networking with government and academic colleagues, impacting a broad array of issues, developing a wide variety of skills and expertise, and seeing firsthand how governmental and non-governmental organizations work in terms of funding and project completion. Although it can be more difficult to carve out your own research niche and be able to design projects related to your specific interests in non-academic jobs, your experiences will help you develop a competitive background. Because you will often be expected to become an expert on a wide variety of issues, you may be viewed later on by colleagues in academic institutions as a potential collaborator, someone who could teach a variety of courses, and someone who has the skill set to effectively contribute to the service duties of the institution. In addition, your experience behind the scenes on understanding how funding announcements are selected, written, reviewed, and awarded will demonstrate to potential academic institutions that you have promise for extramural funding. You can further make yourself more competitive for future academic jobs (as well as helping you to advance in a non-academic career) by staying current on the literature in a particular area of interest and publishing your own research using secondary data (available from government agencies and academic research centers, such as the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/).

If you are interested in conducting policy-relevant research in a collaborative environment, there are several avenues that you can choose. A couple of positions that you might consider are one of the American Psychological Association’s or the...
The Early Career Psychologist (ECP) Committee has been up to some exciting business lately! If you’re attending the 2012 APA Convention in Orlando, Florida, I hope you will join us for the **ECP mentoring symposium**. The symposium will provide information about ways to succeed in a variety of jobs serving children and families. The symposium will include presentations from five mid- to senior-level psychologists (representing Divisions 37, 53, 54, and 12) who work in several settings, including academic, hospital, private practice, policy centers, and government. Each panelist will provide information about what type of work their job involves, how to get and keep a job in each setting, and the challenges and rewards of working in each setting. Check the convention program for the details of this exciting event!

Also at the 2012 APA Convention, we will be holding a **Division 37 ECP social hour**. So, if you’re interested in networking with some ECP’s with similar interests, this is your chance! It’s also a good opportunity to learn more about Division 37. Stay tuned on the listserv for more details!

The ECP Committee has also developed a resource database to provide ECP’s with the opportunity to benefit from other people’s work samples and to facilitate networking between early career professionals. The resource bank includes sample copies of course syllabi, short member biosketches, and other relevant documents of interest to early career psychologists working in the areas of child and family research, policy, and practice. To subscribe, send an email to: division37ecps-subscribe@yahoogroups.com with 'Subscribe.' Once your account is approved, you will be provided with further instructions on how to access and utilize the group. **Also, we are in need of more material**, so please send materials (e.g., copies of course syllabi, funded grant proposals, clinical consent templates) to Miranda Gilmore at drmirandagilmore@hotmail.com.

Finally, as you can see, we’re on our second installment of the ECP advice column for the Advocate newsletter. If you have a question for our advice column, please send it to Amy.Damashek@wmich.edu. I look forward to hearing from you! Also, if you’re interested in becoming active in the ECP Committee or being on our Division 37 ECP listserv, please contact me.

**ADVICE COLUMN CONTINUED:** Society for Research on Child Development’s (SRCD) fellowships in Congress or the Executive Branch (see [http://www.apa.org/about/gr/fellows/index.aspx](http://www.apa.org/about/gr/fellows/index.aspx), [http://www.srcd.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=181&Itemid=529](http://www.srcd.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=181&Itemid=529)). In addition, there are various governmental and non-governmental think tanks that offer internships and fellowships that might be of interest. The Division 37 student and member listservs as well as the listserv for the Consortium of University-based Child and Family Policy Centers (see [http://www.childpolicyuniversityconsortium.com](http://www.childpolicyuniversityconsortium.com)) are good resources for learning about these and other postdoctoral opportunities.

Another thing that you should keep in mind is that your ideal career criteria can be found in academic as well as non-academic settings. There are academic institutions with research centers or departments that focus on policy-related research. An academic position in such a department can provide you with opportunities to collaborate with others on policy-relevant projects. Some examples include Duke Center for Child and Family Policy, George Washington University Center for Family Studies, and New York University Institute of Human Development and Social Change. Overall, you can apply to positions from multiple sectors and make a decision on your first job from the available offers based on what seems to fit your short- and long-term goals. Be assured that your first step does not mean your last, no matter which way you go. Notably, while you are in your first position, you may find it worthwhile to become involved in opportunities that maximize your versatility. If you are focusing on your ultimate career position, your first job may get you to it either more or less quickly, but it does not determine whether or not you get there. Besides, the journey, with all of its unique experiences, is really what makes a remarkable career.
Now is the time to get involved with the Division 37’s student activities and committees. The Executive Board held its annual midwinter meeting in January and approved the creation of many exciting new opportunities for students to get involved. Whether you are looking for ways to get started as a long-term participant in Division 37 activities or participate in a short-term activity while developing professional skills and relationships, we have opportunities for you.

The Student Board, first introduced in 2010, has redefined some of its committees and is excited to offer new opportunities for students to get involved in each of these committees.

• The Membership Committee
  The membership committee helps oversee student membership and aids in recruitment and retention of new members. This committee is working on developing connections with other child and family related divisions and organizations to recruit members and identify resources. To get involved with this committee contact the co-chairs, Will Martinez (wmartin3@depaul.edu) and Erin Bumgarner (erin.k.bumgarner@gmail.com).

• The Communications Committee
  The communications committee works to involve students in division publications and to provide students with resources relevant to Division 37. This committee has several exciting projects with ample opportunities for involvement including:
  The Publications Work Group  – This group includes students interested in writing brief articles for publication in The Advocate. Articles may be solicited by the communications chair (such as for the new Profiles in Advocacy column debuting in this issue) or suggested by authors.
  The Website and Technology Work Group  – This group works to maintain the student section of the Division 37 website, identify and post resources for the student listserv, and – its latest project – research and develop a proposal for Division 37’s first Facebook page.
  The Advocate Editorial Board Member  – The student in this position works with the president, a member from the early career professionals group, and the Advocate editor to help to prepare Advocate issues for publication.
  To get involved with this committee or any of the work groups, contact committee chair Diane Miller (dwm98@cornell.edu).

• The Programming Committee
  The programming committee works with members on the Executive Committee for Division 37 to plan student-oriented programming at APA and other conferences related to child and family policy. The committee is currently in the process of preparing for the APA National Convention in August. To get involved with this committee, contact co-chairs Lauren Legato (Lauren Legato (llegato@depaul.edu) and Angela Tunno (angela.tunno@ku.edu).

• Other Opportunities for Student Involvement
  The Student Board has many other opportunities for involvement, including the student listserv (send an email to div37stu@yahoo.com with the words "new member" typed in the subject line to join), involvement on Division 37 task forces and work groups, development of proposal for a new mentoring program, and developing and monitoring a monthly poll of members. To get involved in any of these activities, for questions about student involvement in Division 37, or to suggest new activities for the Student Board, contact your friendly student representative, Emily Kessler (ekesslerccpp@ku.edu).

