



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS  
DECEMBER 02-04, 2020

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SECOND

# INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PSYCHOTHERAPY

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"Significance and Possibilities of Psychosocial Support in the Protection  
of Children and Youth, Now and After the Covid-19 Pandemic"

ORGANIZER

Bosnian-Herzegovinian Association  
for Integrative Child and Adolescent  
Psychotherapy



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INTERNATIONAL  
congress of child and adolescent psychotherapy

**SIGNIFICANCE AND  
POSSIBILITIES OF  
PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT  
IN THE PROTECTION OF  
CHILDREN AND YOUTH, NOW  
AND AFTER THE COVID-19  
PANDEMIC**

**The book of abstracts**

INTERNATIONAL congress of child and adolescent psychotherapy

**“Significance and possibilities of psychosocial support in the protection of children and youth, now and after the covid-19 pandemic”**

- The book of abstracts -

**Publisher:** BHIDAPA - Bosnian-Herzegovinian Integrative Child and Adolescent Psychotherapeutic Association, Emerika Bluma 9; 71000 Sarajevo; Bosna i Hercegovina; bhidapa.ba; congress.bhidapa.ba; journal.bhidapa.ba

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**DTP:** City.group d.o.o.

**Year:** 2020.

ISSN 2744-1164 (online)

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# introduction

It is our pleasure to present this book of abstracts “Significance and Possibilities of Psychosocial Support in the Protection of Mental Health in Children and Youth, now and after the Covid-19 Pandemic.”

New information and ideas of experts from our country, countries of the region, Europe and the world, through plenary lectures, round tables and practical examples, will describe a number of preventive modalities, educational, legal, social, health, therapeutic and rehabilitation activities aimed at protecting children and their family.

Presentations will be organized through:

A. Plenary lectures (scientific research and theoretical foundations, questions and answers)

B. Round tables (pandemic expert experiences, questions and answers)

C. Practical examples (practical applications, interventions and guidelines for work and treatment, questions and answers)

**Topic of the first day:** Challenges in the new environment - mental health and psychosocial well-being of children

**Topic of the second day:** New approaches to mental health during the Pandemic

**Topic of the third day:** Are we empowered for the Covid reality - Creating timely and flexible support systems for children, families and communities - What have we learned and what can be useful in the post-pandemic period?





# opening statements

## Welcoming speech

**Dubravka Kocijan Hercigonja**

*Chairman of the congress, Polyclinic Kocijan-Hercigonja, Zagreb*

The question we all know the answer to is what children and young people need for proper mental development. Among other things, it is security, structure, belonging, emotional support and understanding. During various crisis situations, we have insecurity, ambiguities in functioning, changed dynamics, both in the family and in the environment, and above all deprivation, actually changes in the current way of life and the lack of structure. Society, adults, schools, and the family often place themselves from the position of an adult vision of the solution, and often under the influence of their earlier unresolved traumas believing they are doing well for their children as well, which is often not the case.

The Second International Congress of Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy organized in these difficult times, thanks to the enthusiasm of colleagues from Bosnia and Herzegovina and beyond and the support of UNICEF, as well as structures from BiH, will help us through lectures, round tables, exchange of experiences to create optimal approaches to children and young people in crisis situations, especially today in the emerging but unfortunately growing pandemic.

Your interest, and especially the support of colleagues and friends from BiH from various levels, I believe will contribute to achieving the set goal, all for the benefit of children and youth. Therefore, I once again thank all the participants and structures from different fields for their support and participation, and I am sure that the Congress will be successful in achieving the set goals.

Thank you.

## Welcoming speech

**Mirela Badurina**

*President of the organizing committee, BHIDAPA, Sarajevo*

Dear friends,

With great pleasure, we are organizing the International Congress of Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy. The health crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic did not prevent us from creating a meeting place, this time virtually. The Congress entitled "Significance and possibilities of psychosocial support in the protection of children and youth, during and after the Covid-19 pandemic" is implemented in partnership with UNICEF BiH, with the support of the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden and the Government of Switzerland.

Children, youth, families and community face the highly stressful challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Leadership and cooperation of adults is crucial for preserving and improving the mental health and well-being of children and young people. The responsibility of experts in these new circumstances is greater than ever. That is why we are organizing this year's congress, as a small step towards strengthening the joint action of experts who work with children and families.

The congress will be an opportunity to share experiences, research, examples of good practice, as well as improve understanding of the impact of the pandemic on the mental health and psychosocial well-being of our children and youth. Also, the Congress will examine a range of ways to create multidisciplinary and intersectoral preventive steps and actions, so that participants can incorporate them into their professional practice, during and after a pandemic.

The book of abstracts documents new scientific and professional findings and proposals of eminent experts from our country, countries in the region, Europe and the world, on possible ways of acting in the time and after the current health crisis.

We hope that the guidelines presented through the summaries, in these unpredictable times, will support us to continue to work together to find optimal ways to act, in order to prevent, to the greatest extent possible, the consequences that a pandemic can and does have on children and young people, their mental health, education, safety and their well-being.

It seems important to us that this time too we send the message that through a relationship with love and respect we nurture the child, and through child humanity as well!

On behalf of the organizing committee, we thank everyone!

## **Welcoming speech**

**Goran Čerkez**

*Vice president of the organizing committee, Federal Ministry of Health, Sarajevo*

Dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen

This year we are holding the Second International Congress of Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy at a time when society's responsibility in the new circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic is greater than ever, but also at a time when support for children, adolescents and their families is needed more than ever.

There were many challenges for the organization of this congress, new circumstances, uncertain environment, but the strong commitment and support of our partners gave us the strength not to give up and to show that no crisis can shake our intentions.

The Second International Congress of Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy entitled: "Significance and possibilities of psychosocial support in the protection of children and youth, now and after the Covid-19 pandemic", due to the current health crisis will be held interactively online with lectures by top regional and global experts.

We hereby confirm the quality and continuity we promised after the First Congress held two years ago. With this, we once again confirm the regional leadership in the field of mental health and promote the importance of the role of psychotherapists and psychologists in the field of health protection of children and adolescents as the foundation of the development of every society.

It is a pleasure that this year, regardless of the Corona virus, over 400 people from all over the world will gather through webinars with the most famous lecturers in this field and the most eminent professors from the United States, Canada, Italy, Romania, Belgium, Great Britain, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia and our country. And what I would especially like to point out is that while many others are hesitant, Bosnia and Herzegovina has found inspiration in the very issue of protecting the health of children in the age of the Corona virus.

The aim of the Congress is to emphasize the need to find optimal ways to act in the emerging health crisis, to preserve mental health and social well-being of young people and their families, but also the mental health of experts - helpers in crisis (psychologists, pedagogues, teachers, social workers) as well as our entire society.

The congress will be an opportunity to exchange experiences, research, examples of good practice, as well as improve understanding of the impact of the pandemic on the mental health and psychosocial well-being of children and adolescents. It will also look into a range of ways to create multidisciplinary and intersectoral preventive steps and actions, so that participants can incorporate them into their professional practice, during and after a pandemic.

As Vice President of the Organizing Committee of the Congress, I express special gratitude to the organizer BHIDAPA - Bosnia and Herzegovina Integrative Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy Association in cooperation with UNICEF BiH with the support of the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden and the Government of Switzerland, UNFPA, BiH Mental Health Project, Ministry of Education science and youth of Sarajevo Canton, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of Republika Srpska and other associates.

We hope that the Congress, in these unpredictable times, will support us to continue to work together to find optimal ways to act, in order to prevent, to the greatest extent possible, the consequences that a pandemic can and does have on the mental health of children and young people, security and well-being.

For us who work in the humanistic sciences, the crisis must not be an obstacle but an inspiration for better times for a better and more secure future that we must build together.

I wish all of us organizers, partners and participants a successful congress and as a child's smile lasts a moment and makes us happy days, so I expect that this congress will make us happy, satisfied and filled with knowledge until the next meeting in two years.

# plenary lectures

## Opening remarks

**Rownak Khan, PhD**

*UNICEF representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina*

Welcome to you all!

Let me start by thanking the Bosnian Herzegovinian Association for Integrative Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy for organizing this 2nd international congress during this difficult time.

COVID 19 pandemic affected regular health services including mental health. This was confirmed by a WHO survey released in early October this year that shows that the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted critical mental health services in 93% of countries worldwide while the demand for mental health is increasing. The demand for mental health is increased due to many factors such as Isolation, loss of income, and related stress and fear as all of these can trigger mental health conditions or exacerbate existing ones.

As for children and adolescents, poverty and unemployment and parental stress can increase the likelihood of child abuse and neglect. We have seen similar patters from previous health emergencies, such as the Ebola outbreak in West Africa from 2014-2016, that children are at heightened risk of exploitation, violence and abuse when schools are closed, social services are interrupted, and movement is restricted.

The negative mental health impact of the COVID-19 can further worsen the situation of children and adolescents with prior mental health issues, especially those whose treatment may have been disrupted as a result of the pandemic. Due to disruption of regular health services, vulnerable children such as children with disability, migrant and unaccompanied children are at higher risk as they struggle to access available mental health and psychosocial services.

The first and foremost step to address any mental health issue is to understand and recognize it and to create a supportive environment at home, in schools, in the community to tackle it. Children and adolescents' mental health can be promoted and protected, and therefore conditions can be treated.

It is encouraging that mental health and psychosocial support services are now seen as an increasingly urgent part of the COVID-19 response globally and in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There is also growing awareness about the need for holistic and community based approached to mental health. The meaningful engagement of children, adolescents, parents, caregivers and community is central of this approach,

UNICEF calls for:

- Increasing awareness of mental health issues and establishing a supportive environment to address mental health issues for children and adolescents
- Increasing investment in mental health and psychosocial support services, integrated within health, nutrition, education and child protection systems and other community services and structures where children, adolescents and families have access to services.

- Increasing investment for schools and communities to ensure all children learn in a safe secure environment through supportive connections to teachers and that mental health and psychosocial support services are available for those children who need it.
- Increasing investment in family-centered and community-based approaches to mental health and psychosocial care of children and adolescents through parenting support programmes, promoting healthy family relationships, and supporting caregiver well-being and mental health.

At the end of my speech let me invite us all to join efforts to remove taboos and social stigma around mental health and call for investment in multidisciplinary, cross-sectorial and community based holistic support for the most vulnerable children, adolescents and caregivers. Let us put our efforts on supporting the potential of the child and help strengthening resilience in children –to help them bounce back from stress and challenges and trauma. Let us work together on building resilient societies after COVID-19 by investing in mental health and wellbeing of the child.

