

# The Ben-Gurion University Center for Women's Health Studies and Promotion

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## Annual Report – 2011



### Symposium in honor of the Center's New Book

Left to right: Ada Sinacore, Zvia Walden, Dorit Segal-Engelchin, Michal Hochberg, Julie Cwikel, Ilana Shoham-Vardi, Orly Sarid & Hava Tabenkin



Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

אוניברסיטת בן-גוריון בנגב

**THE BEN-GURION UNIVERSITY CENTER  
FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH STUDIES AND PROMOTION  
ANNUAL REPORT 2011**

1. **Name of the Center:** THE BEN-GURION UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH STUDIES AND PROMOTION

2. **Center Directors:** Prof. Julie Cwikel & Dr. Dorit Segal-Engelchin, PhD, Spitzer Department of Social Work

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Dr. Orly Sarid, PhD, Department of Social Work

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Ms. Sheila Warshawsky, MS, Faculty of Health Sciences

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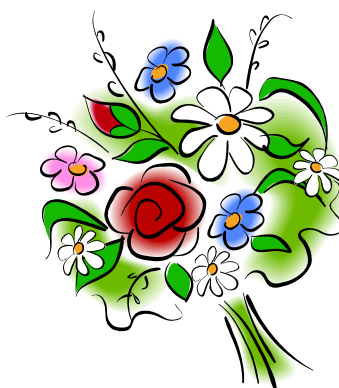
Ms. Sheila Warshawsky, MS, Faculty of Health Sciences

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### *The Center salutes its supporters and donors*

*The range of activities and academic achievements that are reported in this document are made possible, in part, by the support of our many donors to the Center from Israel and abroad. Some of the Center's donors have been involved since its inception; others are more recent supporters.*

*While confidentiality precludes mentioning donors by name, we want you to know that we, the staff and the women and their families of the Negev, salute and thank you for your generosity and continued support. The close of our Bat-Mitzvah year (12 years of activity) is a fitting time to look at where we started and where we are today and say loud and clearly "We could not have done it without you, so thank you one and all".*



# Report on Center Activities: 2011

## Book Launch - March 23, 2011



**Prof. Ada Sinacore**

A symposium to mark the publication of our latest book, "*Mind Body Mosaic - Women's Health in Israel*" (Hebrew), edited by Dr. Orly Sarid, Dr. Dorit Segal-Engelchin and Prof. Julie Cwikel, took place on March 23, 2011 (see cover page photo). The guest speaker was Prof. Ada Sinacore from the Counseling Psychology program of McGill University in Montreal, Canada. She gave a stimulating presentation on current feminist theories, "Identity, Intersectionality and Feminist Theory - Influences on the Women's Health Research Agenda".

Opening remarks were made by BGU President Rivka Carmi, MD and Department of Social Work Chair, Prof. Yonathan Anson. A panel of leaders in women's health research including Prof. Hava Tabenkin, Prof. Ilana Shoham-Vardi, Prof. Yael Latzer and Dr. Zvia Walden presented their evaluations of the rich and innovative material in the book and its relevance to the women's health agenda.

The symposium took place under emergency conditions as Beer-Sheva had been recently under missile attack from Gaza. Dr. Orly Sarid opened the symposium by briefing attendees on the way to the nearest bomb shelter. Despite the conditions of uncertainty, the symposium drew a substantial audience. Prof. Hava Tabenkin, who is the Chair of the Advisory Board to the Minister of Health on Women's Health, supported the publication of the book, distributed copies to all the members of the Advisory Board and wrote a glowing review that was published recently in *HaRefuah* ("Medicine"), Israel's leading medical journal.

### **Visit of Prof. Ada Sinacore in March 2011**

Prof. Cwikel first met Prof. Ada Sinacore at the American Women's Psychology meeting in Portland, Oregon in February 2010. They found that they had many research interests in common, so it was a great pleasure to have Prof. Sinacore visit the Center during the week of March 21-24. During this time, Prof. Sinacore gave three guest lectures; in the practicum of treatment of women: "Feminist Counseling for Men and Women", in the positive parenting seminar on "Alternative Families" and a lecture to master's students of social work on gender awareness and social justice. She also gave the plenary lecture at the book launch. In addition, she met with graduate students and other academic professionals working in the area of gender and psychology.

### **Reciprocal Visit to McGill University As the Guest of Prof. Ada Sinacore: September 2011**



**Left to right - Prof. Julie Cwikel, Prof. Ada Sinacore & Prof. Gillian Einstein**

Prof. Julie Cwikel traveled to Montreal, Canada for a week of lectures and brainstorming with Prof. Sinacore and Prof. Gillian Einstein of the University of Toronto from September 18- 24. While there, Prof. Cwikel lectured in the Fall Seminar Series at the Institute for Gender, Sexuality and Feminism at McGill on "Immigration and Women's Health: An Overview of Theory and Research". Prof. Cwikel gave guest lectures in the Department of Educational and Counseling Psychology in the Faculty of Education on mixed method evaluation designs and role conflict with working mothers. During the visit, she met with Prof. Sinacore's colleagues, including Prof. Alenoush Saroyan, Chair of the Department of Education and Counseling Psychology. The three researchers developed ideas about collaborative research that resulted in the submission of a Canadian Health Research Planning Grant on "An International Collaboration for Health Care: Access, Pain, and Gender in Immigrant Women."

## Visit from Northeastern University's School of Nursing: May 2011

### Dialogue of Civilizations



**Study group participants visiting a Bedouin home in the Negev**

A diverse group of nine health science students from Boston's Northeastern University came for an intensive month of study on health care delivery in the Negev's multicultural society. This study group was coordinated by Ms. Orly Liberman from BGU's Nursing Department of the Leon and Mathilde Recanati School for Community Health Professions. Ms. Liberman developed these professional connections based on our ongoing relationship with Prof. Hortensia Amaro and Dr. Sheryl Mendlinger of Northeastern University (Dr. Mendlinger is also a BGU alumna from the Center- see p. 9). The lectures and site visits were given by many of our local health care professionals and researchers. The students met patients and their families in a variety of settings throughout the Negev. Accompanying the group was Prof. Anita Finkelman of Northeastern's School of Nursing.



