A close-up portrait of a young girl with dark skin and curly hair. She is smiling slightly, and a large white flower with a yellow center is held in front of her mouth. She is wearing a gold hoop earring and a red top with a colorful patterned border at the bottom. The background is a soft, out-of-focus red.

Coming of Age:
15 Years of Violence Prevention

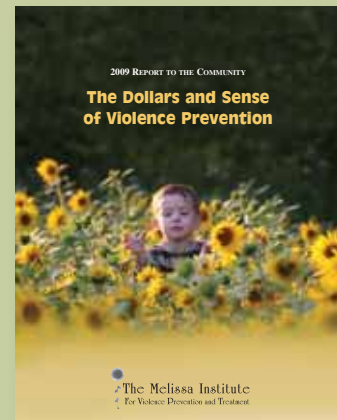


The Melissa Institute
For Violence Prevention and Treatment

2012 Report to the Community

“Even though I was a former gang member, The Melissa Institute got me back on my feet, helped me find a job and steered me to a better life. They helped me find out who I was as a human being — they gave me wings.”

Matthew Corrada



“No matter what our legal system tries to accomplish, victims always have a nagging fear that pain and despair will be their personal legacy of crime. For the past 15 years, The Melissa Institute has worked tenaciously to dispel those fears with much success. I am proud to have been one of the stakeholders who supported the innovative efforts of Michael and Lynn Aptman to turn the tragedy of losing their beloved daughter Melissa into a constructive influence to better our community.”

Katherine Fernandez Rundle, State Attorney



Coming of Age: 15 Years of Violence Prevention

To come of age is to make the transition from childhood into adulthood. When expressed in a sentence, it's a very simple concept. In real life, the transition into adulthood is neither simple nor guaranteed.

In 1995, Melissa Aptman's promising first steps into adulthood were ended prematurely. The Miami native was brutally murdered in a carjacking in St. Louis just two weeks away from her graduation from college.

"When something like this happens, you live with a feeling inside you, every day," said Lynn Aptman, Melissa's mother and one of the founders of The Melissa Institute. "You see violence affecting families, you know how it feels and you want to do whatever you can to prevent anyone else from feeling this way."

Thus, The Melissa Institute was born in 1996. The overriding aim of the Institute has always been to understand the nature of violence and, through that understanding, to prevent it. From the start, research, education and public awareness were seen as prerequisites to finding creative strategies to bring about social change.

Like people, successful organizations also come of age. This is true of The Melissa Institute. Since 1996, we've grown from a small group of dedicated individuals seeking to make a positive, local impact to an organization that attracts the very best people in the fields of violence prevention, education, public policymaking, literacy, bullying prevention, parent training and more. And our mission is no longer restricted to South Florida; the Institute's scope has transitioned to the national — and even the international — level.

"We are no longer simply a local influence," said Institute Research Director Donald Meichenbaum, Ph.D. "Unquestionably, we've made a large impact on the community in Miami-Dade County, where we are based. But we are reaching out nationally, through our ACT program, our innovative websites and tools for educators and suicide-prevention initiatives. Bullying prevention, now a hot-button topic in schools across the nation, has been one of the cornerstones of our organization from day one."

Today, the aim of The Melissa Institute is to continue our transition — our coming of age — into the future, with all of the challenges and rewards that this entails. And we need to accomplish this in the midst of our nation's changing economic and social climate.

New technology, new communication tools and the continued efforts of talented professionals give us a greater impact on violence prevention than we ever imagined when we first began.

"We are proud to have focused on literacy, bullying prevention and intervention, and the importance of healthy parenting since our inception," said Melissa Institute President Suzanne L. Keeley, Ph.D. "We have shown time and again the importance of funding effective, evidence-based programs. Your support has enabled us to take on our vital mission. As long as your support continues, so will we."



Keeping the Trend Alive: Expanding the Scope of Our Literacy Initiative



“Through its community educational efforts and its innovative team of scholars and professionals, The Melissa Institute is at the cutting edge of prevention of violence.”

