

# Silencing the Violence

2008 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



The Melissa Institute  
For Violence Prevention and Treatment



**Of 50 million married persons in the U.S., 15 million have experienced violence in their marriage.**

**In the U.S., a woman is battered by her partner every 15 seconds.**

**Thirteen percent of homicides in the U.S. are husband-wife killings.**

**In California, it is estimated that up to 20 percent of all homicides are witnessed by children.**

**Thirty-seven percent of U.S. students report the presence of gangs in their schools.**

**Teenagers are twice as likely than others to be victims of violent crimes.**

**On average, one school-related homicide occurs every seven school days.**

# Silencing the Violence

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

**W**hat does it take to turn a successful organization into a great and indispensable one?

Many organizations have tackled that question. The great ones find the right answers. At The Melissa Institute for Violence Prevention, we believe that a key to success in the future is to focus on doing the things that we do well.

The Institute has spent more than a decade striving to change the world through research, education, awareness and community involvement. In the past few years, we've made the transition from a founder-driven organization to one that is mission-driven. By turning our attention to strengthening the Institute, we've positioned ourselves to be able to make a greater impact in the community.

A prime example of that impact is Silence the Violence: Youth Violence in Urban America, the second community summit that brought civic leaders, policymakers and law enforcement experts together to address the proliferation of gun violence in Miami-Dade County. The Institute has also conducted a series of Family Violence Conferences, designed to give clinicians, school counselors and other interested professionals a greater understanding of family violence intervention methods.

We're also the local contractor for the National Disaster Response Training program offered by the National Child Trauma Center in Oklahoma. The program will train response teams and other individuals in disaster preparedness.

An endowment from the Belfer Family Foundation has allowed the Institute to provide four \$2,000 Dissertation Awards annually. This program will become the

Belfer-Aptman Scholars Award, and will be made available in perpetuity.

Other positive steps include the creation of the position of project director, who is helping us expand our ability to hold conferences and ensure that our research is always on target. A new video presentation, developed by Melissa Institute President Suzanne L. Keeley, Ph.D., and shown at the Family Violence Conference in September, turns the stories of three women who were victims of violence into a survival manual for women in dire circumstances.

We've also developed new ways to spread the word about The Melissa Institute. Parlor parties, hosted by Institute members in their homes, provide an intimate way to gather like-minded individuals and increase awareness of our mission.

We are especially honored that one of the Melissa Institute founders, Michael Aptman, M.D., was given the Health Foundation of South Florida's Concern Award. Dr. Aptman was presented with the \$25,000 prize in December 2006, on behalf of The Melissa Institute. The Concern Award honors members of the community who make a healthy difference in the lives of others.

We're proud of the strides we've made since our inception in 1996. The contributions of the talented individuals who have helped guide the Institute over the years cannot be overstated. And the generous contributions we've received from people like you have enabled us to achieve so much together. Together, we will continue to find new and better ways to silence the violence in our community, and to make the world a better place.

# Silencing the Violence

## Redefining “Normal”: Youth Violence in Urban America

“We already know what works to save our children. What’s missing is the willingness to get and stay angry about the loss of these young lives.”

These were the words of Leonard Pitts Jr., Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and keynote speaker at “Youth Violence in Urban America,” the second annual Silence the Violence summit meeting sponsored by The Melissa Institute.

Silence the Violence was a clarion call to action resulting from the violent death of nine-year-old Sherdavia Jenkins, who was shot by a stray bullet while playing on her front porch. One year ago, a diverse group of community stakeholders — including civic leaders, clergy, policymakers and judicial experts — met in response to the growing trend toward the proliferation of gun violence among our community’s young people.

The Melissa Institute recognized from the start that a problem this pervasive could not be addressed in a single meeting. The initial

conference was followed up with faith-based seminars, leading up to the second summit meeting, held at South Miami Hospital on November 2.

More than 200 professionals and community leaders attended the day-long event, hosted by Institute Research Director Donald Meichenbaum, Ph.D. The presentations began with a talk by Rodney Hammond, Ph.D., from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Dr. Hammond outlined strategies that have been successful in preventing violence, such as mentoring programs and conflict resolution programs, particularly in elementary schools. He also identified approaches that have not been successful, including firearms training, boot camps and the grouping together of high-risk youths.

