

# The Center for Women's Health Studies and Promotion

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## Annual Report – 2012



Event to Publicize the Isha Be-Shela Counseling Center and its Activities

THE BEN-GURION UNIVERSITY OF THE NEGEV  
CENTER FOR WOMEN'S  
HEALTH STUDIES AND PROMOTION  
ANNUAL REPORT 2012

1. **Name of the Center:** THE BEN-GURION UNIVERSITY OF THE NEGEV  
CENTER FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH STUDIES AND PROMOTION
2. **Center Directors:** Prof. Julie Cwikel and Dr. Dorit Segal–Engelchin, PhD, The  
Charlotte B. and Jack J. Spitzer Department of Social Work

3. **Center Advisory Board**

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Dr. Noah Liel, MD, Cardiology, Department of Internal Medical

Prof. Robert Marks, Department of Biotechnology Engineering

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Dr. Hagit Perez, Department of Epidemiology

Dr. Orly Sarid, Department of Social Work

Prof. Golan Shahar, Department of Behavioral Sciences

Prof. Ilana Shoham-Vardi, Department of Epidemiology

Ms. Sheila Warshawsky, MS, Faculty of Health Sciences

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Prof. Ilana Shoham-Vardi, Department of Epidemiology

Dr. Michal Soffer, Department of Social Work

Ms. Sheila Warshawsky, MS, Faculty of Health Sciences

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### ***The Center Acknowledges its Generous Supporters***

*We are proud that the Center's range of activities promotes "tikkun olam," helping to make the world a better place for women, children and families in the Negev. When we reach out to help others we transmit the belief that it is possible to step outside our own personal concerns. The Center's programs are made possible by the care and generosity of donors like you that support our Center in the Negev from all over the world. We thank you all for your continuing strong support and belief in our goals.*



## **Developing Mind-Body Approaches to Women's Health**

For the past three decades, health psychology, trauma research and women's health research has posited that "the brain minds the body" (Schwartz, 1979; Ornstein & Sobel, 1987) and that "the body keeps the score" (Van der Kolk et al, 1996), opening exciting new fields of research on the relationship between body, brain and behavior, particularly in relation to health, trauma and recovery. In order to prevent disease and promote psychological and physical health, the Center coordinates a series of programs and pursues new research directions that try to promote mind-body strategies for improving women's mental and physical health. This approach allows us to incorporate cognitive behavioral therapies, relaxation techniques, somatic-experiencing (SE), visualization and imagery, meditation, mindfulness, the use of specific art-based techniques and other psycho-educational approaches to prevent and treat a wide range of challenges to women's physical and mental health.

We are pleased to provide this 2012 Annual Report to update you and share some of the past year's research and program highlights with you.

### **Training Mental Health Practitioners on Mindfulness Techniques in Treatment**

On March 21, 2012, Yael Schweitzer, LCSW, an Israeli psychotherapist living in Portland, Oregon, conducted a workshop on mindfulness treatment techniques for mental health practitioners. Over 60 mental health professionals took part in this training. Mindfulness is an integrative psychotherapy technique developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD, Professor of Medicine emeritus, University of Massachusetts Medical School, that involves focused attention, a non-judgmental stance, breathing and relaxation techniques and meditative practice, and clinical trials on the use of mindfulness as a therapy technique have been conducted on a variety of medical and psychiatric disorders. While more training is planned, the symposium led to an ongoing mindfulness practice group led by Prof. Vered Slonim-Nevo which meets weekly.



**Participants in Yael Schweitzer's Workshop**



**Yael Schweitzer Lecturing**

## **Combining Cognitive Behavioral Techniques with Art Therapy (CBI-ART)**

Art can reduce distress by engaging the senses, emotions and cognition in an interactive activity that draws on the creativity, problem solving and empowering aspects of the individual, as well as enabling unconscious experiences to become conscious in a way that promotes control and integration. Thus, art combines doing with feeling and understanding, lending itself well to the development of a mind-body therapeutic technique.

Combining aspects of art with strategies of empirically tested cognitive behavior therapy techniques has led to a research and practice innovation at the Center which is generously supported by Aileen Whitman of Philadelphia. To date, the treatment protocol has been applied by our staff with two groups (cancer and post-partum depression), as well as several women with chronic pain conditions who worked individually with Center therapists as a pilot of the intervention program.

The treatment program evolved from the clinical and theoretical work of Dr. Orly Sarid, Dr. Ephrat Huss, Prof. Julie Cwikel, Ms. Andy Ifergane, Ms. Johanna Czamanski-Cohen and Ms. Limor Niego. Evaluations of the therapy sessions showed a significant reduction in self-reported distress. Two theoretical articles were published by Dr. Sarid and Dr. Huss, and a third paper with evaluation data is almost complete.

The treatment protocol was further developed and is applicable for many women with chronic mental health or physical health conditions. Distress from these conditions includes the experience of pain itself, anxiety over the implications of a diagnosis such as cancer, the fear of social stigma and loss of social support (as often occurs with post-partum depression and cancer) and the burden of trying to cope in the face of daunting health challenges. We hope to expand the use of this protocol for other health challenges during this coming year.



**Participants at the CBI-ART Training**

## **New Research Initiatives**

### **Smell and Mood States**

Dr. Orly Sarid, in conjunction with Dr. Michelle Zaccai-Sabatini, a plant biologist specializing in exotic flowers, has developed a new research approach to examine how pleasant smells affect emotional responses in stressful situations. Previous studies have shown that flower scents and fragrances induce positive affective and cognitive states and promote positive emotions. However, few studies have looked at how fragrances affect people in stressful situations, such as students during in exam periods. This research is aimed at developing a new type of intervention combining psychotherapy and the use of pleasing fragrances for use during stressful periods.

### **Cognitive Behavior Therapy for Women Undergoing In-Vitro Fertilization**

Ms. Johanna Czamanski-Cohen's research on women undergoing in-vitro fertilization (IVF) has shown that women suffering from increased psychological stress before IVF treatment are less likely to conceive. Those practicing cognitive behavioral interventions were shown to have reduced stress, and when women practiced CBT at home they demonstrated improved pregnancy rates. Her ground-breaking results suggest that practicing relaxation techniques during invasive medical procedures has the potential to assist women in normalizing their stress reaction and aid in recovering physical homeostasis.

### **International Collaborative Research on the Impact of New Medical Technologies**

A research group led by Prof. Aviad Raz of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, including Prof. Cwikel and Dr. Frida Simonstein from the Center, has proposed a new research collaboration with German colleagues at the University of Goettingen and the University of Lubeck. The group seeks to study how new reproductive genetic technologies affect the well-being, autonomy and care of children. These techniques include: pre-implantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) for sibling donation (so-called "savior siblings"), prenatal screening for Down's syndrome, and newborn screening. Each of these practices has raised ongoing bioethical debate, but their implications in practice are not clear.

