



Boundary Peace Initiative meetings suspended until at least 3 commit to attend regularly. For info call 250 442 0434.

To Do

The BC Southern Interior Peace Coalition Fall Conference on Oct. 22 in Kelowna. For more info phone Laura at 250-442-0434 or email L4peace@telus.net.

In Canada most live with abundance and peace while so many suffer from war, violence and poverty. Too often, we create the situations that erupt in bloodshed. As we celebrate Thanksgiving take a moment to remember the pain of so many around the world and our local communities.



Aid world seeks better recipe for clean cook stoves in emergencies (Sept. 29, 2014)
 By: Maria Caspani (Thomson Reuters Foundation)

There's a war or a natural disaster. Families lose their homes and put together makeshift shelters. Then the aid worker lands on the scene and hands out a relief item favorite: the clean-energy cook stove.

But can a solar model, for example, provide enough energy to prepare rice or beans? Not really, experts say, urging relief agencies to tailor their assistance to better fit the practical needs and cultural settings on the ground.

"You can't tell a woman how to cook her meals," Daniel Wolf, executive director of the Washington-based **International Lifeline Fund**, said at a panel discussion last week on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly and Climate Week NYC.

"(It would be like) telling an Italian woman how to cook pasta - that from now on she has to cook it in the microwave," said Wolf, whose organization has delivered fuel-saving stoves for emergencies in Africa and Haiti.

Currently, 500 million households around the world do not have access to clean, safe energy, experts say.

Energy is crucial for communities affected by war or natural disasters to ensure their self-resilience and safety. Children need light to do their homework at night and most refugee camps are dark and potentially dangerous after sunset.

Clean cook stoves are meant to help people get back on their feet cooking meals, but many models do not cater to the needs posed by different humanitarian settings and emergencies.

"We're inundated with cook stoves, but we haven't figured out yet what works best for refugees," Alexander Aleinikoff, the U.N. deputy high commissioner for refugees told the panel.

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Our Mission

The Boundary Peace Initiative represents a growing number of area residents of diverse backgrounds brought together over the 2002 Iraqi crisis.

We support multilateral action for non-violent conflict resolution, human rights, ecological integrity for the planet and international law, through education and dialogue locally and globally.

We encourage everyone's participation as we strive for peace and justice to build a better world for future generations.

BPI web site:

www.boundarypeace.20m.com

(From last column) **Cook Stoves DANGEROUS, DIRTY DUTY**

In many communities in the developing world, gathering firewood and water for cooking is a woman's duty, and is rife with risk, particularly in conflict zones.

Women get exposed to the "most incredible dangers" and are often raped while collecting firewood, said Sarah Costa, executive director of the New York-based advocacy group, the **Women's Refugee Commission**.

These responsibilities are also a major hurdle to keeping girls in school, as girls are often tasked with these chores or forced to stay home to look after their siblings while their mothers collect fuel.

Smoke from cooking fires not only causes outdoor pollution, taking a toll on the environment, but also produces indoor pollution, which is one of the top five killers of children, said Susan Bissell of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

The panelists pressed the humanitarian world to rethink the way it provides clean energy to people affected by emergencies.

One way to bring innovative solutions to the challenges posed by cook stoves would be to enlist assistance from researchers, Bissell said.

Experts also highlighted the need to make safe and clean energy programmes more marketable and profitable in order to attract more private sector investment.

<http://www.trust.org/item/20140929105952-e4pzd/>

Nuclear disarmament progress is off track. Delay comes with a high price tag...there are no right hands for wrong weapons.

Ban Ki-Moon 2013

Spare the rod - the biology of poverty and violence

From: UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian

NEW YORK, 30 May 2014 (IRIN) - Scientific advances in human biology may soon have a profound bearing on the policies that governments and organizations adopt towards young mothers, caregivers and babies in poor and stressed communities. There is an emerging body of scientific evidence to show that the environment in which a very young baby develops is pivotal in shaping its brain in ways that can significantly influence its chances in later life.

