
EARA

Newsletter

European Association for Research on Adolescence

May, 2017

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From the President

Dear EARA members,

It is almost a year since the last EARA Conference in Spain, and we are looking forward to the next EARA Conference, to be held in Ghent, Belgium.

We plan to further expand our collaboration with other international associations and societies. Therefore, during the SSEA conference on Emerging Adulthood, to be held in Washington D.C, USA, from November 2-4th, 2017, a SSEA/EARA presidential symposium will be organized, together with Seth Schwartz, Elisabetta Crocetti and other prominent scholars. This activity is planned as a good platform for the promotion of the EARA among the international community. Elisabetta Crocetti will present the paper "Emerging adulthood in Europe: What we know and what we don't know?", Rita Žukauskienė together with Goda Kaniušonytė will present the paper "Links between identity processes and anxiety/depression in emerging adulthood", and USA colleagues will present papers concerning other cultural contexts. EARA scholars will also present at ECDP meeting in Utrecht, and in ECP meetings

Our main priority consists in strengthening the EARA as the leading association in Europe focused on research on adolescence. The EARA is looking into ways to increase its membership, since the membership fee is the primary financial source of EARA. From

the membership fees we will contribute to the EARA-SRA-SRCD joint summer school in 2017. The Summer School will be held in Utrecht, The Netherlands from August 26th to August 29th. More information about this event is available from <http://www.ecdp2017.nl/eadp-eara-sra-summer-school-2017/>. Traditionally, Summer Schools bring together established researchers, recognized for their expertise and teaching abilities with doctoral students from around the globe for several intensive days of research training. The previous EARA summer schools have given students enthusiasm to search for scientific guidance outside of the borders of their countries and the walls of their universities. This year, the Summer School will be directed by Susan Branje. Prominent teachers include Craig Colder, Elisabetta Crocetti, Velma McBride-Murry, Christiane Spiel, Sabine Walper, and Manuel Voelke. A total of 24 students will be selected on the basis of their academic records, research experience, letters of recommendation, and overall evidence of scientific aptitude and competence.

Thus, to be able to support such activities in future, EARA really needs you and your contribution. I would like to remind you to renew your memberships and check your contact info and please encourage your colleagues who are interested in research on adolescence to be part of EARA.

As our work proceeds, we will report to the members about plans, activities and outcomes.

Do not hesitate to contact us with queries or suggestions – we are at your service. And, last but not least, I hope to see as many as possible of you in Ghent in 2018.

Yours sincerely
Rita Žukauskienė
Eara President
Mykolas Romeris University, Vilnius,
Lithuania.

The Irish Context for Research on Adolescence

Jennifer Symonds

(University College Dublin, Ireland)

The Republic of Ireland is a small island nation of around 4.6 million people, of whom around a third are children and adolescents (Central Statistics Office, n.d.). The most highly populated city is Dublin with 1.4 million, followed by Cork with around 200,000, and Limerick with around 100,000. Most of the landmass is rural. The top grossing industries in Ireland are chemical, pharmaceutical, computer, electronics, and food (Central Statistics Office, n.d.), marking a change from an economy that was previously dominated by agriculture. Most people in Ireland speak English, and although nearly 20% of people speak Irish only 1.7% speak it daily (Central Statistics Office, n.d.). The next most commonly spoken language is Polish.

The Irish government provide funding for a wide range of services for adolescents, including the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), and various school-to-work supports for early school leavers and unemployed adolescents. Many youth services operate as charities in Ireland, giving a range of supports including structured activity programmes, careers counselling and connection to other services. The majority of schools for adolescents in Ireland are state funded, and owned by the Catholic Church. These comprise 3,145 primary schools for the 5 – 12-year age range, 723 second level schools for adolescents aged 12 – 18-years, and 141 special schools for children with additional support needs (Department of Education and Skills, n.d.). Adolescents usually attend school until age 17-18, and

graduate with either a lower or higher level school leaving certificate.

Research on adolescence in Ireland mainly takes place in the seven universities, higher education colleges, the Educational Research Centre, the Economic and Social Research Institute, and in other non-profit research agencies. The Growing Up in Ireland (GUI) study is Ireland's nationally representative longitudinal study of children and young people, and to date has provided data on 19,500 individuals (GUI, n.d.). Of those, 8,500 are in the 'child cohort' who were surveyed at ages 9-, 13- and 17-years, with a fourth wave planned for age 20-years. The non-sensitive GUI data is freely available to use on application from the Irish Social Sciences Data Archive (ISSDA, n.d.) and can be compared to similar studies in many other countries across Europe and internationally.

In this edition of the EARA newsletter, we have provided a set of short texts on individual researchers' projects, conducted at University College Dublin, University College Cork and at the Educational Research Institute in Dublin, to illustrate some of the research on adolescence taking place in Ireland.