**Prof. Cwikel, Incumbent of the Chilewich Family Chair**  
**in Studies in Social Integration**

On May 23, 2011, the BGU Senate approved Prof. Julie Cwikel as the new incumbent of the Chilewich Family Chair in Studies in Social Integration. The Chilewich family of New York donated a professorial chair to honor the memory of Yoni Netanyahu around the time of the Entebbe Rescue. Father Aron (z'l) and son Simon (z'l) were active in the American Associates of Ben-Gurion University (AABGU) and Aron was its second president from 1975-1982. The Chair's first incumbent was Prof. Alex Weingrod, followed by Prof. Steve Sharot. Now representing the Chilewich family is granddaughter Mrs. Sandy Chilewich Sultan who is a well-known industrial designer with her own unique line of rugs, mats, household fabrics and furnishings.

***Ongoing Research***

**Using Web Cameras as a Tool for Behavior Change:**

**Preventing Musculo-Skeletal Disorders – Paper Published!**

Results from our trial using the webcam as a way to prevent work-related musculo-skeletal disorders were published this year in *Applied Ergonomics*. This work was carried out in conjunction with Dr. Meirav Taib-Maimon and Prof. Bracha Shapiro from BGU's Department of Information Systems Engineering, together with Dr. Ella Kordish from Occupational Health and Epidemiology and Dr. Naftali Liberman from Orthopedic Surgery at Beer-Sheva's Soroka University Medical Center. This study was funded by a grant from Ministry of Industry and Commerce. We conducted an experiment with 60 university and hospital workers who spend most of their day in front of the computer. The results suggest that using the webcam to deliver feedback on a person's own posture is a better way to help to improve workplace posture than traditional didactic learning or ergonomic training.

The publication of the study on using the webcam for improving workplace posture brought with it media attention. Newspaper stories were run in *Ma'ariv*, *Ha'aretz* and *Galileo* (an Israeli science magazine). An interview on the study was slated to run on August 23<sup>rd</sup> on ABC's primetime *World News with Diane Sawyer*. However, a minor earthquake on the Eastern seaboard bumped it off the news for that night and it was

eventually broadcast later together with two other studies on improving workers well-being and posture while at work: <http://abcnews.go.com/WNT/video/day-work-14424633>

The publication of the study brought interest from workplaces and researchers on how to further apply our findings and we are now trying to develop some new proposals to apply the promising results of the first study. The study was also presented by doctoral student Denis Klimov in May 2011 at BGU's Innovation Day, which presented innovative technology during the University's 41<sup>st</sup> annual Board of Governors Meeting, and was organized by the Guilford Glazer Faculty of Business and Management.

### **Alternative Family Structures**

Dr. Dorit Segal-Engelchin has developed an expertise on new family structures that are becoming more and more common in Israeli society. She is supervising several masters' students who are studying these phenomena from different aspects in order to expand the body of knowledge in this area (see below). She developed a new academic course on alternative families for undergraduate social work students. Emphasis will be placed on the quality of life of women in these new family structures.

Dorit 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 with Prof. Pauline Erera of the University of Washington and Prof. Julie Cwikel. Three articles from these findings are now in process.

### **Dr. Michal Liebergall-Wischnitzer: Pelvic Floor Research to Promote**

#### **Women's Health**

Dr. Michal Liebergall-Wischnitzer, who completed a post-doctoral year with us in 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 prevent incontinence. Together with researchers from Hadassah Medical Center, a follow-up was conducted of women who were operated on with the Manchester procedure, which showed that the surgery was associated with improved sexual health and life satisfaction. This study was just accepted for publication. Based on this research, Dr. Liebergall-Wischnitzer recently opened a multi-disciplinary clinic in Hadassah for women who have had traumatic birth experiences, with the aim preventing long-term weakening of the pelvic floor and the perineum.



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

Following two studies published in the Center on traumatic birth experiences, we have continued to try to understand the impact of such experiences on women's post-partum function. Two different projects began this year.

First, with the collaboration of Dr. Michal Liebergall-Wischnitzer and Dr. Orly Sarid, we joined forces with another post-doctoral fellow, nurse-midwife researcher, Dr. Ofra Halperin, a lecturer at Emek-Yezreel College's nursing faculty. Together we designed a questionnaire that will be used in hospitals around the country in order to gauge how women assess the birth experience: directly following birth and 6-8 weeks after delivery. At present, over 100 women have been assessed by Dr. Halperin and close to half of them have undergone further assessment via follow-up interviews by phone.

The second project uses qualitative interviews to analyze how the passage of time affects the narrative memory of traumatic birth among women at different times following the birth. This memory is encoded through emotions, voices, the contents of spoken language, colors, pictures and bodily sensations. The analysis focuses on what elements predominate over time. This is the master's project of Ms. Limor Niego under the supervision of Dr. Orly Sarid and Prof. Cwikel.

## **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). During Prof. Cwikel's 2007 sabbatical at the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute of Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts, an additional data set on American Jewish mothers and daughters was collected and this year, a mother-daughter analysis of "resisting eating disorders" was published. Analysis of these findings continues by Prof. Cwikel and Dr. Segal-Engelchin, focusing on the evolution of health-promotive behaviors such as exercise, positive body image and nutrition. Recently, a master's student, Ms. Daya Perach, has started to work on a new analysis of these data based on the qualitative interviews already collected. We are working in a mixed methods design, enriching the analyses with quantitative analyses of the survey sample. A paper is in process based on the qualitative-quantitative data.

## **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 this BGU research team in collaboration with Prof. Eitan Lunenfeld, Director of Gynecology and Obstetrics at the Soroka University Medical Center. Our Ph.D. student, Johanna Czamanski-Cohen has completed her data collection to test how the stress associated with infertility affects DNA integrity among women undergoing IVF treatment. Her preliminary findings were presented in London at a meeting of the Cortisol Society of Researchers (see below).

