

# A GLOBAL CHILD AND YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH INTERVENTION UPSCALING BY ONLINE CLASSROOMS IN INTERCULTURAL PARTNERSHIPS

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## A GREETING TO ALL ICP MEMBERS FROM THE DANISH PSYCHOLOGIST ASSOCIATION

*“As psychologists we have a lot to offer in the development of durable solutions, both nationally and internationally.*

*It is of great importance to us that these principles are held also in an international context, and we truly believe that Fairstart is a valuable example to be followed both in content and in level of ambition.”*

*Dea Seidenfaden, president of the Danish Psychologist Association*

# HOW CAN WE BUILD A GLOBAL PSYCHOLOGIST MINDSET?

- UNITE INTERNATIONAL RESEARCHERS
- ENTER INTERCULTURAL PARTNERSHIPS
- UPSCALE OUR PROGRAMS BY VIRTUAL TECHNOLOGIES

TODAY'S EXAMPLE IS THE FAIRSTART PROGRAM:

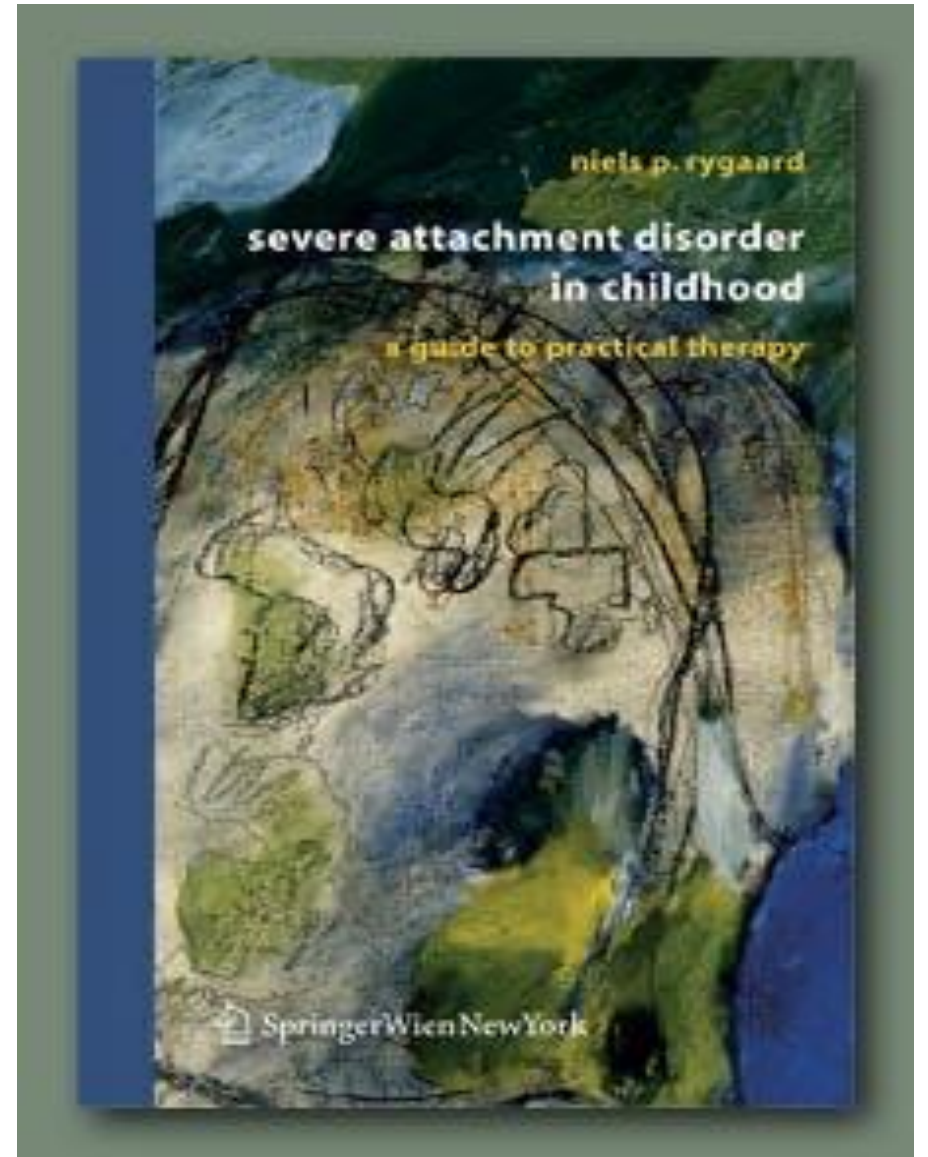
EDUCATING PARTNER STAFF  
TO HELP PARENTS AND CHILDREN AT RISK RECOVER FROM  
STRESS AND TRAUMA, AND ENHANCE RESILIENCE AND POST-TRAUMATIC GROWTH

## BACKGROUND

I'm a Danish child psychologist since 1981.  
My 2005 book was published in 12  
languages, leading to university  
lectures and studies of care for children  
in orphanages and foster care.