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<http://www.education.ie>
- Irish Social Sciences Data Archive (n.d.)
<http://www.ucd.ie/issda>

1. *Enhancing adolescents' psychosocial competencies in Ireland*

Jennifer Symonds

(University College Dublin, Ireland)

In the interdisciplinary field of education and psychology, psychosocial competence

refers to adolescents' ability to regulate and use their non-cognitive skills, for example their engagement, motivation, self-esteem, self-concept and self-control (West et al., 2016). These competencies often have been found to decline shortly after adolescents transfer from primary education to second level education in Europe and North America, in association with changes in school environment and adolescent biopsychosocial development (Eccles et al., 1993; Ng-Knight et al., 2016; Symonds, 2015). A second issue in competency development across adolescence is the perceived gap between the level of competencies adolescents possess at the end of second level education, and that needed for adaptive regulation in third level education and employment contexts (e.g. Camara, 2013). Although these transition periods should theoretically amplify the rate of competency development by providing new positive environmental stimuli, research also demonstrates their short-term risks for many adolescents, which for some can impel longer-term trajectories of personal maladaptation (Symonds, Schoon & Salmela-Aro, 2016).

In August 2016, I moved from Boston, Massachusetts to Ireland, to research and teach at the School of Education, University College Dublin (UCD). There I co-direct the Master of Science in Children and Youth Studies, which is an interdisciplinary programme with offerings from developmental psychology, sociology, geography and the humanities. Since 2006 I have been researching adolescent development and education within the broader field of positive psychology, conducting secondary data analyses of longitudinal data from Finland, England and Ireland, and original mixed methods fieldwork studies in schools. This year, with support from UCD and the Irish Research Council, I have established a research programme on enhancing adolescents' psychosocial competencies across the mid-schooling and school-to-work transitions

through training modules for 11 – 13-year olds, 15 – 18-year olds, and 18 – 24-year olds.

PROSPER: The professional student programme for educational resilience (early adolescence)

Across 2017 and 2019 we are collaborating with two secondary schools classified as having a high intake of socially disadvantaged students, in a research-practice partnership. Working with teachers we are embedding competencies training into the curricula for English, and Social and Personal Health Education (SPHE), and will evaluate the impact of those training modules on early adolescents' (age 11 - 12-years) self-regulated learning, school engagement and mental health. The central tenet of the programme is to help adolescents develop a sense of being a professional student (Lahelma & Gordon, 1997), to help them manage the increased demands of secondary school in comparison to primary school. The training is grounded in social developmental psychology, stress inoculation theory and developmental, cultural and social pedagogies, and is based on longitudinal studies of student engagement (e.g. Symonds et al., 2016; Symonds & Hargreaves, 2016) and a new model of engagement that we are presenting this year at the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI) (Symonds, Upadyaya, Torsney & Salmela-Aro in preparation). Once the curricula are developed, they will be published as open access materials available to all schools in Ireland and internationally. The project is being managed by postdoctoral research fellow Dr Benjamin Torsney (PhD, Educational Psychology, Temple University) and is funded by the Irish Research Council.

Level Up: Career, college and work readiness training (mid – late adolescence)

In this UCD funded project we are adapting a training programme for unemployed 18 – 24-year-olds that we created for use in Dublin city's most socially disadvantaged areas, previously for Trinity College Dublin and the City of Dublin Education and Training Board. The Level Up training programme is based on the theories of work- and college-readiness (Symonds & O'Sullivan, in press, Akkermans, Brenninkmeijer, Schaufeli & Blonk, 2015) and is designed in partnership by myself and Associate Professor Jos Akkermans from VU Amsterdam. In Level Up, secondary school students in their final two years of school will be offered after-school activities to help them develop the competencies of self-profiling, career networking, career values, self-reflection, critical and creative thinking, study and work engagement, and motivation. This is a feasibility study focused on whether we can successfully adapt our existing training programme for unemployed young adults for use in the school context.

Human Learning: The big 8 college superpowers (late adolescence)

In my role as a university lecturer I am developing training to support adolescents' school-to-college transition by helping them develop mastery over their learning competencies. Here I am offering a module to first year undergraduate students in their first semester that can be taken for credit as part of their Bachelor of Social Sciences degree. In the module we are delivering lectures on memory, critical and creative thinking (CCT), self-regulation, motivation, engagement, mindfulness, identity, and morality, and are following these with small-group tutorials where students will practice those competencies through active learning. The module is interdisciplinary and pulls together theory and practice from education, philosophy and developmental and positive

psychology to serve the longer-term goals of helping students grow into ethical, active citizens and life-long learners. Currently we are applying for funding from UCD to evaluate whether this module promotes adaptive development at the school-to-college transition.

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2. Adolescent obesity-mediated inflammation in adolescence, executive control and externalising behaviour

Samantha Dockray,

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Adolescent obesity and adolescent mental health are pressing societal challenges in many European countries. In 2014, a third of European 11 year olds were obese (WHO) and at the same time three million European adolescents met the clinical diagnostic criteria for externalising behaviour (Wittchen et al, 2011), with many more with sub-clinical symptomology. Externalising behaviours, including conduct disorders, oppositional defiant behaviour and

aggression, directly impact on adolescent wellbeing, and identifying opportunities for prevention remains important. Models of externalising behaviour often indicate vulnerabilities related to a confluence of factors, including emotional dysregulation, interpersonal relationships and social contexts, but few studies have fully incorporated biopsychosocial vulnerabilities, for example neuroendocrine or neuroimmunological factors, into models of adolescent externalising behaviour.

Executive function and behaviour regulation

Biopsychosocial factors contribute directly to the adolescent's ability to regulate behavioural expression; this ability is predicated on developments in brain regions that direct behaviours towards meeting self-expectancies and expectancies of the social context (Blakemore & Choudhury, 2006). Structural changes in the brain, resulting from axonal myelination, synaptic proliferation and pruning, are correlated with a reduction in impulsivity, risk taking and aggressive behaviours (Blakemore & Choudhury, 2006). The development of executive functions transforms the individual's capacity to regulate emotions, manage risk taking and enhances goal directed behaviour, and so delays or disruptions to the development of executive functions can result in increases in, or perseverance of, problem behaviours.

