

**The Center for Women's
Health Studies and Promotion at
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev**



ANNUAL REPORT 2020

1. **Name of the Center:** THE BEN-GURION UNIVERSITY NEGEV CENTER FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH STUDIES AND PROMOTION

3. **Center Director:** Prof. Julie Cwikel, PhD, the Spitzer Department of Social Work

4. **Center Advisory Board**

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Prof. David Wittstein, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

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Dr. Nirit Mordish-Volk, Maslan

Prof. Orly Sarid, Department of Social Work

Prof. Ilana Shoham-Vardi, Department of Epidemiology, Emeritus

Prof. Shifra Shvarts, Faculty of Health Sciences, Emeritus

Dr. Yanna Shraga, Department of Social Work

5. **Center Steering Committee**

Prof. Aya Biderman, MD, Family Medicine

Prof. Julie Cwikel, Department of Social Work

Prof. Ephrat Huss, Department of Social Work

Ms. Orly Liberman, Recanati School of Nursing

Prof. Orly Sarid, Department of Social Work

Prof. Ilana Shoham-Vardi, Department of Epidemiology

Dr. Ofer Emanuel Edelstein, Department of Social Work

Women's health in times of Corona - Your support is more important than ever

We have been following the global trends on how COVID19 has affected women and families. The statistics show that women while women have a similar probability to men of being infected, men are close to three times more likely to be admitted to an intensive care unit and 1 1/2 times more likely to die from COVID19 than women (data from Peckham et al. 2020). On the other hand, those who are termed “long haulers” or formerly healthy and young persons who were infected and now suffered chronic fatigue, shortness of breath, brain fog and other neurological and physiological after-effects of the infection are four times as likely to be women (Rubin, 2020, <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/article-abstract/2771111>) .



As in many adverse events, one in four Israelis were either laid off, furloughed or lost income and of these women and the poor are the most severely affected. The closing of small business due to repeated lockdowns has adversely affected women and has pushed thousands of families under the poverty line. Those who are still employed, and working from home, are fighting a daily battle to keep focused on job tasks while helping school children at home and trying to study through ZOOM. While in the first lockdown many mobilized resources, by the second and third round of restrictions, battle fatigue has set in. Reports of domestic violence have increased and we have seen in our Mom to Mom and Isha Be-Shela counseling programs, a sharp increase in those who are looking for support and psychological help. While our services are at peak demand, our Center's capacity has been severely taxed, meaning that we need your support, our dedicated donors, more than ever to continue our “tikkun olam” work in the community.



Center Research and Community Activities

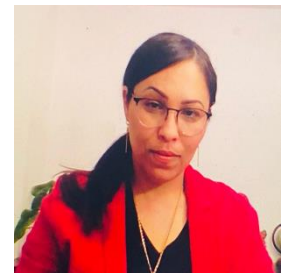
We invite you to read our 2020 annual report, which describes the research and community activities of the Center refocused during the COVID19 crisis. Despite the myriad challenges, we kept our services open and reached out to connect with new mothers in Mom to Mom, who gave birth under the cloud of uncertainty and anxiety that characterizes this year, 2020. In spite of the pressures of the situation, we started several new research and intervention programs, which we present in this report.

Meet new staff members

This year, we were delighted to welcome back to Isha Be-Shela, **Ms. Neta Magen**, who rejoined our counseling service (she had been one of the first psychotherapists in Isha Be-Shela) as the senior supervisor in both Isha Be-Shela and Saban project with a specialty in working with women with multiple trauma and psychiatric disorders. She takes over from **Sarit Pinchasy**, who now is scaling back and will be supervising one group of psychotherapists. Neta will be in charge of staff enrichment meetings and training as well as on-going supervision of the psychotherapists.



We are thrilled to have **Dr. Samira Alfeumi-Zeadna** join the staff of Mom to Mom, as a post-doctoral researcher in charge of developing services especially for women from the Bedouin community who are trying to cope with symptoms of post-partum depression. She is driving force behind this new project, which was graced with two new grants, which are detailed in the report.