Emily Kessler is a third-year graduate student in the Clinical Child Psychology Program at the University of Kansas. She developed an interest in pediatric psychology while attending Agnes Scott College in Atlanta. Emily’s research interests include improving access to and quality of care among pediatric populations and the effective integration of physical and mental health care for children.
Student Dissertation Award

Division 37 gives an award annually for a completed doctoral dissertation concerning issues of social policy, service delivery, welfare, and/or advocacy for children, youth, and families that best exemplifies the mission of the Society. Division 37 is committed to the application of psychological knowledge to advocacy, service delivery, and public policies affecting children, youth, and families. Dissertations submitted for the award should reflect this goal, including an explicit discussion of how the dissertation research contributes to policy and advocacy on behalf of children and families. Dissertations must have been completed within the past two years. The Dissertation Award includes a cash award of $400.

Deadline: June 1

How to Apply: Students should submit their completed, approved dissertations electronically, along with a copy/facsimile of the signed cover sheet, and an abstract of no more than 1,000 words summarizing the research and its relevance to Division 37's mission. Applicants must be members of Division 37.

Submissions should be sent to: Karen S. Budd, Ph.D., Past President at kbudd@depaul.edu

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1: Board members also want to engage more members in local activities and learn about what members are already doing locally, including networking and mentoring opportunities, advocacy trainings, community service projects, or visits with local legislators. Michael Roberts suggested starting in cities with high member densities. Past President Karen Budd indicated that the Chicago area has many active members, so might be good for the inaugural event. Cindy Miller-Perrin plans to poll the listserv to find out what members are doing and where, so please respond when she emails.

Board members also felt strongly that they needed to make a stronger push to recruit and retain Early Career Psychologists (ECPs) and students. Amy Damashek (Member-at-Large for ECPs) and Emily Kessler (Graduate Student Representative) have been working with committees of their constituent members, and brought many new ideas forward. Networking and social events for both ECPs and students will be held at this year’s APA Convention, and both agreed with the rest of the Board that a more formal mentoring program would be beneficial and attractive to our younger members. The Board members decided to begin holding monthly conference calls to continue to develop ideas from the mid-winter meeting; the first agenda item chosen for the Board’s call on February 16 was mentoring initiatives.

Another hot topic in the Board’s discussion was the online survey Michael Roberts circulated to members about the possibility of having a Division 37 journal. Members’ responses to the survey question about whether Division 37 needed a journal ran the gamut from strongly in favor to strongly opposed, without a clear mandate for a division journal. One clear message from some members was that the field lacks a consistent outlet for articles on child and family policy issues. Board members generated several ideas to fill that need. Michael Roberts will be talking to a small set of suggested journal editors and publishers to explore division sponsorship of a special issue of a journal that is aligned with Division 37’s mission and priorities. Sponsorship would provide an outlet for publishing articles by or for our members, without incurring the costs and risks of starting up a new journal. Board Members were enthusiastic about this opportunity and hoped that authors and readers would benefit from this activity.

Board members also discussed the use of social networking such as Facebook or Twitter to better engage with members. Mary Haskett (Section President) noted that a lot of student members check their Facebook and Twitter accounts more regularly than their email and more often than they would go to the Division 37 website. Emily Kessler highlighted other benefits of social networking, including Facebook’s calendar that provides reminders for events every time someone logs on. Meeting attendees noted that if the Division began advertising and conducting more local activities, those reminders would be valuable tools. Such technologies are not without disadvantages or risks, of course, and the Board discussed the need for adopting policies that delineate what constitutes appropriate online behaviors. Carol Falender suggested that we provide an educational component to using Facebook, e.g., what you should and should not post, conveying a professional image, the issue that nothing posted online ever truly disappears when you delete it. The Board agreed to continue looking into the various applications and privacy settings available to organizations using Facebook, and decided they would move forward carefully and thoughtfully.

With these and other ideas discussed at the meeting, the Division Board hopes to engage more members in more activities this year. If you are interested in hearing more about or becoming involved in these initiatives, contact Membership Chair Amy Green at a4green@ucsd.edu.
Kathy S. Katz, Ph.D.

Kathy S. Katz, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the Departments of Psychiatry and Pediatrics at Georgetown University Medical Center. She is a Clinical Child Psychologist with a particular interest in early identification and intervention for individuals from urban high risk populations. Dr. Katz is the author of an APA report, Addressing Missed Opportunities for Early Childhood Mental Health Intervention: Current Knowledge and Policy Implications (2003), completed as part of her term on the Committee on Children Youth and Families. Dr. Katz has participated on a number of APA and local Task Forces directed to affecting policy pertaining to mental health and development issues of children and their families. She is a past member of executive boards of Divisions 7, 37, 53 and 54. Dr. Katz was a principal investigator in the collaborative NICHD funded research program, the NIH-DC Initiative to Reduce Infant Mortality in Minority populations. This research increased her awareness of policy needs for addressing mental health, development and education needs of underserved populations.

Statement of Interest: I have been involved for many years in psychology research, clinical service and training, with a particular interest in early identification and intervention for high risk populations. As a principal investigator in the collaborative NIH-DC Initiative to Reduce Infant Mortality in Minority populations, I developed curricula, tested in different phases of the Initiative, focusing on: parenting skills in high risk mothers, risks of depression, smoking and intimate partner violence in pregnant minority women, and helping teen mothers delay another pregnancy through cell-phone counseling. My involvement with community-based research and services, has made me aware of the need for expanded programs to improve outcomes for children and their families. Translation of findings of research into policies that improve the lives of children, is a critical need across our nation. Through my term as a member and a liaison on the Committee on Children, Youth and Families, I learned a great deal about how APA can play a role in affecting change of this type. Being based in Washington, DC, I feel that I can serve the SCFPP well, by bringing the work of our members to the attention of policy makers and change agents. I would hope to work collaboratively with other child and family focused divisions, committees, and Task Forces within APA to strengthen APA’s role in advocacy for children and families.