These delays and disruptions may be related to biological factors that disrupt expected development, and recent evidence from cross-sectional studies indicates that adolescents who are obese may have differences in the timing of cognitive development. Body mass index (BMI) is associated with cognitive function in a linear fashion, so that the higher the BMI, the lower the scores on tests of cognitive function (Miller, Lee & Lumeng, 2015; Reinert, Po'e & Barkin, 2013). This association is shown consistently, and persists even after statistical control for

socioeconomic, psychological and cardiovascular factors (Li et al 2008) and the most consistent findings have been with measures of the executive function deficits (Anderson, 2001; Bazar et al., 2006; Delgado-Rico, et al., 2012).

There are several plausible explanations for the association of obesity and executive function, including via cerebrovascular disease involving inflammation (Yates, 2012), however this hypothesis does not readily transfer to explanations of adolescent obesity and executive function; adolescents are less likely to have cerebrovascular sequelae from obesity, however they do have low-grade systemic inflammation (Visser et al, 2001). It is possible that inflammatory factors cross the blood-brain barrier and directly affect behaviour and cognition, or disrupt cognitive development and this in turn suggests that obesity-mediated inflammation during adolescence has the potential to disrupt neural development, and so affect current and future behaviour.

Weight status affects physiological as well as psychological wellbeing

Overweight status has been associated with psychological distress and externalising behaviours. Explanatory pathways are often presented as the moderating and mediating effects of psychosocial factors such as self-esteem, stigma and anxiety. Some studies explicitly indicate a diatheses-stress framework, placing the lived experience of the obese adolescent as a stressor, related to stigma and self-esteem (Ali, Amialchuk, & Rizzo, 2012); some include a psychobiological dimension, but examine only internalising behaviours, where obesity is the diathesis (Vander Wal, & Mitchell, 2011). Being obese may contribute to externalising behaviours via the moderation of psychosocial vulnerability (e.g. low self-esteem) but also create a biological vulnerability, where obesity-mediated inflammation impinges on the development

of executive function. Furthermore, links have been demonstrated between obesity and executive function, executive function and externalising behaviours, and, separately again, of obesity and externalising behaviours (e.g., Miller, Lee, & Lumeng, 2015; Reinert, Po'e, & Barkin, 2013; Riggs, Huh, Chou, Spruijt-Metz, & Pentz, 2012), and the recent research in the Biology, Emotions and Transitions Lab at University College Cork has begun to explore the existence and strength of these links in adolescence.

Weight status and executive control

Herein, the results of a pilot study of stress reactivity and weight status are briefly presented, before a description of research-in-progress that uses a longitudinal design to examine obesity-mediated inflammation, stress reactivity and executive function in adolescents. The pilot study examined associations of obesity-mediated inflammation and executive function, as the first phase in a research project that develops a theoretical model in which systemic inflammation links obesity and executive function, and together with biological stress reactivity explains the association of obesity and externalising behaviours.

In the pilot study, 20 adolescents (10 overweight) completed standard measures of executive function along with measures of physical health. There were 11 girls (6 overweight) and 9 boys (4 overweight) to complete the study; all girls were aged 12-years, all boys were aged 13-years. The measures of executive function included the Behavioural Rating Inventory of Executive Function (BRIEF) and the Go/No Go Task. At the same research session, the adolescent, and the adolescent's parent, completed measures of externalising behaviour including the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire. Samples of saliva and blood were used to measure markers of systemic inflammation. The findings (under review)

from the pilot study indicate interesting associations of obesity, inflammation, and executive function. Although the pilot study is insufficiently powered for statistical analyses, the results indicated that, overall, the normal weight group had lower systemic inflammation and also better performances than the overweight group on measures of executive function. Most of the overweight group were within 4 percentiles of the 89th percentile for their age and sex, and so associations of degree of overweight and executive function were not possible to examine. The pilot study provided the foundation for a longitudinal study of the psychophysiological health, executive function and externalising behaviour of adolescents in Ireland.

The ongoing study incorporates measures of inflammation, executive function and externalising behaviour at 3 equidistant time points over an 18-month period, and will be complete in 2018. At each time point, adolescent participants (N=50, 25 overweight) complete a standardized laboratory stress challenge, provide salivary samples for determination of cortisol and of inflammation, including interleukin-6 (IL-6), interleukin-1 β (IL-1 β) and C-reactive protein (CRP). Measures for the calculation of BMI and body fat percentage are collected at each timepoint. The data analysis strategy involves examining patterns of change in externalising behaviours and inflammatory states through adolescence. Measured variables are both fixed in time (e.g. family contexts in early childhood, age of obesity onset) and varying with time (e.g. engagement in education, social context, etc.) and so analytic methods that capture dynamic development will be used to examine trajectories of externalising behaviours and the relation to obesity-mediated inflammation within social contexts.