## **Women with Body Dysmorphic Disorder**

Body dysmorphic disorder (BDD) of the facial bones is characterized by repeated cosmetic and plastic surgeries. Although a rare disorder, related issues arise from repeated surgery, and its effects on self-image and quality of life have not yet been studied in depth in Israel. Dr. Dorit Segal-Engelchin, together with Dr. Naot Givol, a plastic surgeon from the Department of Mouth and Jaw Surgery at Sheba Hospital, are studying this phenomenon among those who request such surgery; the majority of whom are women. In addition, they will be studying those who have facial malformations to determine how this is related to body self-image, life satisfaction and quality of life over time.

## **Examining Treatment Preferences for Women Post-Partum, With and Without Post-Partum Depression**

Together with Ms. Saralee Glasser, an epidemiologist and Israel's leading expert on post-partum depression, from the Gertner Institute for Epidemiology and Health Policy Research and Dr. Racheli Magnezi, a health economist from Bar Ilan University, we are working on a grant proposal to ascertain the treatment preferences of women after childbirth, including options for web-based treatment. We plan to compare their choices for themselves with their choices for psychological treatment for a family member.

## **Ongoing Research**

### **Art-Based Trauma Assessment for Women in the Army**

During Operation Lead Cast (2009) we developed an arts-based trauma assessment (ABTA) procedure that helped social workers in high stress situations integrate and identify sources of stress and resilience both as professionals and as women (Huss, Sarid, Cwikel, 2010). A prior literature review of Israeli women's mental health revealed no empirical study on the potentially traumatic experiences of women in combat-related military roles. We are now conducting research to test the efficacy of this procedure to assess for post-trauma that interferes with normative function post-army by highlighting sources of both stress and resilience. We hope this initiative will further our understanding on the impact of combat and service related experiences on function as these women return to normative roles in society – as students, professionals, mothers and in significant relationships with others (spouses, life partners, etc.). This study was funded by the Brandeis University's Hadassah-Brandeis Institute and is being jointly conducted by Dr. Ephrat Huss and Prof. Julie Cwikel.

### **Using Web Cameras as Tools for Behavior Change**

Following the successful completion of our trial on the use of the webcam as a way to prevent work-related musculo-skeletal disorders, we continue to consider the applications of the webcam for improving workers' health. We are now working with a PhD student, Eyal Levy, who is an ergonomist working at Intel, together with Dr. Meirav Taib-Maimon from BGU's Department of Information Systems Engineering, to consider new options for applying our research findings.

### **Alternative Family Structures**

Dr. Dorit Segal-Engelchin continues to lead the analysis of qualitative data from interviews with parents raising children in the hetero-gay family structure (a heterosexual mother who contracts with a gay father to raise their biological child together). This is collaborative research between Prof. Pauline Erera of the University of Washington and Prof. Julie Cwikel. The two published an article this year on the motivations of heterosexual women for choosing the hetero-gay family context of parenting and the characteristics that they were seeking in selecting the birth fathers.

Dr. Segal-Engelchin taught a new academic course this year on alternative families for undergraduate social work students. The course included a strong emphasis on women's family choices in contemporary society and on the quality of life of women in diverse family structures.

### **Promoting Women's Pelvic Floor Health**

Dr. Michal Liebergall-Wischnitzer, a post-doc at the Center in 2010, has continued to enrich and expand her expertise in research and practice associated with strengthening the pelvic floor in order to promote good health in the middle and older ages, research she further developed while at BGU. She has published a study on women who were operated on with the Manchester procedure, which showed that the surgery was associated with improved sexual health and life satisfaction. Dr. Sarid and Prof. Cwikel participated in this research as well, and enjoy continued collaboration with Dr. Liebergall-Wischnitzer. Dr. Liebergall-Wischnitzer has expanded her multidisciplinary clinic at Hadassah Medical Center for women who have had traumatic birth experiences, with the aim of preventing long-term weakening of the pelvic floor and the perineum. In addition, she has collaborated on a book together with midwife, Ms. Edna Lubovsky, called "Evidence-Based Midwifery" in which she explains many of the current practices in midwifery, along with ethical issues in practice.



### **Understanding Women's Traumatic Birth Experiences**

Working together with a nurse-midwife researcher, Dr. Ofra Halperin, a lecturer at Emek Yezreel College's nursing faculty, a study continues on how women view their birth experiences. Women were assessed at two hospitals in the north of Israel in order to gauge how they assess the birth experience directly following birth and 6-8 weeks after delivery. Dr. Sarid and Prof. Cwikel are now working with Dr. Halperin on two papers from these interesting findings.

### **Mothers and Daughters – Transmission of Women's Health Behaviors**

This project was originally funded by the Ministry of Science, Culture and Sport and yielded a rich set of qualitative and quantitative data which formed the basis of Dr. Sheryl Mendlinger's doctoral dissertation completed in 2009. Analysis of these findings continues by Prof. Cwikel, Dr. Segal-Engelchin, and current MA student Daya Perach, focusing on the evolution of health-promoting behaviors such as exercise, positive body image and nutrition. Dr. Mendlinger's research project continues, and she is now addressing knowledge transmission from mother to daughter with regard to menstruation. Two papers are in process focusing on the impact of education as a force for changing smoking behaviors among daughters and on knowledge transmission and menstruation.

### **Fertility, Technology and Psychosocial Intervention**

Problems of infertility are a major stressor in the lives of some women. This project combines biology and psychosocial intervention in order to increase fertility and decrease the need for invasive procedures such as in-vitro fertilization (IVF). Prof. Cwikel, Dr. Sarid and Dr. Iris Harvadi, a clinical biologist, are part of the BGU research team in collaboration with Prof. Eitan Lunenfeld, Director of Gynecology and Obstetrics at the Soroka University Medical Center. Ms. Johanna Czamanski-Cohen, has completed her thesis and is preparing to submit her findings on how the stress associated with infertility affects DNA integrity among women undergoing IVF treatment. Her findings were presented at two international conferences and one local conference.

Prof. Cwikel and Dr. Sarid attended the Marcé Society meetings held in Paris, France on Oct 3-5, 2012. Researchers from all over the world, including Prof. Vivette Glover and Prof. Martin Kammener from the Imperial College of Medicine in London, attended. Following contacts made at this meeting, we are working on developing research with colleagues from Switzerland, England and Australia. Prof. Cwikel presented the topic of the applicability of webcam interventions with women with post-partum depression and the preliminary findings on DNA damage, stress and women's infertility from Johanna's thesis.

# Graduate Students Creating New Research in Women's Health

## Continuing Doctoral Students

**Johanna Czamanski-Cohen** is a trained art therapist who also works in Isha Be-Shela as a psychotherapist. She is being supervised by Dr. Sarid, Prof. Cwikel and Dr. Harvardi on the relationship between stress, DNA integrity, and the physiological effects of cognitive behavioral interventions in women undergoing IVF treatment. She has now completed her thesis and has submitted it for review.