**Isaac Prilleltensky, Ph.D., Dean,
School of Education, University of Miami**

According to U.S. Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation statistics, violent crime offenses hit a peak in 2006, and have been steadily declining since then. Violent crime numbers also fell by nearly 50 percent in Miami-Dade County over the last 15 years. This downward trend would seem to reflect our nation’s growing response to the problem of violence. While we are encouraged, we know that it is way too early to celebrate a victory.

The numbers are still high. In 2009, more than 1.3 million violent crimes were reported. And we know that as school funds and personnel evaporate, and as household dollars dwindle for many Americans, we need to double our efforts in making violence prevention a priority.

The Melissa Institute has long known that illiteracy is a major contributing factor in violent behavior. Approximately 85 percent of juvenile offenders cannot read. “Children with low reading achievement in early grades have a greater likelihood of grade retention, dropout, drug abuse, early pregnancy, delinquency and unemployment,” Dr. Meichenbaum said.

In an effort to provide information about the relationship between illiteracy and violence, the Institute established a website, youteachreading.org. This site informs the visitor about the importance of early literacy and what the Institute decided to do to assist teachers in helping to ensure that their students become successful readers. It also lets the visitor know how they can help support this process.

For many years, we have collaborated with Dale Willows, Ph.D., as part of the Institute’s Literacy Initiative. Dr. Willows is a renowned literacy expert at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the

University of Toronto, and a member of the National Reading Panel and the Institute's Scientific Board. Her literacy program has been successfully implemented in many Miami-Dade County schools, as well as schools in other parts of the U.S. and Canada.

Three years ago, The Melissa Institute decided to extend the reach of Dr. Willows' proven methods of professional development for teachers by making them freely available to educators around the country and across the globe. To do this, Dr. Willows led a team of hundreds of teachers and graduate students to create The Melissa Institute Literacy website, complete with hundreds of instructional videos containing lesson plans, teaching methodology, classroom organization, etc., all designed directly for teachers.

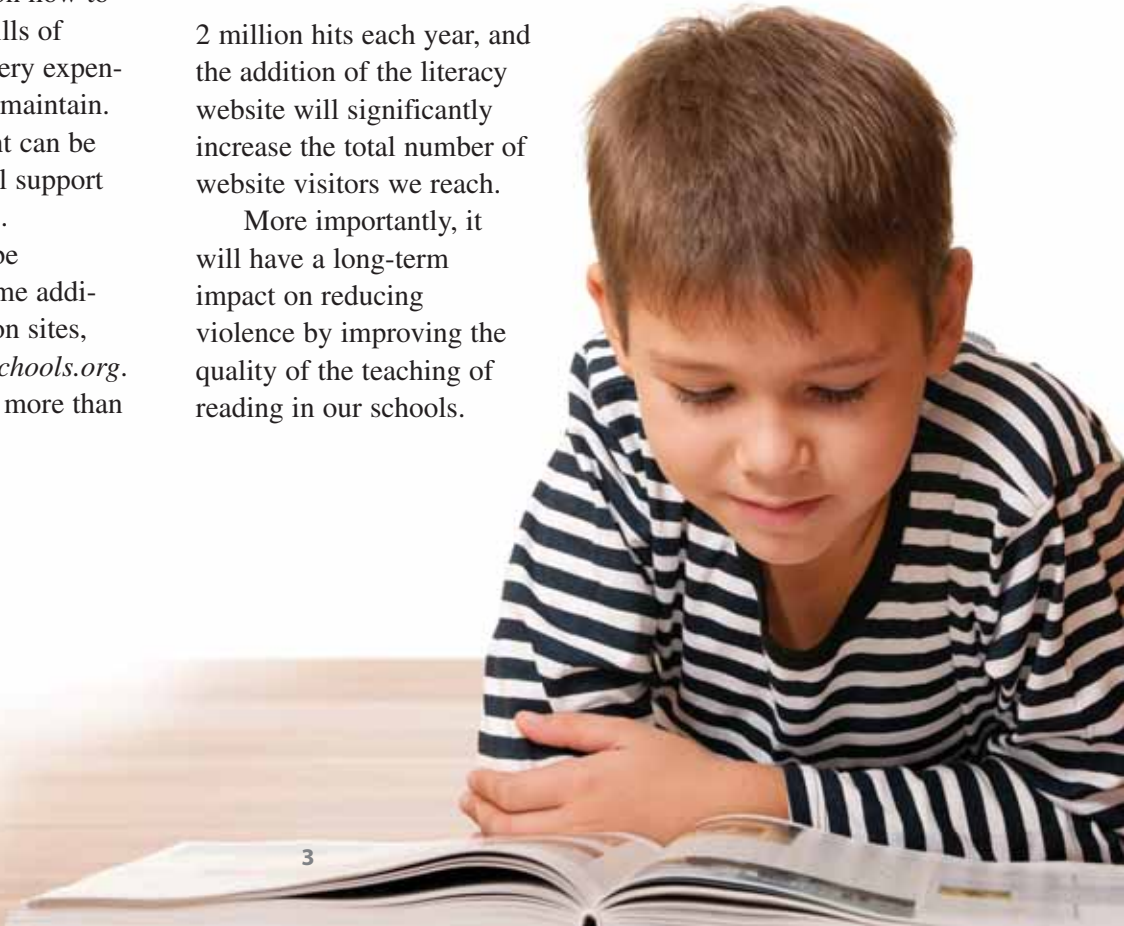
The website, *balancedliteracydiet.org*, serves as the gateway to a wonderful world of professional development for teachers, providing the very latest information on how to impart and improve the reading skills of young children. This project was very expensive to create and will be costly to maintain. This site and its future development can be made possible only by the financial support of our many donors and supporters.