### **Meeting of the Cortisol Society of Researchers, Imperial College of Medicine London,**

**October 2011:** Following the publication of our joint paper (Sarid, Segal-Engelchin & Cwikel, 2011) on the contribution of reproductive experiences and chronic medical conditions to depression and pain among Israeli women, we were asked to present our current findings to the meeting of perinatal researchers, led by Prof. Vivette Glover, Prof. Martin Kammener and Dr. Alyx Taylor-Vieira which took place at the Imperial College of Medicine in London. Prof. Cwikel, Dr. Sarid and Ms. Czamanski-Cohen all presented their work at this interesting symposium. Researchers from all over Europe attended the symposium, which is associated with the Perinatal Society (called the Marcé Society).

### ***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. Harvadi on the relationship between stress, DNA integrity, and the physiological effects of cognitive behavioral interventions in women undergoing in-vitro fertilization. She is now analyzing the rich data collected.

**Tzipi Hornik-Lurie** is working on 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 is now in the midst of preparing two articles from her findings, and has added an

analysis of the use of non-traditional treatment methods (both alternative therapies such as acupuncture and homeopathy as well as consulting religious persons for treatment) to the issues she is examining.

**Svetlana Prokoshev** from Educational Psychology submitted 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.

### **New Doctoral Students**

**Yael Damri**, MSW, with a thesis from Hebrew University on how school-aged children cope with the exposure to ongoing terrorist events, has joined the ranks of the Center's PhD students. 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 ADHD (attention-deficit and hyperactivity disorder) and those without. This study is based on the mentalization theories of Profs. Peter Fonagy and Ariete Slade. She is being jointly supervised by Dr. Naama Atzaba-Poriah and Dr. Shosh Arbel.

**Tzofit Goren**, MSW, with a thesis on understanding the issue of child protection within the Bedouin community is joining the research staff of the biogas project. An experienced social worker with over 20 years of work in the Bedouin sector, she speaks Arabic and is well known in her area of specialization. She will be assessing the impact of introducing biogas digesters on the lifestyle of women living in unrecognized villages of the Negev.

## **Doctoral Students Working Under the Supervision of Prof. Ilana Shoham-Vardi**

**Ricki Krispel-Ochayon**: "Early fetal loss: the association between air pollution and other major risk factors and spontaneous abortions among in southern Israel" (Jointly with Prof. Michael Friger).

**Tamar Wainstok**: "Stress and pregnancy outcomes: the case of pregnancy in Sderot during the rocket attack period" (Jointly with Dr. Liat Lerner-Geva, Tel Aviv University).

**Karen Austrian**: "Integrating financial education into health interventions for young girls in Kenya and Uganda."

**Nava Braverman**: "Obstetric services in Israel- Is there a need for change?"

### **Master's Students who Completed Theses**

**Noa Kfir-Levin**: "The meaning of 'psychache' in the life stories of women who are survivors of suicide". Noa graduated summa cum laude with a thesis grade of 100! She is now writing an article based on her qualitative studies and will be presenting her findings at BGU's Fifth Israeli Conference on Qualitative Research in February 2012. She was supervised by Dr. Segal-Engelchin.

**Ariel Cohen**: "Gay Fatherhood: Coupled gay men's experience of choosing the parenting model". He is now writing an article based on the thesis and will also be presenting his findings at the Conference on Qualitative Research in February 2012. He was supervised by Dr. Segal-Engelchin.

**Najala Masri**: "Perception of early marriage as expressed in the drawings of adolescent girls in Arab society", jointly supervised by Dr. Segal-Engelchin and Dr. Efrat Huss.

### **New and Continuing Research by Master's Students**

**Tali Nevo**: "The meaning of using an anonymous sperm donor from the single mothers' perspective". She is being supervised by Dr. Segal-Engelchin.

**Maya Malkin**: "Women choosing to remain single". She is being supervised by Dr. Segal-Engelchin.

**Amit Shapira**: "The meaning of professional success in the life stories of Ethiopian women". She is being supervised by Dr. Segal-Engelchin.

**Naama Hayat**: "The contribution of pregnancy characteristics, physical and psychological conditions and demographic variables to antenatal depression". She is being supervised by Dr. Segal-Engelchin jointly with Dr. Sarid.

**Avigdor Kaner**: "Conflict resolution among couples undergoing the transition to parenthood". He is being supervised by Dr. Segal-Engelchin jointly with Prof. Cwikel.

**Daya Perach-Yosef**: "Mothers and daughters' health behaviors: An inter-generational perspective". She is being supervised by Dr. Segal-Engelchin jointly with Prof. Cwikel.

### **Visitors and Guest Lecturers at the Center**

1. Long-time Center supporters Natalie and Raymond Stern visited the Center in February 2011, bringing news from Canada. We discussed new options for supporting parents in alternative family structures.



**Left to right - Julie Cwikel, Master's student Limor Niego, Natalie & Raymond Stern**

2. As part of BGU's Board of Governor events, the Center hosted former United States Secretary of Health and Human Services, Prof. Donna Shalala on May 30, 2011, who is now president of the University of Miami. She shared with us some of her tips on successful behavioral change in women's public health interventions.



**Left to right- Ms. Nirit Segal, Dr. Orly Sarid, Prof. Julie Cwikel, Prof. Donna Shalala & Shira Kastan (Prof. Shalala's aide)**

3. Dr. Pat B. Allen, the internationally recognized art therapist and founder of the Open Studio Project in Chicago, Illinois, gave a workshop on Nov, 2011 on humanistic art therapy and gender-based practice to a large group of undergraduate and graduate students. Dr. Ephrat Huss was the organizer of this workshop.



**Left to right- Ms. Johanna Czamanski-Cohen, Prof. Julie Cwikel, Pat's daughter, Dr. Pat B. Allen, Dr. Ephrat Huss**



**Dr. Pat B. Allen demonstrating her technique to students in workshop**

4. Yachad scholar Dr. Helen Milroy visited the center on November 9 and presented her experiences on promoting Aboriginal Women's Health in Western Australia and dealing with cultural inter-generational trauma.



