

FROM THE EDITOR

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The Seventh International Child and Youth Care Conference was held in August of 2003 at the University of Victoria in British Columbia, Canada. The theme of the conference was Promise into Practice, and the intent of the organizers was to encourage discussion of what is promising in current approaches to working with young people and families. This volume of the Journal constitutes the proceedings of Promise into Practice and provides an excellent representation of papers on that theme. Not only do the majority of articles showcase innovative practices in Child and Youth Care, the range of contributions is astounding, in terms of: methodologies described, theoretical orientations to practice, and style of presentation. In this volume of the Journal are contributions from seven countries, our most international issue to date, and this too reflects the reality of Victoria. More difficult to capture, however, is the spirit that prevailed at the conference, which is aptly described in the Guest Editorial, which follows, by Mark Littlefield.

The significance of this International Child and Youth Care Conference went beyond the high quality of the sessions. The diversity of the numerous (over 300!!!) presentations, the well-organized schedule, the beautiful UVic campus and spacious accommodation, the luxurious social events...all paled in comparison to the spirit of hopefulness and camaraderie that was experienced by all who attended. Despite the range of settings we came from, the significant cultural and regional differences, even our diverse approaches to the work itself, we all were there to celebrate the field and each other. This was visible in renewed and energetic discussions of certification in the U.S., Canada, and beyond; in positive participation in workshops and plenary sessions; and in the mutual support that was demonstrated over and over again. Professionals from all over the world were reaching out and cheering each other on to continue with the difficult task of doing the work and developing the profession.

This conference left me more hopeful than ever about the future of our field. Our research and practice is better articulated than ever, and we are clearly learning how to promote ourselves and what we do. I think you will find that this issue of the Journal not only demonstrates the depth and range of the content provided by the Seventh International Child and Youth Care Conference, it also truly communicates the promise that the future holds for our profession.