This new website, which will be launched in early 2012, is a welcome addition to our other violence prevention sites, *melissainstitute.org* and *teachsafeschools.org*. Our existing sites already generate more than

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Balanced Literacy Diet website. At the top, there is a logo with a pyramid of food items and the text "Balanced Literacy Diet". Below the logo is a navigation menu with links for Home, Literacy Diet, Food Groups, Recipes Finder, Planning, Special Diets, and How-To Videos. A search bar is located below the menu. The main content area features a recipe titled "What's in the Bag?". The recipe includes a video thumbnail, a purpose statement, literacy diet components, and a list of materials required. Below the recipe, there is a section for "Related Literacy Recipes" with five thumbnails for "Find that Word", "What's that Word?", "Word Walk", "Monkeying Around", and "That's a Puzzle".

2 million hits each year, and the addition of the literacy website will significantly increase the total number of website visitors we reach.

More importantly, it will have a long-term impact on reducing violence by improving the quality of the teaching of reading in our schools.



Bullying: New Challenges. New Solutions.

In the last few years, the issue of bullying has moved to the front pages of our newspapers. In the spring of 2011, best friends Haylee Fentress and Paige Moravetz fulfilled a suicide pact. They were 14 years old. In 2010, a Rutgers University freshman, Tyler Clementi, committed suicide. That same year, 15-year-old Phoebe Prince committed suicide. All four suicides were the result of bullying. These were by no means isolated incidents. They were, instead, part of a worrying trend.

Recently, many states have implemented bullying legislation and schools have instituted anti-bullying policies. The Melissa Institute has long been at the forefront of recognizing bullying research and influencing policymaking.

While many of us may be familiar with the way bullying presented itself in the past, today's interconnected youth culture — more at home with Facebook than with actual face time — raises bullying to a dangerous level. In modern Internet terminology, bullying has gone “viral.” Cyberbullying and sexting have entered our lexicon. The need for straight talk and effective prevention methods has never been greater.

Our first School Violence Prevention and Intervention Strategies conference presented “Schoolwide Anti-bullying Interventions” in



The Institute gives out “No Bullying Buddies” stuffed animals at Baptist Children’s Hospital health fairs, with information about preventing bullying.

May 1999. Youth Conferences for Bullying Prevention for middle school students began in November 2001 and with elementary school students in 2003.

In November 2010, The Melissa Institute hosted “Bullying Prevention: Social Responsibility in 21st Century Schools.” More than 230 public school psychologists, social workers, counselors and crisis team members interacted with leading national experts and were made aware of the latest research on bullying, victimization and cyberbullying.