**Tzipi Hornik-Lurie** is working on the three papers for her PhD thesis on the topic of "Challenges to Israel's Primary Health Care System in the Treatment of Mental Health Problems among Those Seeking Care - Implications for Health Care Policy." She received a student grant from the Gertner Institute for Epidemiology and Health Policy Research. She has submitted two articles from her findings, including an analysis of the use of non-traditional treatment methods (alternative therapies such as acupuncture and homeopathy, as well as consulting religious persons for treatment).

**Svetlana Prokoshev** from educational psychology completed her thesis on assessing cognitive deficits among breast cancer patients. One paper from her findings has been published and a second one is in process.

**Yael Damri, MSW**, has joined the ranks of the Center's PhD students with a thesis from Hebrew University on how school-aged children cope with the exposure to ongoing terrorist events. She works as a clinical social worker in the child psychiatric clinic at Soroka University Medical Center and will be studying the reflective capacity of parents and their school-aged children among a sample of families with attention-deficit and hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and those without. She has passed her qualifying exams and is now beginning to collect data for her thesis. The study is based on the mentalization theories of Profs. Peter Fonagy and Ariete Slade, and she is being jointly supervised by Dr. Naama Atzaba-Poria and Dr. Shosh Arbel.

**Avigdor Kaner** began with a focus on conflict resolution among couples undergoing the transition to parenthood drawing from two focus groups he ran with new parents, mothers and fathers separately. Based on his findings he is now working on a proposal on "The Transition to Parenthood – an Evaluation of an Internet Intervention for New Fathers." He is being supervised by Dr. Segal-Engelchin jointly with Prof. Cwikel.

**Ricki Krispel-Ochayon** is studying "Early Fetal Loss: the Association between Air Pollution and Other Major Risk Factors and Spontaneous Abortions Among Women in Southern Israel." She is being supervised by Prof. Ilana Shoham-Vardi, jointly with Prof. Michael Friger.

**Tamar Wainstock's** thesis topic is "Stress and Pregnancy Outcomes: the Case of Pregnancy in Sderot during the Rocket Attack Period." She is being supervised by Prof. Ilana Shoham-Vardi, jointly with Dr. Liat Lerner-Geva of Tel Aviv University and Prof. E. Anteby of Barzilai Medical Center. The researchers found statistically significant correlations between preconception and pregnancy stress in Sderot and spontaneous abortions. We are proud to report that the results of this study have just been published (February 2013) and have appeared locally in the newspapers.

**Karen Austrian** has collected data on "Integrating Financial Education into Health Interventions for Young Girls in Kenya and Uganda" for her PhD thesis. She is being supervised by Prof. Shoham-Vardi.

**Nava Braverman** is investigating the topic of "Obstetric services in Israel- Is There a Need for Change?" She is being supervised by Prof. Ilana Shoham-Vardi.

### **Visitors to the Center**

We were fortunate to host many visitors to the Center in 2012. These visits give us a chance to showcase the Center's programs, researchers, and staff and present our projects to our advocates, friends, and donors to BGU and the Center. Our visitors have the opportunity to see BGU and the Center in action and learn firsthand about the Center's strengths and needs. In turn, the Center benefits as well – we are enriched from the expertise our visitors share with us, and we are inspired by their commitment and interest. We look forward to welcoming you to campus – perhaps in the coming year?

#### **Judge Leon Kaplan**

Judge Leon Kaplan of Los Angeles, a great advocate of the Center, paid a visit to the Center during December 2011 - January 2012. His dedication and commitment served as the foundation of the Center's positive parenting program, and he was instrumental in establishing this program and area of research at BGU. His belief in the importance of good parenting skills for all groups in the Negev has also led to important academic and clinical collaborations with mental health practitioners from the Los Angeles area (described later in this report).

During his extended visit to the Center he observed the activities of the Center, especially the Mom to Mom project (Em le Em), participated in the positive parenting seminar, sat in Avigdor Kaner's focus groups for parents, and visited many parenting educational services in the Negev, such as schools and treatment centers. The Center staff, researchers, students, and our community benefited from this visit from one of the Center's greatest supporters.



**Ms. Johanna Czamanski-Cohen, Dr. Naama Atzaba-Poria & Judge Kaplan Visiting the Bi-Lingual School in Beer-Sheva**

### **The Aussies are Coming!**

Prof. Arie Freiberg and his wife Mrs. Monica Pfeffer, along with her sister Rosemarie and brother-in-law Heribert Allemann, visited the Center in January 2012. Prof. Freiberg is the Dean of the Faculty of Law at Monash University in Melbourne, Australia. Monica is the Director of the Social Policy Branch of the Australian Department of Human Services and is responsible for advice on social issues, health inequalities and the intersections of gender, sexuality, diversity and disadvantage. They are long-time advocates for women's legal aid in Melbourne. They shared their experience with us and we discussed how it might apply locally in Israel.



**Standing Left to Right: Mr. Heribert Allemann, Ms. Mati Talmon, Mr. Arie Freiberg; Sitting: Ms. Rosemarie Allemann, Prof. Julie Cwikel & Ms. Monica Pfeffer (Freiberg)**

Marlene Katz, a health advocate from Melbourne, visited the Center in October 2012. Marlene, a successful businesswoman with extensive experience in developing and promoting new ideas, was especially interested in health advocacy for those families coping with a cancer diagnosis. She shared her story and the development of her interest in women's health. She also had an opportunity to learn more about BGU's community health programs and hopes to implement similar programs in Australia.



**From Left to Right: Prof. Julie Cwikel, Ms. Marlene Katz & Dr. Orly Sarid**

### **Jana Singer & Larry Sidman**

Prof. Jana Singer, a professor of law at the University of Maryland who taught law at Tel Aviv University during her recent sabbatical year, and Mr. Larry Sidman, a past President and Chief Executive Officer of the Association of Public Television Stations, visited BGU's Marcus Family Campus in Beer-Sheva and the Sede Boqer campus during their two day visit to the University in January 2012. This was actually Jana's second visit as she was so enthusiastic after her initial solo visit to the University that they subsequently scheduled a shared visit.

We had an opportunity to welcome them at the Center and present our programs and the role of the University in the community, and they shared their interest in legal issues affecting women's status in Israel. We discussed issues such as violence against women and trafficking and how this might be addressed through legal means.

## **Jessica & Jeffrey Rum**

Jessica and Jeffrey Rum from Washington, D.C. were welcomed at the Center in July 2012 along with their two-year-old daughter. We spoke about the need for programs to support new parents and the importance of reaching out to the Ethiopian community during a round-table discussion with researchers and Michal Yatmano, an Ethiopian MA student, who participates in the Em le Em program. We delved into the challenges that new mothers face after pregnancy and also discussed the possibility of creating a similar program for fathers.

Michal talked about her role in the program which is to help with the language barriers within the Ethiopian community. She mentioned some of the issues faced by Ethiopian mothers who must cope with immigration and bureaucratic problems in addition to the challenges of motherhood and the difficulty in recruiting Ethiopian volunteers for the program.