## New challenges and guidelines in psychotherapeutic treatment of children

**Prof. Dubravka Kocijan Hercigonja, PhD, MD**

*Neuropsychiatrist, spec. child and adolescent psychiatry*

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**Key words:** child psychotherapy, crisis, stress, family, society

**Abstract:** Starting from the fact that children need security, structure, sense of belonging, emotional support and known patterns of behavior for proper mental development, changes that affect and change these factors, such as various stressful situations and crises, reflect on the child's development and mental health. The changes and consequences depend on the type of stressor, the age of the child, the environment and family dynamics, as well as the earlier ways and specifics of functioning.

If it is about stressors, crises that affect the wider environment, especially family dynamics, and change, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, the problem becomes much more complex and requires modification of treatment of children and families. As the importance of family and environment depends on the age of the child, it is important to know the impact of the changes in relation to age.

Working with children in crisis situations is much more complex because it must involve both the family and the child-friendly environment. When it comes to a general crisis that affects the functioning of society as a whole, therapy must involve all important people and factors on which the child's development depends, which is very complex given the objective circumstances and often activates previous non-functional traumatic experiences. The reaction of the environment, especially for the child's important people, changes the functioning and relationship with the child, which he does not understand. Often adults, not to burden the child, deny the problem, and changes in the environment and ways of functioning, which confuses the child. The new situation prevents the child from sharing his dilemmas and perceived changes with peers and friends through various forms of creative activities such as play, sports, conversation and the like, which is denied or modified due to the specifics of the epidemiological situation.

It is important in the newly created conditions to modify previously adopted forms of therapeutic work, which must include a different approach and relationships in the family, from a more open relationship, sharing problems in a child-friendly way, creating activities and so on.

Therapy must include working with the child, but also working with the family through counseling in the direction of modifying the way of functioning. In this paper, I want to show my experiences of how the child's way of expressing emotions and functioning through a relationship significantly affects the mental state of the child.

## Specifics of psychotherapeutic treatment of adolescents during a pandemic

**Prof. Mirjana Graovac, PhD, MD**

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**Abstract:** An adolescent, as described by Lewin (Lewin, 1939) is a “person on the margins” - he balances between the role of a child and the role of an adult. At the time of the Covid-19 pandemic, this description of Lewin's seems to depict very well our reality in which both adolescents and the wider environment “balance” between different roles. Professionals who have the mental health of children and adolescents in the essence of their work can also be recognized in this “search for balance”.

There is a long list of tasks that an adolescent, in the process of personality maturation, must master in order to, in harmony with himself and the world, follow the demands of adult status (Tomori, 1979). Adolescents' development and maturation are recognized physically and cognitively, in the area of understanding social relationships, in the search for identity, in the emotional space, in changing relationships with parents and peers. It seems that in the conditions of growing up with the Covid-19 pandemic, development acquires a new dimension of discontinuity, and the effects of which, despite numerous studies, we still cannot see.

Some adolescents will certainly show their healthy strengths in adapting to stressors during and after the Covid-19 pandemic, but we can also expect different models of maladaptive adolescent behavior to which professionals need to offer an answer.

In seeking these answers, it is certainly helpful to reflect on the physiology of adolescent development in the context of the times in which we live marked by the Covid-19 pandemic. Clinical experiences in working with adolescents in everyday practice already show that the “internal and external reality of adolescents” has more or less changed, which requires professionals who diagnose and treat mental difficulties and disorders in adolescence to adapt, understand psychopathology and reshaping interventions and treatments.

In this context, it is up to us, the different profiles of professionals with the interdisciplinary connection of our professions, which deal with the mental health of children and adolescents, to make efforts to ensure that our adolescents are not “marginalized” more than physiology requires.

## Challenges and opportunities of providing mental health care during the crisis

**Prof. Gordana Buljan Flander, PhD**

*Clinical psychologist, court expert witness  
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**Key words:** children, mental health, COVID-19

**Abstract:** The COVID-19 pandemic has confronted us with a threat unheard of in recent history. The need to mitigate its effects on physical health and economic growth in the shadows leaves a mental health crisis, the effects of which we are already recording. Available research conducted at different age groups suggests elevated levels of stress, depressive and anxiety symptomatology. Given the many characteristics typical of mass traumatic events, according to some authors, during and after a pandemic, it is possible to expect an increase in symptoms from the circle of post-traumatic stress. This is in line with research on previous health epidemics, which estimates that among children who have been isolated, the percentage of those with severe post-traumatic symptoms could reach 30%. From a child mental health perspective, a pandemic is an accumulation of risk factors, including threats to the physical health and lives of themselves and loved ones, loss of social contacts and sources of support, increased risk of exposure to abuse, impaired family dynamics and mental health of family members as well as elevated risk of sexual exploitation. Research into the role of adverse childhood experiences clearly shows their long-term negative potential for development and health, which extends all the way to adulthood. Although current knowledge highlights the need for a comprehensive and systematic approach to mental health care at all levels, at the same time, mental health professionals face a number of challenges. The provision of support is hampered by the limited modalities of support conditioned by the priority of physical health, challenges in ensuring the availability and continuity of mental health support, especially for vulnerable groups of children, and the increased professional and personal stress of helpers. The aim of this paper is to provide an overview of the challenges in protecting the mental health of children in the COVID-19 pandemic and to offer guidelines in shaping strategies for the future, based on available research and experience of the Child and Youth Protection Clinic of Zagreb.

## Violence behind the closed doors – specifics during the pandemic

**Key words:** child protection, violence, abuse, negligence

**Abstract:** Child abuse and neglect are a public health problem at the level of the world, Europe and Croatia with significant morbidity and mortality rates. The health crisis, which has lasted for more than half a year and has an uncertain outcome, generates and emphasizes the development of multiple risk factors for child abuse and neglect at the level of child characteristics, parents, family dynamics and the wider community. Numerous respectable world and European child protection organizations warn of the (expected) increase in violence against children due to isolation and quarantine measures and general social vulnerability to the crisis. Research shows an increase in the incidence of undesirable parental behaviors and inadequate parenting practices, at a time when children and young people are particularly vulnerable, due to the effects of the current situation on their mental health. At the same time, there has been a decline in reports of violence to the competent institutions, which is mainly explained by social exclusion and the inability of professionals to recognize and respond to violence equally well in the given circumstances. This presentation will present the previous clinical and empirical experiences of other countries regarding the rates of child abuse and neglect during health

and other crises, as well as the analysis of recent data trends of the Ministry of the Internal Business related to the number of reports compared to previous periods. Models of good practice in responding to and protecting children will also be presented now that the responsibility of professionals working with children and families in changed circumstances is greater than ever.

## The Impact of Family Dynamics on the mental Health of Children and Adolescents during a Pandemic Covid-19

Prof. Albert John Sargent, PhD, MD,

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*Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics, Tufts University School of Medicine,*

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**Abstract:** Family interactions play a key role in the lives, development and mental health of children. Parenting requires the capacity for parental nurturance, structure, attachment and affiliation. Parenting also changes and develops in accord with the child's development through childhood. The Pandemic of Covid-19 has caused illness, death and disruption worldwide through 2020. Measures to prevent the spread of the infection such as mask wearing, social distancing and closure or reductions in school and work environments have led to significant changes in family life and posed additional stresses upon family relationships. Families have had to deal with disruptions in their child's life affecting their education, socialization and their recreation. Some families have also had to deal with loss of family members, loss of jobs, illness among family members, economic distress and increased pressure upon the nature of family relationships. Increased conflict, the possibility of interfamilial violence and the occurrence of enhanced frustration caused by the duration of Pandemic all can further stress family relationships and lead to problematic family interactions. These issues will be presented in this plenary and interfamilial and psychotherapeutic response to build family cohesion and family resiliency will also be presented.

## The covid-19 pandemic and transgenerational war trauma

Prof. Esmina Avdibegović, PhD, MD,

*Neuropsychiatrist, professor at University at Tuzla*

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**Key words:** war trauma, transgenerational transmission of trauma, COVID-19 pandemic

**Abstract:** In the past century and the first decades of this century, we have witnessed a flurry of highly stressful and life-threatening events such as world wars, large-scale disasters, terrorist attacks, and the destruction of entire cities or threats of destruction with nuclear weapons. All these events leave different consequences on the well-being of individuals, communities and society as a whole. They can lead to the development of various trauma-related mental health difficulties in those who have been exposed to these life-threatening events. Trauma affects not only the individual but also the next generations. Research suggests that a constellation of behaviors, perceptions, feelings and functioning that are consequences of trauma can be passed into the next generations. Descendants of survivors may have more problems of mental health including anxiety, shame, health risk behaviors, low trust in the community, or behaviors described as a survival mode. In recent years, some of the possible epigenetic mechanisms have been identified that could explain how exposure



to trauma can lead to changes in DNA function that can be passed on to future generations. Today, we are faced with a disaster of global proportions caused by the novel coronavirus. The COVID-19 pandemic creates stressors such as fear of illness, caring for loved ones, isolation, job loss and additional worries about children and family. In Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, ethnic and national intolerances have intensified, further creating an atmosphere of political, social and economic insecurity. In this context, the COVID-19 crisis in those who survived the catastrophes of the war can activate repressed intrapsychic conflicts and rekindle the unresolved traumas. The aim of this paper was to show how the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the context of a war-traumatized and still deeply divided community such as BiH can reflect on the descendants of war survivors.

## Prevention of violence during and after a pandemic - system plans

**Prof. Elmedin Muratbegović, PhD**

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Founder and director of Criminal Policy Research Center,  
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**Abstract:** Violence in everyday life is unfortunately a constantly present topic in the media, but also in conversations among people. It is mostly manifested through: domestic violence, school violence, violence in community and in the digital environment. The global COVID 19 pandemic only further obscured the true extent of this phenomenon. We also intend to break the silence about this hidden epidemic within the global pandemic. In this lecture, we will present the phenomenology of violence in the Covid 19 era and try to get into its real etiology. Based on the given parameters, we will try to show predictable steps towards the prevention of violence in everyday life today.