**Standing left to right- Doctoral candidate Ms. Yael Damri, Prof. Julie Cwikel, Mom to Mom coordinators Ms. Limor Niego, and Ms. Mati Talmon and Dr. Helen Milroy (seated)**

### *Community Activities*

#### **Travels to Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia with AABGU: June 2011**

Reciprocating her December 2010 BGU visit, Prof. Cwikel traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet with Anne E. Sumner, M.D. a clinical researcher from the Clinical Endocrinology Branch of the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, USA and Prof. Kathryn Sandberg from the Department of Family Medicine, Queen's University, Toronto, Canada. Currently Prof. Cwikel and BGU's Dr. Michal Soffer are collaborating with Dr. Sumner on a review of women's heart health research and heart health risk factors, including the cardio-metabolic syndrome.

Prof. Cwikel also presented current research on the health effects of immigration on women in Ethiopia and the Former Soviet Union at the Howard University College of Medicine's Interdisciplinary Research Conference on June 10. Prof. Thomas A. Mellman, M.D., Associate Dean for Clinical and Translational Research and Professor of Psychiatry hosted this event.

Several meetings were also held with AABGU supporters in the Washington, DC area organized by AABGU regional director Keren Waranch.



## **Visit to Philadelphia**

Long time Center supporters Drs. Alton and Mona Sutnick hosted Prof. Cwikel's visit to AABGU in Philadelphia and facilitated professional meetings with colleagues at Drexel University. On June 14, Prof. Cwikel gave two presentations at AABGU gatherings on "Innovations in Women's Health – An International Perspective". The first event was hosted at the lovely home of Dr. Robert and Marla Zipkin and the second took place at the gracious home of Ms. Rebecca Peikes. This visit was organized through AABGU with the skillful coordination of regional director Claire Winick, associate director Andrew Demchick, and supporters Mona Zeehandelaar and Alton and Mona Sutnick. Additionally, Dan Zeehandelaar (Mona's son) paid a visit to the Center and BGU during his Birthright trip to Israel in the summer.

On June 15, Prof. Cwikel met with Dr. Sandra Urdaneta-Hartman of Drexel University's College of Medicine together with Dr. Alton Sutnick, the former Dean of Medicine at Drexel. Dr. Urdaneta-Hartman is the Assistant Director of the impressive Institute for Women's Health and Leadership at Drexel. In addition, Mona Zeehandelaar organized a visit to Drexel University where Prof. Cwikel met with Prof. Julie Mostov, the head of International Programs.



**Dr. Sandra Urdaneta-Hartman and Prof. Julie Cwikel at the Institute for Women's Health and Leadership**



**Left to right-Joann Simon, Harriet Soffa & Julie Cwikel**



**Laikee Zelitch, Shirley Tauber & Mona Sutnick**



**Left to right- American supporters: Susan Lazar, Rebecca Peikes (hostess), Mona Zeehandlehaar, Prof. Julie Cwikel, Lana Pinkenson, Connie Katz, Barbara Epstein Sivan and Sylvia Brodsky.**

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

Each year, in memory of Prof. John R. Goldsmith, prizes are allocated in the fields of occupational medicine, epidemiology and environmental studies. This year two prizes were awarded. *Alina Vodonos* was awarded the Goldsmith Memorial Prize in recognition of her work on: "Developing a questionnaire assessing exposure to risk factors for adverse pregnancy outcomes: a validation study". She is doing her master's in public health (MPH) in the Faculty of Health Sciences under the supervision of Prof. Ilana Shoham-Vardi and Dr. Natalya Bilenko both from the Department of Epidemiology.

*Naama Buzaglo* was awarded the Goldsmith Memorial Prize in recognition of her work on: "Was the Military Operation 'Cast Lead' a Risk Factor for Preterm Deliveries?" She did her master's studies in emergency medicine at BGU's Recanati School for Community Health Professions under the supervision of Prof. Eyal Sheiner from Gynecology and Dr. Lena Novack from Epidemiology and Biostatistics. Both of students gave an overview of their work at the ceremony on December 29, 2011. A list of the winners from earlier years is shown below.

### Goldsmith Memorial Prizes: 2005-2010

Name of Scholar, Year of Prize	Title of Research	Department, Degree
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 Man 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."	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



**Naama Buzaglo (left), Alina Vodonos (right) with Profs. Julie Cwikel, Gabriel Schreiber (Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences) & Michael Friger**

## *2011 Research and Project Proposals*

<b>Title</b>	<b>Submitted to</b>	<b>\$ Amount</b>	<b>Status</b>
Assessing the experiences of Israeli women who served in combat-related roles in the Israeli Defense Forces – validation of arts-based trauma assessment for normative populations	Hadassah-Brandeis Institute	\$ 3,500	<i>Granted</i>
Review of e-therapy and social work practice literature (with Dr. Tamar Peleg)	Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Services	\$ 5,160	<i>Granted</i>
Working Mom to Working Mom (Em le Em)	AABGU	\$ 29,400	Pending
Developing a training program for Bedouin women on environmental health in unrecognized villages in the Negev and in Jordan – focus on early childhood exposures	Adva Fund	\$ 38,440	Pending
Development of volunteer resources for a defined community (together with Prof. Marsha Kaitz, Hebrew University)	JOINT Israel	\$ 25,000	Pending
Establishing a Center of Excellence on Parenting and Early Childhood Development (Pre-proposal)	Israel Science Foundation: Israel Centers of Research Excellence	Budget to be determined	Pending



## *Community Health Promotion Projects*

### Mom to Mom - Em le Em



#### **Group meeting of mothers, babies and Em le Em staff**

We are now completing our sixth year of running a special volunteer project modeled after a most successful program that started in Boston, Massachusetts and has been running in Jerusalem under the direction of Dr. Marsha Kaitz, a developmental psychologist of Hebrew University.

Veteran mothers receive volunteer training to provide one-on-one support on a weekly basis through home visits to new mothers who feel that they do not have adequate confidence in the first year after birth. When we support new mothers, we help them foster healthy childhood development for the next generation.