**Left to Right: Ms. Michal Yatmano, Ms. Andy Ifergane, Ms. Limor Niego, Ms. Nirit Segal, Dr. Dorit Segal-Engelchin, Mr. Jeffrey and Ms. Jessica Rum with their daughter**

## **Community Activities**

### **Testimony in the Israeli Parliament**

On May 1, 2012, Prof. Cwikel joined Prof. Marsha Kaitz to present “Guidelines for Establishing a National Program for Addressing Post-Partum Depression” at the Health Forum of the Israeli Knesset. This conference on post-partum depression was convened by Dr. Rachel Adatto-Levy a member of the Knesset and physician who has made important contributions in the area of health in Israel. We hope that this initiative will develop into a political lobby to advocate for women and their young children (from infancy through age three).

**The Schechter Institute for Jewish Studies and the National Masorti  
(Conservative) Movement's Women's Study Day in Jerusalem**

On June 22, 2012, Ms. Andy Ifergane and Prof. Julie Cwikel gave workshops in Spanish, Hebrew and English on coping with parents-in-law and coping with traumatic birth experiences, respectively. The workshops were part of the 13<sup>th</sup> National Masorti Women's Study Day organized by the Conservative Jewish Women's Movement in Israel. This is the second time Center representatives have been invited to lecture at this annual event.



**Ms. Mimi Schneiderman, Prof. Julie Cwikel, Ms. Andy Ifergane & Ms. Marsha Chamovitz at the Study Day**

**Visits to Portland, Oregon and Los Angeles, California**

**Portland**

In October 2012, Prof. Cwikel traveled to Portland, Oregon to reciprocate the visit of Ms. Yael Schweitzer, who visited Israel in March 2012. Prof. Cwikel gave a half-day workshop on the use of the art-based assessment tool developed together with Dr. Huss for the evaluation of trauma among US army veterans. The workshop taught the use of the assessment tool to over 60 mental health professionals and volunteers who work with veterans. The feedback was excellent: over 87% of the participants rated the workshop as very helpful to their practice.

While in Portland, Julie attended a symposium on women's economic empowerment where she presented the work of the Center. At this symposium she met Larry Katz, the son of Liane Katz. This was particularly meaningful as Liane Katz, now in her 90s and residing in Florida, attended the opening dedication ceremony of BGU in 1969 as a guest of Bob and Joan Arnow and Joan's father, Jack Wieler.

**Los Angeles**

On November 1, 2012, an event was held at the lovely Beverly Hills home of Sam and Ardyth Freshman. At the event, organized by AABGU Los Angeles Director, Philip Gomperts, Prof. Cwikel introduced the Center and presented the topic of "Promoting Positive Parenting: Developing New Resources at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev" stimulating interest, questions and discussion. Raquel Vert, the architect of

the Spitzer-Salant Building for the Department of Social Work where our Center is located at BGU, was also in attendance. She hosted a wonderful dinner in her impressive home the next evening for some of BGU's supporters.

Highlights of the Los Angeles visit included meetings based on the Sol Leshin research award to support BGU-UCLA research collaboration. The award was presented to the Center and the UCLA Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior's Nathanson Family Resilience Center's Early Childhood Core for the developing binational research collaboration in reflective parenting for high-risk and underserved families.

Following the presentation, a two-day symposium on relationship-based interventions for families was hosted by Dr. Blair Paley and Dr. Regina Pally of the UCLA Center. Dr. John Grienenberger and Diane Reynolds from the Los Angeles-based Center for Reflective Parenting introduced their Reflective Parenting Program and presented their work on Mindful Parenting Groups. Discussion followed regarding further development of joint research proposals programs between the centers, and meetings were also held with Judge Leon Kaplan and Ms. Gina Ross, founder and president of the International Trauma Healing Institute in LA to discuss developing programs to address the concerns of parents coping with chronic security stress.



**Left to right: Ms. Suzanne Oshry, Prof. Julie Cwikel, Ms. Raquel Vert, Ms. Lori Miller & Judge Leon Kaplan**



**Hosts Mr. Sam & Ms. Ardyth Freshman with Prof. Julie Cwikel & Judge Leon Kaplan**



## **Prof. John Goldsmith Memorial Prize Winners**

The tradition continues of granting an academic prize to a student working in the areas of occupational medicine, epidemiology, and/or environmental science to honor the memory of Prof. John R. Goldsmith. This year's winner was Ms. Sarit Oriel-Levy, a third year PhD student in BGU's Department of Psychology. Her research is being supervised by Prof. Ora Kofman, chairman of the Department of Psychology. The topic is: "The Importance of Understanding the Neurobehavioral Deficit Caused by Early Exposure to Organophosphate Pesticide during Early Brain Development on Mice." Residues of pesticides can be found in air, food, soil and water and even in breast milk and have been linked to a range of developmental hazards in early childhood.



**Prize Winner Ms. Sarit Oriel-Levy**



**Ms. Sarit Oriel-Levy, with her Supervisor, Prof. Ora Kofman & Prof. Julie Cwikel at the Ceremony**

**Goldsmith Memorial Prize Recipients: 2005-2011**

<b>Name of Scholar, Year of Prize</b>	<b>Title of Research</b>	<b>Department, Degree</b>
Riki Ochayon (2005)	"Exposure to Environmental Risk Factors Associated with Cancer Among Kibbutz Members From Ein Hashlosha in the Western Negev."	MPH
Ayala Kanfi (2006)	"Chronic Morbidity and Occupational Exposures Among Workers of the Nuclear Research Center in the Negev."	PhD, Department of Epidemiology
Ilana Meallem (2008)	"The Management of Solid Waste in Recognized and Unrecognized Bedouin Villages of the Negev: Social Context, Impacts, and Recommendations."	MA with Honors, Department of Mar in the Desert
Dafna Granit Dgani (2009)	"Encouragement of Exploration Among Young People Studying in Environmental Studies Through the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel (SPNI)."	PhD, Department of Education
Tsafnat Test (2009)	"The influence of Hearing Impairment on Sleep Quality Among Workers Exposed to Harmful Noise."	Medical Student
Michal Ruzal- Mendelevich (2010)	"Particle Grouping, a New Method for Reducing Emission of Sub-Micron Particles From Diesel Engines."	PhD, Department of Environmental Engineering
Alina Vodonos (2011)	"Developing a Questionnaire for Assessing Exposure to Risk Factors for Adverse Pregnancy Outcomes: a Validation Study."	MPH
Naama Buzaglo (2011)	"Was the Military Operation 'Cast Lead' a Risk Factor for Preterm Deliveries?"	MA, Emergency Medicine

# Community Health Promotion Projects

## Mom to Mom - Em le Em



We are now marking the seventh year of the program, our special volunteer project modeled after the successful program that began in Boston, Massachusetts. The program also operates in Jerusalem under the direction of Dr. Marsha Kaitz, a developmental psychologist of Hebrew University. In this program veteran mothers receive volunteer training in order to provide one-on-one support to new mothers who feel that they do not have adequate confidence during the first year following childbirth. The program's volunteers provide much-needed support on a weekly basis through home visits. By supporting new mothers we help them foster healthy childhood development for the next generation.