Nancy Guerra, Ed.D., Director of the Southern California Center of Excellence in Violence Prevention at the University of California, addressed the problem of youth violence from a psychological perspective. If violence is a ploy that sometimes works to the advantage of the perpetrator, she reasoned, we must find ways to tailor our responses and



Former U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno discusses violence prevention with Research Director Donald Meichenbaum, Ph.D., journalist Leonard Pitts Jr. and Suzanne Keeley, Ph.D., President of The Melissa Institute.



"Successful people have the guts and imagination to change things." Dr. Michael and Lynn Aptman (behind Janet Reno) and Florida Supreme Court Chief Justice R. Fred Lewis listen as Leonard Pitts Jr. urges an end to apathy about violence.

make violence a less attractive alternative to young people.

Gang violence expert Scott Decker, Ph.D., Director of the School of Criminal Justice and Criminology at Arizona State University, provided a concise and compelling look at the widespread problem of gang violence and the pervasiveness of gang culture. He also advocated the judicious use of limited funds. "If only 60 percent of a bridge gets built, it's of no use to anyone," he said. "Right now, only about 60 percent of school-based violence prevention programs are ever actually implemented due to poor allocation of funds."

Florida Supreme Court Chief Justice R. Fred Lewis addressed the gathering from his point of view as a judge. "I come to you from the trenches," he said. "In my courtroom every day I see the end result of what is wrong."

Leonard Pitts Jr. gave a detailed description of individuals in urban areas across the country who are making a difference by devising innovative ways to chip away at the causes of violence: poor education, limited opportunities, drug and gang culture and apathy.

"It is pathetic when a child can't play in safety at her own front door," he said. "To accept that as normal is pathetic. Who told you that you cannot change the world? When you lose faith in your ability to make change, you lose everything that matters."



Nancy Guerra, Ed.D.



Leonard Pitts Jr.



Rodney Hammond, Ph.D.



Scott Decker, Ph.D.

# Silencing the Violence

Physical abuse, threats and name-calling are all forms of violence people endure on a daily basis.

## The War at Home: Family Violence Conference

Domestic violence is a societal issue that extends beyond batterers, victims and their families and requires a coordinated community response and culturally competent solutions. That was the message to more than 250 social workers, school counselors, mental health professionals, researchers and police officers gathered at the conference, “Family Violence: Practical Interventions,” hosted by The Melissa Institute in late September.

It was the second in a series during the last year addressing the topic of domestic abuse from a clinical and cultural standpoint. The first conference took place in West Palm Beach in December 2006, and marked the first time the Institute had extended its scope beyond Miami-Dade County.



Scientific Board member Etiony Aldarondo, Ph.D., discusses intervention approaches.

The Institute ignited a public dialogue at the day-long symposium at South Miami Hospital to address the prevalent issue of family violence.

Four leading experts, including Fernando Mederos, Ed.D., of the Massachusetts Department of Social Services, and Institute President Suzanne L. Keeley, Ph.D., shared current perspectives and research concerning

the incidence and impact of family violence. Physical abuse, threats and name-calling are all forms of violence people endure on a daily basis. Learning to identify warning signs and predictive factors of violent behavior can help communities reduce rates of violence, the panelists said.

Gender- and ethnic-based roles can also provide a strategic tool in understanding violent behavior, according to Dr. Mederos.

There are certain characteristics that personify oppressive relationships, such as a controlling personality, prolonged periods of depression, exaggerated self-entitlement or problems with substance abuse.

Dr. Mederos, a specialist in batterer intervention programs, demonstrated the need for culturally sensitive, respectful, relationship-based interventions with male batterers. Etiony Aldarondo, Ph.D., a Scientific Board member of the Institute, substantiated the effectiveness of these intervention programs, particularly in Hispanic communities.

Conference speakers presented myriad strategies and tactics to approach treatment of both batterers and victims. Dr. Keeley talked about resilience of victims and the importance of creating support systems to nurture hope. Donald Meichenbaum, Ph.D., Research Director of The Melissa Institute, said a woman is battered by her partner every 15 seconds in the United States. He examined the core tasks of psychotherapy with victims of family violence, such as transforming pain into meaning, avoiding revictimization and empowering victims through safety plans and goal-setting.



Fernando Mederos, Ed.D., addresses cultural sensitivity.

## Teaching the Teachers: ACT Against Violence

When you were a child, who was your number one teacher? Was it your fourth grade teacher? Your high school science teacher? Your social studies teacher? Actually, the answer is much closer to home.

