

COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES

The Committee on Children, Youth, and Families (CYF) was established by a vote of Council in August 1985 to ensure "...that children, youth, and families receive the full attention of the Association...in order that all human resources are actualized." The Committee consists of six members and reports to the Council of Representatives through the Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest (BAPPI). The 2008 CYF Annual Report provides information on CYF's goals and a summary of activities as they relate to the Committee's goals.

COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES

2008 ANNUAL REPORT

COMPOSITION:

Barbara Fiese, PhD, Chair; Karen Budd, PhD; John Hagen, PhD (Chair-elect); Scott Nolen, JD, PhD (January 2007 – June 2008); Norweeta Milburn, PhD; Stephen Shirk, PhD (July 2008 – December 2009); Anita Thomas, PhD. Dr. Scott Nolen resigned to accept an APA Congressional Fellowship and Stephen Shirk, PhD, was appointed by BAPPI to fill the unexpired term..

MEETINGS:

The Committee held two formal meetings in Washington, DC on March 28-30, 2008 and September 19-21, 2008 and conducted business through conference calls and emails.

LIAISON FUNCTIONS

CYF maintains active monitor and liaison relationships with APA boards, committees, task forces, and divisions. Division liaisons to CYF participate actively in Committee discussions. They provide invaluable consultation and they keep the committee abreast of important work underway throughout APA. Liaisons who participated in one or more meetings include;

Kali Trzesniewski, PhD, Division 7; Jeffrey Haugaard, PhD, Division 37; Shelley Heaton, PhD, Division 40; Connie Morrow, PhD, Division 54; Jean L. Chin, EdD, BAPPI; Jennifer Gibson, PhD, CDIP; Carolyn Schroeder, PhD, Committee on Rural Health; Margaret Feerick, PhD, Division 37 Section 1; Scott Hunter, PhD, Division 40; Michael A. Southam-Gerow, PhD, Division 53; Douglas Kimmel, PhD, BAPPI

OTHER COMMITTEES

CYF strives to learn more about the activities of other APA committees so that its work may be more collaborative and synergistic. To that end, during 2008 CYF invited the Committee on Socioeconomic Status and the Committee on Women in Psychology to a working lunch during the Spring and Fall meetings to learn more about their ongoing and evolving activities. These gatherings facilitated joint convention planning efforts and laid the foundation for potential collaborative projects.

COMMITTEE MISSION AND GOALS

CYF's mission and goal is to further the central purpose of APA- to advance the psychology as a science and a profession and as a means of promoting health, education, and human welfare- by specifically ensuring that children, youth, and families receive the full attention of the Association in order that all human resources are fully actualized. CYF's goals are to:

- identify and disseminate information concerning the psychological status of children, youth, and families for psychologists, other professionals, policy makers, and the public;
- offer consultation to relevant APA boards and committees that are responsible for the educational standards for psychologists who conduct research and provide services for children, youth, and families;
- encourage psychological research on the factors that promote or inhibit the development of individual and family competence;

- contribute to the formulation and support of policies that facilitate the optimal development of children and youth within families;
- designate priorities for APA involvement in the issues affecting children, youth, and families, including issues related to gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and disability.

DIVERSITY

CYF continues to address diversity in the appointment of diverse members to its committee and keeping the needs of diverse children, youth and families at the forefront. The composition of the committee during the spring meeting included 50% minority members (Milburn, Nolan and Thomas). Dr. Nolan resigned from the committee prior to the Fall 08 meeting to an APA Congressional Fellowship. The Committee was pleased to welcome Dr. Shirk who brought expertise in the area of child mental health—another priority of the Association and the topic of a recent APA task force (see Interdivisional Task Force on Child and Adolescent Mental Health).

CYF was also pleased to have one of its members participate on the Task Force on Resilience and Strength in Black Children and Adolescents. In its review of priorities, the committee expanded its focus to include culturally as well as linguistically diverse children, youth, and families.