To date, 27 groups of volunteers have been trained and have conducted over 448 home visits to new mothers. Since the beginning of the project, we have matched volunteers with 327 new mothers. There are currently 40 active mother-volunteer pairs. We are very proud of the achievements of this project which is now recognized throughout the Negev as an important resource for families. This year, we continued to work with the same winning team: Limor Niego, MSW - clinical social worker, Ms. Mati Talmon - public health nurse, Ms. Nirit Segal - administrator and Prof. Cwikel and Dr. Segal-Engelchin – supervisors.

This year we also continued to run a mothers group that meets weekly and combines group discussions with didactic lectures on issues of mothering an infant. Approximately 30 women participated in this open group over the year. Special topics presented included: handling fussy babies, baby massage, career and motherhood, attachment, milestones in development, problems of eating and sleeping in infants, communication between partners on childcare issues and dealing with the challenges of the security situation.

## Isha Be-Shela – Women's Counseling Project in the Negev



This marks the fourth year of our counseling program, Isha Be-Shela, the first counseling center for women in the Negev. Leadership in the project is provided by Ms. Andrea Ifergane, clinical director, together with Prof. Cwikel. They published an analysis of Isha Be-Shela's clients, focusing on the reasons for seeking therapy in the *Israeli Journal of Psychiatry*. The evaluation clearly demonstrated the high quality of therapy being provided by Isha Be-Shela. One interesting finding was that comprehensive intake procedures help to set the stage for successful treatment by addressing diverse sources of trauma and stressful events in women's lives.

We are very proud of our 14 therapists, including one male therapist, who come from varied backgrounds (psychology, social work, art therapy) and provide individual psychotherapy to women and men of all walks of life from throughout the Negev (Beer-Sheva, Arad, Sderot). Most of the therapists are graduates of BGU. We welcome Ms. Jill Zimmermann who comes to the Center with a great deal of expertise and an MA in management and serves as the part-time administrator, replacing Ms. Esther Lilian.

The staff met regularly over the course of the year for monthly training sessions and case presentations and also met for group supervision twice monthly. In addition, the clinical director supervised two social work students from the master's program.

Since the beginning of the project, we have seen over 220 women in psychotherapy treatment, more than half of them young women between the ages of 20-30. Many of our clients have faced significant financial problems and have benefitted from the subsidized psychotherapy we are able to provide with the support of our donors. We know that a considerable number would not have been able to receive psychotherapy treatment otherwise.

In response to the request by many of our clients for additional subsidies, students who did their MA field training at Isha Be-Shela last year organized a fund raising event. The Evening of Wine and Song coordinated by Galia Sabag, Gila Vanhotzker, Hadar Samla and Inbar Zohar raised spirits and funds which will help provide further subsidized treatments. The event featured a sing-a-long with Oded Shoham and his band, together with wine and cheese tasting.

All who participated donated their wares and services for the benefit of our clients. With this undertaking, the dedicated students, together with their supervisors, Ms. Vered Deichman and Ms. Andy Ifergane, once again demonstrated their commitment to the welfare of women in the Negev.



**Pictured here: Oded Shoham with his Band at the Evening of Wine and Song  
(Also on the Cover Page Photo Left to Right: Esther Liliane, Andy Ifergane, & Students:  
Galia Sabag, Gila Vanhotzker, Hadar Samla, Inbar Zohar, Vered Daitchman,  
Julie Cwikel & Nirit Segal)**

### **Somatic Experience Training for the Promotion of Mental Health Among Women**

In order to enhance the treatment skills of mental health professionals working in Mom to Mom (Em le Em) and Isha Be-Shela, the programs' staff participated in specialized somatic experience training, a technique used to help the body recover from psychological trauma. The world renowned educator Gina Ross who developed this program came to Israel twice during 2012 through the Somatic Experience Trauma Institute of Israel. The treatment program is based on cutting-edge research on the brain and its reaction to traumatic experiences. During the training our staff members developed somatic experience treatment skills which will be used to help parents cope with the stressors of chronic security stress, skills which are particularly valuable here in the Negev.

### **Positive Parenting Program**

Thanks to the generous support of Judge Leon Kaplan the Center continues to expand opportunities for supporting new parents in the Negev. For the third year, we continue to teach an MA seminar on positive parenting skills for master's students of social work (MSW). This was jointly led by Prof. Cwikel and Ms. Noa Gueron, an advanced PhD student in development psychology who is being supervised by

Dr. Naama Atzaba-Poria from the Department of Psychology. Ms. Gueron's research focuses on the development of premature infants.

There are seventeen students in the seminar. During this class each student works with a set of parents who are parenting an infant between 6 months and 2 ½ years in order to focus on teaching early childhood parenting skills. Social work students learn by acquiring skills in class and then observing and filming parents who are playing with, reading to, and interacting with their infants and children. Students then analyze the videotaped interactions and provide feedback to parents and also share their findings with the class. The program includes a strong emphasis on the role of fathers in childhood development.

In addition, different topics are presented throughout the year including: coping with post-partum depression, communication between couples, the role of fathers, milestones in child development, historical approaches to parenting, understanding the importance of play and reading to children, coping with problems in sleeping and feeding, etc.

With the assistance of our friends from the Center for Reflective Parenting in Los Angeles, Dr. Regina Pally and Dr. John Grienenberger, we initiated a training course in the use of the Parental Developmental Interview (PDI) for researchers and graduate students in May 2012. We benefited from the presence of Dr. Naomi Ben Bassat who used the PDI in her PhD research at BGU some years ago and helped us translate the concepts into Hebrew from English during the training. The PDI was developed originally by Prof. Arieta Slade and has been used to focus on the reflective capacity of parents with regard to their children. The training was carried out by webcam connection between BGU and Los Angeles. The PDI has now been incorporated into both teaching practice and research by the group's participants.

This past year we initiated a series of six positive parenting training sessions for group facilitators of the Beer-Sheva municipality's Department of Education "School for Parents" program. This program, which will conclude later this year, has provided the opportunity to train 12 group leaders (the trainers who work with groups of parents) in a variety of topics including reflective parenting, coping with security stress, theory and practice of play and reading to infants and children, issues in eating, and parental communication and authority.

## **Biogas for Unrecognized Bedouin Villages – A Project of the Middle Eastern Research Consortium (MERC)**

Forty percent of the Negev's Bedouin Arabs currently reside in unrecognized villages without formal means of waste disposal, instead relying upon biogas digesters that recycle organic material (human/animal waste) into renewable energy for lighting, cooking and heating. The biogas digester has been the focus locally of a working group now funded by the Middle East Research Consortium (MERC) that brings together diverse agencies and actors from across the Negev, including the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies (Kibbutz Ketura), the Abu Basma Regional Council for Unrecognized Villages, the Negev branch of the Israel Society for the Protection of Nature (SPNI) and professors from BGU's Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research.