Until now, 25 groups of volunteers have been trained and have conducted over 380 home visits to new mothers. Since the beginning of the project, we have matched volunteers to 264 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 staff members: Ms. Limor Niego, a clinical MSW, Ms. Mati Talmon, a public health nurse, Ms. Nirit Segal as administrator and Prof. Cwikel and Dr. Segal-Engelchin as supervisors.

This year, we also continued to run a mothers group that meets once a week and combines group discussions with didactic lectures on issues of mothering an infant. There were approximately 30 women who took part in this open group over the year.

Some of these mothers come only to the group, which connects them with other mothers and the staff, while others feel the need to be in the group while also receiving support from a Mom to Mom volunteer. Many of the group members are returning moms mothering their second infant. The group makes time to address psychosocial issues such as how to increase the involvement of fathers in infant care and how to manage time to make space for relating to older children, husbands and their own personal needs.



**Isha Be-shela**

Psychotherapy for Women

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

This marks the third 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, the clinical director, together with Prof. Cwikel. Our coordinators, Ms. Esther Lilian, together with Ms. Nirit Segal, help to keep the project running smoothly. A group of 12 therapists, including one male therapist of all different backgrounds (psychology, social work, art therapy) provide individual psychotherapy to women and men of all walks of life from the Negev (Beer-Sheva, Arad, Sderot). Most of the therapists are graduates of Ben-Gurion University.

The staff met regularly over the course of the year for monthly training sessions and case presentations and for twice monthly group supervision. Ms. Ifergane also supervised two social work students in the master's program. Since the beginning of the project, we have seen over 160 women in psychotherapy treatment, more than half of them young women between the ages of 20-30. Many have significant financial problems and would not have been able to get psychotherapy otherwise. We have psychotherapists who can work in Hebrew, Arabic, Russian, Spanish, and English.

We conducted an evaluation of the process indicators that reflect the treatment process conducted at Isha Be-Shela. This paper is now in press in the *Israeli Journal of Psychiatry* and showed clearly 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.

### **Cognitive-Behavioral Art Intervention: CBI-ART**

This year we introduced a new therapeutic protocol that combines cognitive behavioral intervention (CBI) and the use of art therapy. This initiative is the result of collaboration between Dr. Orly Sarid and Dr. Ephrat Huss and two academic papers have been published on this model of treatment. We conducted a pilot study to examine the effectiveness of this treatment both as a group intervention for women with cancer and post-partum depression and as an individual treatment for women suffering from chronic pain conditions. All women reported a benefit and we are now in the process of writing up the results of our treatment experiences and hope to publish two more papers.

Psychotherapists from Isha Be-Shela and other mental health professionals trained with Profs. Moli Lahad and Miki Doron during the month of October in the comprehensive treatment technique of cognitive behavior interventions with mind-body work, especially for treatment of persons who have experienced trauma.

### **Training in Somatic Experience for Promotion of Mental Health among Mothers**



**Left to right-Julie Cwikel, Gina Ross, Rivka Berger & Johanna Czamanski-Cohen**

In order to enhance the treatment skills of mental health professionals working in Mom to Mom and in Isha Be-Shela, staff from Isha Be-Shela and Mom to Mom participated in the training in moving from the trauma vortex to the healing vortex. The world renowned educator Gina Ross, who developed this program together with Dr. Peter Levine, came twice to Israel this year through the Somatic Experience Trauma Institute of Israel. Based on cutting-edge research on the brain and its reaction to traumatic experiences, the staff members were trained in using somatic experience treatment skills in order to help parents cope with the stressors of chronic security stress. The goal is to complete the training and to be able to work with parents who are struggling to cope with the fall-out of chronic security problems here in the Negev.



## **Positive Parenting Program**

The Center has greatly expanded the teaching and research being done in the area of positive parenting practices. The seminar on positive parenting skills for master's students of social work (MSW) was taught last year during the second semester as a four hour practicum course (Spring 2011). 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 Aztaba-Poriah from the Department of Psychology. Ten students participated in the seminar, including one PhD candidate, Ms. Yael Damri who is continuing her research in this area.

We use two theoretical frameworks: "Positive Parenting" (Regina Palley & John Grienenberger) and "Emotional Availability" (Zeynep Biringen). Social work students learn by acquiring skills in class and then observing and filming parents who are playing with, reading to and feeding their infant/children. Students analyze videotaped interactions, providing feedback to parents and sharing their findings with classmates. The program includes a strong emphasis on the role of fathers in childhood development. In order to kick off the seminar, we were graced with a visit by Dr. Regina Palley, who is director of the Reflective Parenting Center of Los Angeles. She gave an introductory lecture on positive parenting skills.

This fall, the seminar is again being jointly taught by the same team. It has 19 master's students and one PhD student (who is auditing the class), representing almost a two-fold increase. 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 parenting skills for early childhood. Presentations on different topics were made throughout the year: post-partum depression, issues of parenting after infertility treatment, the role of fathers, topics in childhood development, the importance of play, historical approaches to parenting, parenting an adopted child, problems in sleeping and feeding, reading to children, etc.

Another student project was conducted last year by two students from the master's course. The project, supervised by Ms. Andrea Ifergane, was a survey of fathers to find out what kind of resources they wanted to help with their parenting skills. Two suggestions were most prominent: a website for fathers with all sorts of ideas for activities and a playgroup where fathers could bring children and learn to develop play-skills with them through a reflective parenting lens.

**Biogas for Unrecognized Bedouin Villages –  
Middle Eastern Research Consortium (MERC)**



Forty percent of the Negev's Bedouin Arabs currently reside in unrecognized villages without formal means of waste disposal. A biogas digester recycles organic material (human/animal waste) into renewable energy for lighting, cooking and heating. This project has been the focus of a working group that is now funded by the Middle East Research Consortium (MERC) and has brought 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 BGU professors from the Jacob Blaustein Institutes for Desert Research. This year we were joined by Ariel Dloomy, the projects director for the Negev Institute for Strategies and Development (NISPED) and our new PhD student, Ms. Tsofit Goren.