“Toxic stress”, depicting a relentless cycle of stress inflicted on a child whose parents may be battling to survive, unable to nurture it properly; or where there may be violence, neglect and/or poor nutrition, can result in negative patterning on the baby’s brain that can inhibit intellectual and emotional growth and hamper his or her chances of success. This negative imprint, just like a positive imprint, gets handed down from one generation to the next.

University of Cape Town-affiliated neurobiologist, Barak Morgan, says: “We have known for a long time that early childhood is very important, but now science is telling us exactly how important it is.” Whereas educational policies tend to stress the importance of the early school years, the new science suggests that the birth to three-year time frame could be the most cost-effective and critical period for intervention in a child’s life.

In a paper entitled, “Biological embedding of early childhood adversity: Toxic stress and the vicious cycle of poverty in South Africa”, Morgan explains how signals from the environment are known to add permanent “epigenetic marks” onto DNA during sensitive periods of early brain development – both before and after birth. Then a period of resistance settles in, where it becomes very difficult to change these pathways. It is not known exactly when all of these brief, sensitive windows occur, but the first two to three years in a child’s life are critical for him or her to acquire emotional self-regulation skills that make the difference between failure and success later in life.

Spare the rod

Groundbreaking research by Canadian Michael Meany several years ago on lab rats showed that the amount of licking and grooming the baby rats received in their first days of life determined their responses to stress. Those that received minimal licking and grooming were primed to survive their environment with “flight or fight” responses” by having more epigenetic marks on the brain’s major stress gene. Pups that were licked and groomed adequately, regardless of whether by their biological mother or a surrogate mother, had less of these marks, which made them resilient to stress and primed to thrive. Later studies on humans, also in Canada, showed that the brains of suicide victims had more epigenetic marks, similar to those of the poorly nurtured rat pups.

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(From last column) Spare the rod

“The shape and impact of these pathways are sculpted in a once-off way during early development when environmental influences, as mediated by parental care, are most deeply embedded in offspring biology,” Morgan writes. Crucially, the epigenetic marks hamper the development of more sophisticated, flexible “top down” brain functioning that is associated with strong self-regulation and the ability to thrive, as distinguished from more reflex, survival-oriented, “bottom up” brain functioning.

Morgan writes that children with poor self-regulation are shown to mature into adults with “significantly higher rates of substance dependence, criminality, financial problems and single parenthood, and significantly lower income, financial planning skills, socioeconomic status and physical health.”

He adds: “Only very recently has interdisciplinary neuroscience begun to reveal and characterize the stress of chronic poverty as a major environmental toxin that becomes embedded in the biological fabric of bodies and minds in ways that cripple healthy development.”

Nature and nurture

Things have moved very fast since these fairly recent research findings and an entire body of literature is now emerging around “how the environment gets embedded in biology,” he says. The new findings render the “nature” versus “nurture” debate obsolete. Morgan says it is now clear that genes and the environment form an inseparable whole. “Genes can do nothing alone, something in the environment must tell DNA when and what to do. Nature versus Nurture turns out to be Nature *and* Nurture,” he writes.

Furthermore, this embedding of the environment in the genes “gains intergenerational momentum”, he says. The lab rat research shows that rat pups that were not licked and groomed properly, matured into adults that did not nurture their own pups properly either. This helps to explain how the cycle of poverty and deprivation can be reinforced from one generation to the next.

While there is always room for new science, those in the field are not contesting the latest findings. Some argue that there is enough evidence at hand to nudge governments into implementing new policies that aim to reduce the impact of violence and poverty on babies and toddlers. Leading the pack is Harvard University’s Center on the Developing Child director, Jack Shonkoff, an expert in child health and development.