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

Dr. Sharon G. Portwood earned her J.D. from the University of Texas School of Law, and after more than ten years as a practicing trial attorney, she received her Ph.D. in Psychology from the University of Virginia. Dr. Portwood currently serves as Professor of Public Health Sciences and Adjunct Professor of Psychology at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. From 2005-2011, she also served as the first Executive Director of the Institute for Social Capital, a collaborative venture between the University and local non-profits, governmental agencies, and community organizations (1) to strengthen the ability of area agencies to conduct data analysis, data-based planning, and program evaluation and (2) to develop a database providing individual-level data to support community-based research. Dr. Portwood has authored numerous journal articles and book chapters covering a range of topics, including the prevention of youth and family violence, children’s mental health, public policy, advocacy, and effective community collaboration. She is co-author of the legal textbook, Scientific Evidence in Civil and Criminal Cases (5th ed.), and has presented her work both nationally and internationally. Dr. Portwood has consulted with numerous government and not-for-profit agencies in regard to needs assessment; professional training; and program development, implementation, and evaluation. She has served as Principal Investigator for multiple federal grant-funded projects, including a multi-site evaluation of APA’s ACT Parents Raising Safe Kids Program, a primary child maltreatment prevention program. Dr. Portwood is a fellow of the American Psychological Association and Past-President of APA’s Section on Child Maltreatment.

Statement of Interest: Division 37 has been my APA “home” since soon after my graduation from the University of Virginia, so I am very excited at the prospect of serving as its President. Given my interests in law, psychology, and public health applied to a broad spectrum of policy issues relevant to children, youth, and families, I have always CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE
Candidates for Member-at-Large for Task Forces & Diversity

Kerri L. Kim, PhD.
Kerri L. Kim, Ph.D. is currently a licensed clinical psychologist in the State of Rhode Island and employed with the Pediatric Mood, Imaging and Neurodevelopment (PediMIND) Program at Bradley Hospital (a major teaching affiliate of Brown University and one of the nation’s oldest free-standing pediatric psychiatric hospitals). She received her doctoral degree from the Clinical Child Psychology Program at the University of Kansas and completed both her pre- and post-doctoral fellowships at Children’s National Medical Center. The overarching goal of Dr. Kim’s research on childhood stress and resilience are to promote positive outcomes (i.e., optimal psychosocial health despite the influence of life stressors). Specifically, Dr. Kim’s objectives are to: (1) continue clarifying the processes underlying child psychosocial outcomes via the identification of potential moderating/mediating individual (e.g., brain and behavior) and environment–level (e.g., family, peer, school, cultural) factors and (2) utilize data to advance the field and make available to children and families assessments and interventions that best foster resilient outcomes.

Anita Jones Thomas, Ph.D.
Anita Jones Thomas, Ph.D., is associate professor and Graduate Program Director at Loyola University Chicago, Counseling Psychology, where she teaches courses in multicultural issues, family therapy, and human development. Her research interests include racial identity, racial socialization, and parenting issues for African Americans. She has two textbooks on multicultural counseling and psychology. She is currently writing a blog on cultural issues for families at http://cultureconnections4kids.blogspot.com. She has also conducted training seminars and workshops on multicultural issues for state and national professional organizations in counseling and psychology, hospitals and corporations, as well as served as a consultant for human service organizations.

Dr. Thomas has served in APA addressing issues for children, youth, and diverse families. She was a member of the Task Force on Resilience and Strength of Black Children and Adolescents from 2006-2008. She has also served on the APA’s Committee for Children, Youth, and Families from 2008-2010, serving as chair in 2010. As a member of the committee, she was able to write a policy brief on spirituality in African American families which was presented to the Congressional Black Caucus. She has also participated in APA Public Interest Directorate Government Relations Hill visits.

PORTWOOD CANDIDATE STATEMENT: valued the opportunities that Division 37 has provided me to interact with a diverse group of colleagues, including researchers, practitioners, human service providers, advocates, policymakers, and students, all of whom share a passion not only for expanding their own knowledge and expertise, but also for contributing to improving lives through the dissemination and application of their work - and of good science in general. It is the unique ability of Division 37 to bring together individuals to advance science and policy, as well as the links between the two, on which I would like to build to enhance the benefits of membership for existing members and to attract new members and collaborators. Having previously served on the Executive Committee of the Division for two years and as a member of the Executive Committee of the Section on Child Maltreatment for eight years, including a term as Section President, I bring a strong set of administrative, organizational, communication, and leadership skills to this position. These experiences, along with my service on the APA Committee on Legal Issues, have also taught me how to work effectively within the APA to advance the Division and its goals.
Abridged Minutes: Division 37 Board of Directors’  
Midwinter Meeting 2012, January 14-15, San Diego  
By Jennifer Kaminski Ph.D., Division 37 Secretary

Officers attending: Michael Roberts (President), Karen Budd (Past President), John Lochman (President-Elect), Bill Rae (Treasurer), Bridget Biggs (2012 Program Chair), Rich Puddy (Member-at-Large: Task Forces & Diversity), Cindy Miller-Perrin (Member-at-Large: Advocacy), Amy Damashek (Member-at-Large: Early Career Psychologists), Maggie Stevenson (Member-at-Large: Technology & Communications), Mary Haskett (Section President), Emily Kessler (2012 Graduate Student Representative), Carol Falender (Council Representative), Mindy Rosenberg (Fellows Chair), Amy Green (Membership Chair), Karen Roberts (Administrative Officer), Jen Kaminski (Secretary).

Officers attending by telephone: Julie Cohen (Advocate Editor), Matt Jarrett (2013 Program Chair), Sara Stromeyer (2013 Graduate Student Representative).

Michael convened the board meeting and welcomed everyone and expressing his appreciation for the opportunity to serve as President this year. Jen moved to accept the convention meeting minutes. The motion was seconded and passed.

Michael reviewed the agenda, highlighting that the meeting would begin with brainstorming and strategic planning for ways to add value and strengths to the Division in addition to increasing membership benefits.

The following ideas, activities and initiatives were brainstormed over the next several hours:

- Advocacy training, either in conjunction with Convention or locally (to be recorded, webcasted and/or archived on the Division website to broaden the reach);
- Sponsoring or co-sponsoring a midyear Division conference - Creating an advocacy training curriculum (could be done in conjunction with the expected 2013 publication of the Division-sponsored advocacy textbook that Anne Culp is editing);
- Creating translation products from previous Division publications and task force reports, to make the information more widely accessible and actionable;
- Sponsoring service or advocacy activities the day prior to Convention;
- Using social networking tools such as Facebook and/or Twitter to increase visibility, networking and activities (it was also suggested that we conduct/provide educational opportunities to students and ECPs on guidelines for professional online activity);
- Consider new Sections or member interest groups on child/family topics, such as juvenile justice, childhood obesity, the impact of immigration laws on children and families, human trafficking, childhood poverty, child prostitution, parenting, loss of family supports, valuing and supporting early childhood and early childhood education;
- Initiating partnerships with new groups, organizations, foundations, agencies, etc.;
- Meet-ups locally where there are member densities to facilitate professional networking, or even conduct a policy symposium;
- A more formal mentoring program;
- A Division 37 analogue to APA’s Clinician’s Research Digest (a summary of recent relevant research for clinicians);
- Rejuvenating the Division website to include more information and resources, and links to other relevant sites and organizations;
- Reinstating the “Question of the Month” quick membership poll via the listserv; and
- Enlisting more members (including established, ECPs and students) in workgroups and committees to accomplish the above initiatives.