## Covid-19 pandemic - Impact on children and youth and possible reaction to the crisis

**Prof. Milica Pejović Milovančević, PhD, MD,**

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**Key words:** mental health, COVID-19, children, adolescents

**Abstract:** The proclamation of the COVID19 pandemic 2019 has led to major changes in the daily lives of people living in the affected countries. In most countries, a state of emergency was declared, which included restriction of movement, travel bans and the implementation of strict preventive measures (isolation, physical distancing, wearing protective equipment). Due to the confrontation with a unknown virus, there is a flood of different, often contradictory and inconsistent information. All these new changes have led to significant changes in the lives of people and children, which have greatly affected their physical and mental health. Children are a particularly vulnerable population in crisis situations. Although previous research shows that children and young people exhibit clinically significantly milder forms of COVID-19 compared to adults, their vulnerability is reflected in a greater susceptibility to develop serious psychological consequences. Mental problems of children most often develop due to the inability to adequately understand the new situation, fear, separation from peers, changes in the mental state of parents and greater susceptibility to abuse and neglect. Also, systematic changes in the country (closure of educational institutions, reduced workload or closure of health institutions or institutions of support and assistance to children and vulnerable relatives)

contribute to the difficulty of overcoming the pandemic. This is especially true for children with pre-existing mental disorders, neurodevelopmental difficulties and children from vulnerable and minority groups who require more care and services from different support systems.

## Sexting as a form of sexual abuse of children

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**Key words:** sexting, sexual abuse, pedophilia

**Abstract:** Many adolescents own cellular phones and in recent years there has been an increase in sexting among both adolescent and adult cell phone users. Sexting can be defined as sending, receiving, or forwarding of sexually explicit messages, images, or photos to others through electronic means, primarily between cellular phones.

Those who engage in sexting are more likely to have unprotected sexual activity and to use alcohol and/or drugs before sex. Motives for sexting have been proposed, such as: being sexy or initiating sexual activity (85%), being flirtatious (68%), gaining attention from a partner (65%), feeling pressured from friends or dating partners (30%), and as a form of self-expression (30%). It seems that sexting in the 21st century is a form of courting and dating.

There is an ongoing debate whether sexting poses a threat to adolescents' emotional well-being. While sexting can lead to abuse and bullying, sexual attacks, legal consequences, consequences at school, the risk of kidnapping and murder, and suicide, majority of research did not find actual negative consequences. Some studies did not find any correlations between sexting and depression, anxiety, and self-esteem, while one found a correlation between sexting and anxiety and one more between sexting and depression and suicidality. There were few cases reported of adolescents who committed suicide after being subjected to sexting and subsequent abuse through social media. It is also important to establish if there was any pressure from other people to sext and was there a malice intention (i.e. to abuse, harm, or bully).

In Croatian legal system, depending on the age of the person who sends sexts and the age of the person who receives them, the person (sending sexts) can be charged with different offences.

## Structured psychosocial intervention – experiences with the digital application DIALOG+ in treatment of people with psychotic symptoms

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**Key words:** psychosocial intervention; digital application; quality of life; psychosis; randomized study

**Abstract:** DIALOG + is a simple generic intervention intended to assess the patient's satisfaction with their own life and the treatment provided, as well as to quickly identify problems and their needs. At the beginning of the DIALOG + intervention, it is necessary to assess patient satisfaction in eight areas of life and in three domains related to the applied therapy, and to determine in which domains patients want to be helped more. The described structured approach uses the principles of Solution-Oriented Therapy and Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy. DIALOG + supports 'DIALOG 2.0' software on the iPad tablet to help the patient and clinician understand the patient's concerns ('Understanding'), identify an improvement scenario ('Expectations'), explore action options ('Research'), and finally to agree on the activities to be undertaken to improve the patient's condition and his social situation ('Arranging activities').

As part of the international project IMPULSE (779334 - IMPULSE - H2020-SC1-2016-2017 / H2020-SC1-2017) in five Balkan countries, a study of the quality of life of outpatients treated for psychotic disorders with or without structured psychosocial intervention DIALOG + during the 12-month duration of this randomized double-blind protocol. In Serbia, a total of 80 patients and 16 clinicians were included, and 71 patients completed the follow-up study. In addition to the quantitative outcome - changes in the quality of life of patients with or without DIALOG + psychosocial intervention, the aim was to analyze qualitative data obtained based on the general impression of the main study participants - patients and clinicians and to examine how long this intervention prolongs regular dispensary visits.

The presentation will present preliminary results on a part of the sample from Serbia (n=71), will present the impressions and experiences of clinicians and patients and the possibilities that exist for the application of DIALOG + intervention in other populations, primarily to preserve mental health of young people.

## Challenges in the new environment brought by the Covid-19 pandemic and neurobiological responses

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**Key words:** Development, Relationships, Brain, Mental Health, Therapy

**Abstract:** This presentation will offer a perspective from the interdisciplinary framework of Interpersonal Neurobiology (IPNB) on how the challenges of the current pandemic are influencing the environmental experiences of children and adolescents. Neural development and its interface within human relationships will be explored and their relevance for the threat of Covid-19, the loss of family stability, the increase in psychiatric states of depression, anxiety, substance abuse and isolation, and the ways in which physical distancing are impeding the essential social connections that promote healthy growth will be addressed. Applications of the central notion of integration--the linkage of differentiated parts--within the IPNB framework will be discussed.

## Psychosocial Support to Children, Young People and Families during Crisis

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**Key words:** crisis, support, children, youth, parents

**Abstract:** The current COVID-19 health crisis is an example of a crisis event where many people need additional support due to its being new in the lives of both individuals and communities and posing a general threat to all. A crisis is sometimes defined as a state of disturbed balance, which should not be comprehended as a disturbance, but rather as a state of increased vulnerability, with coping mechanisms having a large impact on its dynamics and outcome. It is important to consider the difficulties an individual has in coping with a crisis situation and accordingly choose the most efficient intervention type. Some procedures are preventive, while others are treatment/therapeutic procedures, whose implementation depends on the extent to which individuals' reactions at a crisis time interfere with their everyday functioning.

In a crisis situation both children and young people need support and so do their parents. This lecture will demonstrate the various aspects of providing support to children and young people from a theoretical perspective and present some examples of good practice. Although they may react similarly to disturbing events, all children and young people are different. Special attention should be paid to those who have had several stressful events while growing up or even experienced traumatic events – the more vulnerable ones. One should also take into account the child's individual characteristics, the support each child receives and aggravating environmental factors making the child more vulnerable to stress. The connection between support and stress is particularly important in a crisis. The lecture will also discuss parental support during crisis. It is important to be aware that parental support provided to children is a primary protective factor as well as to identify parental responses, which, in a crisis situation that affects both children and parents, may vary from denial, overprotection and helplessness to emotional overload that diminishes parental coping ability. The current situation has made it clear how important it is to support parental flexibility and self-care.

## SARS-CoV-2 and the COVID-19 disease: current status and future perspectives

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**Key words:** SARS-CoV-2, COVID-19, geoportal, expert system

**Abstract:** The appearance and uncontrolled spread of the new coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) and the new corona disease (COVID-19) at the end of 2019 in China, led to unexpected suffering and death of millions of people around the world, resulting in a defect in all segments of social life.

Extensive, multidisciplinary and multicentric research on the virus has so far not provided the necessary answers or offered solutions for pandemic control and disease treatment. The most notable successes of the research are the isolation of SARS-CoV-2, analysis of its genome and physiological characteristics, development of tests for the diagnosis of COVID-19, development

of different types of vaccines against COVID-19 until the final stages of clinical trials, and research of pathogenic mechanisms. However, the pathogenesis, clinical forms, complications and consequences of the disease, duration of immunity, possibility of recurrence and reinfection are still insufficiently known. Humanity is still facing a deficiency of effective and affordable vaccines and drugs.

The Academy of sciences and arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina has been actively involved in solving the problem of SARS-CoV-2 / COVID-19 in BiH. An original *Expert System for Monitoring and Preventing the Spread of the COVID-19 Virus (ELIS)* was created with the aim of collecting information relevant to epidemiological surveillance in BiH and a scientific research database for other complementary and interdisciplinary projects. The system is intended for scientists, experts and professionals in the field of health and other relevant areas for monitoring and research of epidemic phenomena. A geoportal has been created and provides a spatial and temporal analysis of the COVID-19 epidemic in BiH. The Academy of sciences and arts of Bosnia and Herzegovina research team, in cooperation with microbiologists from BiH, isolated SARS-CoV-2 from human biological samples and, by sequencing their genomes, proved the circulation of different genotypes in BiH. We are working on the study of clinical forms of the disease. The focus of interest was on pedagogical and andragogical challenges in the context of home isolation of children under 18 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

By the end of 2021, control over the spread of the pandemic is expected. The consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on the mental and physical health of people will be present for a long time after the pandemic is suppressed.

### “The Wizarding school”- An Integrative Online Psychotherapy Program for Children

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**Key words:** group therapy, child psychotherapy, pandemic, online therapy

**Abstract:** “The Wizarding School” is a group psychotherapy program for children aged six to ten, with interventions drawn from the lessons described in Harry Potter’s story, based on the fundamental principles of child psychotherapy and including elements of play therapy, expressive therapies, hypnotherapy, cognitive - behavioral therapy, transactional analysis, supportive therapy, family psychotherapy and person centered therapy. Whilst adults may be interested in the theoretical foundations of psychotherapy, children are more interested in a story they can comprehend, therefore the therapeutic myth must be of a different kind. In the “Wizarding School” program the therapeutic relationship is facilitated by the fact that the psychotherapist is a playmate for the child, using a language specific for children. The whole program is conceived like a live fairy-tale, allowing the child to freely use his/her own imagination.

The COVID pandemic posed the challenge of adapting this program for the online environment, and it surprisingly proved to be even more efficient than the traditional approach, given the fact that we can use a variety of online media. The presentation introduces techniques such as: the wizarding school rule book, the wizard’s diary, magic wands, the herbology lesson, the pensive, the personal magic map, magic spells, and so on.

## Strengthening resilience during and after a crisis

Prof. Michael Ungar, PhD

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*Director, Resilience Research Center*

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**Abstract:** As the COVID-19 pandemic continues and many of us are sheltering in place, there is a tremendous strain placed on our children and their relationships with family, peers and their communities. These tensions can have long-lasting effects on mental health. The good news is that resilience is possible, but it requires more than just a positive mindset. Building on his research from around the world and clinical work with child populations that have experienced the stress of social isolation, poverty, stigma and violence, Dr. Ungar will discuss 12 factors young people need to both survive and thrive during this pandemic. Throughout this fast-paced, story-filled presentation, Dr. Ungar will show that resilience is much more than a child's personal capacity to overcome adversity. It is instead a reflection of how well families, schools, service providers and communities work together to create opportunities for children and youth to navigate their way to the resources they need for well-being while making those resources available in ways that young people experience as meaningful. Dr. Ungar's work suggests the need for a culturally sensitive interpretation of what resilience means to children and their families from diverse backgrounds. His presentation will end with four strategies we can teach children to make them better able to cope with an ever-changing world.