New Research:

An integrative method of diagnosis using speech and narrative analysis for Covid19 – Prof. Julie Cwikel, together with Dr. Dan Vilenchik (Computer Engineering), Dr. Alison Stern Perez (Center post-doctoral fellow) and Mr. Ruslan Sergienko (Health Sciences)

Exposure to pain, stress and trauma, and our emotional and behavioral responses, affect our well-being and health, which, in turn, can seriously affect our functioning. The identification of physical and mental disorders and/or physical expressions of mental distress are key issues for researchers, service providers, and patients. Therefore, an efficient, real-time assessment of depression, anxiety and chronic pain through recorded speech patterns may prove critical for adequate differential diagnosis, and health care delivery particularly in times of crisis such as with COVID19. Speech and non-verbal vocal expressions are good markers—both conscious and non-conscious—of how people express depression, anxiety, and pain, which is often difficult, given widespread co-morbid presentations.

Affective speech processing refers to the analysis, through machine learning, of the vocal expressions of mental affective or physical states, involving a large variety of physiological and cognitive mechanisms such as breath, muscle tone, and verbal capacity. Analysis of vocal features can be bolstered by the addition of narrative or linguistic markers of speech associated with trauma or pain, including the identification of emotion words and the assessment of their frequency and valence (positive or negative). However, the combination of vocal speech analysis (how one speaks) and the narrative analysis (what is said) has yet to be accomplished, especially across multiple diagnostic categories. Few studies have systematically attempted to evaluate in an integrative fashion, the linguistic narratives and the paralinguistic contents of speech, either in the general population or among populations at risk.

We are now conducting a novel integrative analysis based on machine learning (ML) and AI, of both the verbal and non-verbal contents of speech to directly, but unobtrusively, assess vocal and linguistic markers for physiological, psychological distress and emotional well-being of the speakers giving us an opportunity to provide rapid, unbiased identification of a variety of clinical states of being: pain, stress, depression and anxiety

The two channels of human communication (verbal and non-verbal) complement each other; thus, tools that utilize both channels are both innovative and promising. We propose to analyze the

recorded speech, using ML methods, of three populations: 1) chronic pain patients attending the Functional Neurology Clinic under the direction of Dr. Yacov Ezra at Soroka University Hospital; 2) community dwelling adults who are affected by the COVID19 pandemic; 3) adults who are currently in psychotherapy treatment for either anxiety (including PTSD), or depression. The ultimate goal will be to develop objective and unobtrusive diagnostic aids, suitable for use in everyday and clinical situations.

This proposal was funded by President Daniel Chamovitz's COVID19 fund and through the generosity of anonymous donors.

New Research: Studies in alternative family structures

Prof. Dorit Segal-Engelchin continues her studies of alternative family and parenting configurations. This year she started a study of the quality of life and health of fathers in different family structures comparing heterogay (a gay father parenting with a heterosexual female partner), divorced, and married fathers.

In another study, she is exploring the quality of parenting and relationships between parents and children and their psychological well-being among children who grow up in three family structures: hetero-gay families, families where parents are divorced, and families where parents are married.

In addition, **Prof. Engelchin** has started two new studies with her postdoctoral fellows. With **Dr. Chen Yaari**, she is studying the motivations of women for the establishment of a one-child family. In another study, with **Dr. Maya Tsfati**, she is examining the experiences of single gay fathers.

Ongoing Research: Identifying Postpartum Depression by Combining Machine Learning and Actigraph Tracking

A multidisciplinary grant from BGU for **Prof. Julie Cwikel** and **Prof. Shlomi Dolev** of Computer Sciences allowed us to track the mood and activity levels of new mothers in order to differentiate between mothers with and without symptoms of Post-partum depression using actigraphs (devices worn like a wristwatch). We finished data collection and were able to show that machine learning successfully differentiated between depressed and non-depressed mothers. Two papers were written from these findings and presented at computer conferences. We are now in the process of doing additional data analysis to prepare a third paper.