The number one teacher of any child is the child's parents. When parents learn to be effective leaders, they help their children become non-violent. The ACT (Adults and Children Together) Against Violence Program works by teaching the teachers. The Melissa Institute teaches professionals to teach parents critical thinking and communication skills that will help them establish effective relationships with their children.

In 2007, The Melissa Institute was selected as one of three regional sites for training ACT facilitators. The mission of the ACT Regional Centers includes working with

local organizations, organizing the training of professionals recruited from organizations in the region and implementing an eight-week Parents Raising Safe Kids program.

The Institute has been awarded a two-year, \$10,000 grant to set up the program in the southeastern United States. We are also poised to advertise and receive community education CEUs through Miami-Dade College.

## Preventing Bullying Through Education

Bullying in schools is a pervasive, serious problem. It can often lead to aggressive and violent behavior, and can go on to affect the adult lives of both the victim and the aggressor.

Bullying can take the form of direct physical aggression, including pushing, fighting or physically threatening an individual. It can also be more subtle and insidious. Children can victimize others by excluding and isolating them from their peers, creating a hostile environment in which the victim's self-esteem can be seriously shaken, sometimes with lasting consequences.



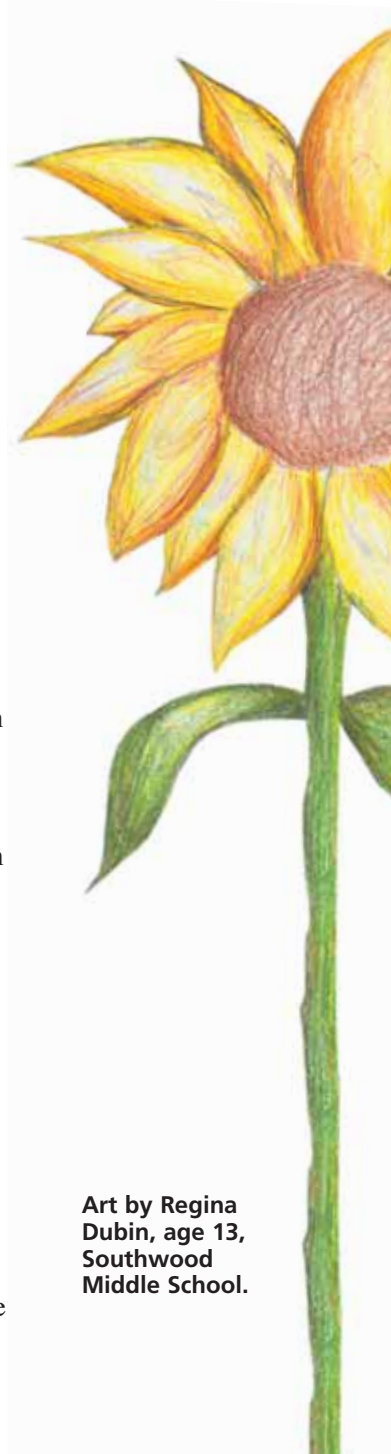
Palmetto Elementary students learn bullying prevention. Left to right: Malaysia Coleman, Debra Pepler, Ph.D., Alexander Castro-Guerrero, Ms. Dorian Castro-Guerrero (Alexander's mother) and Kyle Pease.

The Melissa Institute addresses the issue of bullying through education and applied research. Workshops, community education programs and teacher seminars are effective tools in spreading awareness and giving educators the best information about prevention and intervention.

April 2007 was an especially active month in the Institute's bullying prevention efforts. Debra Pepler, Ph.D., an Institute Scientific Board member and internationally recognized expert on childhood aggression, facilitated two youth conferences on bullying prevention. The sixth annual Youth Conference on Bullying Prevention was held April 11 at Ponce de Leon Middle School. On April 12, the fourth annual Elementary Student Conference on Bullying Prevention was held at Christ the King Lutheran Church. Dr. Pepler also was part of a 20-member panel that met near Washington, D.C., on April 13 to update bullying prevention materials for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dr. Meichenbaum and Trish Ramsay, the Institute's Education Director, also served on the panel, which began to explore ways that The Melissa Institute could work with the federal government on new initiatives for bullying prevention.

We host a one-week Bullying Education Series each fall, in which we work with local police, school administrators, psychologists, students and groups.

