Historic York, England, played host to ISCI’s 3rd Conference July 27–29, drawing some 220 delegates from 42 countries, including a number of young scholars and graduate students. Over 120 papers were presented in more than 40 sessions — a clear indication of the passion for the topic.

Papers explored the measurement of children’s well-being, inequality and economic resources for children and families, child protection, and children’s rights. A number were devoted to methodological aspects of measuring child well-being, while others focused on the use of data to influence policy. Conference PowerPoint presentations may be viewed at the ISCI website.

The conference, held at the University of York, featured a range of perspectives from all over the world. In one session, for example, a group of researchers from five countries presented “Children’s Worlds,” a new multinational study of children’s subjective well-being and daily activities. They showed the challenges and complexity of a multinational and multi-age comparison, and the significance of asking children themselves, especially at a young age.

Dozens of papers were presented by colleagues from developing countries, demonstrating that children’s well-being is not a developed-world issue.

International comparisons and the development of indices were another topic of discussion, special contribution of delegates from UNICEF, OECD, World Vision International, and a number of other international and academic bodies. For details click here.

ISCI extends its sincere thanks to local organizer and host Jonathan Bradshaw for staging a conference that all agreed was a resounding success. The event closed with an invitation by Bong Jo-Lee, local organizer and host of the next ISCI conference, to come to Seoul, South Korea on May 29–31, 2013.
Word from the Board…

ISCI’s board of directors met on July 28 at the University of York, England, during the 2011 ISCI Conference. Here’s a look at the latest developments:

Budget

ISCI now has about 200 paying members and they all get Child Indicators Research journal. The journal remains ISCI’s biggest expense; up to now, all conferences have broken even. Overall, ISCI is financially stable, and with continuing dues, we are ensured at least two more years of operation.

CIR Journal

The journal continues to receive a growing number of submissions, and more papers are being published in each issue. In 2010, papers came from 20 countries, taking about 54 days from submission to initial decision. Over 5,700 institutions are exposed to the journal online, and it gets about 1,000 downloads per month. Proposals from the editorial board for 2012 and beyond: including policy briefs; increasing the number of issues — or the number of papers per issue — if ISCI receives 100 or more papers annually; producing more special issues.

Website

The website has been recreated and moved from Mexico to Chapin Hall in Chicago, Illinois, USA. The new software allows us to update it from anywhere in the world, including uploading conference PowerPoint presentations.

Board Changes

Our board welcomed three new members, replacing three who resigned (see bios in sidebar).

Welcome, New Board Members!

Dagmar Kutsar is associate professor of social policy at the University of Tartu, Estonia, heading up the Family and Welfare Studies unit. Her research interests include family, childhood and welfare research and policies (poverty and social exclusion/inclusion, childhood relative deprivation and poverty, changing family structures and family decision-making), social indicators and social reporting. She has served on the Standing Committee on Social Sciences and on the Executive Committee of the European Science Foundation. She is a past president of the National Associations Council of the European Sociological Association.

Lívia Bedin is a psychologist specializing in organizational psychology. She holds a master’s in social psychology and business administration, and is a Ph.D. student in the postgraduate program in psychology at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (Porto Alegre, Brazil). She is part of the GPPC (Research Group in Community Psychology) — coordinated by Prof. Dr. Jorge Castellá Sarriera — which focuses on quality of life and well-being in children and adolescents. She is also a member of the international project PROTEBA (Proyecto Translatino para el Estudio del Bienestar en la Adolescencia).

Katharine Hall is a senior researcher at the Children’s Institute, a policy research unit at the University of Cape Town (UCT). Her work focuses on child poverty and social policy. She coordinates the Institute’s Children Count data project, which analyzes official national household survey data to provide child-centered statistics on a variety of indicators related to child poverty and well-being. She has an M.Soc.Sci from UCT and is embarking on a Ph.D. program, investigating child mobility and care arrangements in the context of adult labor migration and urbanization.

