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The Transition to Contemporary Parenthood Program's Work on Parental Fear

Amanda Cooklin



One of the research areas of the Transition to Contemporary Parenthood Program (TCPP) is building opportunities to strengthen support to parents through the communities and institutions that comprise their everyday environments. A key study in this area is *Parental fear as a barrier to children's independent mobility and resultant physical activity*, a three-year research project (2012-2015) funded by VicHealth, conducted in collaboration with The Parenting Research Centre and with researchers from the Australian National University, University of Western Australia and University of Texas. This project aimed to increase understanding of the role that parental concerns play in shaping children's independent travel and play and identify the factors that support parents to facilitate their children's independence confidently.

Between October and December 2013, a large-scale community telephone survey was conducted. The survey was the first of its kind in Australia to collect detailed information about the factors that influence parents' fears for their children's safety and the amount of freedom parents give their children to play and travel without adult supervision. A stratified sampling approach was used to select mothers and fathers from across metropolitan and regional Victoria, with surveys completed by 2002 parents of children aged 9-15 years.

School-based focus groups were also conducted with 132 children and 12 parents to build a richer understanding of children's views about how they gain independence and how parents make these decisions.

Graduations

Zaharah Sulaiman graduated with her PhD in October 2014. Her thesis was entitled *Infant feeding: Perceptions and experiences among working women in urban Malaysia*. Zaharah was supervised by Pranee Liamputtong (Public Health) and Lisa Amir.



Zaharah (right) at her graduation ceremony.

Stef Zugna graduated with her Master of Midwifery in October 2014. Her thesis was entitled *Caller Profile, demand for, and referral pathways of callers to the post and antenatal depression association (PANDA) helpline: A Descriptive Study*. Stef was supervised by Helen McLachlan, Della Forster and Touran Shafiei.

Preliminary findings from this research were featured as part of VicHealth's Walk to School Campaign, which was launched on 14 October 2014. Media coverage included print, television and radio commentary by Principal Investigator, Professor Jan Nicholson, and the CEO of VicHealth, Jerril Rechter.

[Read more about the Research Highlights here:](#)

Beyond the bubble-wrap: Understanding parents' fears in allowing their children to play and travel independently

http://www.latrobe.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/602432/Parental-Fear-Research_Preliminary-research-highlights_FINAL.pdf

See our piece in *The Conversation*:

<http://theconversation.com/what-do-parents-fear-unwrapping-the-bubble-wrap-generation-30467>

See the Media Release from VicHealth:

<http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/Media-Centre/Media-Releases-by-Topic/Physical-activity/20141014-Beyond-the-Bubble-wrap---Parental-Fear.aspx#.VHJsR4uUdjQ>

Second National Sexual and Reproductive Health Conference

Angela Taft



From left: Associate-Professor Andrea Whittaker, Associate-Professor Diana Greene Foster and Dr Kerry Arabena.

The second Public Health Association of Australia National Sexual and Reproductive Health Conference was held at Hilton on the Park, Melbourne on 18-19 November. The federally funded program had a strong focus on fertility understandings, fertility control and fertility protection. Professor Angela Taft chaired the Scientific Committee and opened and closed the conference.

Keynote speakers on the first day were:

MAINN conference

The following is a list of presentations delivered at the Maternal, Infant and Child Nutrition and Nurture (MAINN) conference that was held at the University of Western Sydney from 5-7 November 2014.



Miranda Buck
Women's experiences of becoming a breastfeeding mother

Rhian Cramer
Implementing the 'Supporting breastfeeding in Local Communities' (SILC) cluster randomised trial: Exploring the views and experiences of Maternal and Child Health Nurses and Coordinators

Mary-Ann Davey
Intervention in labour and early breastfeeding outcomes

Jessica de Bortoli and Lisa Amir
Factors associated with delayed onset of lactation in a Baby Friendly Hospital

Della Forster
A randomised controlled trial of caseload midwifery for women at low risk of medical complications (COSMOS): breastfeeding intentions, initiation and two month feeding outcomes

Heather Grimes
Pass it on: A study of the experiences of volunteers providing telephone support to breastfeeding mothers in a

1. Associate Professor Diana Greene Foster, Director of Research, University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), who talked about prevention and consequences of unintended pregnancy;
2. Associate Professor Andrea Whittaker, School of Social Sciences, Monash University, discussed "Mobilities, borders and the management of fertility and infertility";
3. Professor Kerry Arabena, Director of Onemda Koori Health Unit, University of Melbourne discussed 'Familiarity, fertility and fear: Addressing sexual and reproductive health needs in marginalised communities'

Speakers on the second day included Dr Lone Schmidt, Associate Professor, Department of Public Health, University of Copenhagen, Denmark who presented her work on "The impact of female and male age on fertility". Dr Schmidt was followed by Professor John Aitken, Laureate Professor of Biological Sciences and Pro Vice-Chancellor of Health and Medicine, University of Newcastle, NSW, who graphically warned of the need to keep reproductively well and healthy; and Professor Victor Minichiello, Adjunct Professor, ARCSHS, La Trobe University, who discussed "New thoughts about 'old' sex: rethinking sexuality in later life".