[Members with a particular interest in advancing any of these initiatives should contact Amy Green, Membership Chair, at a4green@ucsd.edu. For those the Board decides to act on this year, we will also send out invitations for participation via email and/or the listserv.]

Michael proposed that the Board convene monthly via conference call in 2012 in order to facilitate ongoing communication and efforts. The Board agreed. Discussion next moved to the possibility of a Division journal. Michael had distributed a member poll on a new journal. Though many respondents reported that there is a need for an outlet for policy-relevant pieces, some respondents also indicated a reluctance to start a new journal. Board members discussed a variety of considerations, including cost and the likelihood of getting a steady supply of quality submissions. The group brainstormed other publication avenues, including online publishing, special issues or special sections of other journals, and policy briefs similar to SRCD. The Division Board voted not to pursue an independent journal, instead seeking alternative value-added options to meet the informational needs.

Mindy provided updates on Fellows business, including three applications for New Fellow Status. There was a successful motion to approve these three candidates so their applications can be forwarded to APA for the final determination. Mindy also received one application for Current Fellow status, which was approved by the Fellows Committee. [Members who would like information about applying for Fellow status should contact Mindy Rosenberg, Fellows Chair, at mindyrosenberg@gmail.com.]

During breakfast Sunday morning, officers split up into workgroups to focus on three issues: Membership Recruitment/Renewal, Activities & Advocacy, Publications, and Technology & Student Involvement. The Membership Recruitment/Renewal group made necessary adjustments to the renewal form, discussed the process of verifying membership for listserv subscribers, created a new membership recruitment form, and discussed the possibility of online dues payment. We hope to be able to accept credit card payments before the 2013 renewal notices go out in Sept./Oct. 2012.

The Activities & Advocacy group discussed ways to increase activities and advocacy. They will begin by an email solicitation asking members to share and report on activities they are doing on the local, state or national level related to child and family policies. They expect responses will reveal opportunities to involve other members in the same area. The group also discussed initiating new activities, especially in
The Technology & Student Involvement group discussed a variety of technologies of potential use to the Division, including the website, Facebook and Twitter. Emily reported that the Student Board has ideas for reformatting the website, and would like to be involved in implementing them. Emily will also continue to investigate Facebook’s upcoming changes that provide professional groups specific privacy tools and configurations to assist in managing a group page. The Student Board will take on the task of reinstating the “Question of the Month” via the listserv and website. [Students or other members interested in these activities can contact Emily Kessler, Graduate Student Representative, at ekesslercpp@ku.edu.]

Discussion moved to the Advocate, and ways to increase its value. Julie, who just began her Editorship, brought many new ideas to the Board (e.g., profiling prominent advocates for children and families, profiling individual members, spotlighting members in the news, and listing upcoming conferences of interest). The Board concurred with all of them, and offered suggestions to facilitate their implementation, such as enlisting students and ECPs to help write some columns and brainstorming names of advocates to be profiled. In accordance with the Officer’s Manual, Julie will be forming an Editorial Board. Michael agreed to serve on it, and Julie will recruit a few others, including an ECP and a graduate student. Julie had also drafted an Editorial Policy, based on the American Psychologist. The Board suggested a few revisions, and the revised Editorial Policy was moved, seconded and approved. [Members interested in getting more involved in the Advocate can reach Julie Cohen, Advocate Editor, at juliecohen3@gmail.com.]

Bill circulated a proposed 2012 budget. He reported that we were circumspect in our spending in 2011 but our investments lost money. Bill will investigate other investment avenues this year, especially low- or no-fee options. Board members also felt we need to be socially responsible in our investing. Bill noted that although we want to continue to be conservative in our spending, we also want to spend when there is sufficient value to be gained. He urged the Board to be supportive of spending for activities that increase visibility, activity and value to members.

Karen Budd moved the approval of a slate of officer candidates for the 2012 elections to include Kathy Katz and Sharon Portwood for President-Elect, and Kerri Kim and Anita Thomas for Member-at-Large for Task Forces & Diversity. The motion was seconded and approved. Karen next started discussion on the Hobbs nomination that was circulated prior to the Board meeting: Sue Limber. The Board recalled her many contributions and efforts in discussion, reviewed the seven letters of support in favor of the nomination, then seconded and approved giving the award to Sue.

A number of appointments were necessary for liaisons and monitors to APA boards and committees; these are being appointed as needed arises. Openings will be announced on the Division listserv and volunteers solicited. [Members interested in potentially serving in any of these capacities should contact Rich Puddy, Member-at-Large for Task Forces & Diversity, at RPuddy@cdc.gov.]

Bridget reported that APA was continuing to cut Divisions’ program hours. She received 31 poster submissions, of which 22 were accepted and will be presented in a single poster session. Other substantive and nonsubstantive programming hours were still being discussed and negotiated, so Bridget will circulate the final submitted program to the Board soon.

Emily reported that the Student Board has been focusing on membership. She welcomes more ideas from the Board on how we can optimize the partnership with the University-Based Child and Family Policy Consortium. A budget of $500 for student activities this year was approved. Emily intends to do a student breakfast again this year at convention, as it went well last year. Emily next proposed having a student on each task force, either as liaison or as active participant. The Board agreed this was a good way to involve students.

Cindy reported on her meeting with Kerry Bolger from APA’s Public Interest Directorate-Government Relations Office. There is currently Congressional interest in child maltreatment due to the Penn State story (i.e., alleged molestation of youth). APA and the Division can contribute expertise to help translate knowledge into effective action. Cindy will be having another conference call with Kerry.

Amy Damashek reported excitement on and about the ECP Board. They submitted a symposium on mentoring and tips for being successful in different career tracks. They have also put together a panel of senior psychologists for an advice column in the Advocate. They have a Yahoo group resource database with sample syllabi, and Amy asked for suggestions or donations of other materials (e.g., successful grant applications, etc). Bill suggested a $200 budget for ECP activities this year at convention. [ECPs who want to get more involved in Division activities are encouraged to contact Amy Damashek, Member-at-Large for ECPs, at amy.damashek@wmich.edu.]

Michael reported that we have been asked to support the national Multicultural Conference, a major event of the Public Interest Directorate. The Board expressed concern about the room in our budget related to the suggested levels of giving, and felt that there were other ways our limited funds support multicultural diversity. There was a motion to find other ways to support multicultural diversity with $400 this year, which was seconded and approved.

Bill circulated a revised budget, including total projected expenses of $22,250 for 2012. There was a motion to approve the budget, which was seconded and passed.

