

NEWSLETTER

Future of psychology

Mid way thorough 2008 is a good time to reflect on what is happening in our profession and to think about where we want it to go in the future.

I am sure you are aware of the frequency with which psychological topics appear in radio, TV and the print media. The net displays our never ending willingness to share personal information and form new connections. This is surely an era where communication and empathic understanding of others is more pronounced and more needed then ever before. As psychological research strives to embrace every facet of human thought, feeling and behaviour, we can always think of where it is failing to achieve results. Are we any closer to understanding personality, mood disorders and learning difficulties? Do we understand the connection between politics, economics, religion & psychology? Do we have a viable alternative to war? While we struggle with these big questions, there are times when we can't even satisfy the needs (wants?) of psychologists affiliated with the APS. We have a long way to go, but, we are trying!

This year has seen the launch of undergraduate and postgraduate psychology programs at the University of the Sunshine Coast. The introduction of Medicare rebates for psychological services in 2006 made a huge difference to the work of all psychologists. At the same time there has been a decreased recognition of counseling, educational and organizational psychology. Some decry the new emphasis on the commercial aspects of service delivery as private practice becomes the rule rather than the exception. Medicare has made us more visible and the subject of more debate. Dr Ian Hickie (See WE Australian 24 May) argues for new approaches to service delivery by having nurses in general practice. He sees Medicare funding for psychologists as a wasted opportunity to improve access to much needed services. Whether you agree with this or not, we are being

scrutinized and every effort must be made to maintain high standards without promising the impossible.

Through my position at the Division of General Practice I am coordinating a program that is expected to improve collaboration & understanding between GPs, the Mental Health Service and other service providers. The project is called Partners in Mind and Kelly Callaghan is your representative on the Executive Committee that oversees the project.

On Thursday 26 June from 1.00 pm to 6.00 pm the District Health Service and the Division of General Practice are hosting a Mental Health Expo for Service Providers at the Millwell Road Community Hall in Maroochydore.

It won't be advertised as a public event as it is designed to bring together you and a variety of other service providers. This is a very important opportunity for psychologists to establish their place in the new scheme of things. Never before have psychologists and other allied health providers (social workers & OTs) been consulted so actively on mental health matters. There is a growing interest in chronic disease, life style and how to make community based health promotion and early intervention more effective. These are all psychological issues so we have an opportunity to expand our knowledge, skills and contribution to the quality of life in the community. Contemporary practice is based on evidence which suggests that we ought to work from a bio/psycho/social model that incorporates cultural and spiritual factors. How do you take account of all these factors?

There is a good deal of ignorance or indifference amongst service providers when they are asked what they know about other services. As a result, disappointment occurs when others don't live up to vague expectations or we work in isolation. We can all play a part in addressing these blind spots as they certainly detract from the quality

of the services we provide.

The Partners in Mind Project (PiMP?) has only been funded for a limited time, but the collaboration and cooperation will be ongoing if we can engage the various players in a mutually beneficial dialogue. The APS Branch will support the Expo so I urge you to set aside time on 26 June to visit Millwell Road to find out what other services are doing.

If you are interested in having a display or in contributing to the APS display at the Expo, please contact me or Kelly Callaghan as soon as possible.

I am unable to attend the Branch meeting on Tues 10 June but Kelly will be there to answer your questions on PiM and the Expo. I wish to thank our local practitioners who are providing the panel to review Trauma & its various presentations on 10 June. This will be a valuable, informative and practical evening. I hope you can make it.

Brad Levingston
Chairperson

From the Secretary

There is plenty of reading for you in this issue.

We have a word from Brad, the Chair.... Please join us and welcome Sally Rostas to the SCAPS Committee... I hear that Dr Nancy Pachana's workshop on *The Aging Brain: An Update* was exceptional... Kay has some enticing information for you... and there is the third article in the APS National Psychology 2007 week column...

...so enjoy the read.

Cheers
maggie

The Ageing Brain Workshop

“The Idea is to Die Young as Late as Possible” *Ashley Montagu*

If you didn't attend the latest workshop organised by your local APS branch on the Aging Brain then you really missed out. Dr Nancy Pachana was a wonderfully warm and entertaining presenter who not only filled our aging brains with stimulating information but also had the crowd clapping at the intervals and laughing out loud as she shared some of her more interesting experiences from working in the field of geropsychology.

The subject matter ranged from

“Dementia” to “Sex and Driving Competency,” from “Positive Aging” to “Assessment and Treatment in later life.” It's obvious that as older adults make up a growing proportion of the population in Australia it appears that there is a growing need of skilled professionals to meet the needs of this population and there was plenty of practical and enriching information shared by Dr Pachana throughout the day to grow our skills and knowledge with working with this population.