## Lessons from starting a global community of therapists

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**Key words:** virtual therapy, online Oaklander training

**Abstract:** The timeless, universal relevance of the Oaklander model of Gestalt therapy with children and of her developmentally-tailored projective exercises have been long established. But the enthusiasm of participants around the world in "Just for Now" Zoominars guiding them in using her model virtually attests as well to its efficacy across space and at a stressful time. Even more significant, the "Just for Now" endeavor uncovered some challenges, yet reaps the rewards, of establishing a global community of therapists.

Formats such as Zoom, FaceTime and YouTube enable therapists to connect to each other and to clients. The same technology facilitates construction of online tools for individuals or groups to use—speaking, writing, artwork, music, play-acting—and to share with therapists. As examples, the app for the signature Oaklander projective sand tray exercise has been utilized by over 30,000 in 70 countries, while YouTube and other videoconferencing platforms have permitted trainers and consultants to store presentations in a permanent, accessible reserve.

As an equally valuable example, such technologies compensated for the vision and hearing difficulties Violet Oaklander has at 93 years, and allows her to be present to the worldwide audience she has had since her 1978 *Windows to our Children*. This, and the offers of experts from all corners of the Earth to share their work and resources at no charge, built a true network of child, adolescent and family practitioners. So this global community, faced with a pandemic, grew the desire of therapists everywhere to support each other and their clients.

Technical savvy, while helpful, is not mandatory for such increasingly user-friendly platforms nor for the projective exercises that transmit so well online. The mindset of “Just for Now” is lasting longer than expected, yet embracing it continues to help therapists help clients create meaningful, connective responses to challenging events.

# roundtable discussions

## School based challenges during the pandemic

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**Key words:** pandemics, school, pupils, teachers, mental health

**Abstract:** COVID 19 Pandemics has surprised the world. Everything has stopped globally. It seemed that everything had stopped because of new corona virus. Schools have been closed; traditional approach to education has been disrupted.

Threats to health, represented by corona virus, sudden transfer to online teaching and additional concerns at home has created a unique stressful and demanding context for the work of teachers and pupils.

Pupils were afraid for their loved ones, sad, worried. They missed their friends, school, keeping company, teachers, usual daily activities and school routines. Pupils dealt with these emotions in different ways and they revealed them differently. They should have organized the school and studying in their home environment. It was necessary to make adjustments on emotional level and in all other ways to the new situation, and it is difficult, hard and it requires additional resources. The teachers felt the same way. The online teaching has become a novelty in school life, and at the same time also the reality in the lives of teachers and pupils. The ways of communication were different, the quality and organization of schooling depended exclusively on teachers.

Teachers work with masks, visors and gloves. Psychological work conditions are difficult. Anxiety and insecurity are present. Physical distance, everyday temperature measuring, limitation of movements for pupils and teachers, adhering to all epidemiological rules additionally burden the teaching process. Long-lasting emotional stress, deviation from usual daily and school routines through which the pupils and teachers are going through at the moment, leave significant changes on physical and mental health.

It seems that corona virus saves most of the children from disease, but its impact to mental health becomes intensified.

Support for the teachers is necessary for the sake of having the healthy future of the children!

## Challenges and importance of psychological interventions in crisis

MA Mia Roje Đapić

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**Key words:** crisis, psychological interventions, new normal



**Abstract:** A crisis event is a sudden and / or rare event that is extremely disturbing or stressful for most people. The current pandemic, and the earthquake in the City of Zagreb, certainly have the characteristics of crisis events that affect the entire population. The coping mechanisms that people commonly use, in addition to being weakened in many by a state of psychological crisis, are weakened by the demands of reality – lockdown, the ban on socializing and gathering. In the first phase of the pandemic in the spring of 2020, mental health experts, in the so-called stage of heroism were significantly activate in providing support in all available ways. Numerous written, audio and video materials have been published, free support lines have been opened, education and supervision of volunteer experts have been conducted, and numerous studies have been conducted on the impact of the pandemic on mental health. However, the crisis continues. And the question is how much longer the “new normal” will last, named precisely to deprive people of the right to still find it difficult. How to continue to assess the needs of children, youth and families, to respond adequately to these needs, while maintaining the helping enthusiasm in the phase of exhaustion of professional and personal capacities? In this presentation, we will talk about various long-term projects and activities on this topic, as well as the perspective of overcoming the challenge of providing support when it is most needed.

### Providing psychosocial support at the Institute for mental health during the pandemic

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**Key words:** COVID-19, psychosocial support, children and youth, Institute for Mental Health

**Abstract:** The beginning of unprecedented times of COVID-19 pandemic brought significant changes in everyday living and quality of life in Serbia and in other countries around the world. Newly imposed circumstances have impacted and changed professional activities, bringing new challenges for the employees at the Institute for Mental Health in Belgrade.

During the pandemic and the state of emergency measures, it became extremely necessary to find innovative ways to assist the patients and their families, especially because most of them were in groups sensitive to instability caused by stressful circumstances. Besides providing usual diagnostic and therapeutic services, there was a need to find new possibilities to help those who couldn't or did not dare to come to the public institutions even though there was a need for professional help.

During this health crisis, the employees at the Institute for Mental Health have quickly adjusted themselves to new methods of support for patients and other population.

This report will expose strategies and experiences with psychosocial support that the Institute for Mental Health has provided for children, youth and their families. It will also touch base with examples of other institutions and organizations in Serbia, involved in providing psychosocial support for children.

## Activities of the 'Tijana Jurić' foundation during Covid-19 pandemic

Igor Jurić

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**Key words:** In the previous 5 years of work, the 'Tijana Jurić' Foundation, working on preventive activities related to child safety has held about 500 workshops, forums, conferences and round tables. While touring the whole of Serbia we came into personal contact with a large number of sexually abused children who often later had our psychological help and support, and the abusers were often prosecuted afterwards. Today, that is much more difficult and the increase in criminal acts related to the violation of sexual freedoms is obvious, especially when we talk about sexual abuse via the Internet.

What problems we face, how we try to solve them, how our foundation works in general are some of the topics we will talk about.

## From an idea to a great movement

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**Key words:** gestalt play, Italia, Oaklander model, online community

**Abstract:** The Gestalt Play Therapy model's growth in Italy has been quite surprising, especially in the last years. From an occasional discussion in 2010, one step after another, the GPT settled itself as the biggest child therapy's community in the country.

This happened for several reasons. We used an online - only platform to build the community way before Covid - 19, used a three point vision to be uniting more than competing (Using a combination of guru-free philosophy, institutes and models free politics, inclusive community horizontal approach with no pyramids and multilevel). Sharing, giving, helping, with less structure possible, and with love and passion. This combined with tools of web design, communication, conversion, care and passion created a wonderful, ever growing group of professionals that combines love and competence. This translated in an incredible support and innovation during the pandemic, in close connection with international Oaklander model community.

## Platform 'Support in the palm of your hand' – an overview of support for strengthening the mental health of children and young people during and after Covid-19 health crisis and earthquake in Zagreb

Prof. Gordana Buljan Flander, PhD

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**Key words:** children, youth, cross-sectorial cooperation, resilience, support

**Abstract:** According to the definition of the World Health Organization (WHO, 2001), mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his potential, can cope with normal life stress, work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to the community. The health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the consequences that accompany it also pose a risk for the accompanying mental health crisis; the results of recent studies indicate that about 30% of the population has clinically significant posttraumatic symptoms, and elevated levels of depression and anxiety have also been indicated. Among the vulnerable groups, children stand out whose psychological well-being is especially endangered due to the lack of defense mechanisms. Children in Zagreb have complex conditions for growing up in a pandemic, since the past school year was marked by an educational strike, followed by quarantine and a series of earthquakes that hit the area, during which many families lost their homes. The child protection system was then faced with the limitation of direct work with children and parents and intensified activities related to the repair of damage to the facilities of institutions, and employees with the rehabilitation of their own real estate. All of the above can also result in toxic levels of stress which, depending on the developmental stage in which they occur, can potentially lead to long-term consequences for a child's development. Zagreb recognized the mental health of children as a priority public health problem and the Mayor established a Commission for the Protection of Mental Health of Children and Youth of the City of Zagreb, which through coordinated activities of mental health professionals supports cooperation between all institutions owned by the City of Zagreb promote dialogue between the community and health, education and social care institutions, emphasizing cross-sectorial cooperation and joint initiative in protecting the mental health of children, young people and their environment. As part of the project, a digital platform Support in the palm of your hand was created, which brings together resources for children, young people, their parents and professionals - educators, teachers, professional associates, mental health professionals and experts participating in mental health programs: primary care physicians, health care and members of the scientific community. The aim of the platform is to make available content that helps develop resilience and thus empower children, young people and their environment. The platform also contains information on health care, the network of institutions and services they offer in the protection of mental health and other content that includes active leisure time. All content (resources, information, access to webinars and workshops) is free for all users.

## The work of the prosecution in working with children during the pandemic

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**Key words:** Prosecutor, child, victim, minors, perpetrators

**Abstract:** In accordance with the Law on protection and treatment of children and minors in criminal proceedings of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Republika Srpska and Brčko District, Cantonal and District Prosecutor's offices have jurisdiction over criminal proceedings where children are in violation of the law, perpetrators of a criminal offense, or where children are victims of criminal offenses or witnesses of such offenses.