Check out ISCI’s new website: www.childindicators.org
You’re invited to send news and information of interest for the site as well as the newsletter.
Newsletter

Daphna Gross-Manos was appointed as our new newsletter editor. She will also serve as website editor. Feel free to contact her with proposed content of interest.

Awards

The first Kamerman-Kahn Award was presented to Tim Hobbs and Nick Axford during the 2011 ISCI Conference. Discussion centered on whether to have more awards and what the criteria and review process would be. Suggestions included having award recipients give a speech during the conference, encouraging young scholars with awards, and creating an award for developing nations. The issue was tabled for future discussion.

Next Meeting

Our next board meeting will be in September 2012, in Frankfurt, Germany. It could include a workshop for young researchers; stay tuned!

Other Topics

• The question of how ISCI is influencing non-academics was also raised. It was decided that this could be a focus of the next ISCI conference, with a plenary session on the topic. This could also be added as a section in the journal.
• A survey with open-ended questions could be done via e-mail, perhaps with a link to the new website. It could also solicit feedback and suggestions for the next conference.
• A proposal was made to develop a function on the website for members to chat and interact.

Special Issue of CIR Coming in November

“Conceptualizing indicators for children in diverse contexts and particular circumstances, challenges and constraints” is the focus of the next Child Indicators Research journal, due out in November. Edited by Elizabeth Fernandez, the issue follows ISCI’s 2nd Conference and Symposium in Sydney, Australia, in 2009. Articles include:

» Conditions for Change in Impact Evaluation with Children and Young People: ‘Change-scape’ » Vicky Johnson

» Challenges Redoubled: Contexts of Risk and Compromised Access to Service Delivery for Children with Sexualized Behaviours » Wendy O’Brien

» Psychosocial Indicators of Well-being for Refugee Children and Youth: Conceptual and Developmental Directions » Colleen McFarlane and Ida Kaplan

» Immigrant Children and Child Welfare in the USA: Demographics, Research, Policy, Legislation and Practice Impacting Public Services » Sonia Velazquez

» Finding the Right Balance between Standardisation and Flexibility: A Compendium of Indicators for Measuring Child Well-being » Isabelle Carboni and Nathan Morrow

» Falling Behind: The Effects of Persistent Poverty on Children’s Physical, Socio-emotional, and Learning Outcomes » Jung-Sook Lee

» Subjective Social Indicators and Child and Adolescent Well-being » Ferran Casas

» Youth Development Assets in Global Perspective: Results from International Adaptations of the Development Assets Profile » Peter Scales

» Reunification of Separated Children: Predictors and Outcomes » Elizabeth Fernandez and Jung Sook Lee

» How Children’s Voices Were Heard ‘Above the Din’ in Family Court Proceedings in Cases Where There Were Allegations of Child Sexual Abuse: The Importance of Professional Evidence in the Judicial Discrimenent of the Child’s Voice » Wendy Foote
News from the Field

New Book Evaluates Well-being of UK Children

The Well-being of Children in the UK, by Jonathan Bradshaw, was published on July 2011. This new book is the third in a series and updates the findings from a wide range of data to evaluate the outcomes of the Labour Party’s policies for children. It uses a framework to compare policy areas, making it an excellent source book for researchers, policymakers, and students.

Announcing the book at the ISCI Conference in York, Bradshaw said that child well-being in the UK has improved over the last 20 years, according to most indicators and that the improvements had largely been made during the Labour Party’s term in office. Bradshaw, professor of social policy at York University, said that of 48 indicators of child well-being, covering material and economic well-being, physical and mental health, education, housing, maltreatment, 36 show improvements.

However, he argues that this progress should not be cause for celebration. Compared with other countries, children in the UK are not doing well. In an index of 42 comparable indicators, the UK was in the bottom third of rich countries on 19 and in the top third on only eight.

OECD Creates Family Database

Following up on the OECD Babies and Bosses series on the reconciliation of work and family life in select member states, and in view of the strong demand for cross-national indicators on the situation of families and children, the OECD has developed an online database on family outcomes and family policies with indicators for all OECD countries.