A continuing concern of CYF is child, youth, and family representation on the Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest (BAPPI), the board through whom CYF reports to the Council of Representatives. The mission of CYF is to bring to the attention of APA concerns of children, youth, and families who would not otherwise have a voice in APA policy concerns. We dutifully respect the role that other representatives play on BAPPI and urge BAPPI to consider a permanent CYF position at the table so that its mission may be fulfilled to ensure "...that children, youth, and families receive the full attention of the Association in order that all human resources are fully actualized."

IDENTIFY AND DISSIMINATE INFORMATION

CYF NEWSLETTER

The summer issue of CYF NEWS highlighted two key issues important to youth and families: emerging adulthood and resilience and strength in African American children and youth. Dr. John Hagen presented innovative research findings about the developmental period between approximately 18 and 25 years of age. Developmental scientists recognize this period as distinct from adolescence and adulthood for consolidating identity, making important life and career decisions, and that these processes are important for protecting against risk taking behaviors (e.g., substance abuse) into adulthood.

Dr. Thomas, a member of the Task Force on Resilience and Strength in Black Children and Adolescents, provided a summary of the task force's work. The task force determined that optimally functioning African American youth should be multi-cultural, actively engaged in their community, and promote the well-being of themselves and others. The task force report titled *Resilience in African American Children and Adolescents: A Vision for Optimal Development* available on the web <http://www.apa.org/pi/cyf/resilience.html>

2008 Annual Convention

CYF was very active during the 2008 convention with participation in and promotion of Presidential panels, coordination of BAPPI panels, and co-sponsorship of a social hour with divisions and other committees. Committee activities included:

- Presidential Symposium on Treating PTSD in Youth: Lessons from Diverse Areas of Trauma;
- Invited Address: The Cold Hard Facts: Trauma and Related Disorders in Youth;
- Invited Address: Trauma in a Social Context: Discrimination and Refugee Adolescent Mental Health;
- Symposium: Addressing Mental Health Needs of Young Children in Child Welfare;
- Social Hour: Networking to Advance Children's Mental Health; CYF; Division 27, 37, Institute for Juvenile Research

- Symposium: Psychological Implications of Immigration and Customs Enforcement Raids: Strategies to Address Mental Health Issues of Immigrant Children, Youth, and Families
- Symposium: Childhood in the Age of Electronic Media and Online Communications

Immediately following the APA Opening Session, Drs. Fiese and Hagen presented a citation to Edward Zigler, PhD (a former CYF member) in recognition of his contributions to the welfare of children, particularly in the area of Head Start and universal preschool education.

II. Provide Consultation

The Committee consulted with a variety of APA boards, committees, task forces, directorates, and divisions through its liaison and monitor relationships to these groups and on items placed on the Spring and Fall 2008 cross-cutting agendas. These groups included: BAPPI; Commission for Recognition of Specialties and Proficiencies in Professional Psychology; Committee for Ethnic Minority Recruitment, Retention, and Training; Committee on Socioeconomic Status; Committee on Women in Psychology; Committee on Disability Issues in Psychology; Committee on Ethnic Minority Affairs; Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Concerns; Committee on Professional Practice and Standards; and the Policy and Planning Board.

The Committee also provided comment and recommendations on the draft reports of the APA Strategic Plan; Task Force on the Evidence-Based Practice with Children and Adolescents; Survey on Early Career Psychologists; Task Force on Resilience and Strength in Black Children and Adolescents; APA Task Force on the Psychosocial Effects of War on Children and Families Who are Refugees from Armed Conflicts Residing in the United States; Task Force on Mental Health and Abortion; SES status fact sheet.

The Committee also met with SES during its Spring 2008 meeting and identified the following areas of mutual interest: homelessness, families experiencing economic crises, health and behavior change to enhance optimal development, Head Start, harnessing psychology to help schools and communities, and creating support networks for children and youth, and parenting.

Possible avenues for collaboration included advocacy training, convention symposium, information dissemination, and informal interaction at the APA convention and consolidated meetings

III. Encourage Psychological Research and

IV. Formulate Policy

CYF's initiatives listed below describe the important work carried out by CYF in these areas during 2008.