"Our knowledge about what is happening inside a child’s brain must direct our attention outside – to the environment – and to reducing poverty and violence. Later exposure in life to these negatives can also impact a child’s development but early exposure seems to be the most scarring" (Continued page 3)

(From Page 2) **Spare the rod**

After a recent UNICEF panel discussion by scientists on the subject, Shonkoff said in a televised interview: “The quality of the foundation we build in the first couple of years doesn't completely determine everything that is going to come later, but it nevertheless sets you up for a lifetime of good prospects for healthy development, or it puts you in a deep hole that says the risks are much greater that you will have problems across the board.”

In the interview Shonkoff says that the new science is leading to a much deeper understanding of why poor nutrition is so problematic in early childhood. “It's not just because kids are not growing well but it's because their brain development is affected by it.” He adds that interventions that merely offer stimulation for children in poor communities are inadequate. “It's a matter of figuring out how to protect their developing brain from the stress – toxic stress – associated with chronic exposure to violence, really deep poverty and the day-to-day stress of just barely getting by.”

Lawrence Aber, a psychologist from New York University's Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development, is an expert on the impact of poverty and violence on early child development. “Before, policymakers didn't think very young children would be affected so badly because they didn't talk or didn't seem to be aware,” he says. “Now however, science has shown just the opposite. In fact they are highly sensitive to their environment – more so than at any other time in their life cycle.” Aber is involved in research on how HIV/AIDs and poverty impacts on children in South Africa.

Policy implications

The new research has profound and practical implications for policy, he believes. “Our knowledge about what is happening inside a child's brain must direct our attention outside – to the environment – and to reducing poverty and violence.” Later exposure in life to these negatives can also impact a child's development but early exposure seems to be the most scarring. “The earlier the twig is bent the more likely it is to grow in the direction you bend it. The earliest years are the most vulnerable years,” he adds.

But what is the prognosis for the countless babies who have already been exposed to toxic stress? The science seems to suggest that early damage is irreversible. This is not so, say the scientists, however. “It is not just a story of doom and gloom, or a case of once bent always broken,” says Aber. “One must remember that human beings – including very young and vulnerable ones – have enormous capacity for resilience, or what developmental scientists call plasticity. Children can bounce back. We can help them recover from the toxic stress they experience in infancy and toddlerhood.”

Morgan also sites research on Romanian babies in institutions that shows the importance of timing to counteract the effects of stress. (Continued page 4)

Book Recommendations



Frontline Ukraine: Crisis in the Borderlands

By Richard Sakwa © Jan. 3 2015

Publisher: I. B. Tauris

The unfolding crisis in Ukraine has brought the world to the brink of a new Cold War. As Russia and Ukraine tussle for Crimea and the Eastern regions, relations between Putin and the West have reached an all-time low. How did we get here? Richard Sakwa here unpicks the story of Russo-Ukrainian relations and traces the path to the recent disturbances through five “revolutions,” that have forced Ukraine, a country internally divided between East and West, to choose between a closer union with Europe or its historic ties with Russia. The first full account of the ongoing crisis, Frontline Ukraine explains the origins, developments and global significance of the battle for Crimea. With all eyes focused on the region, Sakwa unravels the myths and misunderstandings of the situation, providing an essential and highly readable account of the struggle for Europe's contested borderlands.

Ed Note: If you read a book or see a film you feel is of value and interest to others, please let me know at L4peace@telus.net .

“Business as usual” will create a thirsty planet in 15 years, says UN

By: Magda Mis Thomson Reuters Foundation March 2015

The planet faces a 40 percent water shortfall due to urbanisation, population growth and increasing demand LONDON, March 20 (Thomson Reuters Foundation) - The planet faces a 40 percent shortfall in water supplies in 15 years due to urbanisation, population growth and increasing demand for water for food production, energy and industry, the United Nations said on Friday.

Competition for water between water-thirsty sectors means better management is essential to ensure everybody gets the water they need, said the World Water Development Report.