The Family Database brings together information from different OECD databases (including Social Expenditure, Benefits and Wages, and Education), as well as databases maintained by other international organizations.

Information in the Family Database is categorized under four broad headings: The Structure of Families, The Labor Market Position of Families, Public Policies for Families and Children, and Child Outcomes. Each indicator under these headings typically presents the data on a particular issue as well as relevant definitions and methodology, comparability and data issues, information on sources and, where relevant, raw data or descriptive information across countries.
News from the Field  continued

Innocenti Report Card 10: Child Well-being, Poverty, and Overlapping Deprivation Analysis

Since 2000, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre has released nine issues in the Innocenti Report Card series, addressing different aspects of the living conditions of children and adolescents in economically advanced countries. All are built around a “league table,” which ranks countries according to their performance on key child indicator(s). From 2011 on, the Report Cards will have four recurrent themes, aimed at providing a set of child poverty and deprivation monitoring instruments focused on rich (OECD) economies.

The upcoming issue, Report Card 10, focuses on the direct experience of individual children under a multidimensional perspective and the extent to which deprivations occur simultaneously in multiple dimensions. The comparison of the results of the child multidimensional poverty analysis and the results of the child income poverty analysis will provide a better understanding on the concrete meaning of monetary poverty in the 30 countries included in the study.

Child Indicators Research Accepted for Journal Citation Reports

Child Indicators Research is only in its 3rd volume, yet it already has been selected for coverage in Thomson Reuters products and services. The journal will be indexed and abstracted in:

- Current Contents®/Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Social Sciences Citation Index®/Social Scisearch®
- Journal Citation Reports/Social Sciences Edition

The 2010 impact factor for Child Indicators Research is 0.750. For the last two years, the journal has grown significantly, with citations growing from only 5 in 2009 to 34 in 2010.

Special Issue of Ethnic and Migration Studies Journal Focuses on Transnational Migration

Ethnic and Migration Studies Journal has published a special issue on “Transnational Migration and Childhood” (Volume 37, Issue 8, 2011).

Here’s the list of articles:

- Children’s Roles in Transnational Migration » Allen White, Caitríona Ni Laoire, Naomi Tyrrell, and Fina Carpena-Méndez
- ‘Asexual, Apolitical Beings’: The Interpretation of Children’s Identities and Experiences in the UK Asylum System » Heaven Crawley
- In the Best Interest of the Child? The Politics of Vulnerability and Negotiations for Asylum in Sweden » Marita Eastmond and Henry Ascher
- Making Connections: Second-Generation Children and the Transnational Field of Relations » Lotta Haikkola
- ‘They Told Us in a Curry Shop’: Child-Adult Relations in the Context of Family Migration Decision-Making » Teresa Hutchins
- Tampering with the Sex of ‘Angels’: Migrant Male Minors and Young Adults Selling Sex in the EU » Nick Mai
- Narratives of ‘Innocent Irish Childhoods’: Return Migration and Intergenerational Family Dynamics » Caitiriona Ni Laoire
- Divergent Discourses, Children and Forced Migration » Giorgia Donà and Angela Veale
EU Council Tackles Child Poverty and Well-being

The Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council of the European Union met in Luxembourg in June to discuss addressing child poverty and promoting child well-being. Among the council’s recommendations to the member states:

• to adequately emphasize the aspects of child poverty within their national policies and to consider it when drafting the National Reform Programmes, backing them up with adequate targets, where appropriate, and resources, as well as monitoring and evaluation arrangements.

• to ensure that combating child poverty and promoting children’s well-being are mainstreamed across all policy areas and, where appropriate, targeted actions are taken, with a view to addressing the multidimensional nature of the problem and encouraging integrated interventions at national, regional, and local levels, especially in the most disadvantaged territories.