The Melissa Institute also provides practical information to parents, teachers, school counselors and administrators through an innovative website, [www.teachsafeschools.org](http://www.teachsafeschools.org). It's a comprehensive toolkit that is a valuable resource in the effort to prevent school violence and bullying.



Art by Regina Dubin, age 13, Southwood Middle School.

# Silencing the Violence

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

May 2, 2008

The topic of the 12th annual conference will be "Preventing Violence by Nurturing Well-being in Schools, Social Service Agencies and Communities."

## Prevention and Intervention

A captivating slide presentation of unsolved murders in Los Angeles by new Scientific Board member Marleen Wong, Ph.D., was one of the memorable components of The Melissa Institute's 11th annual conference, entitled "Trauma-focused Intervention for Children, Adolescents and Families: School, Clinical and Community Approaches." Dr. Wong is Director of the Crisis Counseling and Intervention Service for the Los Angeles School District. Other presenters included Esther Deblinger, Ph.D., co-founder of the Child Abuse Research Education and Service Institute; and Betty Pfefferbaum, M.D., J.D., Director of the Terrorism and Disaster Center of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network. Several hundred teachers, psychologists, counselors and other child development specialists attended the May conference, which was moderated by Institute Research Director Donald Meichenbaum, Ph.D.



Research Director Donald Meichenbaum, Ph.D., hosts the annual conference.



Trish Ramsay, Education Director, joins Marty McGuire, Counselor, Young Women's Academy for Academic and Civic Development, J.R.E. Lee Opportunity School.



Founders and presenters: Michael Aptman, M.D., Lynn Aptman, Suzanne Keeley, Ph.D., Donald Meichenbaum, Ph.D., Esther Deblinger, Ph.D., Marleen Wong, Ph.D., and Betty Pfefferbaum, M.D., J.D.

## Tools for Educators

The Melissa Institute's educators' website — [www.teachsafeschools.org](http://www.teachsafeschools.org) — is the perfect complement to [www.melissainstitute.org](http://www.melissainstitute.org). This ongoing project provides toolkits for teachers, counselors and administrators. Made possible through the support of the Robert and Renee Belfer Foundation and other supporters, the site bridges the gap between research findings and practices and procedures for violence prevention. It's a dynamic and indispensable resource for educators.

## Consultations

The Melissa Institute provides consultative services to numerous community agencies and organizations, including: Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Miami-Dade Public Defender's Office, Informed Families of Dade and Miami-Dade County 11th Judicial Circuit Court (Juvenile Division), as well as South Florida's faith-based community.

We also provide training to professionals through workshops, conferences, presentations and educational programs such as Classroom Organization and Management Program (COMP), a teacher-training program to reduce student discipline problems; and Second Step, a conflict resolution program in which students, over a number of years, learn impulse control and anger management.



Panelists Betty Pfefferbaum, M.D., J.D., Marleen Wong, Ph.D., and Esther Deblinger, Ph.D., answer questions at the conference.



**THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP?**

The negative effects of trauma exposure may explain one aspect of the bleak reality that African American and Latino students continue to trail far behind their Caucasian peers in schools, such as higher drop out rates from high school after generations of education "reform". (Shen, 2005).

# Silencing the Violence

## Making New Friends

One way to spread the word about violence prevention is to spread the word about The Melissa Institute. Recently, Institute members have hosted parlor parties in their homes. These low-key gatherings give us a chance to make new friends and enjoy an evening of conversation in an intimate setting. Guests enjoy wine, cheese, good company and a short, informal presentation about the work of The Melissa Institute.



Attending the parlor party at the home of Suzanne Keeley, Ph.D., are Maria Carlo, Ph.D. (left), Ora Prilleltensky, Ed.D., and Isaac Prilleltensky, Ph.D. (right), with Dr. Keeley.



Cynthia Wolman and Lynn Aptman.

## Parlor Parties



Parlor party guests gather to listen to remarks by Isaac Prilleltensky, Ph.D., a Scientific Board member.



Trish Redmond, Jerry Markowitz, Brian Keeley and George Foyo.



Enjoying the intimate gathering are Omar Pasalodos, M.D., Maria Camila Leiva and German Leiva.



Carlos Battle, Lauren Battle and Bill Pearson.