Theoretical and practical implications

Both transient and persistent externalising behaviours create a vulnerability to poor outcomes in all domains of life, and so understanding the factors that contribute to externalising behaviours is necessary to guide prevention and intervention science. The patterns of associations of obesity, inflammation and executive control may be relevant for understanding the development and persistence of externalising behaviour in adolescence. Adolescent obesity and externalising behaviour are usually treated separately in policy and practice, yet both require a comprehensive biobehavioural model to describe vulnerability, and indicate suitable responses at the individual and community level.

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3. Can schools facilitate positive psychosocial development in adolescence? Assessing Ireland's "Transition Year" programme

Aidan Clerkin

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Context: Education in Ireland

Surveys of the Irish public generally report high satisfaction with the education system. The main criticisms centre on perceived shortcomings in preparing students for life beyond school, such as preparing students for the world of work and developing independent learning skills and interpersonal skills. Of course, such complaints are not unique to Ireland.

One way in which Irish Governments have tried to address these issues is with the Transition Year (TY) programme. TY is a quasi 'gap' year, lasting one full academic year, halfway through Irish secondary education. Students can participate in TY after three years of lower secondary education but before entering the two years of upper secondary (completing six years altogether), or they may choose to progress directly to the final two years without TY (five years altogether). TY was originally introduced into schools in 1974 but was not widely available until the 1990s. Participation rates have increased over recent years, and two-thirds of the eligible cohort now participate annually (Clerkin, 2013; 2016).

TY is intended to give students a chance to mature and develop in the absence of high-stakes examination pressure, and thereby to promote maturity and social skills, and to prepare for adult life. Students are generally given more freedom than at other grade levels, providing more opportunities for self-directed learning. Cultural activities, community involvement, and trips outside school are common. The year also contains

a strong vocational component. Most students spend time on work experience placements in real workplaces to familiarise them with the world outside school and to provide insights into possible future careers.

Recent reforms to the curriculum framework for lower secondary education aspire to enhancing student wellbeing, devoting substantial time to teaching wellbeing, life-skills and connectedness in school (Department of Education and Skills, 2015). In one sense, these reforms can be seen to expand the holistic perspective underpinning TY to lower grade levels. On the other hand, the extent to which these changes will be integrated smoothly with TY and upper secondary education remains unclear as yet, and it is possible that the distinctive role that TY currently plays in secondary education could be reduced in the coming years.

This study: Assessing TY's contribution to adolescent psychosocial development

Previous research, often interview-based, has found that students, teachers, and parents tend to regard TY as a positive experience for most students (Jeffers, 2007; Smyth, Byrne & Hannan, 2004). Participation can enhance students' sense of maturity, improve relationships with peers and teachers, and develop skills such as time management and the ability to work as part of a team. However, TY has been relatively under-researched, despite being a uniquely Irish innovation which has been in place for more than 40 years (Clerkin, 2012). No study has previously sought to measure the extent of any differences in student development that might be attributable to TY participation.

My doctoral research (Clerkin, 2016) built on previous studies by gathering quantitative data on several psychosocial outcomes and comparing changes over time between students who took part in TY and those who did not. Outcome measures

included relationships with teachers, engagement, self-reliance, subjective age, school satisfaction, life satisfaction, and social self-efficacy. These measures were complemented by extensive quantitative and qualitative data on students' direct perceptions and experience of TY.

Three waves of longitudinal data were collected, beginning before participants made the choice to take part in TY or not in the following year. Participating students were followed up one year and two years later. Altogether, 1153 students in 20 schools took part in all three waves with about 5500 students participating in at least one wave. Student ages across the three waves ranged from approximately 14 to 18 years old. The dataset thus provides a rich foundation for cross-sectional and longitudinal study of psychosocial development among Irish adolescents.

Findings

Space constraints do not permit a complete description of the main results here, but some key findings can be noted briefly. First, students' descriptions of TY generally presented a very positive view. TY participants described themselves as becoming more mature, socially confident, and discovering new interests through their engagement in the activities of TY. These reports correspond closely to the findings of previous qualitative research.

However, there was a tension between these strong qualitative endorsements and the quantitative longitudinal measurements of students' psychosocial characteristics. Latent growth curve analyses revealed surprisingly few significant differences in development between students who took part in TY and those who did not. One possibility is that TY may be particularly beneficial for some students but is less beneficial (or even detrimental) for other students. If that is the case, averaged measures of psychosocial changes may not

provide the most accurate reflection of the true developmental effects of participation in the extra year. Person-centred secondary analyses will be used to examine this hypothesis more closely.

One of the clearest findings was the extent to which students' TY experience varied between schools. This reflects the relative freedom that each school is given to design their own TY programme. This is unusual in the Irish context, where the content and structure of most other grade levels are highly centralised. The extent of variation between schools points to one of the challenges in assessing the outcomes associated with TY, with school-level factors perhaps playing a bigger role in TY outcomes than is the case for more conventional academic outcomes (where between-school variance in Ireland tends to be low).

Global context

The Irish education system appears to be unusual, internationally, in devoting a full academic year to the explicit prioritisation of social and personal development in mid-adolescence, as it does through Transition Year. There is a growing focus worldwide on positive education and youth development, as well as increasing assessment of adolescent wellbeing, socioemotional development, and non-cognitive factors that affect learning (Ikesako & Miyamoto, 2015; Stankov & Lee, 2014; White, 2016; White & Waters, 2015). Amid this renewed emphasis on youth development, Ireland offers an established working example of a large-scale and widely-accessed programme for social and personal development that is well-integrated into mainstream education.