Michael thanked everyone for their time, attention and energy. There was a motion to adjourn, which was seconded and passed. Meeting adjourned at 5:00pm Sunday.
Dr. Nicholas Hobbs (1915-1983) is considered by many to be a pioneer of advocacy and policy because of the ways in which he conceptualized and approached some of the most difficult problems facing our nation’s youth. Dr. Hobbs was devoted to understanding and improving the lives of children with emotional disturbances and developmental or intellectual disabilities. In a dedication to Hobbs that Edward Zigler (1985) wrote in the Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, he cited Hobbs’ ability to utilize current resources and undertake the arduous process of creating resources when needed for vulnerable populations.

Dr. Hobbs influenced his colleagues and mentees, as well as national policy concerning the health and well-being of children. Dr. Hobbs’ contributions were accomplished through designing and conducting seminal research projects, developing interventions, and teaching future psychologists, advocates and policymakers. Dr. Hobbs also took an active role in advocacy and policy through his work in establishing multidisciplinary training, research and treatment sites, and serving on regional and national committees and panels.

To better address the needs of children, Dr. Hobbs broadened his scope of impact by investing his time into training future leaders in the field. He devoted energy into helping establish training centers in clinical psychology, counseling psychology, school psychology, special education leadership, and research in intellectual disabilities. Dr. Hobbs also co-founded the John F. Kennedy Center for Research on Education and Human Development, better known now as the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center, which is a part of a network of centers in research, service, and training related to developmental disabilities. Toward the end of his career, Dr. Hobbs served as the director of the Center for the Study of Families and Children at Vanderbilt’s Institute for Public Policy Studies. His work not only contributed to the field of child psychology, but also provided opportunities for other professionals to contribute meaningfully through research and service.

Dr. Hobbs was an advocate for increasing awareness of children’s needs and for improving intervention programs for vulnerable children. Dr. Hobbs brought national attention to childhood developmental and intellectual disabilities as a member of President John F. Kennedy’s Panel on Mental Retardation, which led to the creation of mental retardation research centers across the country. In addition, during his time as a member of the advisory committee on child development of the National Research Council and of the Congressional Select Panel for the Promotion of Child Health, Dr. Hobbs advocated for the improvement of services for all children. Additionally, he was the vice-chair of the Joint Commission on Mental Health and Illness which created the Community Mental Health Centers Act (1963), providing federal funding for community mental health centers across the United States.

One of Dr. Hobbs’ most significant and enduring contributions was the development of Project Re-ED, a model of intervention for emotionally and/or behaviorally disturbed youth. It is a systematic, ecological approach that focuses on children’s strengths and on improving the interactions between the children and the significant individuals or systems already in their lives (Zigler, 1985). His efforts live on, as several schools and organizations across the country still use the Re-ED model for intervening in the lives of troubled and developmentally challenged children.

For his many accomplishments and contributions to the field of child psychology, the American Psychological Association presented Dr. Hobbs with the well-deserved Award for Distinguished Professional Contributions and the Award for Distinguished Contribution to Psychology in the Public Interest. Dr. Hobbs is an impeccable example of how psychologists can improve the lives of children in need through policy and advocacy. Not only did he devote his life to the betterment of youth, but he also influenced the perspectives and actions of other professionals.

Division 37 honors Nicholas Hobbs with an Award named in his honor to recognize a psychologist who exemplifies the ideals and devotion to child advocacy/policy characterized by this outstanding Pioneer in Advocacy.
Nominations for Fellow status in Division 37 are invited from the membership. Self-nominations are welcome. APA Fellow status requires evidence of unusual and outstanding contributions or performance in psychology that has had a national impact beyond a local, state, or regional level.

Division Criteria for Fellowship can have a broad range, reflecting the diverse roles and interest areas of members involved with child, youth, family policy and practice. Examples of significant contributions include, but are not limited to the following:

- Publication of research, policy statements, or position papers in refereed journals; book chapters; invited articles, monographs or newsletters
- Authorship or editorship of books; Editorial Board or editorship of psychological journals or monograph series related to the field
- Outstanding teaching/training (e.g., innovative course/curriculum development with documented impact)
- Advocacy on behalf of children, youth and families that made a nationally visible contribution (e.g., published research, scholarly or popular writing, public speaking or testimony, lobbying, preparation of legal briefs, etc.)
- Elected, appointed, and volunteer positions in professional or policy-oriented committees, commissions or psychological organizations
- Consultation with court, legislatures, schools or other systems that impact children and families
- Outstanding performance as a Director/Coordinator of an agency, or provider of psychological services that resulted in unique service delivery models to children, youth and families
- Refer to the Division 37 web site for additional examples of contributions: http://www.apa.org/divisions/div37

Nomination Procedure for Initial Fellows: Refer to APA’s web site for application information: http://www.apa.org/membership/fellows/index.aspx. Complete a Uniform Fellow Application, Fellow Status Evaluation Form and Fellow Status Evaluation Worksheet. Include a copy of your curriculum vita and publication list with “R” beside refereed publications; a self-statement outlining your contributions that warrant Fellow status in Division 37; and have a minimum of three current APA Fellows (and at least one Division 37 Fellow) write endorsement letters that address your accomplishments in the area of child and family policy and practice.

Nomination Procedure for Division 37 Members who are Fellows of Other Divisions: Approval by the Division 37 Fellows Committee is sufficient to become a Fellow of Division 37. To apply, send a copy of your vita and self-statement outlining your contributions. Be sure to place an “R” beside refereed publications.

Inquiries and Materials: Submit all application materials via email by November 1, 2012 to Mindy Rosenberg, Ph.D., Chair, Division 37 Fellows Committee, 1505 Bridgeway, Suite 105, Sausalito, CA 94965. Phone: 415-332-6703, ext. 1; mindyrosenberg@gmail.com.

References

Becca is a second-year doctoral student in the Clinical Child Psychology Program at the University of Kansas. She received a B.A. from the University of Michigan in psychology and sociology. Prior to attending KU, she obtained experience with at-risk youth as a research coordinator at the Center for Human Growth and Development at the University of Michigan and a crisis line counselor at a youth shelter. Becca is presently a research assistant on several projects involving at-risk youth and families.

Angela M. Tunno, M.S., is a doctoral student in the Clinical Child Psychology Program at the University of Kansas (KU). She received her M.S. in Applied Clinical Psychology at the University of South Carolina-Aiken. Prior to attending KU, she completed a one-year fellowship at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Division of Violence Prevention (DVP), Prevention Development and Evaluation Branch (PDEB).
In June 2011 the US Supreme Court weighed in on a California law seeking to regulate the sale of violent video games to minors (Brown v EMA, 2011). In the majority decision the court not only struck down the California law as unconstitutional but specifically criticized the research cited to support it stating, “These studies have been rejected by every court to consider them, and with good reason: They do not prove that violent video games cause minors to act aggressively (which would at least be a beginning). Instead, ‘[n]early all of the research is based on correlation, not evidence of causation, and most of the studies suffer from significant, admitted flaws in methodology.’ Video Software Dealers Assn. 556 F. 3d, at 964. They show at best some correlation between exposure to violent entertainment and minuscule real-world effects, such as children’s feeling more aggressive or making louder noises in the few minutes after playing a violent game than after playing a nonviolent game.”