The research team visited our MERC counterparts in Amman, Jordan on July 27-28. Our team members work at the National Energy Research Center (NERC) to develop common methods of work and research, including a focus on women's involvement in the implementation of this lifestyle change. Since waste management is primarily implemented by women, this is a project that hopes to create a bridge between women and men in these villages. Both parties will learn to maintain the digesters. They will then learn to use the gas, generated by the digesters, safely in their homes in lieu of the traditional open cooking fire. This economically viable source of energy can also provide future business opportunities.

Dr. Orit Ben-Zvi Assaraf from BGU's Department of Science and Technology Education joined forces with Prof. Cwikel to help facilitate the preparation of educational materials on environmental community action that will be the basis of Tsofit Goren's doctoral thesis. Based on exploratory work from last year, master's student Wissam Sedawi explored the perceptions of elementary school children on waste and its impact on the environment and finished her MA thesis in November. The research team made a site visit to the Yaaran Farm in December to see how a small biogas digester is incorporated into the life of a family farm. Work proceeds on building the first two digesters in the Negev.

### ***New Research at the Center***

#### **New Treatment Models for Post-Partum Depression**

Following communication with Saralee Glasser, who is Israel's leading expert on post-partum depression, Dr. Tamar Peleg and Prof. Cwikel discovered that there is a National Screening Program but no organized follow-up of mothers who screen positively with post-partum depression. We developed contacts with Dr. Racheli Magnezi from Bar Ilan University and are now submitting a study proposal to evaluate the efficacy of cognitive behavioral treatment for detected mothers comparing treatment delivery methods (face – to-face, phone and internet using the webcam).

#### **Exploring the Policy Implications of Using Web Camera-Based Psychotherapy Treatment**

In collaboration with Dr. Tamar Peleg, a new research project has commenced to explore implications of e-therapy (psychotherapy delivered remotely through the use of a webcam or internet connection). Using focus group and in-depth interviews with policy makers and psychotherapists, combined with a literature review, we will outline the policy implications of this new type of service delivery.

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

**Prof. Julie Cwikel**

**Publications**

**Cwikel, J.** (2011). Strategies for resisting eating disorders over the life course – A mother-daughter case analysis. Women & Therapy. 34(1): 1-36.

Sarid, O., Segal-Engelchin, D. & **Cwikel, J.** (2011). The contribution of negative reproductive experiences and chronic medical conditions to depression and pain among Israeli women. Psychology, Health & Medicine. 17(1):82-94

Prokasheva, S., Faran, Y., **Cwikel, J.** & Geffen, D. B. (2011). Analysis of memory deficits following chemotherapy in breast cancer survivors: evidence from the Doors and People test. Journal of Psychosocial Oncology. 29:499–514.

Taieb-Maimon, M., **Cwikel, J.**, Shapira, B & Orenstein, I. (2011). The effectiveness of a training method using self-modeling webcam photos for reducing musculoskeletal risk among office workers using computers. Applied Ergonomics, 1-10, eprint.

**Cwikel, J.** & Ifergane, A. (2011). Feminist therapy for a multicultural population in a counseling center in the Negev, Israel Journal of Psychiatry,(in press).

**Chapters in Books**

**Cwikel, J.** & Ephrat Huss, E. (2011). Three-dimensional representations of social work students' identity: a mixed-method analysis in a multi-cultural population. International Advances in Education: Global Initiatives for Equity and Social Justice, vol. 2, Ethnicity and Race. (Elinor L. Brown & Pamela Gibbons, eds.), p. 121-139.

**Invited Lectures**

“Immigration and women’s health.” Invited lecture at Prof. Thomas Mellman’s (MD) seminar on clinical and translational research, Howard University, Washington DC, June 10, 2011

Fall Seminar Series at the Institute for Gender, Sexuality and Feminism (IGSF) at McGill University on “Immigration and Women's Health: An Overview of theory and Research”. September 20, 2011

Israel Association for Health Promotion & Health Education– On gender and health promotion. “Use of mixed methods in health promotion for women”. September 26, 2011.

“Overview of women’s health research at the Center for Women’s Health Studies and Promotion” at the Cortisol network meeting, Imperial College, St. Mary’s Campus, London, England; October 24, 2011.

## **Johanna Czamanski-Cohen**

### **Publications**

**Czamanski-Cohen, J.** Yellow or blue? Medical decision making through art in oncology. Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association (in press).

**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 (under review).

### **Conference Presentations and Academic Meetings**

March 2011: Amit Rosen Memorial Conference, Division of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Soroka University Medical Center. "Cell Free DNA and pregnancy rates among women undergoing IVF".

May 2011. Annual meeting of the Israeli Association for Fertility Research (Ayala), Tel Aviv. "Cell Free DNA and pregnancy rates among women undergoing IVF".

May 2011. Ben-Gurion University, 41<sup>st</sup> annual Board of Governors Meeting. "The effect of cognitive behavioral interventions on stress, pregnancy rates, CFD and cortisol among women undergoing in vitro fertilization".

October 2011, Cortisol Research Group meeting, Imperial College, London. "The effect of cognitive behavioral interventions on stress, pregnancy rates, CFD and cortisol among women undergoing IVF".

### **Teaching**

Art-based Research and Assessment - MA level course, Spitzer School of Social Work, BGU

Cognitive Behavioral Interventions - BA level courses, Spitzer School of Social Work, BGU

## **Tzipi Hornik-Lurie**

### **Publications**

Zilber, N. **Hornik-Lurie**, T. Lerner, Y. (2011) Predictors of Early Psychiatric Rehospitalization: A National Case Register Study The Israel Journal of Psychiatry and Related Sciences 48(1):49-53.

**Hornik-Lurie**, T. Zilber, N. Lerner, Y. (2011) Trends in the use of rehabilitation services by people with mental disabilities in the community in Israel; the factors involved Israel Journal of Health Policy Research (in press).