I am currently preparing articles for peer review based on my doctoral research. My goal is to contribute to building a clearer evidence base on which policy-makers and educators in Ireland can base informed views on the TY programme – its successes

and its limitations – through critical assessment of its assumptions, processes, and outcomes. I also hope to bring TY to the attention of interested parties in other countries for whom TY may provide a useful example of one approach to promoting youth development in adolescence, which could be adapted to other contexts.

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4. Creating an intervention to alleviate anxiety in adolescents with moderate intellectual disability

Katherine Lynch

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As a doctoral student on the Educational Psychology programme at University College Dublin, Ireland, I chose to study part time, which offers students like me who have additional commitments such as a young family and part time employment, a valuable opportunity to pursue their career goals. I am currently in my second year and am balancing the requirements of a placement in a disability service for children whilst working on my doctoral research. I am also employed as an Associate Psychologist in a disability service for children and early adolescents. Although there are inevitable logistical challenges in balancing my various roles, there are also benefits. There are overlaps between my roles as mother, student, researcher and practitioner. Each experience informs the other. I am immersed in the world of the child and am privy to gaps in current service provision, therefore feel that I am better able to understand young people’s needs.

Doctoral research on anxiety of adolescents with moderate intellectual disability

In my practice, I have identified a recurring theme of underlying anxiety presentations across my cases. Behavioural presentations

associated with anxiety are particularly prominent amongst those with intellectual disabilities, and include hyperventilation, aggression, increased irritability, avoidance behaviour, self-injury, and unnecessary motor activity (Hassiotis et al., 2012). Whilst many children referred to the service come with a diagnosis of intellectual disability, Autism and ADHD or other disorders and syndromes, an anxiety diagnosis is not always a primary referral issue. It is often the case that their anxiety exists as a comorbid difficulty associated with their primary intellectual disability or ASD diagnosis. It may well be that their anxiety accounts for many of their presenting issues. Therefore, it is vitally important that their anxiety is targeted through evidence based intervention.

Accordingly, through my research I am to design and determine the feasibility of a new programme for alleviating anxiety in adolescents with moderate intellectual disability. There I will work with several case study adolescents and their parents, adapting existing anxiety interventions for use with those adolescents, delivering the intervention, and evaluating the feasibility of this new approach using semi-structured interviews and an anxiety instrument. A key feature of this research is to hear the voice of the adolescent with moderate intellectual disability and represent it in a valid way by constructing an intervention that is dynamically adapted to their individual needs. Therefore, the programme design will be informed by a series of interviews with parents and adolescents, in an ongoing process evaluation. The anxiety instrument must also fit well with the psychological and behavioural targets of the intervention, so I am developing a logic model in line with good practice for larger, randomised controlled trials.

Ethical considerations

The natural progression in any research project moves from research proposal to

ethics application which allows the researcher to identify many challenges presented by their research design. Due to the adolescent participants' cognitive deficits, a pertinent and important issue is establishing a reliable means to obtain their informed consent/assent. Accordingly, I will provide the adolescents with full information in an accessible format via assistive communication strategies such as visual aids. I will pursue their assent on an ongoing basis due to their intellectual disabilities and the anticipated need for repetition of the information provided so that it may be retained and understood. I will inform the adolescents of their right to withdraw at any point in relation to their rights to freedom and self-determination. The research aims to adhere to the 4 elements of informed consent as highlighted by Diener & Crandall (1978) i.e. competence, voluntarism, full information and comprehension. If these elements are included it is a fair indication that participants' rights have been appropriately considered (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007).

Measuring anxiety in adolescents with moderate intellectual disability

A further challenge of my research design is to identify a valid tool to measure the adolescents' anxiety experiences. It is difficult to obtain valid measurements of children's anxiety through self-report measures and this problem is exacerbated for those children with cognitive and communicative deficits (Breau and Burkitt, 2009). Despite self-rating scales being used on a broad basis amongst the adult population, no reliable nor valid measure is available for the assessment of state anxiety amongst those with intellectual disability (Mindham and Espie, 2003). It may sometimes also be the case that existing rating scales might not be useful for identifying symptom improvement in these adolescents especially those with ASD who

tend to have higher levels of anxiety at baseline.

Adapting anxiety interventions for adolescents with moderate intellectual disability

The accessibility of my intervention is another important issue. Adolescents with ASD and a moderate degree of disability will likely require unique adaptations to existing programme designs, given the presence of deficits in their theory of mind, difficulties with social interaction and reduced level of insight to draw connections between their thoughts and feelings. Through my programme I will test the feasibility of adapted CBT alongside Attention Bias Modification Training (ABMT) and relaxation techniques to alleviate the adolescents' anxiety symptoms. Brown and Marshall (2006) highlighted in their review of the literature the growing evidence base behind CBT in the treatment of those with a disability. In my study, CBT must be adapted with due emphasis paid to cognitive deficits in the adolescents' intellectual and executive functioning, processing speed and working memory. Regarding the use of ABMT, an important consideration for me is to identify and utilise a measure that will determine changes in the adolescents' attention bias for positive and threat stimuli that can be successfully managed by this target group. The solutions to these issues alongside a detailed multiple case study of how the adolescents responded to the adapted intervention will be documented in my forthcoming dissertation.