In dealing with children and minors in criminal proceedings, prosecutor's offices professionally cooperate with juvenile court judges, police, social services, schools and the process also includes pedagogues, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers and other professionals, parents as well as

other family members, where it's often necessary to simultaneously include multiple professionally engaged persons, which makes this process especially demanding, all in the child's best interest. In dealing with children and minors in criminal proceedings during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Prosecutor's Office noticed an increased number of criminal offenses of domestic violence, as well as sexual offenses and crimes against morality, and also the number of offenses of abuse of children in digital environment has increased, where they appear as children in violation of the law, as perpetrators, as well as victims of the previously mentioned offenses. The Prosecutor's Office has faced a series of challenges in dealing with children during the Covid-19 pandemic, where the primary question was how to interrogate a child victim at a time of movement prohibition for children, when children cannot go to school, when they are in isolation or infected with Covid-19 virus, and especially in terms of proceedings involving detainment where deadlines are very short, only 24 hours, and especially in proceedings dealing with sexual offenses or criminal offenses against morality, where the child's testimony is most often the only or key evidence that is the basis of proving that a criminal offense took place. In dealing with children and minors in criminal proceedings during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Prosecutor's Office as well as everyone included in the proceedings always must act in the child's best interest, so the question is how to interrogate in accordance with the Law on protection and treatment of children and minors in criminal proceedings without jeopardizing the life and health of the child. It is best to use examples to show the challenges that the Prosecutor's Office has to resolve in dealing with proceedings that involve detainment and the 24-hour deadline, and the following must be interrogated:

1. An offender who is a younger or older minor, when a foreign citizen, migrant without parental accompaniment, who must be provided during interrogation by the Prosecutor's Office with the presence of a defense attorney, a translator for a language s/he speaks or understands, official representative of Center for Social Work, while it is necessary to determine whether the person is infected with Covid-19.
2. Interrogate a child younger than ten years of age, who is a victim of a sexual offense, for which it is necessary to provide audio and visual recording, as well as presence and support of psychologist and parents.

In dealing with children and minors in criminal proceedings during Covid-19 pandemic, the Prosecutor's Office faces many issues, some of which will have to potentially be resolved by adopting rules of conduct, changes in laws, etc.

## Violence – legal regulations within the school system

**Prof. Elmedin Muratbegović, PhD**

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**Abstract:** Preventing violence in schools is a big challenge. Recognizing early risk factors, reporting them, and protecting a child is, in a way, an art form in a gloomy everyday life. In this presentation, we will present the model of child protection in primary schools applied in several Cantons in the FBiH.

## Child rights during COVID-19 pandemic

**Nada Grahovac, PhD**

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**Abstract:** What began as a health crisis risks escalating into a broader crisis of children's rights (UN Secretary-General). With the outbreak of the corona virus pandemic, states have faced numerous challenges, primarily to take rapid and effective measures to prevent the spread of the virus, but also to preserve and protect basic human rights, especially children's rights as the most vulnerable categories. Announcing the COVID-19 pandemic on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization called on all states to, amongst other things; achieve a balance between health protection, minimization of economic and social disorders and protection of human rights. Therefore, even in emergency situations, when the protection of life and health is the first priority, the rule of law must not be called into question. Even in these circumstances, the state is not released from its obligation under the Convention on the Rights of the Child to take all necessary legislative, administrative, educational and other measures and to ensure the exercise of the rights recognized in the Convention. Although the Convention on the Rights of the Child applies to all children and in all situations, including crisis situations, the COVID 19 pandemic poses a significant threat to the exercise of these rights. Due to the fact that, in different crisis situations, violence tends to increase, the realization of the child's right to protection from various forms of violence, abuse and neglect is especially relevant. The consequences of violence on the development and growth of a child can be very severe and long-lasting, especially in conditions of isolation, when the ability of children to seek protection is significantly reduced. The right to education, as one of the basic rights of the child, in the context of online teaching, not only jeopardizes the participation of children in school life, as an important element of any education system but also access to this online system for children with limited access to technology and / or the Internet. The pandemic is a threat in the realization of the child's right to contacts and association with a parent with whom he does not live, the right to information, to a healthy upbringing, to participation, to the best interest in all activities related to children. Society's response to children's needs, in all situations, especially in crises, must be comprehensive. This requires constant cross-sectorial cooperation, coordinated activity of experts of different profiles and joint action in assessing and determining the best interests of the child. A multidisciplinary approach and quick intervention also contributes to the prevention of severe consequences for the child's development and growth. Despite defined procedures for cooperation, in practice, coordination between sectors remains a challenge.

## Activities within the center for social welfare and intersectoral collaboration during the pandemic

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**Abstract:** The disproportionate impact of the pandemic on young people has exacerbated inequality and risked reducing the educational and productive potential of an entire generation. Young people were particularly negatively affected by the closure of schools, universities and

training centers (or their reduced work). Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic through work, and in cooperation with schools (correspondence) through communication with students and their immediate family, it is certain that young people have learned less since the beginning of the pandemic due to the transition to online teaching and distance learning. The situation is even worse when young people living on the border or below the poverty line, who have less or no access to the Internet, lack of equipment and sometimes lack of space at home, and the computer literacy of themselves or their parents. This emphasizes the large digital divisions among young people, or access to education, etc. The pandemic has created and is creating more barriers in the labor market and prolongs the transition from school to work, which is especially pronounced in the category of countries such as BiH. The above circumstances undoubtedly affect the mental state of young people, susceptibility to anxiety and depression, increasing violence both among young people and within the family. A large number of young people have already felt the direct impact of the pandemic, and we are witnessing that a large number of young people have lost their jobs. Many young workers were employed in the industries most affected by the pandemic. The labor market is shrinking. In order to find and provide an adequate answer to the questions and problems caused by COVID-19, it is necessary to give the opportunity to better hear the voices of young people. It is also necessary to get them involved in decision-making process to express their needs and ideas in improving policies and programs. This is only possible with the continued strengthening of intersectoral cooperation, in order to protect children and young people so that their prospects for healthy growing up, education and employment remain safe. This includes the integration into the labor market of those who have lost their jobs or experienced reduced working hours, ensuring access to unemployment insurance benefits, strengthening the accessibility of education and its quality, and measures to strengthen their mental health - from psychosocial support to sports activities.

## Challenges in the hospital treatment of children and young people during the Covid-19 pandemic, and what needs to be improved

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**Abstract:** Covid-19 infection is highly but intermittently contagious and causes potentially lethal disease or chronic impairment. While young people only infrequently get seriously ill they can transmit the virus affecting educators staff and family members who work with or live with them. Hospital treatment of children and youth is significantly impacted. Virus testing is necessary and those who test positive must be isolated, treated by staff wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) with visitors also limited and wearing PPE. Infected children will need appropriate medical and psychiatric care but also will need to be isolated from others even if they are not personally showing symptoms of covid-19 disease. Hospital census may be reduced and programming for all children on the unit may need to be altered. In a psychiatric unit group meetings will require social distancing. Time outside for recreation may need to be curtailed even for non-affected children. Staff will need access to regular testing, enough PPE to feel safe, and will need to be caring and engaged with the patients even more because of the changes in hospital routine and programming. Closer attention will need to be paid to all inpatients recognizing their diagnosis and their reasons for hospitalization. This can be more challenging for children who have significant preexisting

differences such as children with autism, intellectual disabilities, chronic pediatric illness and other neurodevelopmental disorders. Collaboration with outpatient treatment resources and support for families who may be experiencing other stressors will be essential when planning discharge. This presenter will discuss these issues during the round table.

## The role of virtual media in treatment of children and the education of professionals

Mirela Badurina, PhD and Sabina Zijadić Husić

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**Key words:** virtual crisis intervention, treatment, education, children, professionals

**Abstract:** BHICAPA interdisciplinary therapy center was founded in 2018. Since then it brings together a team of experts in the field of health and support professions - psychiatrists, psychologists, psychotherapists, pedagogues and occupational therapist.

During pandemic therapeutic and educational center continued working in an online mode. Psychotherapy treatment sessions were ongoing with children, adolescents and their families. Center managed to maintain the intersectoral and interregional approach in our work. With this presentation it will be shown the work of our center during and after a lockdown, and a response to the crisis that our center made in order to give support to the professionals in field. This support was designed as an online education on *Virtual Crisis Interventions* for professionals working in mental health centers, social work centers, schools and kindergartens (psychologists, social workers, pedagogues). Education was held online, due to numerous participants from all over the country, and their shared experience, this education was enriching for us as it was for participants.

Presentation will also show a survey, done on the global levels, on how professionals in mental health did their work during crisis, and in and after the lockdown.

Presentation aims to show all benefits of telehealth, which follows teleassessment, teletreatment and teletherapy.

## Teacher burnout in online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic

Prof. Ivana Zečević, PhD

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**Key words:** teacher burnout, online teaching, COVID-19 pandemic

**Abstract:** During the second semester of the 2019/2020 school year, in the midst of the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, the teaching process in B&H was temporarily transferred to online form. This change introduced additional stress and complications in teaching. Accordingly, this research is an attempt to determine the level of job burnout among primary and secondary school teachers, while working in online classes during a pandemic, at the end of the school year. The sample included 1008 teachers from the Republic of Srpska (B&H), mostly from primary schools (79.1%), with a slightly smaller number of teachers working in secondary schools (16.8%), and both primary

and secondary schools (1.7%). Most teachers were women (83.5%), with a smaller number of men (14.8%), and participants who did not declare their gender (1.7%). The average length of service of the respondents is 13.76 (SD=9.67) years. The level of burnout was measured using the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory (CBI), which is adapted for administration during online teaching. Questionnaire items primarily measure the various attributes of fatigue and work exhaustion. Possible values of the burnout score are normalized to the range from 1 to 5. The average CBI burnout in Republic of Srpska's teachers is already known, determined on a representative sample (second semester of the 2017/2018 school year):  $M=1.97$ ,  $SD=0.52$ . In relation to these normative values, the average level of burnout in teachers during the pandemic, established in this study, was statistically significantly higher:  $M=2.96$ ,  $SD=0.91$ ;  $Z=60.72$ ,  $p<.001$ ,  $d=1.91$ . The effect size of this difference can be characterized as very high. No differences in the level of burnout were found between primary and secondary school teachers ( $\eta^2=.002$ ,  $p=.42$ ), nor was burnout related to years of service ( $r=-.01$ ,  $p=.72$ ), with only a slightly higher scores in women compared with men ( $t(989)=-2.22$ ,  $p=.03$ ,  $d=0.20$ ). With the caveat that the available normative values refer to burnout during the second half of the second semester, and burnout during the pandemic was measured at the end of the second semester, the findings nevertheless suggest a large increase in teacher burnout during online teaching, compared to the classic teaching modality.

## Significance and possibilities of organizing physical activity of children and youth during the pandemic with special reference to children with disabilities

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**Key words:** Strategy, training, competitions, people with disabilities, covid 19

**Abstract:** The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic had a sudden and dramatic impact with an unprecedented impact on the health and daily lives of the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially those with a disability.

The mission of the Special Olympics is to provide year-round sports preparation and sports competitions in various Olympic sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, thus providing them with constant opportunities to develop physical fitness, show courage, experience joy, participate in sharing gifts and skills and make friends, with their families, other special Olympians and the community. Sport remains the primary way in which the Special Olympics bring about change, with action in health care which has become crucial to our mission. Significant progress has been made in recent years. UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD) and the World Disability Report, The World Health Organizations have helped change the view of people with disabilities as social cases and portray them as equal members of society.

