APA's Team at the United Nations

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The American Psychological Association (APA) is the world’s largest association of psychologists. Formed in 1892, the APA now numbers over 134,000 scientists, researchers, educators, practitioners and students across the USA and around the world.

APA holds special consultation status with the Economic and Social Council, is affiliated with the Department of Public Information, and is in consultative status with the United Nations Children’s Fund. APA is also a member of CoNGO.

APA’s representatives, special project associates and interns work to contribute to psychologically informed global policies by providing policy makers and their staff with research-based psychological information and resources pertinent to the behavioral dimensions of social issues. They also serve as a conduit to provide APA member expertise to the UN for its many initiatives and activities. In addition, the team informs APA’s membership and staff about UN and international issues through reports and contributions to APA publications and presentations.

Psychology includes the scientific study of behavior and the application of science-based expertise to behavior. The APA is dedicated to advancing the creation, communication and application of psychological knowledge to benefit society and improve people’s lives.

APA’s team works with other NGOs at the UN, with UN staff, and with representatives of UN member states on a variety of timely global issues, including:

- Ageing
- Children and Families, including Child Welfare, Violence Prevention, Healthy Families
- Climate Change
- Disability Access and Accommodation
- Education from Early Childhood Throughout the Lifespan
- Gender Equality
- Habitat, Environment and Human Settlement
- Health and Mental Health, including Treatment and Prevention
- HIV/AIDS
- Human Rights
- Multiculturalism
- Peace and Conflict Resolution
- Racism and Xenophobia
- Women
- Rural Health

APA’s four main Directorates and Executive Offices address the breadth of psychology. Each Directorate offers resources that can be brought to bear on UN global policy and programs.

The Public Interest Directorate works to apply the science and profession of psychology to advance human welfare. Special offices include AIDS, Aging, Children Youth and Families, Disability Issues, Ethnic Minorities, Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Concerns, Women, and Violence Prevention.

The Science Directorate promotes the science of psychology to funding agencies, policy makers and the public. It serves the needs of psychological scientists by disseminating information and providing opportunities for training, collaboration and public engagement.

The Practice Directorate supports psychologists and health consumers. In addition to advocacy, the Directorate works to show the value of psychological services in healthcare and engages in public education on issues such as resilience, violence prevention, and recovery from natural or man-made emergencies.

The Education Directorate advances the education and training of psychologists, the teaching of psychology, and the application of psychology to education at all levels.

APA’s Executive Office includes offices on Ethics, Student Issues, International Affairs, Division Activities, and Governance.

APA is a major publisher of scientific journals and books in psychology, and produces PsycINFO, the largest searchable database of psychological literature. APA’s website (www.apa.org) serves the discipline, students, and the public with information, resources, guidelines, directories, and databases.

More about APA