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The XVI EARA conference in Ghent

Submitted by Wim Beyers
(Ghent University, Belgium)

The organizing committee of the upcoming EARA conference in Ghent, Belgium (12-15 September, 2018; mark in your agenda!) is working hard in preparing this meeting. Soon more information will be spread through the website and mailinglist on program, practical issues and other important information. Check your mail!

The theme of the conference is "Nurturing adolescent growth". Starting from a positive and organismic view on adolescence, we invite papers, posters and symposia that

highlight positive youth development, factors and contexts that can add to this positive development, and try to understand psychopathology in order to help adolescents to cope, deal and solve their problems.



Ghent at night

Just to make you eager to join this meeting: “Ghent is a historic city, yet at the same time a contemporary one. The modern daily life of the city’s active inhabitants plays itself out against a gorgeous historical backdrop. In Ghent, they live, work and enjoy life over and over again each day. A couple enjoys the peace of an authentic beguinage. Parents and children stroll through the traffic-free streets of the city centre. A tourist snaps a photo of the three towers, as so many have before, but just a little differently. A businessman with an iPhone walks along the distinctive Graslei, crosses the Lys and enters his stylish four-star hotel hiding behind a medieval facade. Dozens of pavement cafes invite you to discover Ghent’s specialities. The sun is reflected in the many waterways. The city is alive and bids you welcome.”

Wim Beyers, Bart Soenens & Maarten Vansteenkiste,

Chairs of the organizing committee, together with all colleagues of Developmental Psychology at UGent, eara2018@ugent.be

From the Student and Early Career Network (SECNet): Students and Early Career Network (SECNet)

***Submitted by Jolien van der Graaff,
Utrecht University (The Netherlands)***

Dear EARA-members,
We would like to give you an update about SECNet, the Student- and Early Career network of EARA. SECNet includes all students, young researchers, post docs and young assistant professors who are member of EARA. We organize young scholar activities at EARA-conferences, but also in between the conferences we want to keep our network of young adolescent researchers alive! We want to thank all young scholars who increased and strengthened our network by becoming an EARA-member since our conference in Cadiz.

Emerging Scholar Spotlight

Please have a look at our website and see our monthly ‘Emerging Scholar Spotlight’ (<http://earasecnet.weebly.com/emerging-scholar-spotlight.html>) to read about young EARA-members’ recent publications in leading journals in the field of research on adolescence. We want to encourage all SECNet-members to propose their own studies for upcoming ‘Emerging Scholar Spotlights’ by contacting Marlies Maes (marlies.maes@kuleuven.be). Since we have noticed that SECNet-members are often too shy to promote their own studies, feel free to also bring a study of your colleague to our attention!

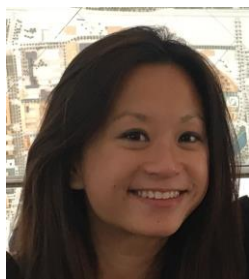
National Representatives

We want to thank the young scholars who joined us in the role of National Representative. We now have National Representatives for Belgium, Canada/USA,

Chile/Spain, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, The Netherlands, Romania, Scotland, Sweden, and Turkey. Please have a look at our website to read their profiles, and contact the representative of your country if you have any ideas to promote EARA among young scholars in your country (<http://earasecnet.weebly.com/national-representatives.html>). Further, if you would like to fulfill the role of national representative, and your country is not represented yet, please send an e-mail to Ioana Pop (popeleonoraioana@gmail.com).

SECNet Facebook Page

We are grateful that SECNet National Representatives, Hana Hadiwijaya and Sofie Danneel, took the initiative to activate our network through facebook! They opened a SECNet-EARA facebook page at which they share the latest news on adolescent research. Please visit and like our new SECNet-EARA Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/earasecnet/>) and use the page yourself to post any interesting information to share with your peer-adolescence-researchers!



Hana Hadawijava and Sofie Danneel

EARA 2018 in Ghent

As you all know, the next EARA conference will be held 12-15 September 2018 in Ghent. At the moment we are thinking about pre-conference workshops and social activities to organize for young scholars. If you have any ideas or wishes regarding this, please contact us (eara.secnet@gmail.com).

Your SECNet committee,
Jolien van der Graaff, Marlies Maes, Mette Ranta, Elisabeth Schubach & Ioana Pop

International Consortium of Developmental Science Societies (ICDSS)

Using Developmental Science to Improve Lives Globally: The Role of the International Consortium of Developmental Science Societies (ICDSS)

Written by Anne C. Petersen, (University of Michigan), ***and Frosso Motti-Stefanidi,*** (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens).

Submitted by Susan Branje (University of Utrecht)

Developmental science has much to contribute to global issues affecting human development. Representatives from the eleven member societies of the International Consortium of Developmental Science Societies (ICDSS) gathered in Utrecht, The Netherlands in February 2017 to identify developmental science contributions to understanding important global challenges and ways to improve lives. Working groups discussed three topics for policy and practice implications: (1) migration, (2) trauma resulting from disasters, and (3) climate change effects. Each group is preparing statements for the member societies and other potential stakeholders.

What is the International Consortium of Developmental Science Societies?