Dr. Suzanne Keeley (fourth from right) with conference faculty, school district personnel and Institute staff at the bullying prevention conference.



The panel of experts included Drs. Debra Pepler and Wendy Craig (co-directors of Canada’s national bullying prevention initiative, PREVnet); and Drs. Ron Slaby and Kim Storey, who have collaborated throughout the U.S. to address all aspects of bullying.

In addition to cyberbullying, the group addressed the reasons that kids start and stop bullying, how to empower bystanders, ways to create a positive school environment and how parents and teachers can partner to promote social responsibility.



“When most bullying prevention programs were focusing on middle and senior high students, The Melissa Institute recognized the need for early intervention. The Melissa Institute Elementary School Student Conference on Bullying has been conducted for the past eight years, reaching over 1,000 students. I am so grateful to work with The Melissa Institute on such an important issue.”

**Julie Astuto, Counselor,
Palmetto Elementary School, Miami, FL**

Kids participate in the Youth Conference for Bullying Prevention, and an attendee poses a question to the panel at the 2010 conference.

Answering the Call: Silence the Violence

The Melissa Institute has a history of “giving science away.” One of the ways we do this is by hosting violence-prevention workshops and conferences. In 2005, the first such conference addressed the issue of family violence. A follow-up conference was held in 2006.

Also in 2006, the Institute took a bold, proactive step by convening the first of several Silence the Violence symposia following the tragic shooting death of a 9-year-old Miami girl, Sherdavia Jenkins, who was killed by a stray bullet while playing on her porch.

“Born out of tragedy, The Melissa Institute is a legacy to a life lost, and a great contribution to saving so many other lives. I so admire the love and the deeply meaningful expertise of The Melissa Institute.”

David Lawrence Jr., President of the Early Childhood Initiative Foundation and Chair of the Children's Movement of Florida

Policymakers, civic leaders, law enforcement and judicial experts, members of the clergy and Institute members gathered at Baptist Hospital for a daylong meeting. The event was followed by two more summit meetings.

ACT: Extending Our Influence



“I am proud of myself. I am a better mom. I have seen a tremendous improvement in my son.” “I encourage every parent to be a part of this program.” “I took this course because I love my children and want to be sure I am doing all I can.” “It has been an extremely beneficial teaching tool.”

These are some responses from parents who took part in the “Adults and Children Together (ACT) Raising Safe Kids” program. ACT is a national family violence prevention program designed by the American



Patricia Bryant (left), a school counselor and ACT facilitator, celebrates with parents from Miami's Hibiscus Elementary School at the completion of the “Raising Safe Kids” program.

Special Conferences/Workshops

Oct. 2005	Family Violence
Sept. 2006	Silence the Violence: Creating a Safer Community for Our Children
Dec. 2006	Family Violence: Intervention and Prevention Strategies in a Diverse Society
April 2007	Silence the Violence: Faith-based Meeting
Sept. 2007	Family Violence: Practical Interventions
Nov. 2007	Silence the Violence 2: Youth Violence in Urban America
Dec. 2007	Dating Violence
April 2008	Grand Rounds/Treating Returning Veterans
Oct. 2008	Silence the Violence 3: Prevention and Response to Youth Violence
Nov. 2008	Bullying Prevention: Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence in School, Clinical and Community Settings
Nov. 2009	Reducing Violence Through Family Empowerment
Nov. 2010	Bullying Prevention: Social Responsibility in 21st Century Schools

Psychological Association to train early childhood, mental health and service agency professionals who, in turn, train parents. The parents quoted above were among those involved in a series of eight two-hour parenting classes conducted by ACT facilitators trained by The Melissa Institute.

The major premise of ACT is that from birth children learn through observation of others and everyday experiences. Research shows that children who witness or experience physical or verbal abuse in their home and community are more likely to be aggressive and violent adults. ACT seeks to break this cycle of violence by training facilitators to teach parents about positive discipline and ways to reduce the impact of violence in their children's lives — including violence on television, in movies and video games.