The final, lively debate about surrogacy featured a broad range of speakers. These included a gay father, a surrogate child, lawyers who assist with the legal aspects of surrogacy, and scholars exploring the impact on Thai surrogate mothers and those in Thailand and India.

Videos of keynote conference presentations have been posted at the following site: <http://www.phaa.net.au/NSRH2014Conference.php>

Unwanted Pregnancy Symposium

Mridula Shankar

Following the second National Sexual and Reproductive Health Conference, a one-day symposium was held at the Judith Lumley Centre on 21 November. This symposium brought together a select group of researchers across Australia, working in the fields of prevention of unwanted pregnancy and pregnancy termination. The focus of the symposium was threefold: To showcase and discuss the work of Associate Professor Diana Greene Foster; to share amongst peers, areas of past and current research; and to identify current gaps in knowledge in the field, and explore the potential for future collaborations based on shared research interests.

Beginning with Diana Greene Foster's opening presentation on the Turnaway study in the US "What happens to women who are denied abortions", the day's presentations and discussions illustrated a diverse body of work unravelling and understanding the predictors, dynamics and complexities of reproductive choices and fertility management, and the consequences of reproductive choices (or lack thereof) for women and men in Australia.

randomised controlled trial

Helene Johns

Exploring breast pump use in a group of Australian women: the Mothers and Infants Lactation Cohort (MILC) study.

Helen McLachlan

Supporting breastfeeding in Local Communities (SILC): Findings from a cluster randomised controlled trial in Victoria (This was an invited plenary)

Amongst others, topics of current and past research included examining patterns of contraceptive use; understanding attitudes towards sexual health; exploring the experiences of (un)intended pregnancies; examining barriers to pharmacy access of emergency contraception; the mapping and analysis of sexual and reproductive health policy in Australia; measuring pregnancy intentions; improving uptake of long-acting contraceptives; and assessing access and equity to medical abortion. There was acknowledgment that research and advocacy had contributed to significant progress in improving women's reproductive choices, and that much work still remains to be done.

The day's discussions culminated in a whiteboard exercise listing "unanswered questions" and identifying areas of shared interest for future collaborations.

For many, it was the end of a tiring week of conference presentations. Yet there was much appreciation for the opportunity to meet, interact and discuss research interests with a select group of scholars in the field; and to develop new friendships and professional collaborations to continue a shared workplan for 2015 and beyond.

New Breastfeeding Guidelines



The Centre in partnership with the Royal Women's Hospital and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development have developed new Victorian Breastfeeding Guidelines. These

guidelines aim to protect, promote and support breastfeeding mothers across the state.

It is the first major update of Victoria's breastfeeding guidelines in 16 years and was written by Associate-Professor Lisa Amir and Anita Moorhead (pictured). The guidelines were funded by the Victorian Government and advice taken from community and hospital-based maternal and child health professionals and mothers themselves.

This ensured valuable feedback to make the content appropriate for clinicians in all settings. The release of the Victorian Breastfeeding Guidelines came in

Lunchtime Seminars

Open lunchtime research seminars are held on the first Wednesday of every month from February to December, from 12:30-1:30pm, and showcase the work of national and international academics/researchers.

Other seminars will be announced as they arise. For the program, please see the upcoming events listing at <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/jlc> If you would like to be added to our mailing list or update your contact details, please email us at jlc@latrobe.edu.au

Breastfeeding Forum



Lisa Amir (left) was the invited keynote speaker at the Breastfeeding Planning Forum, City of Whittlesea and City of Hume, in South Morang on 21 October 2014. She is pictured here with Mayor Mary Lalios .

World Breastfeeding Week.

Researching Violence against Women at La Trobe University

Ingrid Wilson

Violence against women is a public health and human rights issue affecting the health and well-being of women across the globe.