• to bear in mind that the fight against child poverty cannot be separated from the situation of families: decent employment opportunities for parents, adequate family benefits and income support, arrangements for reconciling work and family life, and parenting support services are crucial.

• to improve access to quality services, in particular, early childhood development and care services from the earliest ages and decent housing; to guarantee access to quality education across the cycle of childhood, including combating early school leaving; and to ensure quality health care and adequate protection and support, especially for children without parental care.

CSO Forum Launches Website

The Civil Society Organizations (CSO) Forum on the African Charter of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) was started in 2009 to ensure a united voice on behalf of Africa’s children and to strengthen the work of ACERWC. Four forums have been held, bringing together CSOs from across Africa, child rights experts, and representatives from the African Union.

In June, the CSO Forum launched its website: www.forum-acerwc.org. With user-friendly, interactive features, the site offers background on the CSO Forum as well as resource documents from past forums and other information.

Visitors can leave comments, search the site by keyword, get the latest news and updates by e-mail, and link to related sites. The website will be used for future communication with network members and to register participants for the next CSO Forum.
Reports and Publications

UK Office Publishes Report After National Debate

As part of its commitment to produce new measures of national well-being, the UK’s Office for National Statistics (ONS) in July produced a summary of the issues that emerged from a national debate with relevant stakeholders. “Measuring Children’s and Young People’s Well-being” was produced together with Cardiff University and included perspectives from schools, colleges and universities, mother and toddler groups, and charities working with children and young people, among others.

The report covers why measuring children’s and young people’s well-being is so important, what is already known, findings from the debate, issues in measuring this population sub-group, and next steps. A key challenge will be how to incorporate the views of children and young people themselves about what is important to their well-being. These more subjective measures will need to be included in order to gain a fuller picture in the UK.

Read the full ONS report here: http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/Files/rc/reports/2011/0609_global_compact/0609_global_compact.pdf

UNICEF Report Outlines Lessons Learned


The organization’s primary objective is strengthening equity and reducing child poverty and disparities. Its social policy work covers four key areas: 1) Child-centered analysis, 2) Policy-oriented, evidence-based advocacy, 3) Support to program interventions, and 4) National capacity development for equitable child-focused policies.

Following these four levels of interventions, the July 2011 report shares the experience of UNICEF in its efforts to reach the most marginalized. The cases highlighted are highly diverse, from a social protection strategy in Burkina Faso to a multidimensional approach to child poverty measurement in Morocco to district-level MDG monitoring in Indonesia to a child budget analysis in Jordan.

Documentation of key lessons and experiences facilitate further application and organizational learning. However, it is important to recognize that lessons gained through cooperation in one country or context are not necessarily valid or transferable to the circumstances of another.

Reports and Publications continued

European Report Focuses on Youth and Work

The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions published the report “Youth and Work” in June. Findings include:

- The unemployment rate for young people ages 16–24 in the 27 EU member states is twice as high as the overall rate of unemployment — including those with higher levels of education. The recession has exacerbated this problem significantly.

- Young people are disproportionately more likely to be offered a non-standard form of employment — e.g., temporary contracts. Yet young workers are also more optimistic than older workers about being able to find a job.

- Social partners agree on the need for reforms in order to improve transitions, including developing and expanding vocational training, apprenticeships and work placements. However, disagreements have emerged about whether job creation for young people should include removing such perceived barriers as minimum wages and length of contract.

- While social partner involvement has suffered through the recession, government involvement has increased. Active labor market policies are the main tool governments have used to create more jobs and boost the skills of young people.


Young People and Alcohol Studied by UK Organization

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation published a report on the relationship of young people with alcohol in the UK. Released in June, it presents findings from a major study and explores the wide range of influences on young people's drinking.

The study surveyed 5,700 teenagers ages 13–14 (Year 9) and 15–16 (Year 11) in schools in England. Data was statistically modeled using binary logistic regression to highlight the strongest influences on and predictors of young people's drinking.