The biogas digester became the focus of a research project on the perception of waste and its impact on the environment and public health of elementary school pupils in unrecognized villages in the Negev. This MA thesis of Sedawi Wisam was conducted in conjunction with Dr. Orit Ben-Zvi Assaraf (Department of Science and Technology Education). The results have been presented at four international conferences and a paper for publication has been prepared and is under review.

The larger research team includes students, Yair Teller, Tareq Abuhamed, and Abeer Abu Sara and former student, Tsofit Goren, MSW. The team's work spans the breadth of the project, from the construction of biogas digesters to the social issues they raise. During 2012, research continued in tandem with the construction of two new biodigesters at Halil Abu Rabia's farm (El-Cuhleh near Tel Arad) and in the Nachal Aricha area near Mitzpeh Ramon. A questionnaire was created which included specific topics on health related to the environment. The questionnaire was translated into Arabic and tested with the women in El-Cuhleh to ensure its cultural acceptability. After modifications and additional pre-testing in Nachal Aricha, the questionnaire is being used in the field as data is collected at both sites.

In addition, our work with women from the two sites expanded with the development of a group training protocol to promote general knowledge on health, the environment, recycling waste materials, the biogas digester and its use. The protocol will be used to generate interest and motivation for incorporating the biogas digester into village and everyday life and to develop projects that will encourage more environmental awareness and develop uses for the biogas products.



**The Training Protocol being carried out in the El-Cuhleh Site by Ms. Abeer Abu Sara & Ms. Rabcha Krenawi, Pictured Left to Right**

Biogas digesters are used throughout the world, and in May 2012, the research team's efforts went international by visiting two biodigester sites in Jordan. Researchers met with women at both sites and explored potential avenues for projects and community work around the biogas digesters. After discussion, the questionnaire was adapted for use in Jordan and it was tested during the visit. In December 2012, engineers from the Jordanian team visited BGU and the biogas digester sites.

## **Welcome to New Faculty**

### **Dr. Leeat Granek**

Dr. Granek is a new faculty member in the Department of Public Health in the Faculty of Health Sciences. She came to BGU from the University of Toronto and arrived in Israel in August 2012 as a new immigrant from Canada.

Dr. Granek is a prolific researcher and writer. Her research expertise includes: the psychology of health and illness; psychosocial determinants of women's health; psycho-oncology specifically focusing on mourning, death and dying and the history and theory of psychological disorders and current practice.

Her current research projects include: how pediatric and adult oncologists cope with their own reactions to patient loss and how it impacts their quality of life as well as patient care; the experience of women with bipolar disorder and their spouses; and the bereavement follow-up care received by family members when a patient has died of cancer. In the past she has done research on how single parents whose children have cancer manage the illness; the experience of hope in parents of children with advanced





cancer; women coping with depression and eating disorders; women who delay seeking care for cancer symptoms; and the emotional well-being of healthcare professionals.

We ask you to join us in welcoming Dr. Granek to Ben-Gurion University of the Negev and the Center. We look forward to updating you in the future on her developing involvement in the Center and the contributions she is certain to make on behalf of women, children and families of the Negev.

## **Professional and Community Activities of Center Researchers and Scholars (in Alphabetical Order by Last Name)**

With great pride we share with you many of the professional and community activities of the Center's researchers and scholars during 2012.

### **Dr. Orit Ben-Zvi Assaraf**

#### **Publications**

**Ben-Zvi Assaraf, O.**, Eshach, H., Alamour, Y. & Orion, N. (2012). Culture Differences and Students' Spontaneous Models of Water Cycle: a Case Study of Israeli Bedouin Children. Journal of Cultural Studies of Science Education. 7, 2, 451-477.

**Ben-Zvi Assaraf, O.**, Dodick, J., & Tripto, J. (2012). High school students' understanding of the Human Body System. Research in Science Education.

Asely, M., **Ben-Zvi Assaraf, O.**, & Eshach, H. (In Press). Toward Valid and Meaningful Assessment of Science Learning Environment as Constructivist. Journal of Science Education and Technology.

Goldman, D., **Ben-Zvi Assaraf, O.**, & Sharabani, D. (In Press). The Effects of an Informal Environmental Training Program on Junior High School Students Environmental Literacy. International Journal of Science Education.

**Ben-Zvi Assaraf, O.**, & Agronovich, S. (In Press). Characterizing the Attitudes of Primary School Students towards Science. Journal of Education and Learning.

Tripto, J., **Ben-Zvi Assaraf, O.**, & Amit, M. (2012). The Concept Map as a Research Tool: Exploring Human Complex System Understanding among High School Biology students. American Journal of Operations Research.

#### **Presentations at Conferences**

**Ben-Zvi Assaraf, O.**, Cwikel, J.G., Sedawi, W. & Goren, Z. (2013). Place-Based Education in the context of Waste-related Implications on Health and Welfare among Bedouin Arab Communities in the Israeli Negev. Presented at the 7th International Conference on the Impact of Environmental Factors on Health, 23 - 25 April, 2012, Budapest, Hungary.

**Ben-Zvi Assaraf, O., Sedawi, W., & Cwikel, J.G. (2012).** The Conceptualization of Health and Welfare among elementary school students within the Bedouin Arab community in the Negev. Presented at the *9th conference of the European Researcher in Didactics of Biology –ERIDOB* Berlin 18-22 September, 2012.

Sedawi, W., **Ben-Zvi Assaraf, O., & Cwikel, J.G. (2012).** The Conceptualization of Health and Welfare among elementary school students within the Bedouin Arab community in the Negev. Presented at the *39th National Conference of the Israeli Society of Ecological and Environmental Quality Sciences (ISEEQS)*, Tel Aviv, Israel, 16-18 October, 2012.

**Ben-Zvi Assaraf, O., Sedawi, W., & Cwikel, J.G. (2012).** The Conceptualization of Health and Welfare among elementary school students within the Bedouin Arab community in the Negev. Presented in the *The 4th International Conference Implementing Rio+20 for Drylands, and Desertification*. Sede Boqer, Israel, 12-15 November, 2012.

### **Prof. Julie Cwikel**

#### **Publications**

**Cwikel, J. & Ifergane, A. (2012).** Three years of Isha Be-Shela, A Women's Counseling Center in the Negev – a mixed method analysis, Israel Journal of Psychiatry, 49(3):219-226.

Liebergall-Wischnitzer., M., Ben-Meir., Sarid., O. **Cwikel.**, & J. Lavy. Y. (2011) Women's well-being after Manchester procedure for pelvic reconstruction with uterine preservation: A follow up study. Accepted for publication in Archives of Gynecology and Obstetrics.

Soffer, M. **Cwikel, J. & Harman Boehm, I. (2012).** Coronary heart disease and metabolic risk factors in Israel: Focus on gender and ethnicity. Current topics in Cardiovascular Risk Reports. Eprint: May 24, 2012. 6:363–371.