The International Consortium of Developmental Science Societies was initiated in December 2012 among nine founding societies: the Cognitive

Development Society (CDS), the European Association for Developmental Psychology (EADP), the European Association for Research on Adolescence (EARA), the International Congress for Infant Studies (ICIS), the International Society for the Study of Behavioral Development (ISSBD), the Jean Piaget Society (JPS), the Society for Research on Child Development (SRCDD), the Society for Research on Adolescence (SRA), and the Society for the Study of Human Development (SSHDD). Subsequently two additional societies joined: the Australasian Human Development Association (AHDA) and the Society for the Study of Emerging Adulthood (SSEA). Criteria for membership include global scope and interdisciplinary focus on human development. Additional societies have asked to join and will be considered later this year. Until governance of the consortium is in place, a Secretariat¹ has been managing the work. Initial discussions established the vision (i.e., global developmental science enhancing human potential) and mission (i.e., to coordinate and extend the work of the member societies to foster global developmental science and enhance global policy and practice). Governance principles were identified and it was agreed that the Consortium should pursue programs that are effective across the member societies, such as sharing effective organizational approaches, engaging in collaborative research on global topics, and translating developmental science for effective policy and practice.

Policy Perspective

The Secretariat developed a framing statement for engaging policy research. Other multinational organizations have considered the role of global phenomena in affecting human development. For example, the World Bank examined the effects of economic shocks on human development (Lundberg & Wuermli, 2012), and the recently adopted United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN, 2016) integrated

developmental science in two of the 17 goals: “ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages” and “promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.” Beyond effective communication, bringing developmental science to policy-makers and practitioners requires engagement with implementation science to bridge the gap between research and programs/policy (e.g., Wuermli et al., 2015). Recent examples (e.g., Cockcroft et al., 2014) make clear that policy-makers can understand research and expect more from research for shaping effective policy. ICDSS must include both “intrinsic” curiosity driven research and “extrinsic” research to address societal needs. Important principles for bringing science to policy and practice are: (1) using research syntheses (and not single studies) for conclusions and inferences, (2) tailoring communication of research to specific stakeholders and their needs, (3) developing reputations as honest brokers of reliable scientific information (vs. advocating for beliefs or positions without evidence), and (4) being clear about where scientific evidence is inadequate or insufficient to guide policy or practice. While there is tremendous strength in collaborative efforts among Consortium members, such efforts also present challenges. For example, there is great variation in the size and scope of ICDSS member societies, the largest having sophisticated communication efforts for bringing research to policy and practice. Further, even those societies with existing policy initiatives tend to focus on a region, such as Europe or North America; thus no society has yet taken a global perspective. Nevertheless, while most policy and programs are implemented locally, and only occasionally nationally or regionally, we believe that developmental science could be useful for global policy and programs if attention were paid to scope and scale, as well as to the cultural relevance of existing research evidence. ICDSS aims to aid member societies and their scientists to access the best, i.e., the most reliable and relevant research results needed for

adopting effective policy and implementing best practice.

The ICDSS Consensus Conference

Secretariat members raised funds with a competitive grant from one member society plus contributions from several others for a Consensus Conference to develop collaborative research and policy/practice statements on the three topics. The Conference aimed to exploit the richness of expertise represented by consortium member societies across ages and disciplines. Member societies were invited to submit brief statements on each topic that identified useful theories, constructs, and scientists; in order to include all societies who submitted statements, three submissions were selected for each topic. Based on the background papers submitted by ICDSS member societies, a clearer conceptual frame emerged. There are three major kinds of disasters affecting human development: natural disasters (including those resulting from climate change), political conflict/violence, and economic shocks (Lundberg & Wuermli, 2012). Natural disasters are the most prevalent and costly globally, followed by political conflict/violence, with economic shocks a distant third in terms of human effects. All three factors cause migration and human trauma, with effects worse for lower income countries because they lack systems for effective response. The salient underlying construct is pervasive uncertainty and its consequences. Many of the background papers identified theories and constructs for framing consideration of human development responses. These included Bronfenbrenner's multilevel systems, risk/resilience, plasticity, relational systems theory, perceived coping/self-efficacy, meaning making, and ambiguous loss framework. Effective responses include social support/social convoy model, community effectiveness/civic engagement, as well as psychological/behavioral interventions available to wealthier

countries. Sustainable Development Goals were mentioned in some papers as the major existing global policy. Its coherent framework considers distal factors and focusses on what must be done for sustainable development of nations and especially the communities within them. One possible ICDSS contribution would be to specifically identify effective responses to disasters that promote human development and/or reduce negative consequences. The intermediate consequences of disasters include migration of populations and trauma to individuals, topics extensively studied by developmental scientists with results such as:

- *Migration*: Age/developmental period at migration matters along with aspects of both the migrants and the receiving context/people. Social support (e.g., migrating with family or alone); resilience including relational resilience; acculturation process and effects on families and individuals; and ethnic identity development. These are among the processes discussed in the background papers.
- *Trauma*: The developmental science of stress/trauma is well established. Specific contexts that might be considered with policy and practice in mind include terrorism, child soldiers, youth and political conflict. There is also significant developmental research on effective interventions for reducing the effects of trauma.

The background papers recommended that collaborative research syntheses are needed because extant research provides partial knowledge on specific populations in specific circumstances; in contrast, a global scope requires a more comprehensive, synthesizing perspective. The dominant theory mentioned in this context is the life-span ecological perspective (e.g.,

Bronfenbrenner, 2005). In addition to research syntheses, it will be important to identify programs and policies that have been shown to be effective. The Consensus Conference took place over two days. The first day involved an overview session on moving from research to policy/practice, followed by discussion of the background papers in three sessions. The second day involved writing by three working groups. Here are brief paragraphs describing the results of these interim working group sessions.