# Tango Party

Guests enjoyed a lively tango-themed party at the home of Melissa Institute Board member Silvana Spinelli Casale.



Partygoers included Valerie Leach, Carla Spinelli, Philli Bullard, Monica Acquaviva and Angie Pattulo.



Dr. Elsa Dominguez and Horacio Rivera.



Hostess Silvana Spinelli Casale (center) joined by Diego and Maruchi Polenghi.

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## Peace and Harmony

Beautiful voices and generous hearts were the theme of the evening at “An Evening of Peace and Harmony: Music for a Better World.” The annual fundraising concert was held in March at Congregation Bet Shira, and featured performances by four operatic singers from Amici dell’Arte, an organization of South Florida artists. The event, chaired by Kent and Martha Journey, raised more than \$75,000 to support The Melissa Institute’s violence prevention initiatives. A silent auction, chaired by Sharon Lombardo, raised more than \$28,000. The performance included original compositions by Lynn Aptman.



Concertgoers included Terri Williams, Kris Williams, Kathy Schlect, Martha Journey and Kent Journey.



▲ Community Service Award winner Mary Cagle, J.D., and husband, Peter.



Lelania Vasallo and Suzanne Keeley, Ph.D. ▶



Silvana Spinelli Casale, Marta Spinelli and Alcira Hernandez bid in the silent auction.



Maria Carlo, Ph.D. (recipient of the Norma Bossard award), joined by Etiony Aldarondo, Ph.D., and their son, Diego.

## Nurturing New Scientists

The Melissa Institute awards fellowships and scholarships to individuals who are working within the area of violence prevention and treatment. This year we received more applications for dissertation scholarships than ever before.

The Institute has partnered with the Belfer Family Foundation to create a permanent endowment for the Belfer-Aptman Scholars Award. This will allow us to award four \$2,000 scholarships each year.

The following are our 2007 recipients:

**Lisa D. Bailey, M.S.**  
University of Miami

**Jennifer L. Becker, LCSW**  
Florida International University

**Stephanie T. Mihalas, M.A.**  
University of South Florida

**Sara G. Whitcomb, Ed.M.**  
University of Oregon

## Five Honored for Contributions

Each year, The Melissa Institute honors individuals whose work has helped further our mission. We gratefully acknowledge the contributions of these special individuals:

### *Community Service Awards*

**Mary Cagle, J.D.**, Executive Director, CHARLEE Program

**Jacqueline Gonzalez, J.D.**, Executive Director, Children's Home Society of Florida

**Trudy Novicki, J.D.**, Executive Director, Kristi House

### *Educator Recognition Award*

**Evelyn Langlieb Greer, J.D.**, member, Miami-Dade County School Board

### *Norma Bossard Literacy Award*

**Maria Carlo, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor, School of Education, University of Miami



**Evelyn Greer, J.D.**

## Religious Leaders Tackle Violence

More than 50 members of the faith-based community came together at the Baptist Hospital auditorium on April 13. The meeting was a follow-up to the Silence the Violence initiative started by The Melissa Institute last fall. The religious leaders discussed strategies to reduce violence.



Faith-based conference attendees.

**Presenter R. Drew Smith, Ph.D.**, Director of the Faith Communities and Urban Families Project at Morehouse College.



**Presenter Richard Lewis**, senior associate at ICF Consulting.

## OUR VOLUNTEER BOARDS

Without the participation, expertise and leadership of our volunteer boards, the Institute could not accomplish its goals. The boards 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 fund-raising, plan projects and represent the organization at community events.

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

**Donald Meichenbaum, Ph.D.**, Distinguished Visiting Professor at the University of Miami, clinical psychologist, Research Director and a founder of The Melissa Institute.

**Lynn Aptman, M.Ed.**, Melissa's mother, one of the founders of The Melissa Institute and Director of Information Services.

**Michael Aptman, M.D.**, neurologist, Melissa's father, one of the founders of the Institute and Vice President.

**Jo Baxter, MBA**, Corporate Vice President, Baptist Health South Florida.

**Queen T. Brown, M.A.**, Community Violence Prevention leader and program host on WINZ 940AM radio.

**Grace L. Carricarte, M.S.Ed.**, Family Counseling Services of Greater Miami.

**Kathryn Hanson Carroll, M.Div.**, Pastor, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**Silvana Spinelli Casale, M.A., CAES**, school psychologist and doctoral candidate.

