



# **World Child & Adolescent Psychiatry**

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countries. It broadened my viewpoint of research and provided me with a chance to identify clinical practices and research methods that are applicable to Sri Lanka. I would recommend this training seminar to any psychiatry trainee who is interested in the branch of child and adolescent psychiatry.”





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## The 15th International Training Seminar on Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

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### Introduction

Fondazione Child for Study and Research into Childhood and Adolescence organized the 15th International Training Seminar on Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. This seminar aimed to facilitate knowledge exchange between junior and senior colleagues, to build research skills, and to promote academic career development in child and adolescent psychiatry.

The training seminar was held in Rome, Italy at Villa Aurelia from 12th to 17th, May 2019, and at the Ministry of Health on 14th May. Forty-seven trainees from 29 countries all over the world were selected after an extensive screening process.

Twenty senior faculty members, including eminent professors, world-renowned psychiatrists, and experienced researchers from reputable academic institutions all over the world, conducted the lectures. A few of the eminent academics included:

- Prof. Norman Sartorius, President, Association for the Improvement of Mental Health Programmes, Geneva
- Prof. Ernesto Caffo, Professor of Child Neuropsychiatry, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia
- Prof. Bennett Leventhal, Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, University of California San Francisco

### Nature of Participation

The 47 trainees were divided into groups where they could discuss research ideas with mentors and gain insight into the most current and relevant areas in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry. Trainees had an ample amount of time to meet colleagues from other countries and to share knowledge and experience related not only to psychiatry but also to sociocultural aspects of care.

At the end of the session each trainee did brief presentation on the research topic they discussed in the mentoring groups.



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Our schedule was also packed with 24 lectures and 4 colloquia over the one week. These sessions covered, in breadth and depth, updates in classification systems, neurosciences and research methods. Despite being intensive, each session approached the topic with a fresh perspective to improve existing understanding.

The faculty were nothing short of amazing. While being accomplished in their field, they mentored the trainees with warmth and genuine interest. It was not uncommon for them to stay beyond the session or join us for a meal, where they had the opportunity to address our doubts and share some laughs. There was palpable interest in getting to know each other.

It was noteworthy that, throughout the seminar, trainees were only allowed to speak in English and to sit next to a participant from a different country. Although these requirements initially seemed daunting, we adapted to them and quickly bonded with our colleagues over many similarities in values, interests (especially food), and challenges faced in our respective countries.

#### **Best Practices**

On 14<sup>th</sup> of May 2019, trainees and lecturers representing Fondazione Child met the Italian Minister of Health. The minister highlighted the need for strengthening child and adolescent psychiatric research and clinical facilities, as improving child and adolescent mental health has been identified as a key health investment. The minister requested that representatives of all countries convey this message and proactively improve child and adolescent psychiatric research and clinical facilities at their respective institutes.

#### **Recommendations**

This training seminar should continue for the simple reason that it effectively mobilizes the best in the world to learn how to care for young people's well-being. It is recommended that the seminar continue to be led by diverse, spirited faculty. For future seminars, a slightly more relaxed schedule with more hands-on activities interspersed between the lectures could better facilitate learning.

#### **Individual Comments**

"All of the lectures were very innovative and insightful. However, 'Contribution of genetics to Brain Development and Psychopathology' and 'Genetics of Developmental Psychopathology' by Prof. Stephen Sanders and 'Neurodevelopmental Disorders' by Prof. Bennett Leventhal kindled my research interests and curiosity very much. My main research interest is neurodevelopmental disorders; hence, these lectures bore a quintessential significance to my brewing research ideas.

"This seminar was one of the most insightful and worthwhile experiences I have had so far had in my career. It was the first time I had individualized time to work with and share knowledge with a group of international mentors with such caliber and discuss my research ideas with a group of colleagues belonging to multiple nationalities and