The Melissa Institute has been designated as the ACT Regional Training Center for the southeastern United States. Locally, two-day ACT facilitator sessions are conducted at Baptist Hospital and South Miami Hospital in Miami, and at Highridge Family Center in West Palm Beach.

The Institute has trained more than 200 professionals in South Florida alone. We plan to make the training available throughout Florida and the southeastern U.S. In addition, through our trained facilitators, our reach now extends to Puerto Rico, Peru, Brazil, Aruba and Spain.



The Melissa Institute hosted "The Interrupters," an award-winning movie about the Ceasefire gang prevention program that was developed in Chicago. Pictured with Board member Karyn Cunningham (left) are panelists State Rep. Cynthia Stafford and Ruban Roberts, MSW, of the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine.

Bolstering Resilience

15th Annual Conference

The Melissa Institute's 15th annual May conference, "Bolstering Resilience: A Life-span Perspective," drew more than 200 psychologists, teachers, counselors and child



Education Director Trish Ramsay, Scientific Board member Dr. Guerda Nicolas and President Suzanne Keeley.

development specialists to South Miami Hospital in 2011.

The meeting focused on ways to encourage resilience in children. It is known that factors such as poverty, homelessness, alcoholism, dysfunctional families and exposure to violence can have ramifications that last a lifetime. By the same token, up to two-thirds of children who live through these victimizing experiences manage to grow up to be successful, well-adjusted adults. By studying this natural tendency toward resilience, we can learn how to implement strategies that engender resilience, both in children and adults.

The conference, co-sponsored by Baptist Children's Hospital, was hosted by Dr. Meichenbaum and Robert Brooks, Ph.D., Director of Psychology at McLean Hospital in Boston. Dr. Keeley served as conference director.



Attendees listen to Dr. Robert Brooks, co-host of the conference on "Bolstering Resilience."



Board members Lynn Aptman (left) and Atlee Wampler III with Sharon Sadownik, MSW.

2011 Dissertation Scholarship Awards

The Melissa Institute awards scholarships to doctoral students who are conducting research within the area of violence prevention and treatment. The Institute has partnered with the Belfer Family Foundation to create a permanent endowment for the Belfer-Aptman Scholars Award for Dissertation Research. Since inception, 38 dissertation awards have been given, with a total value of \$68,000.

This year, the following individuals received \$2,000 awards:

Stephanie Donnelly, M.Ed.

University of Miami

“Understanding the Experiences of Immigrant Mothers in Defining and Coping With Intimate Partner Violence”

Michelle Kozey, M.A.

University of British Columbia

“Childhood Aggression and Executive Functions”

Ryan Landoll, M.A.

University of Miami

“The New Frontier of Peer Victimization: Associations Between Adolescents’ Online Peer Victimization and Internalizing Symptoms Over Time”



Randy Lee, Michael Aptman, M.D., Lynn Aptman, Dr. Donald Meichenbaum, Dr. Robert Brooks and Dr. Suzanne Keeley.

Annual Conference Topics

- 1997 Violence and Youth: Treatment and Prevention
- 1998 Helping At-risk Youth and Their Families
- 1999 Helping Victims of Violence
- 2000 Preventing Violence: A Life-span Perspective
- 2001 Ethnic Minorities and Diversity: Implications for Violence Prevention and Treatment
- 2002 Anger-control and Aggressive Behavior
- 2003 Trauma, Children and Families: Practical Ways to Help
- 2004 Family Violence: Intervention and Prevention Strategies in a Diverse Society
- 2005 Strengthening Resilience in Children and Adults
- 2006 Aggression and Suicide Among Children and Youth: Focus on Gender Differences
- 2007 Trauma-focused Interventions for Children, Adolescents and Families: School, Clinical and Community Approaches
- 2008 Reducing Violence by Nurturing Emotional and Behavioral Well-being: Application to Schools, Communities and Social Agencies
- 2009 Race, Ethnicity and Mental Health: Treatment Innovations and Cultural Adaptations of Evidence-based Interventions
- 2010 Child and Adolescent Depression and Suicide: Promising Hope and Facilitating Change
- 2011 Bolstering Resilience: A Life-span Perspective

Peace, Harmony and Moonlight

On a lovely spring night in March 2011, The Melissa Institute hosted a garden party under the stars. “Peace, Harmony and Moonlight” featured live music and a tram ride through a moonlit Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden. The event was chaired by former Coral Gables Mayor Donald and Mrs. Jeannett Slesnick. The gala dinner and a silent auction, chaired by Grace Carricarte, raised more than \$80,000 for the Institute.