With “business as usual” the world is facing a “collapse in our global socioeconomic system,” Richard Connor, lead author of the report, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

By 2050 two thirds of the world's population will be living in cities and demand for water is expected to increase by 55 percent, mainly from demands related to growing urbanisation in developing countries. (Continued page 4)

(From Page 3) **Spare the rod**

The cognitive and social outcomes for severely emotionally deprived babies adopted before 20 months of age were as good as those of their Canadian and British peers who had not been deprived. However, for those adopted after 20 months of age, the prognosis was less rosy. There is also the “dandelions” and “orchids” hypothesis, which suggests that some children (dandelions) are less genetically predisposed to being influenced – positively or negatively - by their environment than others who are more sensitive (orchids).

While there is growing awareness of the need for investment in children long before they enter school, Aber believes that not everyone is ready to act. “The logic is irrefutable but we haven’t made the policy investments yet,” he says, adding however that governments in developing countries “are starting to realize that if they don’t affect change in the first years of a child’s life there will be a glass ceiling on what can be achieved in the education system and ultimately, on national productivity.”

For children living in poverty in South Africa, where domestic violence rates are high, toxic stress “is a newly recognized pandemic that must be addressed,” Morgan argues.

Invest in children

But what kind of interventions can be made? Aber sites the benefits of the “conditional cash transfer” system on poverty alleviation efforts in Latin America and increasingly, Africa and South Asia.

“These cash payments to very poor families are conditional on the family’s investment in the child’s development,” he says. These schemes encourage mothers to attend antenatal classes, get their babies immunized and their children to attend school, for example. They can be adopted to help minimize the effects of poverty and violence too.

Visits from health workers to new mothers have been shown to improve parental practices in Khayelitsha, South Africa, for example. Programs that help parents understand the dangers of exposing their young children to toxic stress, and help them find ways to shield them from it, can help too.

But what is called for, says Aber, is far more than small-scale programmatic intervention. “The entire system needs to address this on a broad population level.”



(From page 3) **“Business as usual”**

Urbanisation means that access to safe water and adequate sanitation, although typically higher in cities, has decreased in the fastest growing urban areas.

One example is sub-Saharan Africa, where urbanisation - often unplanned - is happening most rapidly. Here the proportion of people who have piped water on their premises has fallen to 34 percent from 42 percent since 1990.

“The spontaneous urbanisation, which creates slums, makes it very difficult because of the layout of the slums to provide water,” Joan Clos, executive director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in a phone interview from Nairobi.

“Once you have a street then for the water operator it becomes very easy to reach the plots.”

MORE PEOPLE, MORE FOOD

By 2050 the world will have to produce 60 percent more food and the global water demand for industry is predicted to increase by 400 percent, said the report, published ahead of World Water Day on March 22.

The growing population will also need 70 percent more energy and water is required to produce almost all forms of it. “You have to manage water. If you’re using less water because of your proper irrigation and soil management in agriculture that allows more water to be available for other users,” Connor said.

“Every sector has to pitch in and do its best to be water efficient.”

Investing in sustainable water management, although costly, pays off: a \$15 to 30 billion invested in improved water resources management in developing countries can have an annual income return of \$60 billion, the report said.

“Over the long term investing in water and sanitation is cost-effective. That is the convincing argument that it’s not just to help the poor, it’s actually good business,” said Connor.

Cities with long-term water plans will have more robust economies within decades, he said, because people who have access to clean water are healthier and have a better chance of getting educated and finding jobs. (Reporting by Magdalena Mis; Editing by Ros Russell)

Dwight D. Eisenhower said at the Geneva Summit in 1955: “War has failed. The only way to save the world now is through diplomacy.”

The Boundary Peace Initiative (BPI) welcomes articles. All articles are the responsibility of the author and may not be common consensus. To submit an article, contact **Laura** at **250-442-0434** or **L4peace@telus.net**. The BPI is a member of: BC Southern Interior Peace Coalition, Abolition 2000, Lawyers Against the War, affiliate of the Fellowship of Reconciliation; we work with local and global peace, social justice and environmental groups.

Voice your opinion to the Prime Minister and all MPs. Free postage: {Name of MP}, Parliament Buildings, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6
Go to the Government of Canada website for emails of all MPs, Ministers at **<http://www.canada.gc.ca>**