The Special Olympics in Bosnia and Herzegovina is the only accredited sports organization that implements programs for people with intellectual disabilities and is responsible for implementing the Special Olympics Development Strategy, which provides an answer to the question "where do we want to go, where will we end up." At the time of the Covid 19 coronavirus pandemic - all training processes and competitions were suspended, including the activities of the Special Olympics. However, in cooperation with special sports clubs, day centres, institutes and associations, online training and competitions have been successfully conducted. Competitors from our associations participated in online training. Some online training was led by coaches, and some by parents



and young leaders. But at the beginning of June this year, competitions and health programs were conducted according to the SOBiH Competition Calendar for 2020. The competitions that were organized were: the National Championship of the Special Basketball Olympics, the Sports Games of Oaza and Special Olympics, the Parallel Friendly Competition and National Table Tennis Championships. A family health forum and health program was also organized. The Special Olympics takes the health of its athletes, families, volunteers and coaches very seriously. The WHO guidelines are fully followed, CDC and local health authorities to establish policies and procedures that will minimize the impact of any threat to the health and safety of our athletes.

## The importance of the supervision of professionals during and after the pandemic

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**Abstract:** Supervision is important at any time in helping therapists take a meta view of their work. We need supervision as a safe space to reflect, emotionally, theoretically and in terms of affect, so that we can stay safe and keep our clients safe, supporting them to manage their lives and move forward in the best way possible.

The pandemic has posed challenges to all in our society, particularly those vulnerable physically or emotionally. Therapists and supervisors have faced particular challenges in moving their practice online, working with masks and in managing their own anxieties and reactions alongside those of their clients. Fears created by uncertainty, and loss of contact also trigger historic traumas and survival patterns. We are all experiencing higher levels of isolation, restriction, disconnection, loss and fear of loss. Therapists need support to be able to manage this and to stay present and available. Supervision is therefore of particular importance.

This presentation is based on my personal needs for supervision during the pandemic and on my experience supervising psychotherapists across Europe. I also conducted a mini research project with therapists and supervisors asking them how the pandemic has influenced their practice and about their specific needs from supervision or as supervisors in relation to working at this time. All therapists and supervisors interviewed were, like myself, working from a relational developmental perspective.

In this presentation I will share my findings and how I too have found this a challenging time. I have been very grateful for the support and contact provided by my personal supervision. From a polyvagal perspective it has helped me stay regulated and within the window of tolerance, and so able to support others.

# practical examples

## Anger- most misunderstood of all the emotions?

Jon Blend MA Dip Psych Dip Child

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**Key words:** anger, rage, Oaklander, projective arts, containment

(Note: content is based on the author's clinical practice and is informed by Dr. V.Oaklander's theory.)

**Abstract:** *“Anybody can become angry - that is easy, but to be angry with the right person and to the right degree and at the right time and for the right purpose, and in the right way - that is not within everybody's power and is not easy.” Aristotle*

Eminent child and adolescent psychotherapist Violet Oaklander describes anger as 'the most misunderstood' of all the emotions: it receives a 'bad press'. Anger is often erroneously thought to lead inevitably to violence. Anger however is just an energy, neither good nor bad; feeling angry is a universal experience though how we experience, make sense of and manage it (or not) varies considerably from person to person. This talk explores the nature of anger- what it is, how it is experienced in the body and what can be done to help young people safely express and contain strong feelings through a mixture of direct and private expression. When anger can be discharged safely and productively with awareness, children and adolescents feel empowered, learning how to appraise and take charge of their rage rather than feel frightened and controlled by it. In taking responsibility for personal feelings and responses, in this way, children discover that their arousal level diminishes, helping them reconnect with a calmer, more peaceful place inside.

To facilitate this work safely and appropriately requires an active dialogue with someone, often a therapist, who has sufficiently resolved their own anger issues. This latter is essential to be able to provide the effective containment and guidance necessary to help vulnerable young clients explore their anger-related concerns. A projective arts psychotherapy approach is proposed (after Oaklander) that pays close attention to pace, meaning and context.

## Children and Young People' Stories: Dealing with Uncertainty and Losses in a Crisis

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**Key words:** COVID-19, children, uncertainty, losses, clinical work

**Abstract:** Children differ according to their characteristics, the number of adverse experiences they went through while growing up and the support of their loved ones available to them. These differences notwithstanding, most of them, predictably, experience a slight anxiety about the

COVID-19 pandemic, which, despite the widespread consensus on the phrase “the new normal”, would be more precisely termed “the new abnormal”. Both children and adults miss and long for normality, even though this normality is not the same for everyone. Although some child groups are more vulnerable and demonstrate increased anxiety and concern both about their own well-being and about the health of people close to them, some indicators suggest that the majority of children are sensitive to insecurity of the present time.

In addition to various other risks, two major aspects of the current health crisis threaten the child’s and young person’s basic need for security: uncertainty and the various forms of losses important for the process of growing up.

As is well-known, an individual’s ability to tolerate uncertainty will influence the way of dealing with a situation. Children, who, due to their developmental characteristics, have underdeveloped coping mechanisms, definitely need help, especially if they show strong reactions to uncertainty and losses (simple and complex) and believe that “the world is not a safe place”. The examples of clinical work with children and family interventions are used to examine the strategies that facilitate coping with stress, develop tolerance of uncertainty and foster resilience, while providing children with support and enabling them to understand everything they experience (loss-induced grief, fear, anxiety, etc.).

### Case study - “Save me from myself”

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**Key words:** Prepsychotic anxiety, suicide attempt, parasuicidal behavior

**Abstract:** This study shows psychotherapeutic work with a fourteen-year-old girl, which started a year ago, after the school psychologist alerted the parents that the girl showed a farewell letter to the class teacher and said that she tried to commit suicide. Before the psychotherapeutic treatment, a psychiatric examination was performed, and pharmacotherapy and individual and family psychotherapy for the girl and the family were recommended.

In the first meeting, the girl has a striking appearance, holds her mother’s hand and refuses to be separate from her and to stay alone in the waiting room. She complains of fear that is prepsychotic: she is afraid that men on the street or on the bus will attack her with a knife or rape her, she is afraid that she will be left alone in a room or apartment, because someone could enter through the window and hurt her physically or sexually, she is afraid that someone is looking at her through the camera of a mobile phone, etc. She experiments with her sexuality and enters into relationships with both sexes. During six months of intensive treatment, she shows affective instability and impulsivity, and the parents are powerless and inconsistent in setting boundaries. After the third attempt of suicide and parasuicidal behaviors in the form of risky sexual contacts with unknown older men, hospitalization was indicated. During the four-week hospitalization and change of pharmacotherapy, stabilization of affect and reduced impulsivity in the girl was achieved, parental competencies were improved, and then treatment was continued individually and in the family.

## “Creative therapists or creative kids?” - Online therapy during the pandemic

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**Key words:** child psychotherapy, online environment, pandemic, online interventions, creativity

**Abstract:** Child psychotherapy is based mainly on the alliance and relationship that we, as therapists, have with the child, and furthermore, on play-derived interventions that allow the child to be more open in talking with the psychotherapist. The present pandemic forced psychotherapists to work with their clients in a different manner become more creative and adapt to this situation. But who is the most creative: the psychotherapist or the child?

In this presentation, the author will share her professional experience during this pandemic, the ways that the therapist changed her approach using online interventions and tools, in order to keep the therapeutic process at the same standards and efficiency.

Things that children usually do are always at hand, no matter the social context. Psychotherapists need to feel comfortable working in all possible situations and preferably have the capacity of thinking outside the box. There are lots of online tools that can be adapted for working with children and even become standard online interventions, if the psychotherapist uses the online environment creatively. Many times the child is the one who makes the therapist realize that the creative mind of the child is the best resource we can use.

Furthermore, the online environment is an opportunity for the psychotherapist to approach the whole family in a different, even more efficient manner, than the traditional one. Therefore, it seems the psychotherapist's flexibility, creativity and desire to adapt to the online environment are the factors that make the therapeutic process a successful one.

## Mental health of adolescents during the quarantine in Sarajevo Canton

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**Key words:** pandemic, survey, mental health, needs assessment, younger adolescents

**Abstract:** As part of the secondary prevention program implemented in the Sarajevo Canton, in order to assess the mental health of students and their way of coping with stress in a crisis situation, or the Covid 19 pandemic, a survey of students was conducted in April 2020; on a sample of 90 students. The survey consisted of 5 open-ended questions (For example, “Who supports you during isolation?”). The results of the survey served as a starting point when it comes to assessing the needs of children during isolation, in order to undertake certain interventions within the school in relation to that. The survey was conducted during the classes of the Class Group, online, through the school platform “Google classroom”. The results suggest that online teaching, tests and homework were

the most stressful for children, although the answers are varied. The answers should be interpreted with caution, given that a small sample of children was included in the survey and the questions were not of an objective type. The significance of this survey, in addition to offering specific answers, is reflected in the fact that 90 students during isolation and online classes had the opportunity to discuss their needs and emotions with the school psychologist or their class teacher.

## Using the Violet Oaklander model during a pandemic

**Karen Hillman Fried, PsyD, M.F.T.**

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**Key words:** Gestalt child therapy, Oaklander training

**Abstract:** Violet Oaklander has treated countless children and has trained thousands of therapists around the world. Her *Windows to Our Children*, translated into 14 languages, remains the bible of Gestalt therapy with young persons, guiding therapists to engage and enlighten them through developmentally-tailored projective artwork and games. Not only timeless and universal, her model stands the test of this pandemic. This presentation details the professional experience of using her approach virtually.

COVID-19 forces children to pursue school and socializing online, disabling normal venues for academic and emotional maturation. The “Just For Now” guidelines permit therapists to reframe and utilize this isolation through virtual platforms. Oaklander’s projective exercises transmit remarkably well despite deploying all five senses, movement, emotions and thought, and can be effectively enacted, shared, and explored online.

This should not surprise, for the core merit of Gestalt therapy with children is its power to combat their perceived isolation by revealing and integrating the sensory, physical, emotional and intellectual self. Projective activities allow children to access and express feelings and to strengthen their sense of self as they imagine, create, enact, and judge their “fit” with those images.

Indeed, the success of contact-free Oaklander techniques stems from her view that children enter therapy precisely to resolve difficulty with contact—between parts of themselves and between themselves and others—and a poor sense of self, seen in a weak awareness of the body, emotions, and thoughts. Thus, the model pointedly addresses their experience of isolation.