A multidisciplinary study on the use of art as a method of stress assessment using different methods of drawing

The Technology-ART study has been completed and the preliminary analyses have been completed. Forty-eight women, fluent in Hebrew were recruited to participate in an experiment tailored to examine the psychological and physiological differences in stress reduction through art-making and were randomly assigned to draw with oil pastels on paper or on a 12-Inch iPad Pro with the Art-Rage program. Before drawing, participants' stress levels were induced by the "sing a song" stress test. Heart rate variability was measured throughout the experiment and two salivary samples for cortisol were taken: one at the beginning of the experiment as a baseline and the second after 45 minutes of art-making. We concluded that art-making with digital media may be equally effective in stress reduction as art-making with traditional art materials. We are now reanalyzing the heart-rate variability data to verify the correlations between saliva cortisol and stress reduction from the art engagement. We believe that there are important clinical implications for working with populations coping with chronic illness who may not be able to use traditional art supplies and need to use digital platforms.

The collaborating researchers are: **Dr. Johanna Czamanski-Cohen** (University of Haifa), **Prof. Julie Cwikel** and **Prof. Orly Sarid** (The Center for Women's Health Studies and Promotion, BGU), and **Dr. Giora Galili** (Open University). This is supported by a grant from a private donor.

Chernobyl effects on women, men and children, 34 years later

The worst environmental disaster of the twentieth century occurred over 30 years ago, when in the early morning hours of April 26th, 1986, the nuclear reactor at Chernobyl exploded, blowing off the 1000-ton concrete roof and dispersing radioactive particles all over Europe. This constituted the "largest short-term release from a single source of radioactive materials to the atmosphere ever recorded". In 1991, **Prof. Michael Quastel** and colleagues conducted whole-body counts for radioactive cesium isotopes (¹³⁷Cs) and physical exams on a sample of 723 adults and 300 children (aged 0 to 16 at the time of the accident), who had immigrated to Israel from areas in the Former Soviet Union (FSU) affected by the Chernobyl accident.

Now 33 years after this "natural experiment", we are now examining the chronic health effects in general among men and women and the reproductive effects among women who have been exposed to low-levels of ionizing radiation from the Chernobyl. Using hospitalization data from Soroka University Hospital, we are comparing their reproductive health outcomes with a series of

comparison groups: non-exposed immigrants from other areas of FSU, immigrants from other countries (e.g. North and South America, Western Europe, North African/Asia, Ethiopia), and native-born Israelis. A paper was published this year in the Journal of Clinical Medicine: **Reproductive outcomes among immigrant women exposed to the Chernobyl accident** with the collaboration of **Prof. Eyal Sheiner** and biostatistician, **Ruslan Sergienko**, and **Dr. Danna Slusky**. A final paper on the hospitalizations of this cohort with all the collaborating researchers is under review for publication.

Examining Treatment Preferences for Women Post-Partum, With and Without Post-Partum Depression

This research focused on the treatment preferences of women after childbirth, including options for web-based treatment, treatment by telephone and through groups. **Prof. Orly Sarid**, **Prof. Julie Cwikel** and **Dr. Meital Simhi**, have finished analyzing the data set on 1,000 post-partum women collected from the Rehovot region from the district Tipat Halav (Mother and Child Health Clinics) on their treatment preferences in the face of post-partum depression or anxiety. The data show that women are clear that they want treatment options available in the community, without having to resort to mental health services, due to the stigma attached to receiving psychiatric care. About 10% of the women in the study showed signs of PPD and this affected the type of treatment they preferred. This research was supported by a grant funded by the Gertner Institute for Epidemiology and Health Policy Research. Last year we published a paper was published in the Israel Journal of Health Policy Research entitled "*Preferences for mental health treatment for post-partum depression among new mothers*". Another paper is now under review from these data looking at the Health Belief Model and its effect on mothers' service preferences.

CB-ART (cognitive behavioral and art-based interventions), collaborative research with Monash University in perinatal mental health

This clinical intervention which combines between cognitive behavioral and art based therapy methods, has been the source of a number of publications with **Dr. Ephrat Huss**, **Prof. Orly Sarid**, **Dr. Johanna Czamanski-Cohen** & **Prof. Julie Cwikel**. Last year we completed a project funded by the Pratt Foundation through a special BGU-Monash University grant initiative. Our colleagues from the Monash University, **Prof. Jane Fisher** and **Dr. Heather Rowe** of the Jeanne Haile Research Center replicated our CBART protocol in Melbourne to reduce perinatal depression and

anxiety. Last year we completed a test of their workbook-based protocol, called WAWA (Why Are We Anxious?) with 34 new mothers, working to ease common anxieties that present during pregnancy and in the post-partum period. Our analyses show that it is very effective in reducing symptoms of anxiety, stress and depression in the post-partum period and very acceptable to the mothers who participated. A paper has been submitted for publication from these findings and is under review (revise and resubmit). Our colleagues in Monash are working on a paper from their CBART results.