The La Trobe Violence Against Women Network (LAVAWN) has been established to draw together the breadth of expertise across La Trobe University on this important issue. Based at the Judith Lumley Centre and led by Professor Angela Taft, the aim of the network is to encourage collaboration and partnerships, with the aim of fostering innovation in violence against women research, evaluation and knowledge translation. The network will have its first cross-university meeting in early 2015.

For more information about the network, contact Ingrid Wilson, LAVAWN coordinator, by telephone on 9479 8805 or by email at imwilson@students.latrobe.edu.au.

New and Visiting Staff



Cattram Nguyen

Cattram Nguyen is a Research Fellow/Biostatistician in the Transition to Contemporary Parenthood Program. She recently completed a PhD at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI) examining methods for assessing the goodness-of-fit models used in multiple imputation, a statistical technique for handling missing data. She will be spending two days a week at the Judith Lumley Centre, primarily providing statistical support to the TCPP. Cattram also works part-time as a statistician at MCRI.



Dr Naomi Hackworth

In January 2015, JLC will welcome Dr. Naomi Hackworth. Naomi has been appointed as a Senior Research Fellow with the Transition to Contemporary Parenthood Program. Dr Hackworth

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has considerable experience in project management, content development, research and evaluation both within both the university and not-for-profit sectors. She has managed a number of large scale government funded implementation and research projects and successfully attracted research funding to pursue research in parenting, early childhood development, child and adolescent chronic health, and engagement of vulnerable families in face to face and online interventions.

Dr Hackworth is a psychologist with clinical experience working with children who have learning difficulties and their parents.

Dr Patricia McNamara



Dr Patricia McNamara (Department of Social Work and Social Policy, Melbourne Campus) has been an Academic Visitor to the Centre whilst on Study Leave during Semester Two. During her time at JLC, Dr McNamara has participated in many Centre activities including a new study of 'anticipation of parenthood' led by Professor Jan Nicholson. Her primary research focus during recent months has been a national study of out of home care pathways to higher education.

This research has competitive funding from the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education at Curtin University. Dr McNamara has also written several papers and book chapters during her stay. These have focused on therapeutic approaches to residential and foster care and youth homelessness as an outcome of child poverty in Australia.

New publication

Whittaker JK, del Valle JF and Holmes L, eds. (2015) *Therapeutic residential care for children and Youth: Developing evidence-based international practice*. London and Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

The European Scientific Association for Residential and Foster Care Research Conference (Copenhagen, September, 2014) hosted the launch of the above-named edited collection, which showcases therapeutic approaches to residential care from 9 countries around the western world. The book includes a chapter on what many describe as 'a new era of therapeutic approaches to care in Victoria.'

New grants and tenders

Staff at JLC have recently attracted funds to undertake new projects

Led by staff at the Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS), AIFS and JLC teamed up to propose a successful project 'Domestic and family violence and parenting: mixed methods insights into impact and

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support needs' to the new federal fund Australian National Research on Women's Safety (ANROWS)

Kaspiew R, Humphreys C, Nicholson J, Hooker L, Taft A. \$249,683. ANROWS.

Led by Danielle Mazza (GP Dept, Monash University) Angela Taft and others were successful in attracting and NHMRC project grant to conduct a trial to encourage an increasing encouragement by GPs of the use of LARCs.

Mazza D, Black K, Taft A, et al. Increasing the use of long-acting reversible contraception (LARC): the Australian Contraceptive Choice project (ACCORd) \$701,848. NHMRC.

The new Research Focus Area at La Trobe University (Transforming Human Societies) has provided JLC staff Angela Taft, Rhonda Small and Mridula Shankar with seed funding to pilot their trial of preventing and reducing family violence in the Indian community (HARMONY) using bilingual general practitioners teamed with bilingual advocates.

Taft A, Small R, Hegarty K, Feder G, Krishnan S and Shankar M. The Harmony Project \$87,255. RFA Transforming Human Societies.

Angela Taft and Lyn Watson were successful in a tender to analyse secondary data from three rounds of national surveys of community policing and law and justice in Timor Leste as baseline data for a new eight year initiative of the Asia Foundation, funded by Australian Aid to reduce violence against women in Timor Leste.

Taft A, Watson L. Secondary Analysis of Violence Against Women. \$US30,000. The Asia Foundation.

Lisa Amir, Della Forster, Helen McLachlan with Lael Ridgway and Miranda Buck of JLC were very recently awarded funds to develop infant sleeping guidelines for Victoria.

Amir L, Forster D, McLachlan H, Ridgway L, Buck M. Development of a Victorian safe infant sleeping guideline. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

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