



# Announcements

**The tenth Eusarf Conference will be held in Italy next March (Padova, 26-29/03/2008) on: "Assessing the 'Evidence-base' of Intervention for Vulnerable Children and Their Families. Cross National Perspectives and Challenges for Research, Practice and Policy"**

The International Conference is organised by the European Scientific Association on Residential and Foster Care for Children and Adolescents, the Fondazione "E. Zancan" – Onlus, the International Association for Outcome-based Evaluation and Research on Family and Children's Services, the University of Padua, the Municipality of Padova, under the patronage of the Ministry for the Family Policy.

The main goal of the international conference is to start the critical examination of the existing cross-national research bases of both child and family client characteristics and service outcomes to identify future directions for enlightened public policy, effective service programming and improved empirical outcome research. A closely related goal is to explore the latest in "evidence-based" approaches to effective child, youth and family interventions.

We are interested in proposals that explore different national and regional conceptions of the problem we seek to address: the needs and salient characteristics of high-resource using youth and their families. Secondly, we are interested in both evidence-based interventions as well as novel approaches that will require further study. For this reason we will consider mainly those proposals that highlight the problems, the solutions we know, those we need to find and their results.

Main areas of interest:

1. Characteristics of Severely Troubled Youth and Families: Developmental, Familial & Community-Contextual Factors Viewed in Cross-National Perspective
2. Seeking Effective Strategies for Troubled and High Resource-Using Youth and Families
3. Prevention and Family Support Alternatives for Troubled and Troublesome Children and Youth
4. Intensive Treatment Alternatives for Troubled and Troublesome Children and Youth
5. Planning for Successful Re-Integration of Troubled and Troubling Children and Youth to School, Work and Community
6. Methodological Challenges in Population and Service-Based Research with Severely Troubled Children and Youth
7. Tuning in to Consumer Voices: Creative Approaches to Listening to the Children, Youth and Families Who We Seek to Serve
8. Evidence-Based and Culturally Responsive Services: The Critical Nexus
9. Building the Organizational Infra-Structure for Effective and Humane Services for Troubled and Troublesome Children and Youth
10. Challenges and Opportunities in Improving the Effectiveness of Services for Troubled and Troublesome Children and Youth: The Role of International Research Associations.

The complete programme will be posted on the website in September 2007. For the details of the conference, please refer to the Conference website: <http://www.outcome-evaluation.org/eusarf2008>.

Eusarf and Fondazione Zancan would be very grateful if you collaborate in the dissemination of this information to others who may be interested in attending this Conference. We look forward to welcoming you in Padova!

## Book Announcement

Berry, M. (Ed.) (2007). *Identifying Essential Elements of Change: Lessons from International Research Community-based Family Centres*. Leuven: Acco.

Members of all of the helping professions (psychology, education, social work, advocacy, etc.) are seeking an understanding of the nature of the helping relationship. What are the essential elements in a relationship between professional and client that contribute to the client (be it a child, parent, or entire family) taking the courageous steps to change their behavior, thoughts, or situation. Across all counseling and helping professions, drop-out rates and/or non-compliance rates are as high as 75%; even when families are living in dire conditions, taking the steps necessary to break out of old patterns or environments takes courage and persistence.

Helping professionals are charged with facilitating this courage to change, but the critical skills, techniques and qualities possessed by successful practitioners remains elusive. This book "Essential Elements of Change" will help to fill the void in this critical area of the literature, by identifying, through seven case studies in community centres in five different countries around the world, the essential elements that contributed to families finding their way out of abusive or neglectful parenting patterns, estrangement from, and violence between, family members, isolation from their social support and community services, and other stresses we know to contribute to poor outcomes for children and their families.

These seven case studies are prefaced by an overarching conceptual framework guiding an exploration of the essential elements of change in the helping relationship. The book concludes with a chapter illuminating what appear to be the universal essential elements of change, as well as cultural differences in the helping relationship between the studies in the five different countries.

This book will appeal to practitioners in all of the helping professions aimed at children and families, including psychology, education, developmental disability, early education, family support, social work, community organizing, and advocacy. By virtue of its collection of seven case studies across five countries, it will also be useful to those teaching social science research methodology, as an concise casebook of different examples of qualitative case study research by different researchers on the same topic, with similar results in some areas, and culturally different outcomes in others.