Adini, B. Laor, D. **Hornik-Lurie**, T. Aharonson-Daniel, L. (2011) Improving hospital mass casualty preparedness through ongoing readiness evaluation The American Journal of Medical Quality (in press).

Grinshpoon, A. Lerner, Y. **Hornik-Lurie**, T. Zilber, N. Ponizovsky, A. M. (2010) Impact of Postdischarge Contact with Mental Health Clinics on Psychiatric Readmission: A 6-Month Follow-up Study The Israel Journal of Psychiatry and Related Sciences (in press).

## Dr. Ephrat Huss

### Publications

Huss, E. The impact of belly dancing and drawing of the dancing experience on women's body image. Body, Movement & Dance in Psychotherapy (in press).

Kaufman, R., Huss, E., & Segal-Engelchin, D. (2011). Social work students' changing perceptions of social problems after a year of community intervention. Social Work Education, 30(8), 911-931.

Sarid, O. & Huss, E. (2011). Methodology of image formation and image transformation. The Arts in Psychotherapy. 38 (4), 252-255.

### Chapters in Books

Huss, E., Kacen L. & Hirshen E. (eds.). Things we see and things we say: Social Methodologies for Researching the Visual: A Handbook. (Accepted: Ben-Gurion Publications, 2011.)

Cwikel, J. & Huss, E. (2011). Three-dimensional representations of social work students' identity: a mixed-method analysis in a multi-cultural population. International Advances in Education: Global Initiatives for Equity and Social Justice, vol. 2, Ethnicity and Race. (Elinor L. Brown & Pamela Gibbons, eds.).

## Orly Liberman

### Publications

Peleg, R., Liberman, O., Press, Y. & Shvartzman, P. (2011) Patients visiting the complementary medicine clinic for pain: a cross-sectional study BMC Complementary and Alternative Medicine: [www.biomedcentral.com/1472-6882/11/36](http://www.biomedcentral.com/1472-6882/11/36).

### Grant

Quality of life and sense of coherence among patients with osteoarthritis, BGU Faculty Grant.

## Dr. Michal Liebergall-Wischnitzer

Practice: Midwife, delivery room, Hadassah Medical Center, Ein Kerem.

### Publications

Halperin, O., Goldblat, H., Noble, A., Raz, I., Zvulunov, I., Liebergall-Wischnitzer, M. (2011). "That marks you for the rest of your life": The impact of stressful childbirth situations on midwives– A qualitative analysis. Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health, 56, 388-394.

Liebergall-Wischnitzer, M., Paltiel, O., Hochner-Celnikier, D., Lavy, Y., Manor, O., Woloski Wruble A. C. (2011). Sexual function and quality of life for women with mild-moderate stress urinary incontinence. Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health (accepted for publication).

**Liebergall-Wischnitzer, M.** (2011). The Paula method and the pelvic floor. Comment. International Urogynecology Journal 22 (6): 681.

**Liebergall-Wischnitzer, M., Ben-Meir, A., 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).

### **Chapters in Books**

Braverman, N., (editor and writer). Vinograd, O., **Liebergall-Wischnitzer, M., Levy, M., Mohaban, K., Nokrian, M., Tel-Oren, A.** (2011). Labor. In Tamir, T. (Ed.), Women and Their Bodies (PP.473-504). Israel: Modan (in Hebrew).

### **Invited Lectures/ Workshops**

Workshop: Paula Method and Women's Health, Women's Health Promotion Day, Israel Museum.

Sheba Hospital, Women and Maternity Branch Clinical Day: Prevention of pelvic floor damage and perineal trauma: Nursing approach.

### **Conference Presentation**

29th Triennial Congress, International Confederation of Midwives (ICM), Durban, South Africa. Paula Method (circular muscle exercise) stress incontinence, birth and delivery and Women's Health. Workshop, **Liebergall-Wischnitzer, M.**

29th Triennial Congress, International Confederation of Midwives (ICM), Durban, South Africa. Stressful Childbirth Situations: A Qualitative Study of Midwives. Ofra Halperin, Liebergall-Wischnitzer, M., Hadas Goldblat, Anita Noble.

### **Teaching**

Women's Health Course & Research Methods in the BA in Nursing Program, Hadassah–Hebrew University School of Nursing

Health Promotion (MA) and MA thesis instructor on various subjects (cardiac rehabilitation, health promotion behaviors among adult survivors of childhood cancer, perceptions of health professionals on the relationship between IVF and breast cancer, women's perceptions on urinary incontinence). Hadassah – Hebrew University School of Nursing.

### **Professional Activities at National Level**

2008 – Present, Member, National Midwifery Organization – Research Committee.

2009 – Present, Member, Advisory Committee for Women's Health for the Director General of the Ministry of Health Israel



## **Dr. Sheryl Mendlinger**

### **Presentations at Conferences**

June 2011- Blood is thicker than water: Menarche as a trigger for memories, Mother-daughter dyads across cultures, Presented at the Society for Menstrual Cycle Research (SMCR), Pittsburgh, PA.

### **Program Development**

Completion of additional cohorts for women for the Entrepreneurship Training Institute, offered to previously incarcerated women as part of the Safe and Sound Return grant award funded by SAMHSA - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The initiative, developed by Northeastern University's Institute on Urban Health Research in partnership with the College of Business Administration and the Boston Public Health Commission, teaches entrepreneurial skills to women imprisoned for such offenses as selling drugs. As they re-enter the community, the women are encouraged to utilize the entrepreneurial skills they learned as part of the Training Institute. One of the women has started her own business selling gift baskets in the community. Here is a link to a recent article about this program: [www.wace2005.neu.edu/news/stories/2011/04/safesound.html](http://www.wace2005.neu.edu/news/stories/2011/04/safesound.html).

### **Research**

Research project examining the effects of tourism on the economic development of the Maasai in the Ngorongoro Conservation Area, Tanzania. Responsible for interview data collection and qualitative analysis.