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

**Judge Norman Gerstein**, Circuit Court, Miami-Dade County.

**Remi J. Kajogbola, MBA**, Corporate Regional Vice President, Cardinal Health.

**Philipp N. Ludwig, MBA**, Treasurer of the Institute and Corporate Director of Baptist Health South Florida.

**Robert J. Sena, M.S.**, partner, Alterra Capital Group.

**Lelenia C. Vasallo, Esq.**, attorney, Vasallo & Vasallo, 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 in the School of Education at the University of Miami. He is co-chair of the National Latino Alliance for the Elimination of Domestic Violence. He is also a member of the National Advisory Board of the National Violence Against Women Prevention Research Center and research consultant to the National Institute of Justice and the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention. He has published extensively on ethnicity and wife assault and the clinical assessment of battering.

**Ann Kelley, Ph.D.**, is former Director of Program Development and Project Director of *Healing the Hurt*, a category III site of the National Child Traumatic Stress Network. Her nearly three decades of mental health service experience have focused on working with children who have suffered trauma by physical abuse, homelessness or natural disasters. She has labored tirelessly to prepare childcare professionals to work with children affected by trauma and provide parenting support.

**Jim Larson, Ph.D.**, is Professor of Psychology and Director of the School Psychology Training Program at the University of Wisconsin, Whitewater. His recent book is *Think First: Addressing Aggressive Behavior in Secondary Schools*. He has more than 25 years' experience with the study and treatment of anger-related behaviors in children and youth. He was a school psychologist with the Milwaukee Public Schools for 14 years and directed its violence prevention program.

**Donald Meichenbaum, Ph.D.**, is Distinguished Visiting Professor at the University of Miami and Research Director of The Melissa Institute. He is one of the founders of cognitive behavior therapy. In a survey reported in *American Psychologist*, he was voted "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 Post-traumatic Stress Disorder* and *Stress Inoculation Training*.

**Clifford O'Donnell, Ph.D.**, is Professor of Psychology at the University of Hawaii and Director of the Community Studies Program. He is an authority on childhood aggression and violence and he has addressed the issue of gun violence and youth. He has also developed culturally sensitive community programs for youths and their families.

**Debra Pepler, Ph.D.**, is a 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. Dr. Pepler speaks widely to professional and community audiences and publishes extensively. 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 was born in Argentina and has studied and worked in Israel, Canada, Australia and the United States. He has lectured widely in South America, Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand. He 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*. He recently completed with his wife, Dr. Ora Prilleltensky, a book entitled *Promoting Well-being: Linking Personal, Organizational and Community Change*.

**Wendy K. Silverman, Ph.D.**, is a Professor of Psychology and Director of the Child and Family Psychosocial Research Center at Florida International University. She has authored or co-edited four books, including *Helping Children Cope with Disasters and Terrorism* with Dr. Annette La Greca. Dr. Silverman is a member of the scientific advisory board of Child and Adolescent Trauma Treatment in New York and editor of the *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*.

**Barbara Hanna Wasik, Ph.D.**, is Professor of Education at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, and Director of the UNC Center for Home Visiting. She is a pioneer and leading authority in the area of home visiting. Her book *Home Visiting: Procedures for Helping Families* is a classic in the field. She has consulted internationally on home visiting and early intervention programs.

**Dale Willows, Ph.D.**, is a Professor in the Department of Human Development and Applied Psychology at the University of Toronto. A registered psychologist in Ontario, she is an acknowledged expert in the teaching of reading and has published extensively. She also serves as a member of the National Reading Panel.

**Marleen Wong, LCSW, Ph.D.**, is Director of Crisis Counseling and Intervention Services for the Los Angeles Unified School District. She has developed school crisis teams, mental health recovery programs and training for school districts and law enforcement personnel in the United States, Canada and Asia, and is frequently consulted by the U.S. Department of Education to assist with recovery for schools impacted by violence and disaster. She collaborated on the development and evaluation of Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools, an evidence-based program that uses skill-based, group intervention to relieve symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and general anxiety among children exposed to trauma. Dr. Wong has served on the

Institute of Medicine's Committee on Preparing for the Psychological Consequences of Terrorism and the IOM's Board on Neuroscience and Behavioral Health, which is charged with assessing national priorities and approaches to public health and medical practice, public policy, research, education and training.



### HONORARY BOARD

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

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