

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 2006 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 2006 ANNUAL REPORT

COMPOSITION

The six members of the Committee on Children, Youth, and Families (CYF) for 2006 were Nancy E. Hill, PhD (chair); Lonnie Sherrod, PhD (chair-elect); John Lochman, PhD; Mario Hernandez, PhD; Barbara Fiese, PhD, and Karen Budd, PhD.

MEETINGS

The Committee held two formal meetings in the Washington, DC, area on April 7-9, 2006, and September 29 - October 1, 2006. In addition to these sessions, the Committee accomplished other business by e-mail exchange and conference call.

LIAISON FUNCTIONS

CYF maintains active monitor and liaison relationships with APA divisions, boards, committees and task forces. Division liaisons to CYF are active and involved in the work of the Committee. Liaisons who participated in one or more meetings during 2006 included: Kathy S. Katz, PhD, Division 7; Karen Saywitz, PhD, Division 37; Margaret Feerick, PhD, Division 37 Section 1; Shelley Heaton, PhD, Division 40; James Bray, PhD, Division 43; Marilyn Erickson, PhD, Division 53; Brian Smedley, PhD, Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest; Clark Campbell, PhD, Committee on Rural Health (Monitor); Jennifer Gibson, PhD, Committee on Disability Issues in Psychology; and Diane J. Willis, PhD, American Orthopsychiatric Association.

Each CYF member is a monitor or liaison to several APA boards and committees. They review pertinent material and bring relevant issues to CYF's attention. In addition, CYF strives to comment appropriately on all crosscutting agenda items that have some pertinence to children, youth, and families to ensure that adequate and accurate consideration is devoted to those issues.

MISSION AND GOALS

CYF's mission is to further the central purpose of APA -- to advance 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 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 responsible 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.

SUMMARY OF CYF 2006 ACTIVITIES

Diversity Training and Representation At the request of the Council of Representatives, the following information is provided on diversity training activities and membership. In all its efforts from Committee membership to policy statements, the Committee works diligently to ensure that diversity issues receive the Committee's full attention. For example, CYF's 2006 membership was diverse with respect to ethnicity (i.e., One African-American, One Hispanic-American, Four European-Americans) gender (three females and three males), and geographic location; the Committee solicits nominations from ethnic minority psychological associations to enhance the ethnic diversity of the candidate pool; and the Committee advocates for or develops publications, policies and programs that are appropriate with regard to age and developmental level, culture, ethnicity, language (Spanish and English language public information material), disability, gender, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.

Further, advocacy priorities established by the Committee pay special attention to issues uniquely important to those from diverse backgrounds. This commitment is reflected in Committee's Federal Advocacy Priority focused on diversity. In that priority, CYF calls for advocating for federal funds for research on the normative development of minority children, youth and families; funding to support training for psychologists to work with children, youth and families from diverse backgrounds in culturally sensitive ways; supporting and funding research based policies that promote the healthy development of children in all families, including those from married, unmarried, single parent, lesbian, gay and grandparent headed household; and for preserving and protecting the rights of and services to immigrant, migrant, and refugee children and youth and for funds for research and programs to serve these families; among others.

The Committee reviewed its strategic plan to ensure its consistency with the APA diversity goals. In addition, the Committee developed specific strategies to enhance the Committee's multicultural/diversity capabilities, reviewed the *Guidelines on Multicultural Education, Training, Research, Practice, and Organizational Change for Psychologists*, published in the American Psychologist in 2003. CYF set as a goal the identification and implementation of existing APA documents and policies that further APA's and the Committee's commitment to diversity. The Committee also committed to developing or to assisting in the development of new policies as needed.

The Committee supported the establishment of the Task Force on Resiliency and Strength in Black Children and Adolescents and looks forward to reviewing their product.

Committee members participated in APA's Multicultural Leadership Workshop and developed a 5-part action plan for engaging and retaining members of color in the Association's activities.

The Committee continued ongoing activities and initiated new efforts in 2006 to fulfill its mission. The Committee's major activities are summarized below as they relate to each of their five goals.