One powerful principle I gained from the workshop is that older

adults are not as “cut and dry” as one might assume. Misconceived stereotypes of “old people” as a) polite ladies with blue rinses who like knitting and grandchildren and b) gents who like to wear hats when driving were dispelled by Dr Pachana who highlighted that older adults in fact belong to a very heterogeneous population. This makes sense when you think about it, because the older we get, the more we experience. This plethora of life experience often results in an individual who has a rich tapestry of history, skills, values and beliefs deserving of our respect, empathy, as well as our undivided time and attention in order to undertake valid assessments and plan appropriate treatment plans.

From the workshop the pearl of wisdom I most want to share with those that were unable to attend is the criteria for successful aging. This includes maintaining optimal biological and mental health, being socially active and involved in relationships with friends and family, having the ability to maintain personal control over your life and your choices, and finally being satisfied, optimistic and accepting of your life's journey goes a long way to prolonging your life expectancy.

Deb Dewberry



Profile – Sally Rostas

As a new resident to the Sunshine Coast I thought joining the Sunshine Coast Branch of the APS would be a great way to meet new people and of course contribute something useful to the association and its members in the process.

After completing one year of a psychology degree many years ago, I decided after starting a family, to return to study. With an honours degree from Deakin University under my belt I then took a couple of years off, spending 11 months traveling and studying in India with my husband and two children, experiencing an exciting and vibrant country and undertaking studies in the yoga sciences. On my return to Australia, I worked with the Department of Human Services in Child Protection before returning to study again in 2006, completing a Masters in Clinical Psychology program at the Australian Catholic University, Mel-

bourne campus at the end of 2007. During my studies I gained experience working in the university clinic, a school setting and at the Austin Hospital, gaining and improving skills in assessment, individual counseling, cognitive behavioural therapy, and group work, both with children and adults.

With my studies completed, and an opportunity for my husband to transfer his job to Brisbane, our many years of planning came to fruition and we made the move to the Sunshine Coast earlier this year. Unfortunately I underestimated the length of time it takes to mark a thesis and have been waiting for that elusive bit of paper to arrive in order to graduate and register as a psychologist in Queensland. I am particularly interested in working with depressed and anxious clients but would love to work in any area that provides the opportunity to increase my knowledge and experience of all things psychological.

With the likelihood of registration

in the near future I'm looking forward to starting a new career here on the Sunshine Coast and enjoying all the wonderful lifestyle opportunities the Sunshine Coast has to offer.

I look forward to meeting you all!



Membership Recruitment Campaign: May 2008 - January 2009

The Australian Psychological Society now has approximately 16,500 members. To maintain our strong voice for psychology, we need to ensure that our membership continues to represent a high proportion of psychologists.

As an incentive to increase the membership of the Society, from now until 31 January 2009 the Society will give a \$50 APS PD voucher to an Associate Member or Member of the Society for each person they recruit as an Associate Member or Member. The Society will also give a \$50 APS PD Voucher to all those people elected to the grade of Associate Member or Member in the same time period.

To be eligible for the voucher, you need to download the Membership Recruitment form found on the APS website and attach a completed version to the Member or Associate Member application form. A booklet has been included in your 2008-09 membership renewal package which lists many of the benefits and services of membership with the APS. You might like to show the booklet to non-APS psychologists as a way of encouraging them to join. As this campaign runs until 31 January 2009, it allows you to recruit fourth year graduates at the end of the year. Seize the chance to make your workplace have a stronger APS presence, and be rewarded for your efforts!

Summary

You must be an Associate Member or Member to be eligible to receive the \$50 APS PD voucher.

You will be sent one \$50 APS PD voucher for each person you recruit to the Society who is elected to the grade of Associate Member or Member until 31 January, 2009.

There is no limit to the number of vouchers you may receive.

There is no limit to the number of vouchers you may use at any one APS PD event.

The PD voucher is valid until 31 May 2009.

Yes! You could go to the 2008 APS annual conference in Hobart for no charge if you recruit enough members.

Peer support groups

Tony Collins

Eden Health Care Centre,
46 Maple Street
Cooroy
RSVP to check times
5447 7473

Robyn Nolan

1st Mondays of the month
5.00pm
Coolum
RSVP to check location
5473 9547

Your committee

APS Sunshine Coast Branch
PO BOX 724
MOOLOOLABA QLD 4557

Office Bearers for 2006 – 2008

As a committee we will also meet on the second Tuesday of each alternative month – so please contact us if there is anything you would like to raise with us. Your committee contacts are:

Please email newsletter contributions to
mb@maggiebailey.com.au

Chair	Brad Levingston	brakerry@optusnet.com.au
Treasurer	Kay Manning	kaymanning@ozemail.com.au
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Committee Member	Celia Dickson	celiadickson@ozemail.com.au
Committee Member	Robert Neil	ptq@powertrainqld.com.au
Committee Member	Sally Rostas	srosta@bigpond.net.au

Calendar of events

10 June	General meeting	Percy House	Church Street, Maroochydore
Presenters: Naomi Beutel, Melanie Howe, Janice James & Barb Wood			
Topic: Working with trauma.			
8 July	Committee meeting		
12 August	General meeting	Percy House	Church Street, Maroochydore
9 September	Committee meeting		
14 October	BGM & General meeting	TBA	
11 November	Committee meeting		
9 December	General Meeting	Percy House	Church Street, Maroochydore
Presenter: Robert DiPasquale - National Manager - Professional & Consumer Services			
Topic: AON Risk Management Seminars			

The art of Grand Parenting: What's going on?