## OBSERVATIONS

The main cause of poor child development:  
Uneducated and underpaid female caregivers,  
caring for too many traumatized children



All language versions:

[https://www.academia.edu/40600825/Severe Attachment Disorder in Childhood In 12 languages](https://www.academia.edu/40600825/Severe_Attachment_Disorder_in_Childhood_In_12_languages)

## OBSERVATIONS OF CAREGIVERS

### **Romanian orphanage:**

Only physical care

No social-emotional care

5 caregivers for 60 children

Children are mostly in beds



### **Polish foster care:**

Foster mothers

receiving 14 children each  
from closed orphanages.

No supervision or support.

### **Mexican orphanage:**

Only two women, caring around the clock and year - for  
29 new-born babies, abandoned in the wave of migrants

# MENTAL HEALTH STRESSORS FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN: MIGRATION AND URBANIZATION

In 2050, 80 % of the world population will live in a major city

Roskam: *"parental burnout is caused by urban individualization"*

Urban family and community networks break down:

153 million orphans from 300 million uprooted and refugee families

Poor mental health for children and youth - even in rich countries

Lack of mental health staff and professional burnout

[Climate Change, Migration, Urbanization, and the Mental Health of Children at Risk in the European Union](#)



# THE IDEA FOR THE FAIRSTART FOUNDATION

Build an international bridge between child researchers, partner NGOs and government agencies.

Educate partner staff to train groups of high-risk parents, foster parents, group home staff, teachers and social workers.

Design caregiver group training programs with our partners

# WHAT ARE THE UNIVERSALS OF "QUALITY CARE"?

## RECOMMENDATIONS FROM AN INTERNATIONAL NETWORK

- Charles Zeanah, Tulane University, US. Ayşe Rodopman Arman Marmara University, Istanbul. Bo Vinnerljung, Sweden, C. Hamilton-Giachritsis, Psychology at Birmingham Un. Robert McCall & Christine Groark, University of Pittsburgh, Office of Child Development, USA. Mary Dozier, Delaware Un. USA. Dr. René Hoksbergen, the Netherlands University of Utrecht, Faculty of Adoption studies. Sibel Kazak Berument, Ankara Un. Annika Melinder, Child Psychology Department, Un. of Oslo, Norway. Sheyla Blumen, Psychology Dpt. Of Universidad Pontifica Catolica, Lima, Peru. Jorge Barudy and Maryorie Dantagnan, Chile. Michael Rutter group, GB. Marinus van Ijzendoorn, Femmie Juffer, Leyden Un. Kamikado Kazuhiro Nagano University, Japan. Rukhsana Saddul, Pakistan. Tuhinul Khalil Bangla Desh. Marie Gramstrup, Denmark, Patricia Crittenden, USA. Ed Tronick, Un. of Massachusetts, USA, Elsa Roskam, Un. of Louvain, Belgium, a.o.



# STUDIES OF EARLY CARE ENVIRONMENTS LINKED TO SUCCESS IN ADULT EDUCATION, JOB, AND SOCIAL COMPETENCES

A long term attachment to a few stable caregivers

A long term membership of a peer group

Caregivers and parents regularly educated and supported

Absence of stakeholder conflicts over the child

Adequate government and NGO funding

Easy-to-apply outcome measurement tools



# GUIDELINES FOR INTERCULTURAL COOPERATIONS with a local partner

Successful interventions depend on:

Equal and intimate dialogues between researchers, the executing consultant units, and end users.

General programs must be adapted to local language, cultural strengths and needs.

Partners must be involved in program design and implementations

A pilot 2008-12, applied and evaluated  
with partners in twelve European Union countries

Leaders of foster family and orphanage organizations were educated and trained  
their staff with group training sessions in:

English, Danish, Latvian, Polish, Russian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Turkish, Spanish,  
Catalan, Greek, Italian.