I. Identify and Disseminate Information

Newsletter

CYF NEWS is the primary vehicle for communication of information about CYF activities and issues of concern. Two CYF members edit the newsletter. Drs. Fiese (Summer 2006) and Budd (Winter 2007) shared that responsibility in 2006. Copies of the newsletter are available on the Internet at <http://www.apa.org/pi/cyf/cyfnews.html>. The Committee also uses other APA vehicles to disseminate information to members (i.e., APA Monitor on Psychology, APA Division Dialogue) and public information pieces (i.e. Tips for Talking with Adolescents and Yes...It's Normal for Adolescents to... bookmarks in English and Spanish.)

2006 APA Convention

To mark the Committee's 20th anniversary as an APA committee, CYF presented a presidential symposium on the topic, "*Growing up with diversity: The role of psychology in strengthening families.*" This symposium was co-chaired by Drs. Hill and Sherrod and focused on the increased diversity in the United States of America of the last century; the importance of understanding the unique and interactive influences of ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic status, and community resources for understanding parenting, family dynamics and children's development in diverse contexts; and how diversity influences policies and programs. President Koocher was the discussant.

In addition, CYF member, Dr. Lochman, chaired a symposium titled "*Issues in the Dissemination of Empirically-Supported Interventions for Children and Adolescents.*"

APA staff planned a CYF 20th Anniversary reception for Friday, August 11th at the Convention. They developed an informational packet that reflected the 20-year history of CYF. The Committee received a Presidential Citation from President Gerald Koocher, PhD, in acknowledgement of their 20th Anniversary and for their efforts in carrying out their mission.

For the 2007 Convention, on behalf of CYF, member, Dr. Fiese, in collaboration with CWP, has proposed a symposium to BAPPI to reflect the theme *The Psychological and Health Impacts of Social Injustice.*

Conference Activities

CYF works through its members to involve the Association with other organizations in collaborative efforts to bring psychology's knowledge base to other professionals. Nancy E. Hill, PhD, took the lead in advancing an Interdisciplinary Conference on Family-School Relations. The conference focused on empirical research findings on the relationship between family involvement in schools and children's educational outcomes, and on factors that promote or inhibit the development of family and school relationships for families, schools and teachers. The conference took place in July, 2006, was hosted by Duke University, and was funded by the National Science Foundation.

Through the work of Marsha Kline Pruett, PhD and with the enthusiastic support of CYF, APA accepted the invitation of the Association of Family Conciliation Courts (AFCC) to be a collaborating organization for the AFCC's 43rd Annual Conference. APA members participated in conference research presentation and activities.

II. Provide Consultation:

Consultation was provided to a variety of APA boards, committees, task forces, and divisions through CYF liaison and monitor relationships to these groups.

Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest (BAPPI)

At the request of BAPPI, the Committee forwarded recommendations for members of the Committee on Socioeconomic Status.

Other Consultations

The Committee reviewed and made recommendations to the National Standards for High School Psychology Curricula, Report of the Task for on Sexualization of Girls, report of the Presidential Task Force on Evidence-Based Practice, Report of the Accreditation Summit Meeting; the report of the Task Force on the Impact of Elementary and Secondary School Zero Tolerance Policies; the Report of the Working Group on Psychotropic Medications for Children and Adolescents, APA Guidelines for Child Custody Evaluations in Divorce Proceedings, and the Report of the Task Force for Psychological Practice with Girls and Women. The Committee also discussed and made substantive recommendations related to the Presidential Task Force on Enhancing Diversity in APA and increasing membership. The CYF Chair also attended the Membership Summit.

The Committee made recommendations for the National Standards for High School Psychology Curricula Working Group, and APA Presidential Task Force on Military Deployment Services for Youth, Families, and Service Members.

Dr. Hernandez, CYF Member, provided consultation to President Koocher on a response to the controversy surrounding the Judge Rotenberg Institute and its use of aversives to disrupt self-injurious behaviors among autistic patients.

III. Encourage Psychological Research and

IV. Formulate Policy:

CYF's initiatives, listed below, encompass activities that concurrently address both of these important aspects of the Committee's responsibilities.