Board member Grace Carricarte with her dad, Michael Carricarte.



Brian E. Keeley and Dr. Suzanne Keeley with event co-chairs Jeannett and former Coral Gables Mayor Donald Slesnick.



The Hon. Lester Langer and Education Director Trish Ramsay.



Jill Sheer, Bill Goldberg, Ken Bloom, Dr. Suzanne Keeley and Emery Sheer.



Melissa Institute founders Dr. Donald Meichenbaum, Dr. Suzanne Keeley, Lynn Aptman and Michael Aptman, M.D.

"The work that The Melissa Institute is doing to curb domestic and school-related violence is of the utmost importance. I had the pleasure of having their support as I sponsored legislation to bring heightened awareness to cyberbullying, and through their efforts, we were able to educate even more people on the importance of this issue."

**Rep. Dwight Bullard, District 118,
Florida House of Representatives**



George and Luisa Foyo and Kathy and Jim Harris.



The Hon. Dwight Bullard, Dr. Suzanne Keeley, the Hon. Erik Fresen and Board member Karyn Cunningham.



The annual event raised more than \$80,000 for the Institute's educational and research efforts.

OUR VOLUNTEER BOARDS

Without the participation, expertise and leadership of our volunteer boards, the Institute could not accomplish its goals. These include the Board of Directors, Scientific Board and Honorary Board.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Committed individuals who volunteer their time to oversee the operation of the Institute, assist with fundraising, plan projects and represent the organization at community events.

Suzanne L. Keeley, Ph.D., President and a founder of The Melissa Institute, a psychologist in private practice with extensive clinical experience in treating victims and perpetrators of violence.

Donald Meichenbaum, Ph.D., Research Director and a founder of The Melissa Institute, a clinical psychologist, Distinguished Professor Emeritus, University of Waterloo, Ontario, and a former Distinguished Visiting Professor, University of Miami.

Lynn Aptman, M.Ed., Melissa's mother, Secretary and a founder of The Melissa Institute.

Michael Aptman, M.D., neurologist, Melissa's father, Vice President and a founder of the Institute.

Jo Baxter, MBA, marketing and public relations consultant, Baptist Health South Florida.

Kenneth Bloom, Esq., Bloom & Minsker, P.L.

Marilyn J. Bruno, Ph.D., J.D., CEO, Aequor, Inc.

Grace L. Carricarte, MS.Ed., Executive Director, Ganley Foundation.

Penn B. Chabrow, Esq., Vice President and Director, law firm of Wampler Buchanan Walker Chabrow Banciella & Stanley, P.A.

Karyn I. Cunningham, B.A., Government Action Specialist, United Teachers of Dade.

Lisa M. Goldberg, Esq., Office of Gen. Counsel, Internal Revenue Service.

Remi J. Kajogbola, MBA, McKinsey Hospital Institute.

Philipp N. Ludwig, M.S., MBA, Treasurer of the Institute and Vice President, Operations, Baptist Health Medical Group.

Kristy M. Nunez, Esq., Assistant State Attorney.

Ana M. Ojeda, Psy.D., licensed psychologist.

Judge Nushin G. Sayfie, 11th Judicial Circuit of Florida.

Marguerite R. Snyder, Esq., law offices of Ronald Weil, P.A.

Atlee Wampler III, Esq., President, law firm of Wampler Buchanan Walker Chabrow Banciella & Stanley, P.A., former U.S. Attorney, Southern District of Florida.

SCIENTIFIC BOARD

This board comprises international experts in the areas of violence prevention and treatment of victims.