Segal-Engelchin, D. Erera, P., & **Cwikel, J.** "Having it all? Unmarried women choosing hetero- gay families" AFFILIA: Journal of Women and Social Work. Accepted.

Czamanski-Cohen, J., Sarid, O., **Cwikel, J.**, Lunenfeld, E., Douvdevani, A., Levitas, E., & Har-Vardi, I. Increased plasma Cell Free DNA is associated with low pregnancy rates among women undergoing IVF-ET. Reproductive BioMedicine Online. Accepted.

Kozarinsky, D., Biderman, A. & Cwikel, J. (2012). Attitudes of Women with Breast Cancer Regarding the Doctor-Patient Relationship", European Journal of Cancer Care. Accepted.

#### **Chapters**

**Cwikel, J. (2012).** Encyclopedia chapter "Social Epidemiology". In The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Health, Illness, Behavior, and Society, (William C. Cockerham, Robert Dingwall, and Stella Quah, Eds.) Accepted.

## **Invited Lectures**

**Cwikel, J. & Kaitz, M.** Guidelines for establishing a national program for addressing Post-partum Depression. The Israel Knesset, the Health Forum, Conference on Post-partum depression, May 1, 2012.

**Cwikel, J.** Workshop for Mental Health Professionals who care for Returning Veterans, the Use of Arts-based assessment of trauma. Portland VA Hospital, Oct 28. 2012.

**Cwikel, J.** Mom to Mom Program in Israel. Building a binational research program in reflective parenting for high-risk and underserved families. The Semel Institute, UCLA, Oct. 30, 2012.

## **Grants**

2011- "Assessing the experiences of Israeli women who served in combat-related roles in the Israeli Defense Forces – validation of a arts-based trauma assessment for normative populations", Hadassah-Brandeis Institute, from the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute, Dr. Ephrat Huss, co-investigator. The HBI named our award as the "Shirley D. Kalb Research Award for the Study of Israel and Zionism" in memory of our late board member Shirley Kalb.

2012- The Sol Leshin Program for Collaboration between Ben Gurion University (BGU) and UCLA, Building a Binational Research Program in Reflective Parenting for High-Risk and Underserved Families together with Dr. Blair Pally (UCLA) and Dr. Tamar Peleg.

## **Johanna Czamanski-Cohen**

## **Publications**

**Czamanski-Cohen, J.** (2012). The Use of Art in the Medical Decision-Making Process of Oncology Patients. *Art Therapy*. 29(2), 60-67.

**Czamanski-Cohen, J., Sarid, O., Cwikel, J., Lunenfeld, E., Douvdevani, A., Levitas, E. & Har-Vardi, I.** (2012). Increased plasma Cell Free DNA is associated with low pregnancy rates among women undergoing IVF-ET, *RBM Online*, 4 pages.

## **Published Proceedings**

**Czamanski-Cohen, J., Cwikel, J., Sarid, O., Lunenfeld, E. & Har-Vardi, I.** (May 2012) Cell Free DNA and pregnancy rates among women undergoing IVF, Annual meeting of the Israeli Association for fertility research (Ayala), Dan Panorama, Tel Aviv.

**Czamanski-Cohen, J., Sarid, O., Cwikel, J., Zeadna, A., Levitas, E., & Har-Vardi, I.** (2012). Practicing cognitive behavioral interventions (CBI) increases pregnancy rates in women undergoing IVF. *Fertility and Sterility*, 98(3), S45.

**Czamanski-Cohen, J., Cwikel, J., Sarid, O., Lunenfeld, E. & Har-Vardi, I.** (2012) Stress, cortisol and cell free DNA (CFD) and their relationship with pregnancy rates in women undergoing In-Vitro Fertilization (IVF), *Archives of Women's Mental Health*, Proceedings from the Marcé Society annual meeting, Paris, France.

## **Awards**

2012 American Society for Reproductive Medicine Travel Grant (\$2,000 US)

## Tzipi Hornik-Lurie

### Publications

**Hornik-Lurie**, T. Zilber, N. and Yaacov Lerner (2012). Trends in the use of rehabilitation services in the community by people with mental disabilities in Israel; the factors involved. Israel Journal of Health Policy Research, 1:24.

Adini, B. Laor, D. **Hornik-Lurie**, T. Schwartz, D. and Aharonson-Daniel, L. (2012). Improving hospital mass casualty preparedness through ongoing readiness evaluation American Journal of Medical Quality February 10, 2012.

Lerner, Y. **Hornik-Lurie**, T. and Zilber, N. (2012). The effect of the implementation of the Rehabilitation of the Mentally Disabled in the Community Law in Israel on the pattern of psychiatric hospitalizations: a national case register study International Journal of Mental Health Accepted.

**Hornik-Lurie**, T. Cwikel, J.G. Feinson, M.C. Lerner, Y. and Zilber, N. (2012) Use of unconventional medical practices by primary care patients - religious resources vs. complementary or alternative medicine services. The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine. Under review.

### Presentations at Conferences

Gleitman, S. **Hornik-Lurie**, T. Caspi, G. and Aharonson-Daniel, L. "Factors affecting ambulance availability- duration of hospital staying factor" International Preparedness and Response to Emergencies and Disasters (IPRED II 2012), Tel-Aviv, Israel, January 15–19 2012.

## Dr. Ephrat Huss

### Publications

**Huss**, E., Huttman-Shwartz, O., Altman, A. (2012). The role of collective symbols as enhancing resilience in children's art Arts in Psychotherapy. Accepted.

**Huss**, E. (2012). Integrating strengths and stressors through combining dynamic phenomenological and social perspectives into art evaluations, The Arts in Psychotherapy. doi:10.1016/j.aip.2012.07.001.

**Huss**, E., Elhozayel, E. & Marcus, E. (2012). Art in Group Work as an Anchor for Integrating the Micro and Macro Levels of Intervention with Incest Survivors. Clinical Social Work Journal.

**Huss**, E. (2012). An informal diagnostic tool for caretakers self-regulation using a single image: Social Work Education Special Edition, Creative Tools in Social work. Accepted.

### Theoretical book

**Huss**, E. (2012). What we see and what we say: Using images in research, therapy, empowerment and social change. New York: Routledge Monographs in Mental Health.

## Orly Liberman

### Lectures and presentations

Finkelman, A., Romem, P., Liberman, O. An International collaborative interprofessional health care study abroad experience: Northeastern University, USA, and Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Israel.

International Nursing conference, Jerusalem, Israel.

Liberman O, Peleg R, Shvartzman P. Quality of life and sense of coherence of patients suffering from knee osteoarthritis. Annual National Conference of Family Medicine, Jerusalem, Israel.

### Dr. Michal Liebergall-Wischnitzer

#### Publications

**Liebergall-Wischnitzer, M., Paltiel, O., Hochner Celnikier D., Lavy Y., Manor O., Woloski Wruble A.C.** (2012). Sexual function and quality of life of women with stress urinary incontinence: A randomized controlled trial comparing the Paula method (circular muscle exercises) to pelvic floor muscle training exercises. Journal of Sexual Medicine, 9(6), 1613-1623.