Unlicensed Residential Treatment Centers for Youth

Dr. Hernandez brought unlicensed residential treatment centers to the Committee's attention. There are a growing number of unlicensed residential treatment centers for juveniles. There have been reports that some of these unlicensed centers utilize questionable methods of discipline and treatment. Dr. Hernandez will lead the Committee in exploring possible recommendations to address this issue.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act and Civic Engagement

The NCLB Act is up for reauthorization in 2007. The NCLB cuts across several CYF interests including civic engagement, parental involvement in education, and the lack of attention to nutrition and health. In collaboration with Annie Toro, JD, from the APA Policy Office, Dr. Sherrod will lead the Committee in developing recommendations for language in the reauthorization.

Inter-divisional Task Force on Children's Mental Health Care

The Committee continued to liaison with the Inter-divisional Task Force on Children's Mental Health. As part of its larger effort to advocate for children's mental health services, the Task Force submitted a draft proposal for a Wingspread Conference on providing quality mental health services to children, and developed talking points to use in advocacy visits with Members of Congress.

Updating Lesbian & Gay Parenting: A Resource for Psychologists

CYF contributed to the document titled *Updating Lesbian & Gay Parenting: A Resource for Psychologists* by identifying reviewers and collaborators with the appropriate expertise, and assisting with the document's refinement and editing. The document was released early in 2006.

Rural Children's Mental Health

At the request of the Council of Representatives, CYF gathered information and developed a report on APA's efforts related to rural children's mental health as articulated in Council New Business Item No. 58C: Rural Children's Mental Health Services. The CYF forwarded its report titled Report of APA Activities Focused on Rural Children's Mental Health to the Council of Representative.

Mental Health Interventions Targeted at Children in the Welfare/Child Protection System

Empirically supported treatments developed in research lab settings rarely include children (or their parents) who are wards of the state. There is also a disconnect between the research done in juvenile courts on families trying to regain custody of their children. This topic was brought to the committee by Dr. Budd. She will lead the committee in comparing a review of the scholarly literature with legislative initiatives to see where they intersect and develop recommendations for further research, policies and practices pertaining to enhancing the mental health outcomes of children in protective custody. This topic will serve as the major theme of the Winter 2007 issue of CYF News.

Family Mealtimes and Obesity in Children

Family mealtime routines are related to childhood obesity. Obesity among children has increased substantially over recent years and is associated with a number of maladaptive outcomes for children. Moreover, childhood obesity is largely preventable. Dr. Fiese brought this to the Committee's attention and organized various reports on this topic for the Summer 2006 CYF Newsletter. Dr. Fiese will lead the Committee in the development of a set of CYF brochures on various aspects of childhood obesity and mealtimes.

Additional Topics

The Committee discussed other issues including corporal punishment, children's rights, civic engagement, dissemination of empirically supported interventions for children and adolescents, and multicultural education and training for psychologists.

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

This goal permeates every aspect of CYF's work and is evident through the variety of consultation efforts, working groups and task forces described earlier. In recognition that CYF is particularly effective when its members have expertise to respond to contemporary events affecting children, youth, and families, the nominations statement for terms beginning in 2008 explicitly encourages applicants with such expertise, including (but not limited) to culturally and linguistically diverse, understudied, and underserved populations; rural mental health; mental health disparities and promotion of healthy lifestyles for children, youth, and families.

Revised Legislative Priorities

After consultation with staff from the Public Policy Office (PPO), the Committee revised and reorganized the CYF legislative priorities to include priorities related to children's mental health, physical health, education, diversity, family support, and children's rights and civic engagement.

Conclusion

Different from most APA committees, CYF advocates for and provides service to a population that is not represented among the membership, nor capable of promoting its best interests without the assistance of others. CYF's strives to use psychological knowledge and practice to improve and enhance the lives of young people both as individuals, as well as within the family structure. The notion of public service truly underlies all of CYF's efforts.

CYF focuses APA's organizational efforts and capabilities on issues of critical social importance. During the past year, those efforts have encompassed numerous topics for which APA has provided assistance in the areas of education, information dissemination, training, and public policy recommendations. 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:

Nancy E. Hill, PhD
2006 Chair
Committee on Children, Youth, and Families
January 10, 2007