The Myriam de Senarclens Prize -CB-ART: The Reduction of Psychological Stress and its Physiological Correlates among Women Undergoing In Vitro Fertilization (IVF)

CB-ART is a 2-4 session treatment protocol that has been utilized with women coping with stress, depression, and pain and is effective in reducing these indicators. The research group, **Dr. Johanna Czamanski-Cohen, Prof. Orly Sarid, Prof. Julie Cwikel & Dr. Iris Har-Vardi**, received funds from the **Myriam de Senarclens Foundation** to conduct a randomized controlled trial of a CB-ART intervention with 100 women with elevated perceived stress, before undergoing IVF treatment; in order to examine its effect on perceived stress, plasma CFD, telomere length and pregnancy rates. The program was stalled because the IVF unit was not running during most of this year, due to cutbacks caused by Covid19. They are now back to work and collecting the data from the final 5 participants for this study. Ms. Rachel Abramowitz is coordinating the conduct of the research.



John R. Goldsmith Memorial Prize Winner

This year's prize winner of the Prof. John R. Goldsmith student prize is **Ron Sarafian** whose PhD research is on Geographical and Environmental applications of modern statistical learning algorithms. He used machine learning and statistical theory to analyze spatio-temporal climate, and environmental data, acquired by remote-sensing. Advisors: **Dr. Johnathan Rosenblatt**, and **Prof. Itai Kloog**. He gave a seminar on "A domain adaptation approach for the performance estimation of spatial predictions" in a departmental seminar in the department of Geography and Environmental Development on December 23rd, 2020.

Graduate Students Creating New Research in Women's Health

Congratulations 3 PhD graduates this year:

Nava Dihi-Tabu: Jointly supervised by **Prof. Dorit Segal-Engelchin** and **Prof. Jonathan Anson**: "Endogamy and Homogamy: Jewish Marriage Market in Early 21st century".

Noa Kfir-Levin: "The rehabilitation community as experienced by both rehabilitants and therapists: The "Hiram" case" Supervised by **Prof. Dorit Segal-Engelchin**.

Nirit Volk: "The helping connection: how mothers of daughters who were sexually abused experience the relationship to their daughter's therapist". She was supervised by **Prof. Julie Cwikel**

Post-doctoral fellows

With Prof. Dorit Segal Engelchin:

Dr. Chen Yaari, she is studying the motivations of women for the establishment of a one-child family.

Dr. Maya Tsfati, she is examining the experiences of single gay fathers.

With Prof. Julie Cwikel:

Dr. Alison Stern Perez – Dr. Perez developed her Narrative Method for Assessment of Psychosocial Processing (NMAPP) as a tool to allow a detailed qualitative analysis of the traumatic nature of a narrated event and its current processing using tenses, pronouns and other word markers such as emotion words. She is validating her findings with a set of birth narratives from three time points (at birth, at one and four months), collected by **Dr. Tahli Frenkel** of the Interdisciplinary Center in Hertzlia. In addition, she is teaching a 3rd year research seminar with Prof. Cwikel on **mixed method research**.

New PhD students:

Joining our research team under the supervision of Dr. Perez and Prof. Cwikel are two new PhD students: **Shani Vichinski-Tanneboim** (comparing the birth narratives of prima versus multipara mothers) and **Noa Shviger** (comparison of the birth narratives of mothers with c-section and vaginal deliveries).

Supervised by **Prof. Orly Sarid** and **Dr. Netta Achdut**, we welcome **Noah Rotman** who is studying the demographic predictors of loneliness.

Continuing PHD Students

Talia Aizen: "Establishing a relationship with a widower with young children: Women's perspectives". Supervised by **Prof. Dorit Segal-Engelchin**. Talia is continuing to analyze her data. Her thesis was submitted and is under review.

