



THE MELISSA INSTITUTE
For Violence Prevention and Treatment

25th Annual Conference
**ADVANCES AND
INNOVATIONS IN VIOLENCE
PREVENTION & TREATMENT:**
THE FIRST 25 YEARS OF THE MELISSA INSTITUTE

Jim Larson, Ph.D., NCSP
Donald Meichenbaum, Ph.D.
Guerda Nicolas, Ph.D.
Debra Pepler, Ph.D., C. Psych.
Isaac Prilleltensky, Ph.D.
Ron Slaby, Ph.D.

Friday, May 7, 2021
9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

- 9:00 a.m. Welcome and Introductions**
Lynn Aptman, M.Ed., President, The Melissa Institute
Etiony Aldarondo, Ph.D., Executive Director, The Melissa Institute
- 9:10 a.m. Creating the New Scientific Discipline – Violence Prevention**
Ron Slaby, Ph.D.
 Not long ago, there were no organized concepts, research tools or cross-disciplinary strategies for understanding, treating and preventing violence, while youth violence in America was growing to epidemic proportions. Dr. Slaby will present key milestones achieved in the process of creating an effective new scientific discipline – violence prevention. It draws from, unites and expands aspects of the disciplines of behavioral science, public health, criminal justice and education. We now know that research-based violence treatment and prevention works when effectively developed and applied. Our application of this new discipline now presents major opportunities and challenges in addressing the current problems of violence in our society.
- 10:00 a.m. Nurturing Children for Violence Prevention and Treatment**
Debra J. Pepler, O.C., Ph.D., C.Psych
 For 25 years, The Melissa Institute has focused on violence prevention and treatment. This focus requires that we simultaneously consider both children's development (their strengths and challenges) and the quality of relationships in which they are developing (family, peer, school, community). From the earliest days of life, the relationships in which children grow up have a significant impact on their brains, genes, behaviors and views of the world around them. Research provides guidance as to the ways that all children and youth need to be nurtured. It also vividly depicts how children and youth get onto a troubled pathway when they lack connection, engagement, belonging and support. This support comes from all the people in their lives: parents, siblings, teachers, peers and community leaders. We all have a responsibility to identify children and youths who are struggling, and provide a safe and caring context to divert them onto healthy, nonviolent, pathways.
- 10:50 a.m. Emotional Competence and Anger Management: Preparing Young Children for the Social Challenges of School**
Jim Larson, Ph.D., NCSP
 Social and emotional competency increases the probability that the transition from home learning to large group learning in school will be successful. Perhaps the most critical skill is the child's ability to understand and manage his or her anger and aggression. This talk will focus on how helping professionals can support parents and children in this task most effectively.
- 11:40 a.m. Panel Discussion: Ron Slaby, Ph.D., Debra Pepler, Ph.D., and Jim Larson, Ph.D., NCSP.**
- 12:15 p.m. Lunch Break**
- 1:15 p.m. Examples of How Bystander Intervention Programs Have Been Used Effectively to Reduce Violence**
Donald Meichenbaum, Ph.D.
 Together we will examine several examples of how bystander intervention programs have been used to reduce violence toward others and toward oneself in a variety of settings, including schools, police departments and the military. We will address what organizational supports need to be implemented in order for bystander intervention programs to be sustained effectively.
- 2:05 p.m. Understanding the Impact of Trauma and Racialized Violence in Black Communities and What to Do About It**
Guerda Nicolas, Ph.D.
 Examining the impact of trauma and racialized violence on communities, this talk will address the critical steps we must take to change the conditions fueling these problems. We will identify the cumulative burdens of racialized violence on the health and prosperity of Black families, and outline concrete steps to actively support the development and prosperity of Black communities to repair the damage done by racialized violence.
- 2:55 p.m. The Role of Mattering in Personal, Organizational, and Community Well-being**
Isaac Prilleltensky, Ph.D.
 Mattering consists of two complementary experiences: feeling valued and adding value. We can feel valued by, and add value to, self and others. Mattering is essential in personal, organizational and community well-being. When people feel valued, they are more likely to add value, engendering a virtuous cycle. When people don't feel valued, they are less likely to contribute to the well-being of self and others. Dr. Prilleltensky will present data and interventions related to the promotion of mattering at various levels of the human experience.
- 3:45 p.m. Panel Discussion: A conversation with Donald Meichenbaum, Ph.D., Guerda Nicolas, Ph.D., and Isaac Prilleltensky, Ph.D.**
- 4:30 p.m. Adjourn**

25th Annual Conference

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Friday, May 7, 2021, 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. | *Virtual Conference*

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

For 25 years The Melissa Institute has been at the forefront in the education and training of violence prevention and treatment in South Florida and beyond. Every year we set out to provide state-of-the-art conceptual and practical tools to help make our lives safer and healthier. During this time, the Institute has been part of a remarkable evolution in violence prevention programs and services that have significantly improved the safety and well-being of children, families, schools and neighborhoods across the nation.