This finding keynoted a watershed year for video game research which saw continued debate on the presence or absence of effects, considerable acrimony among scholars, the repudiation of this research field not only by the US Supreme Court, but also in independent reviews of the research by the Australian National Government (2010) and the Swedish National Government (2011) and increasing data from experimental (e.g. Adachi & Willoughby, 2011; Devilly, Callahan, & Armitage, in press; Valadez & Ferguson, 2012) and longitudinal studies (Ferguson, San Miguel, Garza, & Jerabeck, in press; von Salisch, Vogelgesang, Kristen, & Oppl, 2011) contradicting the causal hypothesis. Further youth violence continued its decades-long plummet to 40-year lows (childstats.gov, 2011) which occurred during the video game era. Indeed in the lead-up to the Brown v EMA case some scholars warned the scientific community that there was significant credibility risk posed by overstatements of causal effects (Hall, Day & Hall, 2011a). By and large, the belief that violent video games contribute in a substantial way to societal violence and serious aggression is probably obsolete.

In light of broader discussions of “methodological flexibility” and Type I error in psychological science more generally (e.g. Simmons, Nelson, & Simonsohn, in press) it is probably worth discussing the errors that promoted a sense of public policy urgency among many psychologists even in the absence of a public health issue. To some extent these issues hinged upon what I sometimes refer to as “scientific urban legends,” that is beliefs that were repeated among scholars despite being demonstrably false in the published literature. I highlight several of these in this article.

**Urban Legend 1: There is a Consensus Among Researchers About Causal Effects.**

Generally speaking the scholarship on video game violence has gone through three periods. Through the year 2000 (just after the Columbine Massacre) most scholars acknowledged that research on video game violence was inconsistent at best. After 2000 this changed with scholars expressing greater causal certitude and often claiming a scientific consensus, despite that the state of the data had not much changed (Sherry, 2007). Such an appeal to consensus is a logical fallacy, but its veracity was exposed as illusory during the Brown v EMA case when scholars commenting on the California law were about equally split between two opposing amicus briefs. This split, perhaps not surprisingly, resulted in great acrimony between the two groups, with one groups of scholars who had supported the California law (Pollard-Sacks, Bushman, & Anderson, 2011) claiming they and their colleagues had greater expertise than the other group. A subsequent analysis of this claim by independent scholars who had signed neither brief (Hall, Day & Hall, 2011b) revealed the claims of Pollard-Sacks et al. to be largely specious, methodologically flawed, ad-hominem and devoid of...
discussion of the scientific facts. As Hall et al. (2011) note, that one group of scholars would proclaim themselves the true experts in a debate is hardly illuminating or surprising.

**Urban Legend 2: Effects of Violent Video Games Are Comparable to Medical Effects**

One of the comments commonly used to support legislation and advocacy against violent video games is the notion that effect sizes found in the literature are similar to those for smoking and lung cancer or other important medical effects. This misimpression was created through two processes. First, the fact that many studies and meta-analyses found results for video game violence no different from zero was ignored selectively in favor of higher effect sizes (Ferguson, 2010). Second, the effect size for medical effects was miscalculated, greatly truncating these estimates (Block & Crain, 2007; Ferguson, 2009) making them appear miniscule. Despite the clear repudiation of this claim in the published scholarship, it is nonetheless often repeated.

**Urban Legend 3: The Interactive Elements of Video Games Make Them More Harmful**

This claim was used by the state of California to support their regulatory law despite the absence of any data to support it. Even taken at face value, the data on video game violence provides no evidence for stronger effects compared to other forms of media (Sherry, 2007). As noted in the Brown v EMA decision, this is an important point, as regulation of one media opens the door for regulation of all media, from Grimm’s fairy tales to Greek plays to novels, TV and music. That, of course, may be exactly what some anti-media advocates want but, if so, it should be stated openly rather than focusing on a single media.

**Urban Legend 4: The US Military Uses Video Games to Desensitize Soldiers to Killing.**

The source for this claim appears to be a popular press book by an anti-game activist who claims that the use of human shaped targets desensitized soldiers to shoot at the enemy in conflicts after WWII. The methodology behind such claims has been revealed to be faulty (Ferguson, 2010) and as Steven Pinker has pointed out in his recent book on violence (2011) military personnel actions have historically been far more brutal in the past than in the present. The US military has generally disavowed this claim as well and, despite being a good talking point, it appears to be based more in misimpressions than data. Indeed, although war is always horrific, the modern US military is probably one of the most disciplined and respectful of human life in history.

**Urban Legend 5: Voluntary Ratings Systems Don’t Work.**

One of the issues raised in the Brown v EMA case was whether a state mandated regulation was necessary to replace the voluntary Entertainment Software Ratings Board (ESRB) ratings system already in place. Far from being problematic, the ESRB system has been found to be reliable by the FTC (2009), more so than other voluntary ratings systems including the MPAA movie system (which is also voluntary, something many people don’t realize). The ESRB ratings system has been praised by the Parents Teachers Association and many state attorney generals (some of whom supported the video game industry in an amicus brief during Brown v EMA). My own research has found the ESRB system to be a reliable and valid system when tested against trained blinded (that is to the ESRB ratings) raters (Ferguson, 2011).

From this last point we might ask why would psychologists and advocates seek to replace a system that already works well, even assuming video games are harmful? The reactions of the psychological community probably fit well within Moral Panic Theory. Put briefly here, Moral Panic Theory posits that societies often react to morally threatening stimuli in predictable but irrational ways. In essence the society forms a rigid conclusion early in the process, selecting only to acknowledge that data which further supports the original conclusion. The scientific process, particularly when degraded by “methodological flexibility” (Simmons et al., in press) is easily corrupted (although unconsciously and with good intentions) to fit society’s requests for support for the a priori conclusion. After all, it’s hard to get grant money arguing something isn’t a pressing societal prob-
lem. And one of the issues to emerge from the Brown v EMA case was that much of the research used to support the California law had been funded by anti-game lobbying/activist groups with a clear axe to grind (such groups would arguably become financially insolvent were data not to support their cause). In previous moral panics over other media ranging from dime novels to comic books to television, some scholars could always be relied on to make alarmist claims of harmful effects, often claiming the new media was unique in some way, much like the interactivity of video games supposedly made them unique. That scholarship on video games, particularly the spike in alarmist statements beginning in the early 2000s fits Moral Panic Theory has already been documented (Ferguson, 2010).