Nuha Sliman: The effect of family structure on children's morbidity in the first year of life in Arab society. Jointly supervised by **Prof. Jonathan Anson** and **Prof. Julie Cwikel**. Her thesis was submitted and is under review.

Alex Davidov: "Neurofeedback training as a tool that contributes to function and regulation of the emotions under stress among Israeli soldiers in IDF" supervised by **Prof. Julie Cwikel** and **Prof. Talma Hendler**, Tel Aviv University, Sackler Medical School. Alex finished collecting his data and is now beginning data analysis and writing.

Liat Hofer: (Jointly supervised by **Prof. Dorit Segal-Engelchin** with **Prof. Shifra Shvarts**): "Health and Psychosocial characteristics of Women and Men Coping with hair loss from childhood as a result of a disease." Liat is writing her thesis.

Lior Deray: Supervised by **Prof. Julie Cwikel**. Her topic: adjustment of soldiers in combat support roles: effect of background variables, coping strategies, gender and unit atmosphere on drop-out. She completed the data collection for this study and is now beginning her data analysis. This research is taking place in the IDF mental health unit with the collaboration of **Dr. Avishay Antonovsky**.

Merav Daniel: Merav is an educational psychologist who is testing of a cognitive-behavioral protocol to promote the return to work of women recovering from breast cancer. She is being jointly supervised by **Prof. Julie Cwikel**, **Dr. Ofer Edelstein** and **Dr. Svetlana Prokashev**.

New Medical Student

Ms. Batya Montag, a medical student, is studying the factors influencing the return of new mothers to work following maternity leave. She is being jointly supervised by Prof. Cwikel and her colleague, **Dr. Lilah Rinsky Halivni** of Hebrew University Medical School.



Students in Public Health Supervised by Prof. Ilana Shoham-Vardi

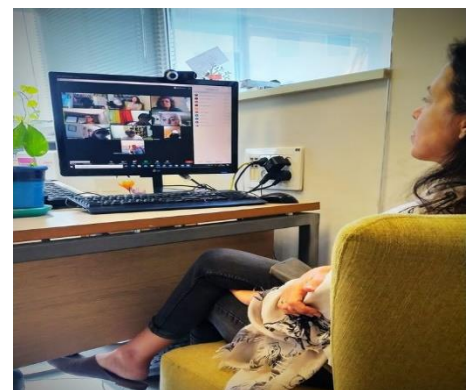
<u>Student</u>	<u>Academic degree</u>	<u>Collaboration with</u>	<u>Thesis title</u>
Goni Shelef	MD-MPH	Prof. Adi Weintraub	The Effect of Advanced Age and Ethnicity on Postoperative Complications Following Pelvic Floor Repair Surgeries
Hanaa Abokaf	MPH	Prof. Adi Weintraub	Subsequent pregnancy outcomes following a second trimester abortion: comparing surgical and medical abortion
Noa Zangen	MD thesis	Prof. Adi Weintraub and Dr. Shimrit Yaniv- Salem	The association between duration of transition from latent to active labor and adverse obstetrical outcomes.
Matan Rotchild	MD-MPH	Prof. Adi Weintraub	Risk Factors associated with post-operative complications following urinary stress incontinence repair surgeries
Leor Molcho	MPH	Prof. Nihaya Daoud and Prof. Dan Greenberg	Differences in healthcare services utilization between women with and without postpartum depression in Israel
Hen Avraham	MPH	Prof. Yan Press	The right time to sign advance Healthcare directives towards the end of life from the point of view of an internal medicine doctor

Shifra Gottlieb -Unger	MPH (submitted)	Prof. Nadav Davidovitch and Dr. Zvika Orr	Social and Structural Determinants and Their Associations with Emergency Department Use and Patient Experience
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Community Activities Mom to Mom

Mom to Mom is now completing its 15th year, providing support for new mothers and their infants in Beer-Sheva and the Negev. "Mom to Mom" is a project designed to help mothers cope with the first year of parenting guidance by skilled mental health coordinators, Ms. Limor Niego and Ms. Ilana Schmidt ,who recruited and trained volunteer mothers to make home visits and provide telephone contact. The aim is to provide support and guidance to mothers of the Negev who feel that they lack adequate support to make the transition smoothly. This year, new mothers were doubly challenged as lock-down restrictions limited access to regular sources of support. For this reason, over 2020, we created special out-reach programs for new mothers taking advantage of telephone, Whatsapp and ZOOM when personal meetings were not allowed.