### **Publications**

Warren, L.E., **Mendlinger**, S.E., Corso, K. & Greenberg, C.G. "A Model of Knowledge Acquisition in Early Stage Breast Cancer," *Breast Journal*, January/February 2012. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1524-4741.2011.01183.x/pdf>

## **Dr. Orly Sarid**

### **Publications**

**Sarid**, O., Berger, R., Eckshtein, R., & Segal-Engelchin, D. (2011). Are cognitive behavioral interventions effective in reducing occupational stress among nurses? *Applied Nursing Research*. doi:10.1016/j.apnr.2011.01.004

**Sarid**, O., Segal-Engelchin, D., Cwikel, J. (2011). The contribution of negative reproductive experiences and chronic medical conditions to depression and pain among Israeli women. *Psychology, Health & Medicine*, doi:10.1080/13548506.2011.579987.

**Sarid**, O. & Huss, E. (2011). Methodology of image formation and image transformation. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*. 38 (4), 252-255.

Huss, E., & **Sarid**, O. (2011). Using imagery in health care settings: addressing physical and psychological trauma. *Art Therapy and Healthcare*. NYC: Guilford Publications (accepted 20 pages).

## **Chapters in Books**

**Sarid, O.** (2011). The role of neurobiology in understanding the impact of sexual trauma on the brain. In: J. Postmus. (Ed). Encyclopedia of Sexual Violence and Abuse. Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO (accepted, 4 pages).

**Sarid, O.** (2011). The role of neurobiology in shaping clinical interventions with traumatic memories of survivors. In: J. Postmus. (Ed). Encyclopedia of sexual violence & abuse. Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO (accepted, 4 pages).

## **Invited Lectures and Presentations**

Evidence-based cortisol and depressive symptoms: Cortisol Network Meeting, Imperial College, St. Mary's Campus, London, England, October 24, 2011.

Strategies of image transformation as a way to reduce distress. University of Geneva, Swiss Center for Affective Sciences; Geneva, Switzerland, December 5, 2011.

## **Dr. Dorit Segal-Engelchin**

### **Publications**

Sarid, O., Berger, R., Eckshtein, R., & **Segal-Engelchin, D.** (2011). Are cognitive behavioral interventions effective in reducing occupational stress among nurses? Applied Nursing Research. doi:10.1016/j.apnr.2011.01.004

Sarid, O., **Segal-Engelchin, D.**, Cwikel, J. (2011). The contribution of negative reproductive experiences and chronic medical conditions to depression and pain among Israeli women. Psychology, Health & Medicine, doi:10.1080/13548506.2011.579987.

Kaufman, R., **Segal-Engelchin, D.**, & Huss, E. (2011). Transitions in first-year students' initial practice orientations. Journal of Social Work Education (accepted).

Kaufman, R., Huss, E., & **Segal-Engelchin, D.** (2011). Social work students' changing perceptions of social problems after a year of community intervention. Social Work Education, 30(8), 911-931.

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

### **Publications**

Ratzon R, Sheiner E, **Shoham-Vardi I.**, The role of prenatal care in recurrent preterm birth. Eur J Obstet Gynecol Reprod Biol. 2011 Jan;154(1):40-4.

Pasternak Y, Weintraub AY, **Shoham-Vardi I.**, Sergienko R, Guez J, Wiznitzer A, Shalev H, Sheiner E. Obstetric and Perinatal Outcomes in Women with Eating Disorders. J Women's Health (Larchmt). 2011 Nov 2. [Epub ahead of print] PMID:22047098.

Test T\*, Canfi A, Eyal A, **Shoham-Vardi I.**, Sheiner EK. The influence of hearing impairment on sleep quality among workers exposed to harmful noise Accepted June 2010. Sleep 2011 Jan 1;34(1):25-30. Comment in: Sleep. 2011 Jan;34(1):7-8.

\* *Prof. John Goldsmith Memorial Prize for Excellence in Occupational/Environmental Health Studies*

## **Presentation at Conferences**

Ratzon R, Sheiner E, **Shoham-Vardi I.**, Society of Pediatric & Perinatal Epidemiology (SPER), Montreal, Quebec, Canada, June 20-21, 2011 Recurrent preterm birth: Incidence, outcomes, and risk factors. A population-based study of two ethnic groups in southern Israel (poster).

Wainstock T, Anteby EY, Glasser S, **Shoham-Vardi I.**, Lerner- Geva L. Society of Pediatric and Perinatal Epidemiology (SPER), Montreal, Quebec, Canada, June 20-21, 2011. The association between prenatal actual and perceived stress, and birth outcomes (poster).

Hershkovich, E. Gazala, E., **Shoham-Vardi I.**, The association of failure to thrive (FTT), maternal-infant socio-behavioral factors and feeding patterns in Israel. Presented at the 5th EUROPEDIATRICALS conference of the European Academy of Pediatrics (EPA EUROPEAN, Vienna, 23.6.2011) (Best poster award).

Daoud N, **Shoham-Vardi I.**, Poor psychosocial health among polygamous Bedouin women in southern Israel (APHA - American Public Health Association Annual Meeting 2011, Washington, D.C.) (poster).

Chair of session on closing the gaps in health care. Mitzpe Ramon Conference on Equality in Health, May 12, 2011.

## **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.

## **Dr. Frida Simonstein**

### **Publications**

**Simonstein F.** and Mashiach M. (2011) 'Should there be any limit to IVF cycles? A rejoinder to Stewart et al.' Fertility & Sterility (in press).

### **Ongoing Research**

**Simonstein F.** and Mashiach M. 'The impact of IVF policy in Israel on the culture of perseverance in IVF' (research funded by the Gertner Institute for Epidemiology and Health Policy Research).

### **Presentations**

Issues in Reproduction: "Should 'one hundred percent utilization of IVF' be the best for an IVF policy?" 25<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Philosophy of Medicine and Health Care Priorities, University of Zurich, Aug 17-20, 2011.

Invited speaker: "Reprogenetics and IVF policies in Israel." Ethics Forum, Rambam Hospital, April 29, 2011.

Invited speaker: "Longitudinal research: IVF policies in the world and in Israel." Department of Health Management Research Forum, May 2011.