The report examines circumstances surrounding young people's first time drinking, their current drinking patterns including levels of consumption, and their experiences of drunkenness. It develops our understanding of what really influences young people's drinking patterns by identifying the domains and indicators that have the strongest relationship with their behavior.

“Headline Indicators,” a July report from the AIHW (Australia’s national agency for health and welfare statistics and information), provides the latest information on how that country’s children, ages 0–12, are faring. The report gives their status according to Children’s Headline Indicators — 19 priority areas covering health status, risk and protective factors, early learning and care, and family and community environments.

The Children’s Headline Indicators were designed to help guide and evaluate policy development by measuring progress on agreed priority areas for children, and they have been endorsed by Australia’s ministerial councils for health, community and disability services, and education.

Australian children are faring well, but results vary among states and territories, and across population groups, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, as well as those in remote or socioeconomically disadvantaged areas. It is clear that there is room for further gains across a number of indicators.

Internationally comparable data for OECD countries are available for only 5 of the 12 indicators: infant mortality, low birth weight, dental health, injury deaths, and teenage births. Australia ranked ahead of the OECD average in all of these areas.

Click here for more information:


One of the key reform priorities that came out of the National Early Childhood Development Strategy, Investing in the Early Years — released by the Council of Australian Governments in 2009 — was to build better information and a solid evidence base, as well as establishing national outcome measures for early childhood development. Developing an indicator-based reporting framework for early childhood development will enable monitoring of achievements against the Early Childhood Development (ECD) Outcomes Framework.

This information paper outlines the process of developing an indicator-based reporting framework, including:

- Reviewing existing national and international frameworks, and identifying key indicator areas through an extensive indicator mapping process
- Reviewing national and international literature on early childhood development and outcomes
- Developing conceptual models to count the relationships between all indicator areas within and across the outcomes in the outcomes framework, consulting with key experts and stakeholders.

Forty-six key areas considered most relevant to early childhood development and well-being outcomes were identified. However, only 20 potential indicators were recommended for reporting against the ECD Outcomes Framework.

Click here for more information:
India to Host Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect

October 6–9, 2011 » New Delhi, India

The term child abuse and neglect (CAN) has different connotations in different socioeconomic and cultural settings. The 9th Asia Pacific Regional Conference on Child Abuse and Neglect will provide an opportunity for discussion and sharing of ideas, practices, expertise, and experience in order to develop region-specific programs to tackle child abuse and neglect.

Conference-goers will explore a number of sub-themes across different cultures in the Asia Pacific region: socio-cultural aspects, legal issues and justice mechanisms, child protection, prevention and rehabilitation, physical abuse, sexual exploitation, children “at work,” and homeless children.

Organizers invite professionals from various disciplines — pediatricians, nurses, lawyers, members of the judiciary, police, teachers, social workers, child psychologists, child rights activists, and community leaders — to participate in this unique event.

For details, see http://www.apccan2011.com/

Adolescent Birth Rate and Adoption Studied in NIH Report

A new report, “America’s Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being 2011,” shows a drop in the adolescent birth rate in the U.S. and includes a special feature on adoption.

The report was published by the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, a working group of 22 federal agencies that collect, analyze, and convey data on issues related to children and families. Areas include social environment, economic circumstances, health care, physical environment and safety, behavior, education, and health. The information is presented in a non-technical, easy-to-use format to stimulate discussion among data providers, policymakers, and the public.

In addition, the report focused on adoption, showing that adoption is preferred over alternatives such as long-term foster care or care in group homes, emergency shelters, and orphanages. It noted that although most adopted children thrive, children who are adopted, particularly beyond the first months of life, experience disruptions in parenting that can have longstanding implications for their development and well-being.

Read the full report here: http://childstats.gov
Final ‘Children’s Rights for All’ Conference Scheduled

October 20–21, 2011 » Brussels, Belgium

About a million children live with intellectual disabilities throughout the European Union. These children are often discriminated against and excluded from society, and are frequently denied the right to quality education, health care, recreation, and services. In many cases, their families are also subject to discrimination and denied access to adequate financial and emotional support.