Etiony Aldarondo, Ph.D., is Associate Dean for Research, Director of Dunsbaugh-Dalton Community and Educational Well-Being Research Center, and an Associate Professor in the School of Education at the University of Miami. His career includes appointments at Boston College, Harvard Medical School's Cambridge Hospital and the Philadelphia Child Guidance Center. The recipient of various recognitions for academic excellence, his scholarship focuses on positive development of ethnic minority and immigrant youth, domestic violence, and social justice-oriented clinical practices. His publications include the books *Advancing Social Justice Through Clinical Practice* (Routledge) and *Programs for Men Who Batter: Intervention and Prevention Strategies in a Diverse Society* (Civic Research Institute, with Fernando Mederos, Ed.D.).

Wendy Craig, Ph.D., is a Professor in the Department of Psychology at Queen's University in Ontario. She has published widely on the topics of bullying and victimization, peer processes, sexual harassment and aggression in girls, and was editor of a volume on childhood social development. As a Canadian representative, Dr. Craig works with the World Health Organization and UNICEF conducting research and promoting healthy relationships. She recently wrote a chapter on bullying and fighting for the World Health International Report for the World Health Organization. She is an author and co-editor of *Understanding and Addressing Bullying: An International Perspective*. Together with Dr. Debra Pepler, Dr. Craig is leading PREVNet (Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence Network), a Networks of Centres of Excellence — New Initiative.

Jim Larson, Ph.D., NCSP, is Professor Emeritus of Psychology and former Director of the School Psychology Training Program at the University of Wisconsin, Whitewater. He has more than 35 years' experience in the study and treatment of anger-related

behaviors in children and youth. Dr. Larson was a school psychologist with the Milwaukee Public Schools for 14 years and directed their violence prevention program. He also has extensive experience in the area of parent management training and is the co-author of *Parent to Parent: A Video-augmented Training Program for the Prevention of Aggressive Behavior in Young Children and of Helping School Children Cope with Anger: A Cognitive-behavioral Intervention*, 2nd Ed. His most recent book is *Think First: Addressing Aggressive Behavior in Secondary Schools*.

Donald Meichenbaum, Ph.D., is Research Director of The Melissa Institute and a former Distinguished Visiting Professor in the School of Education at the University of Miami. He is one of the founders of cognitive behavior therapy. North American clinicians voted Dr. Meichenbaum "one of the 10 most influential psychotherapists of the 20th century." He has published extensively, and his most recent book is *Treatment of Individuals with Anger-control Problems and Aggressive Behavior*. Other books include *Treating Adults with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder*, *Nurturing Independent Learners* and *Stress Inoculation Training*.

Guerda Nicolas, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Educational and Psychological Studies at the University of Miami School of Education. As a multicultural (Haitian American) and multilingual (English, Spanish, French and Haitian Creole) psychologist, she focuses on developing culturally effective mental health intervention for people of color, particularly immigrant children, adolescents and families. Concerned about women's issues, depression, spirituality and social support networks of ethnic minorities, Dr. Nicolas is author of many articles and book chapters and is an invited presenter at national and international conferences. She is a member of the Caribbean Studies and 2009 president of the Haitian Studies Association.

Clifford R. O'Donnell, Ph.D., is Professor Emeritus of Psychology, founding Director of the Community and Culture Psychology Graduate Program at the University of Hawaii, and Honorary International Fellow of the Centre for Applied Cross-Cultural Research at Victoria University in New Zealand. He is a past president of the Society for Community Research and Action (APA Division 27) and has published on topics such as delinquency prevention, school violence, firearm deaths among children and youth, cultural-community psychology, and education and employment in community psychology. His most recent work is a theoretical integration of community and cultural psychology and a 35-year follow-up of a

youth mentoring program. He currently serves on the board of directors of the Intermountain Centers for Human Development and consults to several youth mentoring programs that use his community-peer delinquency prevention model.

Debra J. Pepler, Ph.D., C.Psych., is Distinguished Research Professor of Psychology at York University, Toronto, Ontario, and co-director of Promoting Relationships and Eliminating Violence Network (PREVNet), Canada's national initiative for bullying prevention. She is an internationally recognized expert on bullying and childhood aggression and an authority on school-based interventions. She speaks widely to professional and community audiences and publishes extensively. Her major research program examines the antisocial behavior of children and adolescents, particularly in the school and peer contexts. She is an author and co-editor of *Understanding and Addressing Bullying: An International Perspective*. She was honored with the Contribution to Knowledge award from the Psychology Foundation of Canada.