By Brad Levingston

Grandparents traditionally look forward to taking care of their grandchildren occasionally, perhaps even during the week while parents are at work, still leaving time to get on with their own life, especially in retirement. But more and more, grandparents are being expected to take on a larger role, even that of parent.

An increasing number of grandparents are doing this throughout Australia and the Sunshine Coast is no exception.

In 2003, there were 22,500 Australian families in which a grandparent, or grandparents, were the guardians of their grandchildren. They were caring for 31,100 children aged 0-17 years.

"Sadly the circumstance in which a child comes into the care of grandparents is rarely a happy one," says Australian Psychological Society psychologist, Brad Levingston. "When a marriage breaks down, when parents are no longer willing or able to parent because of health problems, drug abuse or a death in the family, grandparents rather than government services or foster parents are quite likely to take over the care of

the grand kids."

It can be extremely challenging. Finances are stretched, legal rights & obligations may be unclear and all this may

standing of the child's adjustment. School staff can often advise grandparents on whether they think it would be helpful to consult a professional and even which service may be able to help. Parenting strategies that seemed to work 20 or 30 years ago will not work today unless they are adapted to the times in which we live.

"Talking to other grandparents may be a good way to check out the alternatives. There

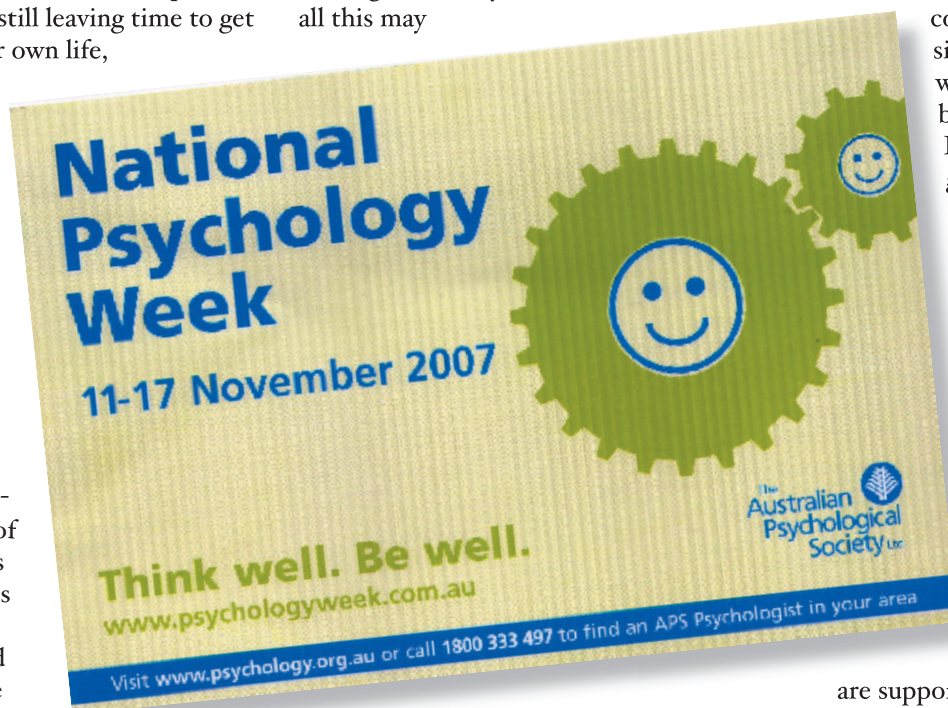
are support groups in

Coolumb and Noosa. A phone call to someone who has been through it all may be a start to doing things differently and taking care of the grandparent," Mr Levingston said.

The Australian Psychological Society urges all grandparents who take on this challenging role to seek help and information if they start to run into trouble. Bringing up children has always been hard work as well as fun – that hasn't changed; but parenting a grand child in 2007 is a huge challenge.

For further information & comment, please contact Mr. Brad Levingston, Chairperson, Australian Psychological Society Sunshine Coast Branch.

Ph 0402113220



be done in a very emotional atmosphere where everyone is angry or unhappy or worried about the future. When a child comes into the care of grandparents, something has gone wrong. The children may have been living in an angry, unstable situation where they often decided what they would do and where they would go. They may be frightened, angry and resentful. While it may be thought that they should be grateful or relieved, such emotions are often not expressed until well after the children have adjusted to their new life and feel secure.

Talking to the class teacher and other school staff can help a grandparent to get a clearer under-