**Liebergall-Wischnitzer, M., Paltiel O., Lavy Y., Svikey D., Manor O., Hochner Celnikier. D.,** (2012). Long-term efficacy of Paula Method as compared with PFMT for Stress. Urinary Incontinence in women: A 6-month follow-up. Journal of Wound, Ostomy and Continence Nursing. Accepted.

#### Chapters

Lubovsky, E., writer and **Liebergall-Wischnitzer, M.** (2012). Evidence based midwifery: In "Midwifery and fear". Private publication.

#### Invited Lectures/Workshops

Head nurses national forum of maternity department: Perinatal clinic

Joint symposium The Departments of Obstetrics and Gynecology Hadassah Medical Center, Jerusalem Holy Family Hospital, Bethlehem: Pelvic floor symptoms and conservative therapy

Clinic specialization in nursing: pelvic floor-abdomen

Elderly women, community volunteers' training course Hadassah Women's Health project

Jerusalem (Gilo Community center): Pelvic Floor Relaxation and Women's Health.

#### Presentations at Conferences

RNOA-Registered nurses of Ontario, International Nursing Conference - NURSING: Caring to Know, Knowing to Care, Jerusalem, Israel. Pelvic floor muscle training in the maternity ward – A health promotion plan project poster presented.

**Liebergall-Wischnitzer, M., Liat Shik-Nave, Asia Kopitman, Yana Glazer, & Nava Braverman.**

**Publications**

Choosing the Best Breast Cancer Treatment Option, News at Northeastern, February 16, 2012. <http://www.northeastern.edu/news/2012/02/mendlinger/>

**New Research**

Research on the effects of tourism on the economic development and empowerment of women of the Maasai in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, Tanzania. Dr. Mendlinger is responsible for interview data collection and qualitative analysis of in-depth interviews examining the influences of women's empowerment through tourism. A focus group was held with local Maasai women discussing health issues that included how mothers prepare their daughters for menstruation, preparation for adulthood, and the importance of education for the daughters and how that can affect their overall health.

**Dr. Orly Sarid**

**Publications**

Liebergal, M.W., Ben-Meir, A., **Sarid, O.**, Cwikel, J., Lavy, Y. (2012). Women's well-being after Manchester procedure for pelvic reconstruction with uterine preservation: A follow up study. Archives of Gynecology & Obstetrics, 285 (6), 1587-1592.

Grinstein-Cohen, O., & **Sarid, O.** (2012). Gunshot terror attack in pregnancy: A case report. Journal of Forensic Nursing, 1-6.

Czamanski-Cohen, J., **Sarid, O.**, Cwikel, J., Lunenfeld, E., Douvdevani, A., Levitas, E., & Har-Vardi, I. (Accepted). Increased plasma Cell Free DNA is associated with low pregnancy rates among women undergoing IVF-ET. Reproductive BioMedicine Online.

**Sarid, O.** & Shraga, Y. (Accepted). Infants' sleeping and feeding patterning: a cultural perspective of maternal practices. Journal of Nursing Education and Practice.

**Presentations at Conferences, 2012**

Marcé Society Meeting, Paris France, October, 2012: The contribution of negative reproductive experiences and chronic medical conditions to depression and pain among Israeli women.

**Dr. Dorit Segal-Engelchin**

**Publications**

**Segal-Engelchin, D.**, Erera, P. & Cwikel, J. (2012). Having it all? Unmarried women choosing hetero-gay families. AFFILIA: Journal of Women and Social Work, 27(4), 391-405.

Sarid O., Berger R., Eckshtein M., & **Segal-Engelchin, D.** (2012). Are cognitive behavioral interventions effective in reducing occupational stress among nurses? Applied Nursing Research, 25(3), 152-157.

Sarid, O., **Segal-Engelchin, D.**, & Cwikel, J. (2012). The contribution of negative reproductive experiences and chronic medical conditions to depression and pain among Israeli women. Psychology, Health & Medicine, 17(1), 82-94.

Kaufman, R., **Segal-Engelchin, D.**, & Huss, E. (2012). Transitions in first-year students' initial practice orientations. Journal of Social Work Education, 48(2), 337-359.

### **Prof. Ilana Shoham-Vardi**

#### **Publications**

Abu-Ghanem S, Sheiner E, Sherf M, Wiznitzer A, Sergienko R, **Shoham-Vardi I.** Lack of prenatal care in a traditional community: trends and perinatal outcomes.

Archives of Gynecology & Obstetrics; 2012 May; 285(5):1237-42.

Shalom G, **Shoham-Vardi I.**, Sergienko R, Wiznitzer A, Sherf M, Sheiner E. Is preeclampsia a significant risk factor for long-term hospitalizations and morbidity?

Journal of Maternal-Fetal and Neonatal Medicine; 2013 Jan; 26(1):13-5.

Bashiri A, Ratzon R, Amar S, Serjienko R, Mazor M, **Shoham-Vardi I.** Two vs. three or more primary recurrent pregnancy losses--are there any differences in epidemiologic characteristics and index pregnancy outcome? Journal of Perinatal Medicine; 2012 Feb 16; 40(4):365-71.

Daoud N, O'Campo P, Anderson K, Agbaria AK, **Shoham-Vardi I.** The social ecology of maternal infant care in socially and economically marginalized community in southern Israel. Health Education Research; 2012 Dec; 27(6):1018-1030.

Sharon N, **Shoham-Vardi I.**, Aricha-Tamir B, Abramowicz JS, Sheiner E. What do ultrasound performers in Israel know regarding safety of ultrasound, in comparison to the end users in the United States? Harefuah. 2012 Mar; 151(3):146-9, 190. Hebrew.

Shapira E, Ratzon R, **Shoham-Vardi I.**, Serjienko R, Mazor M, Bashiri A. Primary vs. secondary recurrent pregnancy loss--epidemiological characteristics, etiology, and next pregnancy outcome. Journal of Perinatal Medicine; 2012 Feb 29; 40(4):389-96.

#### **Presentations at Conferences**

Wainstock T, Lerner- Geva L, Glasser S, **Shoham-Vardi I.**, Anteby EY. The Association between Maternal Preconception and Prenatal Stress and the Risk of Spontaneous Abortions. APHA American Public Health Association Annual Meeting 2012, San Francisco.

#### **Research Grants**

National Committee on the reduction of infant mortality, Ministry of Health, with I. Belmaker, H. Peres, N. Bilenko: Intervention to reduce the rate of birth defects and infant mortality in the Bedouin population of the Negev (ongoing).

Israel National Institute for Health Policy and Health Services Research. Socio-demographic factors and health care services utilization patterns associated with antenatal corticosteroid treatment in pregnancies at high risk for preterm delivery. Shoham-Vardi I, Sheiner E (Co-PI), Landau D (Co-PI). Bernard Van Leer Foundation.