Isaac Prilleltensky, Ph.D., is Dean of the School of Education at the University of Miami. Prior to that he was Director of the Doctoral Program in Community Research and Action at Peabody College of Vanderbilt University. Dr. Prilleltensky is concerned with value-based ways of promoting personal, relational and collective well-being. He is the author, co-author or co-editor of several books, including *Community Psychology: In Pursuit of Liberation and Well-Being*, *Doing Psychology Critically*, *Critical Psychology*, *Promoting Family Wellness and Preventing Child Maltreatment*, and *The Morals and Politics of Psychology*. The book *Promoting Well-Being: Linking Personal, Organizational and Community Change* was co-authored with his wife, Dr. Ora Prilleltensky.

Wendy K. Silverman, Ph.D., ABPP, is Professor of Psychology and Director of the Child and Family Psychosocial Research Center at Florida International University. She is an expert on child anxiety and its disorders. Her research on developing and evaluating evidence-based assessment and treatment procedures for children and adolescents with anxiety disorders has been funded for the past two decades by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). In addition to conducting research, teaching and mentoring students, she has served as editor of the *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, associate editor of the *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, past president of the Society of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology

(Division 53, American Psychological Association) and chair of the NIMH grant review panel for Child and Adolescent Psychosocial and Psychopharmacological Intervention Research.

Ron Slaby, Ph.D., is a developmental psychologist, research scientist and educator who serves as senior scientist at both the Education Development Center (EDC) and the Center on Media and Child Health. Through his innovative research, teaching and program development at EDC, Children's Hospital Boston, and Harvard University, Dr. Slaby has helped to shape national and global strategies for preventing youth violence and bullying. Known for introducing a "bystander strategy" into the field of bullying prevention, Dr. Slaby has co-authored the CDC's first national plan for preventing violence in America; the World Health Organization's global program for preventing violence in schools; the American Psychological Association's National Reports on Violence and Youth; *Early Violence Prevention: Tools for Teachers of Young Children; Aggressors, Victims & Bystanders*, an evidence-based program for middle school students; and a multimedia bullying prevention program, *Eyes on Bullying: Preventing Bullying in the Lives of Children*.

Dale Willows, Ph.D., is a Professor in the Department of Human Development and Applied Psychology, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. She is also a registered psychologist. Dr. Willows is a renowned expert in the teaching of reading and preventing reading and writing difficulties in young children. She has devoted herself to implementing change in early literacy education through in-service professional development for primary grade teachers and school administrators. In addition to publishing extensively in journals and authoring numerous books and book chapters, she is frequently invited to present at academic and professional conferences. In 2001, Dr. Willows was honored as an Outstanding Educator by three Canadian school districts. She is the only international member of the National Reading Panel, commissioned by the U.S. Congress in 1998, and was invited to attend the White House Assembly on Reading in 2001.

Marleen Wong, LCSW, Ph.D., is Assistant Dean, Clinical Professor and Director of Field Education at the University of Southern California, School of Social Work. Her research projects include the Trauma Services Adaptation Center for Resiliency, Hope and Wellness in Schools, funded by the National Child Traumatic Stress Network; the USC Institute for Creative

Technology's Army-funded grant, SimCoach, to develop virtual physical and mental health education for military personnel and families; and a Department of Defense/Educational Activities grant on Building Capacity in Military-Connected Schools to create supportive environments for military children. Dr. Wong is a U.S. Department of Education (DOE) consultant who assists schools impacted by violence and disaster. She helped develop and evaluate Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS) for children exposed to trauma. She co-authored *Psychological First Aid for Students and Teachers: Listen, Protect, Connect (LPC)*, available on the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and U.S. DOE websites. Dr. Wong was recently appointed to the National Advisory Council of Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

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This board is composed of distinguished citizens and community leaders who lend their support to The Melissa Institute.

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