The 25th Anniversary Conference highlights essential research-based knowledge and strategies for educators, mental health professionals, social service providers and policy makers. Following a year in which unexpected health, social and financial challenges have threatened the stability and safety of our lives, this conference offers insights and guidance to address some of the most complicated issues affecting us.

This year's extraordinary challenges have left us with a deeper sense of appreciation and gratitude for the importance of educators, health professionals and social service providers in our lives. It has also highlighted the value of research-based violence-prevention strategies in making our homes, schools, neighborhoods and communities safer. By equipping these essential professionals with proven tools to prevent violence, the conference supports their efforts and takes an important step toward creating a much safer and healthier post-pandemic life.

The Melissa Institute's internationally renowned Scientific Board members will share their current work on violence prevention and the promotion of well-being. Dr. Ron Slaby will make the case for research-based violence prevention as a central component in our efforts to repair the world. Dr. Debra Pepler will talk about early childhood violence prevention and child development research. Dr. Jim Larson will discuss managing adolescent anger and behavioral concerns. Dr. Guerda Nicolas will examine the impact of trauma and racialized violence for racial minorities. The Institute's Scientific Director, Dr. Donald Meichenbaum, will talk about the power of active bystanders to help defuse conflict and prevent violence from escalating. Finally, Dr. Isaac Prilleltensky

will discuss research-based methods to help people achieve a higher sense of purpose and a deeper sense of meaning, providing professionals the tools needed to optimize well-being and productivity.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this conference, participants will be able to:

- Explain the role of emotional competence in successful school experiences and incorporate science-based techniques to promote connection, engagement and belonging within families, schools and communities.
- Overcome obstacles in the implementation of active bystander violence-prevention interventions, community enhancement initiatives and school-based interventions.
- Recognize multisystemic roadblocks to key resources to deal with cumulative burdens and support the healthy development of at-risk children, families and communities.
- Incorporate into professional practice evidence-based skills and interventions to promote mattering and well-being, as well as be acquainted with key resources readily available to help individuals, organizations and communities.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Teachers, administrators, school counselors, psychologists, social workers, family mediators, mental health workers, marriage and family therapists, social services agency personnel, juvenile and family-court judges, lawyers, law enforcement personnel, clergy, nurses, pediatricians, primary care physicians and psychiatrists.

PRESENTERS



Ron Slaby, Ph.D., has helped to shape national and global strategies for treating and preventing violence and bullying through his innovative research, teaching, and program development. A developmental psychologist, Dr. Slaby is known for co-authoring the CDC's first National Agenda for the Prevention of Violence, the WHO's global program for Preventing Violence in Schools, the Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) Program to prevent men's violence against women, and the multimedia Eyes on Bullying program to prevent bullying in early and middle childhood — and for introducing a widely applied “bystander intervention strategy” into the field of violence prevention.



Debra Pepler, Ph.D., has led research on aggression, bullying, and victimization among children and adolescents for the past 35 years. Her programs of research on peer and family relationships have been embedded in educational, clinical, and community programs. Her research has informed practice and policy related to children and youths' relationships and violence prevention.



Jim Larson, Ph.D., is Professor Emeritus at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, where he directed the graduate program in School Psychology for 21 years. He is the author of *Think First: Addressing Aggressive Behavior in Secondary Schools* and co-author of *Helping School Children Cope with Anger: A Cognitive-behavioral Intervention* (with John Lochman, Ph.D.).



Guerda Nicolas, Ph.D., is Professor in the School of Education and Human Development at the University of Miami. A multicultural and multilingual psychologist, she focuses her scholarship on the interplay of race, culture, trauma, and well-being for ethnically diverse and immigrant communities. She is a pioneer in improving mental healthcare systems and policy in Haiti and in the United States. The recipient of the 2018 International Humanitarian Award by the American

Psychological Association for “extraordinary humanitarian services and activism by psychologists,” her most recent book is *Social Networks and the Mental Health of Haitian Immigrants*.



Donald Meichenbaum, Ph.D., is Research Director of The Melissa Institute and Distinguished Professor Emeritus at the University of Waterloo in Ontario. He has served as Distinguished Visiting Professor at 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 presented in all 50 states and internationally. Dr. Meichenbaum has published extensively, and his most recent book is *The Evolution of Cognitive Behavior Therapy: A Personal and Professional Journey with Don Meichenbaum*. Other books include *Roadmap to Resilience: A Guide for Military, Trauma Victims and Their Families*; *Treatment of Individuals with Anger-control Problems and Aggressive Behavior*; *Treating Adults with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder*; *Nurturing Independent Learners*; and *Stress Inoculation Training*.