## 2012: THE FAIRSTART FOUNDATION

### **Mission:**

To empower any NGO, government or professional group with online, research based staff educations and caregiver group training programs.

To strengthen local professionals and their communities.

Contribute to international standards for mental health educations.

Disseminate scientific recommendations for quality care and learning.

SIX MONTHS OF EDUCATION FOR 25 STAFF  
- DESIGNED ON THE EdX UNIVERSITY PLATFORM FROM HARVARD AND MIT



## THINK GLOBAL, ACT LOCAL:

Research to match local care culture, language, stressors and strenghts

PARTNER: SOS CHILDREN'S VILLAGES DENMARK

THE SOSCV` STRATEGY: MOVE CHILDREN FROM VILLAGES TO  
COMMUNITY CARE, AND RE-UNITE CHILDREN WITH THEIR FAMILIES

250 SOS STAFF EDUCATED IN NINE AFRICAN COUNTRIES  
THEY HAVE TRAINED THE CAREGIVERS OF 35.000 CHILDREN

GOVERNMENT STAFF AND LOCAL RESEARCHERS PARTICIPATE



# A 3-DAY LOCAL STARTUP SEMINAR FOR 30 PARTNER STAFF

Attachment-, learning and group development theory  
How to participate in their six-month online classroom



Each student trains a caregiver groups at 7 group sessions

Caregivers make work plans



One class covers 1200 children



## FIVE DANISH GROUP HOMES FOR YOUTH AT HIGH RISK





FOR GREENLAND GOVERNMENT: CROSS-PROFESSIONAL EDUCATIONS FOR PEDAGOGUES, TEACHERS, SOCIAL WORKERS, FOSTER FAMILY CONSULTANTS - IN INUIT AND DANISH



CAREGIVERS LEARN THE BASICS OF ATTACHMENT THEORY:  
A SECURE BASE ELICITS EXPLORATION BEHAVIOR:  
PLAY AND LEARNING



# MEASURING OUTCOMES

We designed two pre-and post- training Scorecards using smileys (for non-readers)

Caregivers are assisted by their instructor.

One for caregiver stress and knowledge about how care for traumatized children and youth.

One for caregiver's assessment of each child's development on five dimensions:

Emotional state, social behavior, exploration behavior, trust in the caregiver, endurance in difficult tasks.

Scorecards were externally compared to SDQ and other instruments by prof. Tobias Hecker – sufficient validity and reliability from age 0-12.

AVG child development improvement after 6 months of caregiver trainings: 20 %.

## THREE FOSTER MOTHERS REFLECT ON THEIR NEW MINDSETS



## STUDY THE FREE GROUP TRAINING SESSIONS ONLINE

Go to [www.fairstartfoundation.com](http://www.fairstartfoundation.com) , click "English".

Scroll down to "Choose Language and Training Programmes"

Click your language flag. Then hold cursor over "Foster Care" or "Group Care" in the menu line.

A list of group training sessions comes up – click any topic to open.

Permission for non-profit purposes, mail to [info@fairstartfoundation.com](mailto:info@fairstartfoundation.com) , to Niels Rygaard and Morten Jac.

For a demo version of our educations, click [here](#). Click "View course" choose a password, and sign in.

For program research papers and presentations, click [here](#)

Behavioral Science  
in the Global Arena  
Volume IV

**CHILDREN AROUND THE WORLD  
THE FUTURE OF OUR EARTH**



EDITED BY  
Niels Peter Rygaard, Uwe Gielen,  
Elaine Congress, and Julia Larock

## BOOK ABOUT GLOBAL INTERVENTIONS

IN THIS PCUN BOOK SERIES, WE ASKED 17 RESEARCHERS  
FROM AROUND THE WORLD:

*“PLEASE DESCRIBE MAJOR RISKS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN YOUR FIELD,  
AND DESCRIBE YOUR INTERVENTION PROGRAMS”*

- ANOTHER SMALL STEP TOWARDS A GLOBAL PSYCHOLOGIST MINDSET

TO BE PUBLISHED FEBRUARY 2024. CLICK [HERE](#) TO ORDER

Thank you for your attention!

Discussion – questions, comments?

**FAIRSTART  
FOUNDATION**

**HELP CHILDREN SAVE THE WORLD**

**Program research papers and presentations:**

<https://independent.academia.edu/NielsRygaard>