Unhealthy Eating and Childhood Obesity

CYF member, Barbara Fiese, PhD, consulted with the Public Interest – Government Relations Office (PI-GRO) staff to develop three legislative briefing sheets for policy makers on:

the prevention of youth obesity and disordered eating

(http://www.apa.org/ppo/pi/Recommendation_prevent_youth_obesity.pdf),

the shared risk factors for youth obesity and disordered eating

(http://www.apa.org/ppo/pi/shared_risk_factors_youth_obesity.pdf); and

an Eating Disorders Fact Sheet (http://www.apa.org/ppo/pi/eating_disorders_fact_sheet.pdf).

Dr. Fiese and PI-GRO staff developed an APA Resolution on Promotion of Healthy Active Lifestyles and Prevention of Obesity and Unhealthy Weight Control Behaviors in Children and Youth. APA boards and committees reviewed the draft resolution and it was revised to reflect comments received. During their December 2008 meeting, the Board of Directors recommended that the Council of Representatives approve the resolution at their February 2009 meeting. In 2008 Dr. Fiese and PI-GRO staff began coordinating efforts with the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) to hold a 2009 Congressional Briefing on Healthy Eating and Active Lifestyles for Children, Youth and Families.

Mental Health Needs of Children in the Welfare System

Dr. Budd began collaborating with PI-GRO staff to develop policy fact sheet on the mental health needs of children in the welfare system. This will consolidate the information presented at the 2008 APA Symposium that Dr. Budd coordinated.

Head Start

Dr. Hagen brought to CYF's attention a schematic titled *Challenges and Strategies in Using Research to Improve Outcomes for Young Children* proposed at the 2008 Head Start Research Conference. CYF discussed the schematic and provided comments to the originators. Under Dr. Hagen's leadership, CYF's long-standing interest in early childhood education and Head Start is integrated in the CYF Advocacy Priorities and in CYF's work with the PI-GRO staff.

V. Designate APA Priorities for Children, Youth, and Families

This goal permeates every aspect of CYF's work and is evident in its consultation efforts with various groups. CYF is particularly effective in ensuring that its members have expertise to respond to present-day events affecting children, youth, and families. The 2009 nominations statement explicitly encourages applications from candidates who have particular expertise in addressing research and policy relevant to contemporary issues facing children, youth, and families in the context of their socioemotional and cognitive development and mental health. Candidates who have particular interest in culturally and linguistically diverse, understudied, underserved, and diverse populations (e.g., ethnic minorities, sexual minorities, and those with disabilities) and who have expertise in topics relevant to these populations are also particularly encouraged to apply. The Committee paid particular attention to cultural diversity and competency in putting forth its 2009 slate.

Revised Legislative Priorities

After consultation with the PI-GRO staff, the Committee revised and reorganized the CYF legislative priorities with additions in the areas of primary health care; comprehensive health care for all; faith-based organizations; culturally and linguistically appropriate prevention, intervention, and response to crises; and concerns of immigrant children and their families.

Conclusion

CYF focuses APA's organizational efforts and capabilities on issues of critical social importance. During times of economic stress, children, youth and families are often vulnerable to household disruptions that portend for poor outcomes. CYF will be well poised to address these issues for the Association, the scientific community, and to advocate for support of children, youth, and families to be resilient under stressful periods. During the past year, CYF efforts have foreshadowed the impact that strong science and strategic policy efforts can enhance the wellbeing of children, youth and their families in the domains of health, social justice, education, and child welfare. The continued work of the committee on homelessness, resilience and spirituality, early education, and child mental health continues to advance this important work. These contributions clearly enhance the reputation of the Association while at the same time delivering important public service. CYF members are proud of this service and confident that it has had a meaningful positive impact on the lives of many young people and families.

Respectfully submitted



Barbara H. Fiese, PhD
2008 Chair
Committee on Children, Youth, and Families