Isaac Prilleltensky, Ph.D., is the former Dean of the School of Education and Human Development at the University of Miami, where he currently serves as Professor of Educational and Psychological Studies and Vice Provost for Institutional Culture.

In addition, he holds the Mautner Endowed Chair in Community Well-Being at the University of Miami. He has published 12 books and over 140 scholarly papers and book chapters. His areas of expertise are well-being, mattering, fairness, and organizational culture. He is the recipient of multiple awards from the American Psychological Association, including the Lifetime Achievement Award for Prevention from the Division of Counseling Psychology and the Distinguished Contribution to Theory and Research and the Seymour Sarason Awards, both from the Division of Community Psychology of APA. In 2015 he won an award from the National Newspaper Association for his humor writing about Miami.

CREDITS

PSYCHOLOGISTS: Baptist Health South Florida has been approved by the Florida Board of Psychology to sponsor 6 continuing education credits for psychologists. Baptist Health South Florida CE Broker Provider #50-182. (Approval pending.)

FLORIDA BOARD OF CLINICAL SOCIAL WORK, MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPY AND MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING: The Melissa Institute has been approved by the Florida Board of Psychology and the Florida Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage and Family Therapy and Mental Health Counseling to sponsor 6 continuing education credits for mental health professionals. CE Broker Course #20-772217.

EDUCATORS: Conference registration and payment to The Melissa Institute must be completed prior to registering for Miami-Dade County Public Schools professional development credit online at <http://calendar.dadeschools.net>. Seven (7) master plan points will be awarded to participants who have completed a follow-up activity and have preregistered online with M-DCPS. (Approval pending.)

MEDIATORS: The Melissa Institute for Violence Prevention and Treatment is a recognized provider of Continuing Mediator Education (CME) credits for

Florida Supreme Court-certified mediators. This course is eligible for up to 7 CME hours for certified mediators. Mediators are required to self-report those hours applicable to their areas of certification at the time of their renewal. For more information on the CME requirement, visit www.flcourts.org and select Alternative Dispute Resolution/Mediation.

NURSES: This continuing education activity has been approved for 6 credits for Nursing and Nurse Practitioners. Baptist Health South Florida CE Broker Provider #50-182. (Approval Pending).

PHYSICIANS: This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the Essentials and Standards of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education through the joint providership of Baptist Health South Florida and The Melissa Institute for Violence Prevention and Treatment. Baptist Health South Florida is accredited by the ACCME to provide continuing medical education for physicians. Baptist Health South Florida designates this live activity for a maximum of 6 AMA PRA Category 1 credits. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity. This activity has been approved for 6 credit hours by the Florida Boards of Medicine, Osteopathic Medicine, and Psychology (6 hours). (Approval pending.)

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www.MelissaInstitute.org • www.TeachSafeSchools.org • www.ReadingTeacher.net

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The mission of The Melissa Institute is to prevent violence and promote safer communities through education and application of research-based knowledge.

EDUCATION • COMMUNITY SERVICE • RESEARCH SUPPORT • CONSULTATION

REGISTRATION

Registration deadline is *Friday, April 30. Space is limited; register early!* Instructions to join the virtual conference will be emailed to you prior to the conference.

REGISTER ONLINE!



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Friday, May 7, 2021, 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m

Name* _____ Title _____

Institution or Organization _____

Address* _____

Phone _____ Email* _____

Registration Type*: _____ \$75 _____ \$35 University of Miami Faculty (must provide @miami.edu email)

_____ Free University of Miami Student (please email info@melissainstitute.org to register)

Payment method*:

☐ Check enclosed (Make payable to The Melissa Institute.)

☐ Purchase Order number _____ (please mail/scan copy of registration to guarantee reservation)

Specialty professional credits required:

LICENSE # _____

☐ Florida Board of Psychological Examiners

☐ Miami-Dade County Public Schools

☐ Florida Board of Medicine

☐ Florida State Board of Nursing

☐ Florida Board of CSW, MFT and MHC

☐ Mediators (Family and Dependency)

Register Online (save \$5): www.MelissaInstitute.org
For more information, email info@melissainstitute.org

Mail to:

The Melissa Institute
1507 Levante Avenue, Suite 331
Coral Gables, FL 33146

Conference proceeds benefit The Melissa Institute for Violence Prevention and Treatment.

Cancellations must be sent in writing by Friday, April 30, to receive a refund of the registration fee, less a \$10 administrative fee. Cancellations postmarked after April 30 will forfeit the registration fee.



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