- *Migration*: Jeffrey Arnett, Marc Bornstein, Robert Crosnoe, Frosso Motti-Stefanidi (lead), Wim Meeus, Fons Van de Vijver, and Hirokazu Yoshikawa The Migration Working Group chose an initial focus on Syrian refugees to Europe for a projected policy brief. They began with a vignette exemplifying the challenges of refugee children/youth and their families. The contributions of developmental science include knowledge about risk/resilience of children in challenging contexts. Among the risks to children/youth is the asylum experience -- an uncertain, often protracted period involving harsh living conditions without adequate food and shelter and often exposure to violence. Social isolation, discrimination, and lack of access to education or employment are among other risks. These challenges can be addressed with effective services by the host countries to minimize risk and trauma. Effective examples will be identified.

- *Trauma*: Kristine Ajrouch (co-lead), Ronald Barr, Colette Daiute, Anja Huizink (co-lead), and Paul Jose The Trauma Working Group is preparing a research synthesis to be submitted for publication. Key developmental theories (including

sociological, psychological, and biological stress models) frame the review of what is known about understanding and intervening with trauma. The focus will be specifically on how trauma inherent in the refugee situation may impact developmental milestones across the life course. The refugee situation will be used to highlight what is known from developmental science and where knowledge is limited or lacking.

- *Climate Change*: Marcel van Aken, David Henry Feldman, Katariina Salmela-Aro, and Ann Sanson (lead) Climate change is regarded as the most serious global health threat of the 21st century (Costello et al., 2009) and the most significant inter-generational challenge facing the world (UNICEF, 2013). By 2050, there will be 150-200 million forced migrants due to climate change events (Oxfam, 2010). Children in the poorest communities are the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change through increases in malnutrition, disease, poverty, inequality, and conflict (Stern, 2007). Developmental scientists have important roles to play in mitigation of and adaptation to the impacts of climate change. This working group is developing a call to action that will include developing a research agenda for increasing children's understanding about climate change, building their capacity to adapt and engaging them in mitigation efforts, and identifying effective ways to reduce negative impacts on populations, especially children and youth. Given that climate change features prominently in the Sustainable Development Goals, that may be an effective avenue for mobilizing action (Raikes et al., in press).

These efforts will continue through follow-on activities engaged by the Consortium in partnership with member societies.

Acknowledgements: The Consensus Conference was convened with major support from SRCD competitive grants and member contributions from EADP, ICIS, ISSBD, SRA, and SSEA.

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¹ ICDSS initial Secretariat: Anne Petersen, Rainer Silbereisen, and Lonnie Sherrod; Frosso Motti-Stefanidi joined in February 2017

In memoriam of Prof. ÇİĞDEM KAĞITÇIBAŞI

Submitted by Figen Çok
(TED University, Turkey)

We are very sorry for the loss of Prof. Çiğdem Kağıtçıbaşı, an excellent researcher and teacher. Among her incredible contributions to science, her most important legacy are the thousands of students and researchers and her incredible humanity.



She received her Ph.D. in Social Psychology from University of California, Berkeley, US. She worked at METU, Bogaziçi and Koç Universities after her return to Turkey. Although her degree was in Social Psychology, her work influenced

Developmental Psychology, Early Childhood Education, Cultural psychology and Cross Cultural Psychology and other related fields. She was surely a great scientist and she had focused on the effects of the culture on the development in general and on the development of self in particular.

Kağıtçıbaşı carried her passion for education beyond the scientific field. Through a non governmental organization, Mother Child Education Foundation (AÇEV), she created one of the most important enrichment programs of early childhood education and mother support.

She worked to develop education programs for young people for supporting social welfare and peace in Turkey. Prof. Kağıtçıbaşı promoted the best models for education. Moreover as the director of the Koç University Center for Gender Studies (KOÇKAM), she tried to promote gender equality, and the role of women in society. She worked at many universities all over the world as visiting professor. She gave hundreds of keynotes and papers at many different scientific meetings. She was an extremely friendly person and had many connections and collaborations with different academic groups.

Prof. Kağıtçıbaşı has been among the strongest supporters of secular education and she made concrete efforts to promote this aspect in the society and also to reduce the gender gap and sustain the education of the girls in Turkey. In this respect and as UNESCO Chair on Gender Equality and Sustainable Development, she created the Human Development Research Award with the aim of supporting young social scientists, using their own resources.

The excellence of work of Prof. Kağıtçıbaşı for science and education have been acknowledged with many national and international awards by various academic organizations and universities including Jacobs Foundation, European Association for Developmental Psychology (EADP) and Society for Research on Adolescence (SRA).

Her books and articles inspired many people. Although she had been a well known international researcher, she also wrote various Turkish books and textbooks for Turkish scientific community. Thus she was extremely productive and contributed to the development of social sciences in her home country too.

She contributed to the EARA Conferences with her keynotes and papers (Jena EARA 2000, Antalya 2006 and Çeşme 2014) and she realized various collaborations with EARA members.

We will be always remember her remarkable and productive life as well as her supportive and friendly attitude.

Deepest condolences to her family and to the academic community.

Figen Çok

EARA Publications

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The EARA newsletter is a publication of the European Association for Research on Adolescence, and is published twice a year. All inquiries about the content of the newsletter should be addressed to the editor:

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