Additionally, telehealth formats let therapists monitor clients in their “natural habitats.” This intensified focus ably tracks varying levels of energy and of resistance to painful material while therapists work to strengthen children’s contact and self by increasing their awareness of body and feelings; ability to make choices; definition through self-statements; owning projections; and activating playfulness and imagination.

## Challenges in working with children and adolescents at the General hospital Dubrovnik during the pandemic

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**Abstract:** The Polyclinic for the Protection of Mental Health of Children and Youth of the General Hospital Dubrovnik, as an independent unit dealing with the protection of mental health, behavioral problems and mental difficulties of children and youth and early intervention, started operating in the General Hospital Dubrovnik in April 2019. It brings together a team of experts in the field of health and support professions - psychiatrists, psychologists, educational rehabilitators, phonetics, speech therapists and occupational therapists, as well as experts dealing with sensors.

The work of psychologists in the first year was based on the diagnosis and treatment of behavioral disorders in children and adolescents, and most often the diagnosis of autism spectrum disorders.

With the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown from March to May 2020, all cold drives, including the Children and Youth Mental Health Clinic, ceased regular operation as well as diagnostic and therapeutic procedures. During the daily shifts, counseling therapies continued, and local newspapers published recommendations on how to deal with stressful situations caused by the pandemic, as well as therapeutic exercises that parents can conduct with their children at home. Diagnostic procedures were not performed during this period. With the opening of the Polyclinic on May 4, 2020, regular work continued, and increased needs for therapeutic procedures of psychologists were noticed when it comes to mental and behavioral difficulties of children and youth. This represents a new challenge in the work and in the coming period, as there is another possibility of closing the system, and the need for therapeutic procedures is increased and requires the design of new methods of work in completely different conditions.

## Program of the secondary prevention of the unacceptable forms of behavior and protection of students during the pandemic

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**Key words:** prevention, children in risk, treatment, inter-sectoral approach, pandemic

**Abstract:** The “Justice for Every Child” program has been implemented in cooperation with UNICEF BiH since 2016. In November 2019, the implementation of the second phase of the project began and it represents an upgrade based on previous exercises.

The key activities of the project include: advocating for the adoption of bylaws and the adoption of continuous education of teachers' councils and professional services of schools, establishing monitoring teams, collecting positive practices and identifying challenges as well as strengthening referral mechanisms at local and cantonal level.

In the period leading up to the pandemic, the identification of children at risk showed that slightly more than every second child was at low risk (58.5%), every fourth child in medium (25.5%) while every sixth identified child was in high risk.

When we talk about the treatment of these children, 80% of them were involved in some of the treatments (group, individual in school or individual in the community).

In March 2020, due to the state of emergency caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, classes began to take place via online platforms. Having in mind the fact that the Secondary Prevention Program provided knowledge of the etiology of risks that put children in a state of vulnerability; the School Support and Technical Supervision Teams organized an emergency meeting in the second week and agreed that the implementation of the Program must be continued. This meant that children identified in the previous period had to have continuous support. It was also determined that special emphasis should be placed on all other children, who in an emergency situation may be at risk.

With all this in mind, it was decided to continue the implementation of the Program using online methods with a focus on children in treatment, identification of new children, but also providing support to parents, teachers and professional services of schools that, like children, were exposed to additional stress .

# plenary lecturers -biographies-

## **Prof. Dubravka Kocijan Hercigonja, PhD, MD, neuropsychiatrist, psychotherapist**

Professor at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Zagreb, neuropsychiatrist, subspecialist child and adolescent psychiatry, psychotherapist, retired. Born 1938. in Pleškovac, Čakovec. Graduated from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Zagreb (1962), M.Sc. (1975), Ph.D. (1979), the title of dissertation: "Analysis of Causal factors leading to psychological changes in people with epilepsy". She worked at the Jankomir Psychiatric Hospital where she founded the first Autism Center in the former Yugoslavia. She was an advisor to the Government of the Republic of Croatia and a head of the psychosocial assistance program for war victims. She established the Mental Health Center in Children's Disease Hospital. She is Head of the National Center for Psychotrauma and Center for Distressed Disorders. Now she works in her own Polyclinic Kocijan / Hercigonja. She has published 66 papers. She is Author and Co-author of 14 books, 19 chapters in books. Some of the most important awards: Life Achievement Award for Child Rights Promotion (2008); Laureate for Contributing to Psychotherapy in Croatia (2008); Medal of bravery Katarina Zrinski. She is Regular member of AMZH since 1983. She is President of the European Association for Therapeutic Services for Children and Young People (EIATSCYP).

## **Mirela Badurina, PhD, Gestalt psychotherapist, Child and Adolescent Integrative Psychotherapist**

Mirela Badurina, PhD, Gestalt Psychotherapist and Child and Adolescent Integrative Psychotherapist, was born in 1968 in Sarajevo. For the past twenty-five years, she has focused her professional and academic development on the areas of health and well-being of children and young people. She is an exhibitor at numerous national and international congresses and conferences on the topics of health, rights and interests of children. She is the author and co-author of many scientific and professional papers, and European certified psychotherapist. Also, she is the founder and director of the BHIDAPA Association within which there are three centers: European accredited educational programs in the field of child and adolescent integrative psychotherapy and counseling, Interdisciplinary therapeutic centers for the protection of children, young people and families, and a Scientific and professional research center. She is the president of the Organizing Committee of International Congress of Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy and editor of the Interdisciplinary Journal of Psychotherapy. She is happily married and a mother of two.

## **Prim. Goran Čerkez, MD, Deputy to the Federal Ministry of Health**

Work as Deputy to the Federal Ministry of Health, over twenty years of experience in public health, policy development and strategy, and community service. He specializes in field of mental health development in BiH. Goran Čerkez has led the mental health reform in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the establishing of Mental Health Services in the community as the director of the World Bank project in BiH. He participated in drafting the Action Plan for Mental Health of World Health Organization as the only expert in the region of Southeast Europe. He worked on the mental health strategy in BiH, development of standards and norms for mental health centers, development of



accreditation standards, on the implementation of coordinated care and occupational therapy in mental health, on the development of psychosocial disaster support guides, the development of a matrix for the identification of the risk of violence school population, prevention of violence, as well as numerous other activities in the field of mental health. He worked with IOM and the Defense Ministry in BiH on the initiation of psychologists in the armed forces. For the past eight years he coordinated the mental health project in Bosnia and Herzegovina, implemented by XY, and supported by the Swiss government. Goran Čerkez is a invited lecturer on topics related to the development of mental health services at the Faculty of Medicine in Sarajevo, summer schools for health management organized by the United Nations Center for Peace, the Summer School for social workers in Dubrovnik, as well as the Faculty of Criminalistics, Criminology and Security Studies about juvenile violence. He also taught at Human Resources Development Week in the World Bank. As a mental health expert he worked with the World Bank, WHO, IOM and the Council of Europe, ITF, UNICEF, UNFP, Harward Refugee Trauma, the Southeast Europe Health Network and many NGOs. In the area of mental health in the region of Southeast Europe within the Stability Pact, he was a member of the Executive Board of the project "Strengthening Social Cohesion through Mental Health Development". More than 15 years representing Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Southeastern Europe Network, where he has been chairman of the executive committee for three years. Honorary member of the Association of Psychologists of FBiH. For contribution to the development of quality in health care, the development of accreditation standards in mental health awarded by AKAZ, and recognition for the development of health care in the Republic of Moldova. The holder of awards for the development of regional cooperation in South East Europe.

#### **Rownak Khan, PhD, representative of the Unicef BiH**

Rownak Khan is the UNICEF Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, based in Sarajevo. In this position, she is responsible for the overall management of all of UNICEF's work in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Prior to her current appointment, from 2014, Dr. Khan served as the Deputy Representative in UNICEF Nepal, providing strategic guidance, leadership, implementation and monitoring of UNICEF supported programme including humanitarian action. She has also served with UNICEF Programme Division in New York Headquarters, providing overall leadership in a joint UNICEF, WHO and UNFPA Global Programme for Elimination of Maternal and Neonatal Tetanus, in Polio Eradication Programme in UNICEF Headquarters, and implementing health and nutrition programme in UNICEF Afghanistan. Dr. Khan first joined UNICEF in 1996 as Project Officer based in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Dr. Khan is a national of Bangladesh. She has a Master's degree in Public Health from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London and a Bachelor's degree in Medicine from Dhaka Medical College, Bangladesh.

#### **Prof. Mirjana Graovac, PhD, MD, child and adolescent psychiatrist, psychotherapist**

In 2003 she defended her doctoral dissertation at the Faculty of Medicine in Rijeka with the topic "Styles of coping with stress during the middle phase of adolescence in high school". The founder and head of the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the Psychiatric Clinic, University Hospital Center Rijeka from 1998. She is associate professor at Department of psychiatry and psychological medicine at the Faculty of Medicine in Rijeka and Faculty of Health Studies in Rijeka (undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate studies). She is lecturer at the postgraduate study of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the Faculty of Medicine in Zagreb. Educator in European Programs for Child and Adolescents Integrative Psychotherapy in Zagreb (Croatia's Interdisciplinary Therapeutic Association for Children and Young People HITUDIM), Zadar (at Center for psychotherapy, education and counseling Psihika) and Sarajevo (Bosnian-Herzegovinian

Integrative Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy Association - BHIDAPA). Areas of interest: children and adolescent psychiatry and psychotherapy; psychodrama as a therapeutic technique. Specific areas of interest: identity development and pathology of identity, depressive disorders of children and adolescents, feeding disorders, disorders related to stress and trauma in children and adolescents, family and child/adolescent with psychological/developmental difficulties.

