

INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON INFANTS, TODDLERS AND CHILD PROTECTION

CHILD PROTECTION DURING THE PERINATAL PERIOD: INNOVATION IN ASSESSMENT AND PRACTICE EXPERT SEMINAR AND DISCUSSION

May 20thth 2021: 13.30-16.45 (BST: London)



REGISTER HERE (TICKETS ON EVENTBRITE OPEN ACCESS NO CHARGE)¹

An optimal caregiving environment during the perinatal period is critical for the healthy development of infants. Challenges to optimal development include poor nutrition, a chaotic and stressful environment and, critically, insensitive and unresponsive caregiving. Infants are at higher risk of maltreatment than any other age group and have a higher-than-average risk of being the victims of homicide. Despite their vulnerabilities, infants deemed to be at risk of harm are often not given adequate protection within a time frame that is consistent with their developmental needs. Furthermore, an increasing number of infants are being removed at birth due to failures to identify and support pregnant women with recognised risks, many of whom have no specialist input until late in pregnancy.

This online seminar focusses on child protection in the period from conception to birth. This is a significant issue in view of widespread evidence concerning the high (and apparently growing) number of infants removed from birth parents within the first few weeks of life, in several different countries. The seminar will explore the following issues:

- Community-level assessment and intervention
- Pre-birth assessment: timeframes and processes
- Supporting pregnant and newly-delivered women whose infants are at risk of harm
- Effective interventions in preventing repeat removals
- Guidelines for humane and sensitive practice when infant removal is necessary

Key presentations from the seminar will be published in a special issue of Child Abuse Review. Participants are also invited to submit abstracts for papers to be considered for this Special issue:
<https://www.childprotectionprofessionals.org.uk/News/call-for-abstracts-child-protection-during-the-perinatal-period>

¹ If you have difficulty in registering through this link please contact harriet.ward@education.ox.ac.uk

PROGRAMME

May 20 2021: 13.30-16.45 BST (London)

13.30-14.30: Differential rates of infant removal, assessment and intervention at a community level

Fred Wulczyn, Senior Research Fellow and Director of the Center for State Child Welfare Data, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago USA <https://www.chapinhall.org/person/fred-wulczyn/>

Erin Dalton, Director of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania <https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/About/Biographies/Erin-Dalton.aspx>

14.30- 14.45: Break

14.45 -15.45: Assessment and intervention at an individual level: innovative ways of assessing, engaging and supporting pregnant and newly delivered women whose infants are at risk of harm

Jane Barlow, Professor of Evidence-Based Intervention and Policy Evaluation, Department of Social Policy and Intervention, University of Oxford, UK and President of The Association for Infant Mental Health (AIMH), UK <https://www.spi.ox.ac.uk/people/profile/barlow.html#/>

Marit Skivenes, Professor in the Department of Administration and Organisation Theory, University of Bergen, Norway <https://www.uib.no/en/persons/Marit.Skivenes>

15.45-16.45: Sensitive practice in infant removal/ preventing repeat removals

Claire Mason, Research Fellow, Centre for Child and Family Justice Research, University of Lancaster, UK <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/sociology/people/claire-mason>

Melissa O'Donnell, Associate Professor and Deputy Director, Australian Centre for Child Protection, University of South Australia <https://people.unisa.edu.au/Melissa.O%27Donnell>

Sarah Wise, Associate Professor and Good Childhood Fellow, Department of Social Work, University of Melbourne, Australia <https://findanexpert.unimelb.edu.au/profile/33705-sarah-wise>

AiMH UK (The Association for Infant Mental Health) has kindly agreed to host this event for us. Any queries on the day of the event please contact:

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The International Network on Infants, Toddlers, and Child Protection

The seminar is organised by the International Network on Infants, Toddlers and Child Protection, a consortium of academics, policy makers and practitioners, brought together with the aim of sharing research evidence and information about good practice, in order to:

- enable more children to receive care that optimises their development
- enable more children to remain safely with their birth families
- promote better quality of care for those who cannot be looked after by birth families and are placed in foster care or institutions

The Network was initiated in response to widespread evidence concerning the high (and apparently growing) number of infants removed from birth parents within the first year of life, many of them within a few days of birth. This is an issue of concern in numerous high, middle and low income countries with different welfare regimes. Although the primary reasons for removal may vary, the underlying factors include poverty and destitution, parents' problems, child maltreatment and the risk of harm.

The Network is sponsored by Centre for State Child Welfare Data, Chapin Hall Centre, University of Chicago; Rees Centre, Department of Education, University of Oxford; and Department of Social Policy and Intervention, University of Oxford.