Put bluntly, the scientific belief that video game violence causes youth violence, serious aggression or brain damage is falsified. Disagreement still exists about whether violent games might contribute to very minor acts of aggression. That’s still worth considering but here too, the evidence is inconsistent at best. It’s understandable that psychologists wish to protect children, but we can’t hold science hostage to culture wars or ideological biases. As Simmons et al. imply, the time has come to insist on greater rigor in psychological science if we wish to be a science at all. Unfortunately video game research has historically been an example of how social science has gone wrong. I call upon scholars on all sides of the debate to work to improve rigor in our field. And we must fundamentally remember that things may morally offend us, but that does not make them ‘harmful.’ It’s a premise that, even as scientists, we often forget.

References


Best Practices in International Family Finding

By Kerri Socha, MSW, LGSW, Karen Czajkowski, and Amanda Tiara Beach
Intercountry Case Managers at International Social Service-USA Branch, Inc.

One result of globalization is that an increasing number of children in the U.S. have relatives living in other parts of the world. Families move across borders as students, military personnel, retirees, employees of multinational corporations, refugees, asylum seekers, and migrant workers. Children from some of these families invariably come into care of the child welfare system, as a result of a death, incarceration or deportation of a parent, as well as child abuse and neglect, or abandonment (Naughton & Fay, 2003). Regardless of how a child comes into care, the goal of the child welfare worker is to provide children with a stable and permanent home. According to Beck (2008), children placed with relatives have less placement disruptions and maintain stronger familial and cultural connections.

International family finding involves making every effort to identify, locate, and contact all relatives regardless of their location or citizenship, who may provide resources, support, or care for a foster child. Service providers must utilize a new set of skills to locate family members outside of the United States for potential placement options, or to initiate a family connection as a resource for a child in the foster care system. According to the “Six Steps to Finding a Family: A Practice Guide to Family Search and Engagement” (n.d.) having a family connection is as urgent a need for any child as safety.

When working with youth in foster care or state custody, child welfare workers have an obligation to help maintain or build family connections which are a vital resource and important protective factor in the lives of these at-risk youth. Helping youth identify and engage with potential family connections should be no different if the family member lives in the same town or in another country. Child welfare advocates can use the following tips to facilitate international family finding:

1. **Keep your eyes and ears open.** Be mindful to listen to and look for clues that the family has international connections: a photo, vacation story, or a holiday tradition can lead you to discover the child’s connection to family across borders. Reviewing the entire case record with an eye to international connections may yield new leads in the case (Beck, 2008).

2. **Don’t judge a book by its cover.** Do not assume that the child you are working with does not have international family connections just because he or she is not an immigrant or English is his/her first language. Make a point to ask each and every family, “Do you have any family connections outside of the United States?” Remember that relatives may be living overseas for work, military service, or retirement.

3. **Be explicit about international family finding.** When interviewing the youth, family members, or interested parties, be sure to say that you will consider international family members for kinship placement. People may not mention these relatives because they assume that their location precludes them from being considered for placement.

**Expect barriers, delays, and conflicting priorities.**
As is true in most family finding efforts, you will encounter barriers to contacting relatives of the child in question. These can be increased when contact needs to be made across international borders (Naughton & Fay, 2003). Have realistic expectations about time frames, language barriers, foreign government requirements, and other factors which may cause delays in the process. If you are attempting to locate or assess a relative in a foreign country, prepare the child and other parties for the process to take longer than usual. Finally, don’t delay; make requests as quickly as possible!

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE
Locating Services

Once child welfare workers or child advocates have identified an international family connection, they must determine the next step toward permanency for the child. This often requires a search in the country where the person may be residing. Once the relative is located, the child advocate will need to make contact and assess the individual’s interest in participating in the child’s future. Common services requested in international family finding are relative tracings, home studies, serving legal documents, and intercountry mediation.

When a caseworker manages a case with international dimensions, there are multiple options for how to proceed. The obvious answer is to contact the child welfare agency in the country where the relative is located. However, many barriers including language, cultural norms, unfamiliar government or agency procedures, and access to technology may arise. Alternately, the U.S. Embassy in the country, or the Consulate/Embassy of that country in the U.S. are also able to assist in cross border child welfare issues. Embassy staff, however, is unlikely to be trained in the social services field and the request work for may not be timely.

International Social Service-USA Branch, Inc. (ISS-USA), is a part of an international federation that has provided case management services for international family finding for over 85 years (“International Family Finding,” 2011). With over 100 international units around the world, ISS-USA acts as a facilitator between professionals across borders to bring resolutions for separated families.

A psychologist, social worker, lawyer, other professional, or an individual may make a referral for service to ISS-USA. In addition to the aforementioned services, other services available from ISS-USA include document tracings, criminal background checks and Child Abuse Registry Checks, assessing the well-being of a child living abroad, and the repatriation of U.S. citizens, including unaccompanied minors, back to the United States. All cases are handled in partnership by the ISS-USA staff, located in Baltimore, Maryland, and the ISS unit in the given country, who is usually a licensed social worker or a lawyer native to the country.

Please contact us at question@iss-usa.org or visit our website at www.iss-usa.org for more information.

Case Examples

The following case examples illustrate some child welfare cases with an international dimension that ISS-USA handles on a regular basis. All names have been changed.

Relative Tracing: The state of New York was interested in locating Mark Smith in Germany, the father of Sarah Smith, for permanency planning reasons. Sarah was a 12-year-old in custody of the New York social service department as a result of child abuse by her mother. The only information the department had about Mr. Smith was his last known military assignment location and his date of birth. Upon providing the ISS correspondent in Germany with this information, they opened the case and began working. After about six weeks, the ISS Germany unit notified the ISS-USA case manager that they were able to locate this man through their connections with another social service agency. As a result, the state of New York was able to terminate the parental rights of Mr. Smith and then move forward with the child’s adoption in the state of New York.

Home Study: In 2010 ISS-USA received the referral of the case of Yasmin O’Connor a sixteen year old girl who was in the custody of the state of California. Until recently, she had been living with her maternal grandmother in California, but the grandmother’s health was failing and she no longer felt able to care for Yasmin. Yasmin was moved to a residential facility while her social worker was working with the family toward the goal of reunifying Yasmin with her grandmother. Concurrently, they were working toward the goal of independent living, since Yasmin would soon be turning 18. During this time, Yasmin expressed her desire to be reconnected with her father, who resided in Barbados. With only a name, city, and phone number,
ISS-USA’s Barbados unit was able to locate Yasmin’s father and discuss his daughter’s situation with him. The social worker in Barbados was able to confirm the father’s interest in reuniting with Yasmin, and then conducted a home study to assess the suitability of his home. ISS-USA was able to provide this positive assessment to the court overseeing Yasmin’s case and within a few months Yasmin was escorted to Barbados to live with her father.