**Prof. Gordana Buljan Flander, PhD, clinical psychologist, psychotherapist**

Gordana Buljan Flander is the director of the Child and Youth Protection Center of Zagreb has been working with children for thirty years of her career. As a child psychologist of Children's Hospital Zagreb, she often worked with abused and neglected children who had not had the necessary protection from adults. This is the reason why she was among the first professionals in Croatia to recognize the issue of child abuse and neglect and to devote her further work to that issue. She is the founder of the Brave Phone, help-line for abused and neglected children and of the Child and Youth Protection Center of Zagreb. The Center has been recognized as a model of good practice by the Council of Europe and was, as such, presented in the UN. She received several awards of recognition for her work. One of the outstanding achievements was the Child Protection Center Multidisciplinary team award received by the International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN) in 2008. Besides her professional work she has been active in scientific work and published and presented at international conferences a number of scientific and professional papers. She has published books, handbooks and brochures for parents, children and professionals. She is especially devoted to disseminating her knowledge and experience to future professionals and works at the Faculty of Philosophy in Osijek and Croatian Studies in Zagreb. She is a permanent court expert for abused and neglected children

**Prof. Albert John Sargent, PhD, MD, pediatrician, psychiatrist, psychotherapist**

He is a national leader in developing systems of care for children with significant behavioral health issues. He is Chief of the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Director of the Child Psychiatry Residency Program at Tufts Medical Center. He is Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics at Tufts School of Medicine. Dr. Sargent is a clinician in the Massachusetts Child Psychiatry Access Project, and is a member of the Massachusetts Children's Behavioral Health Advisory Council. He is also past president of the American Family Therapy Academy. Dr. Sargent is board certified in Pediatrics, Psychiatry, and Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

**Prof. Esmina Avdibegović, PhD, MD, neuropsychiatrist, psychotherapist**

Neuropsychiatrist, Ph.D., Associate Professor at the University of Tuzla was born in 1957. She graduated in 1981 at the Faculty of Medicine in Sarajevo. She ended her specialization in neuropsychiatry in 1991 in Sarajevo. At the Faculty of Medicine University of Tuzla she took her post graduating studies and obtained her master's degree in the field of suicidology, as well as her Ph.D. which regarded a subject in the field of women's mental health. She is a subspecialist in social psychiatry. She completed training for group analyst at the Institute for group analysis in Zagreb. Currently, she works as a psychiatrist and group analyst at the Clinic for Psychiatry at the University Clinical Centre in Tuzla. Moreover, she teaches at the Faculty of Medicine, Educational – rehabilitation faculty and the Department for social work at the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Tuzla. She published several scientific and professional papers, as well as several book chapters in the field of psychiatry and neurology. She is a member of several psychiatric and psychotherapy associations. She is involved in the reform processes in Bosnia and Herzegovina that regards mental health services, engaged in strengthening user's organizations, and through

non-governmental organizations she is also involved in providing support and help for victims and survivors of genocide, torture and war trauma in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**Prof. Elmedin Muratbegović, PhD, criminologist**

Prof. Dr. Elmedin Muratbegović was born in Sarajevo in 1972. He is the professor at the Faculty of Criminology at the University of Sarajevo. Elmedin Muratbegović provides services as a researcher, expert or consultant in numerous national and international governmental and non-governmental projects. He is the author of several important documents and laws that are listed as follows: Private Agencies for the Protection of People and Property Act in Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (2003), The Code of Ethics for the research with children and about children in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2013), Guidelines for the treatment of children in case of violence against children in Bosnia and Herzegovina (2013), Strategy for the treatment of children which are in conflict with the law in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2010-2014, Strategy for the prevention of violence against children 2012-2015, Protocol for collecting data about violence against children for shadow monitoring (2012), Strategy for the suppression of human trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2013-2015 and The Action Plan for the improvement of child protection system against child pornography and other forms of abuse through information and communications technologies in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**Prof. Milica Pejović Milovančević, PhD, MD, child psychiatrist**

Prof. Pejović Milovančević is a child psychiatrist from Belgrade, currently a professor at the Department of Psychiatry at the Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade, where she teaches both on undergraduate and postgraduate level. She has been the organizer of the elective undergraduate course called Child Abuse and Neglect since 2012. She is the director of the Institute of Mental Health, as well as the head of the Child and Adolescent Clinic. Since 2001, she has been the permanent member of the Institute's team of experts on the protection of children from abuse and neglect. From 2010 to 2018, she was the president of the Special Working Group of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Serbia on the implementation of the Special protocol of the healthcare system in the protection of children from abuse and neglect. Until now, two versions of the Protocol have been published, as well as three editions of the Handbook on the Special Protocol Use, the latest containing a whole chapter dedicated to the phenomenon of parental alienation. As a leader, lecturer and organizer, she took part in various types of training aimed at educating the professionals from the healthcare, education and legal sector in order to improve their knowledge and skills related to working with abused and neglected children and adolescents. Among others, she is cooperating with the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Serbia, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, as well as UNICEF and the Child Rights Centre of Serbia.

**Doc. Goran Arbanas, PhD, MD, psychiatrist, psychotherapist**

Dr. Goran Arbanas was born on September 6, 1970 in Karlovac. He graduated from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Zagreb, and specialized in psychiatry. Dr. Arbanas completed postgraduate studies in psychotherapy and training for forensic experts. From the beginning (2004) he was involved in the first education in Croatia in sexual therapy. Dr. Arbanas has been dealing with issues of sexuality as well as transgenderism and transsexuality for the past fifteen years. He is the president of the Croatian Society for Sexual Therapy. He has translated fifteen books in the field of psychiatry from English, for "Naklada Slap". He is the author of textbooks and workbooks in psychiatry for medical high schools. He is the author of several professional and scientific papers. Dr. Goran Arbanas is a member of Mense. He is married and the father of two daughters.

**Prof. Nađa Marić Bojović, PhD, MD, psychiatrist**

Prof. Nađa Marić Bojović, MD Psychiatrist, Head of the Department for Scientific Research and Early Interventions in Psychiatry (since 2009) at the Clinic for Psychiatry of the Clinical Center of Serbia, scientific advisor and associate professor at the Medical Faculty of the University of Belgrade (since 2016). She is a member of the Council of the Association of Psychiatrists of Serbia, president of the Society for Biological Psychiatry and a member of the Board of Directors of the Serbian Brain Council. She received her PhD in 2003 on the theme of structural neuroimaging in the study of gender differences in schizophrenia. She works on the improvement of diagnosis and treatment of psychoses and mood disorders. She advocates the introduction of methods of early interventions in psychiatry and the development of neuroscience. She is actively involved in several international projects. She also takes part in national projects: Phosphorylation of the glucocorticoid receptor as a biomarker of mood disorders (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Serbia - subproject manager); Control of energy homeostasis in humans in various pathological conditions (Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Serbia-researcher); Depression in schizophrenia, (Ministry of Science and Technology, head Prof. Dr. M. Jašović-Gašić). She has won several awards and recognitions: Okasha Award for Developing Countries, World Psychiatric Association (2005), AEP Research Award for the best paper published by a young psychiatrist (2004), Young Investigator Award, International Congress on Schizophrenia Research (2003), First Prize University of Belgrade for student research (1991). In 2016, she acquired the title of scientific advisor. As an author or co-author, she has published 70 papers from the SCI list, with about 1000 citations.

**Prof. Daniel J. Siegel, PhD, MD, pediatrician, psychiatrist, psychotherapist**

Dr. Siegel is a clinical professor of psychiatry at the UCLA School of Medicine and the founding co-director of the Mindful Awareness Research Center at UCLA. He is also the Executive Director of the Mindsight Institute which focuses on the development of mindsight, teaches insight, empathy, and integration in individuals, families and communities. Dr. Siegel has published extensively for both the professional and lay audiences. His five New York Times bestsellers are: *Aware: The Science and Practice of Presence*, *Mind: A Journey to the Heart of Being Human*, *Brainstorm: The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain*, and two books with Tina Payne Bryson, Ph.D: *The Whole-Brain Child*, and *No-Drama Discipline*. His other books include: *The Developing Mind*, *The Pocket Guide to Interpersonal Neurobiology*, *Mindsight*, *The Mindful Brain*, and *The Mindful Therapist*. He has also written *The Yes Brain* and *The Power of Showing Up* with Tina Payne Bryson, Ph.D. Dr. Siegel also serves as the Founding Editor for the Norton Professional Series on Interpersonal Neurobiology which currently contains over seventy textbooks.

**Doc. Bruna Profaca, PhD, clinical psychologist**

Clinical psychologist from the Child and Youth Protection Center of Zagreb, institutions specialized in working with traumatized children and their families. The focus of her clinical and research work is the area of stress, trauma, traumatic loss and a crisis in childhood and adolescence, parenting, emotional problems of children and young people, as well as treatment and counseling work with children and families. She is an external associate at the graduate and postgraduate studies at several faculties of the University of Zagreb and has collaborated on several projects. She is also educator for professionals who work with children in different systems in Croatia and abroad. She has presented and published a number of scientific and professional papers and book chapters.

**Acc. Prof. Mirsada Hukić, PhD, MD, spec. of microbiology**

Academician, prof. Mirsada Hukić is born in Tuzla, specialist in microbiology and member of the European Academy of Sciences. 1974 graduated from the Medical Faculty of the University of Sarajevo. She specialized in medical microbiology at the Medical Faculty of the University of Sarajevo in 1981. In 1984, she obtained a master's degree in medical sciences at the Medical Faculty of the University of Tuzla, and in 1992 she obtained the title of doctor of medical sciences at the same faculty. In her rich work experience, she went from a general practitioner in the '70s, through the head of the Department of Parasitology and Intestinal Infection at the University Clinical Center Tuzla, head of the Department of Microbiology in the '90s in Tuzla, and in 2003 head of the Institute of Microbiology, immunology and parasitology of the Clinical Center of the University of Sarajevo. Since 2003, he has been a full member of the European Academy of Sciences (EAS), in the field of biomedicine, and since 2012 a corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences and Arts of BiH. She has dedicated years of professional training in the field of immunology, bacteriology, virology, in Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Serbia and Croatia. She is a member of numerous scientific and professional organizations and associations in the country and the world, we will single out: a representative of BiH within the World Health Network. Professor Hukić is the winner of the largest scientific award in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the State Award for Science for achievements in the field of science at the international level, which was awarded by the Ministry of Civil Affairs of BiH for the first time. She has published over 300 scientific and professional papers, connected microbiologists of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the world and made a huge contribution to the study of Hantavirus.

**Karen Hillman Fried PsyD, M.F.T., clinical and applied psychologist, psychotherapist**

Karen Hillman Fried, Psy.D., M.F.T. is a licensed marriage and family therapist and an educational therapist in Santa Monica, California. Karen operates her own private practice in psychotherapy, provides consulting for adults dealing with aging parents and elder care, and co-directs The K&M Center, Inc., a mid-sized educational center that has been helping students remediate and overcome learning disabilities for over twenty years. Karen is also one of the founding members of the Violet Oaklander Foundation, a non-profit corporation created to further the work of Dr. Violet Oaklander, eminent child and adolescent psychotherapist, trainer, and author.



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Federalno Ministarstvo zdravstva



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Ministarstvo za obrazovanje,  
nauku i mlade Kantona Sarajeva

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