With funding from the European Commission, three organizations — Inclusion Europe, Eurochild, and Charles University in Prague — carried out a project to promote the rights of children with intellectual disabilities across the EU. Over a period of two years (2009–2011), they analyzed the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child from the perspective of children with intellectual disabilities, by conducting research throughout the 27 EU member states. The results will be presented at the October conference in Brussels.

For details, see http://www.childrights4all.eu/

Conference to Assess Human Development and Human Rights

October 24–25, 2011 » Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

“Human Development and Human Rights: Two Decades of Advancement, What’s Next for Children and Youth?” is the title of a conference to be held in the Dominican Republic in October. The conference aims to:

- provide a better understanding of the relationship between human development and human rights for children and youth
- integrate both paradigms to produce better analyses of child well-being and, subsequently, more effective public policies and programs for children and youth
- encourage an exchange of experiences and knowledge as well as inter-agency collaboration

For more information, click here: http://www.childwatch.uio.no/events/conferences/Unicef%20UNDP%20Conference.pdf
Conferences and Events continued

Youth Development Frames International Conference

*November 1–3, 2011 » Putrajaya, Malaysia*

The First International Conference on Youth Development, to be held in Malaysia in November, will explore issues around the role of adult-youth relations in forging and nurturing positive development in young people. Diverse perspectives are sought from those who work with and on behalf of young people from a variety of disciplines and backgrounds. Sub-themes will deal with youth and the issues of poverty, health, technology, community, identity, education, well-being, and family.

For more information, see the conference website: [http://www.ipsas.upm.edu.my/icyouth2011/index.html](http://www.ipsas.upm.edu.my/icyouth2011/index.html)

Children’s Liberty Is Theme of Kampala Conference

*November 7–8, 2011 » Kampala, Uganda*

The African Child Policy Forum and Defense for Children International are jointly organizing “Deprivation of Children’s Liberty as the Last Resort,” an action-oriented global conference. The event aims to contribute to the improvement of laws, policies, systems, and procedures in child justice in Africa.

Specific objectives include: 1) raising awareness of the gaps in Africa’s child justice system among policymakers, CSOs, academia, and other relevant stakeholders; 2) identifying and sharing successful practice models and concrete actions in the child justice system; 3) promoting learning and collaborating among African states; and 4) developing, recommending, and advocating for guidelines on child-friendly justice in Africa.

Visit the conference website for details: [http://www.kampalaconference.info/](http://www.kampalaconference.info/)
Researchers are invited to submit information to this study by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. And please forward this to any of your colleagues who may be interested.

In response to Human Rights Council resolution 16/12 on the protection and promotion of the rights of children working and/or living on the street, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is preparing a report to submit to the Human Rights Council at its 19th session in March 2012.

OHCHR welcomes input (in English, French, or Spanish) from civic organizations, human rights institutions, scholars, research institutions, policy think tanks, private sector businesses, community groups, and children and youth organizations. Information is sought on challenges, lessons learned, and best practices in using a holistic, child-oriented, gender-based approach to protect and promote the rights of children working and/or living on the street — particularly relevant research, results from provision of services, and personal experiences.

Submissions should be as concise as possible and sent to the following e-mail address no later than October 3, 2011: children.street@ohchr.org

For details, click here: http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Children/Study/Pages/childrenonthestreet.aspx
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Join the International Society for Child Indicators (ISCI)

The International Society for Child Indicators (ISCI) contributes to improving the well-being of the world’s children. The ISCI seeks to build a network of individuals dedicated to improving measures and data resources, advancing data analysis, exploring theoretical issues, and publicizing and disseminating information on the status of children. ISCI is also working to enhance the capacity of the field, especially for countries in the initial stages of producing child well-being indicators. Finally, ISCI is identifying and developing ways to facilitate the dissemination and application of indicators in policy and practice.

For a full description and information on joining ISCI, please visit www.childindicators.org.