Document Tracing: Shortly after their mother died in childbirth, the father of two boys brought his children to the United States to live. Now teenagers, Eric and Stephen have been in state custody since ages four and six when their father surrendered his rights in court because he was not able to provide a safe and stable home for them. The children lived in numerous foster homes for the first few years but were together in a pre-adoptive home when the referral came to ISS-USA. In order to meet the best interests of the children, the state social worker thought it would be best to obtain legal status for the children concurrent to the adoption process. Based on their history, the boys were eligible for Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) but they needed an original copy of their birth certificate from El Salvador. The state social worker had been trying to obtain these documents for two years prior to learning about the services offered through ISS-USA. Once the referral was made, and a case was opened, the ISS-USA case manager worked with the correspondent in El Salvador to express the need for the document, and to create a plan to obtain this documentation. Within eight months the original copy of the birth certificate was given to the social worker and the children attended their final hearing for SIJS status which was ruled in their favor. The boys have since been formally adopted by the foster parents.

References


Congratulations Diane J. Willis!

Diane J. Willis, a founding member of Division 37 and past president of the division, has been awarded the Distinguished Elder Award from the National Multicultural Conference & Summit (NMCS). She and eight other recipients will be honored at NMCS, to be held in Houston in January 2013. Diane J. Willis is Professor Emeritus in the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center
Carol Falender, Ph.D.—Council Representative

Carol Falender attended the Council of Representatives meeting on February 24-26. What follows is an outline of topics covered, focusing on meeting highlights most relevant to Division 37 members.

State of APA: Sixty percent of members are not involved in formal governance—and 50% of individuals have no direct representation on Council by virtue of not being a member of Divisions or State or Provincial Associations.

Some statistics presented by President Suzanne Bennett-Johnson as part of her presidential initiative to engage the next generation of psychologists:
- The mean age of members in 2010 was 54. The mean numbers of years post-degree was 20.6.

APA member characteristics: Members are 65% White. The percent are Division members decreased from 45% in 2005 to 39% in 2010. The number in State Associations decreased from 38 to 33%.

Characteristics of new members: The mean age is 43.4. The percent of Division Members in 2010 was 12%. The percent members of State Psych Association was 6.8 % in 2010.

Among Early Career Psychologists (earned degree in last 7 years), the percent of APA members ECPs—18% (decreasing), percent division members—25%, and percent State Association member 5.9%.

Additional Information from APA President Suzanne Bennett-Johnson the Obesity Initiative:

The following statistics are from [http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/trends.html](http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/trends.html). The trend is from low obesity in 1990 to high levels of obesity—1/3 of all adults in U.S. are obese; and 2/3 are overweight. In children: Ogden & Carroll (2010) from CDC—rapid increase in obesity—17% of all children are obese. In adolescents, almost 30% of Black females are obese, and 27% of Hispanic boys.

A diabetes epidemic: 50% of African American girls born in 2000 will develop diabetes in their lifetime. This is a behavioral problem well within the scope of psychology but we are under-involved. APA is beginning to develop Treatment Guidelines—Guidelines for Depression first.

Council approved moving ahead with new journal proposed by APAGS called Translational Issues in Psychological Science.

Other highlights:
- PsycNET—highest rated service by librarians (Charleston Advisor): 21,822,069 visitors to platform (60,000 per day)—downloaded 2,754,620 articles.
- APA also has several other new products, including PsycTherapy—video product; PsycReference—ability to select chapters from handbooks for course adoption (print or electronic); PsycTest—of measures; PsycNetMobile—Ipad and Iphone downloads of journals and a psych dictionary; PsycExtra. There has been a 10% increase in data base subscriptions this year.

Please look at two exemplary reports from Dr. Melba Vasquez’ Presidential Initiatives, available soon on the APA website:
1) Report of the Presidential Task Force on Diversity and Discrimination, and
2) The Presidential Task Force on Immigration Report included Strengths of immigrants; Stresses of immigrants; Challenges with Assessment; Misuse of psychological tests with immigrant populations; Issues of second language acquisition; Relationship of family to schooling; Protective traditional family networks; Collectivist coping strategies; Clinical implications; and Barriers to culturally sensitive treatment.
Members Making News

The following members recently had their work featured in a news story:

John E. Lochman, PhD, ABPP, Professor of Psychology, The University of Alabama
"Anti-bullying efforts ramp up: Psychologist-designed anti-bullying programs take on the problem from the perspective of the bully, the victim and the community," February 2012 issue of the Monitor on Psychology, p.54-57

Tasha R. Howe, Ph.D, Professor of Psychology, Humboldt State University
"Parents Share Ways to Limit Children's Screen Time," The Children's Advocate of Action Alliance for Children, winter 2011-2012

Carmen R. Valdez, University of Wisconsin-Madison
"Pilot project helps Latino and Latina families overcome the effects of parental depression," University of Wisconsin-Madison homepage between December 2011 and early January 2012

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING CONFERENCES

MARCH
Society for Research on Adolescence Biennial Meeting: March 8-10, Vancouver
International Conference on Violence, Abuse, and Trauma Ninth Annual Hawaii Conference: March 13-15, Honolulu
American Psychology and Law Society (Division 41) AP-SL Conference: March 14-17, San Juan, Puerto Rico
20th World Family Therapy Congress: March 21-24, Vancouver
Society for Research in Human Development 18th Biennial Conference: March 22-24, New Orleans
Rocky Mountain Psychological Association Meeting: April 12-14, 2012, Reno, NV

APRIL
National Biennial Conference on Adolescents and Adults with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: April 18-21, Vancouver
Southwestern Psychological Association Annual Meeting: April 12-14, Oklahoma City
Western Psychological Association Annual Meeting: April 26-29, San Francisco

MAY
Midwestern Psychological Association Meeting: May 3-5, Chicago, IL
Child and Youth Mental Health Matters: 3 Conferences in One: May 6-8, in Vancouver
Society for Prevention Research: May 29 – June 1, Washington, DC

JUNE
International Conference on Infant Studies: June 7-9, Minneapolis
American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children 20th Annual Colloquium: June 27-30, Chicago

JULY
International Family Violence and Child Victimization Research Conference: July 8-10, Portsmouth, New Hampshire
International Society for Study of Behavioral Development Biennial Meeting: July 8-12, Edmonton, Canada
International Congress of Psychology: July 22-27, Cape Town, South Africa
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Help support advocacy for legal and mental health issues relevant to children and families

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