Since the beginning of 2020, we have provided support to an additional 40 new mothers, who joined either the on-line groups or were matched with a volunteer. At any given time, we have around 30 volunteer-new mother pairs who work together. All volunteers are carefully guided by our two coordinators, Ms. Limor Niego and Ms. Ilana Schmidt.



This year we expanded the reach of Mom to Mom to include a special out-reach project into the Bedouin community headed by our intrepid post-doctoral fellow, **Dr. Samira Alfeumi-Zeadna**. We have been the happy recipient of two grants, one from the **Two Lilies Foundation from Denver**, Colorado and one from **Keren Briah** from Israel in order to expand the reach of Mom to Mom into the Bedouin community. We have translated many of the **Mom to Mom** materials into Arabic [Mom to Mom- Arabic \(follow link here\)](#) . We have started and are now in the process of setting up our steering committee to guide this project, made up of experts on women's health and the Bedouin community. We hope to open our



first support/treatment group in a matter of weeks, especially for new mothers who have symptoms of post-partum depression.

In addition to the two grants, we received two generous gifts this year for our new mothers: 1) hand-knit blankets and hats for new babies from volunteers from Amcha and a donation of books for new mothers, from the authors, Ms. Sarit Elihu and Adi Brosh. The books, entitled: [A notebook for you](#), are designed to encourage new mothers to chronicle their journey into parenting.



We had to reorganize our Wednesday morning mothers' workshop on "positive parenting" and run it as a ZOOM group. The attendance was not as strong as we had hoped as new mothers really look forward to meeting other mothers in a safe space, together with their babies. Our Facebook page [Mom to Mom Facebook page](#) continues to be a place where new mothers meet and interact.

We are frequently asked by other community groups to advise on working with new mothers, especially as social services are working at under capacity due to the Covid19 restrictions. We are seeing quite a few new mothers being referred to us from community services, rather than primarily from Soroka University Medical Center.

Since the beginning of the project, we have helped close to 800 new mothers adjust to parenthood in the first critical year of life and trained around 260 volunteers, many of whom have worked with us for years. The volunteers meet monthly with the coordinators and receive training and enrichment activities such as: volunteering during Covid19, doing yoga in an armchair, using music to activate babies, how to give mothers' support by telephone, etc.

This year, we participated in a training of nurses from Tipot Halav around the country, through a ZOOM symposium organized by the Health Cities Project of Jerusalem. Prof. Cwikel presented on the capacity of Mom to Mom to effectively address symptoms of post-partum depression in the community.

Saban Project – Improving the accessibility to treatment for women who are victims of sexual abuse

The **Cheryl Saban Self-Worth Foundation** has supported the treatment and expansion of services for psychotherapy for women who have been exposed to sexual violence and complex trauma. This year, 2020, the psychotherapists continued to provide treatment to a total of 13 women, all of whom have a background of extensive trauma. We set up a regular supervision setting to support the psychotherapists which has been meeting regularly and since the fall has been under the professional aegis of Ms. Neta Magen, a senior psychotherapist with a background in trauma treatment. We now have a regular cadre of four psychotherapists, and two who worked for a period of time in the project and then left. One of our psychotherapists, **Noga Best**, just gave birth to her third child and is on maternity leave. Mazal tov to Noga!

We are in regular contact with **Maslan**, which is the center in Beer Sheva that serves women who are victims of sexual violence and has not had a psychotherapy unit until very recently, when **Dr. Nirit Volk**, a psychotherapist and researcher who completed her PhD with **Prof. Cwikel**, took on the task of establishing therapy service within **Maslan** as well. Together, Nirit is planning a training course for mental health practitioners on how to provide psychotherapy to these types of clients, who challenge both the psychotherapists and the frameworks, because of their needs for specialized and long-term therapy.

In July we conducted an evaluation of the program, using an internet platform to gather survey data and collecting the written evaluations of the psychotherapists for all of their clients. The survey showed significant gains in the following areas: reductions in the levels of depression, anxiety, PTSD and stress from before the clients entered treatment until the time that they filled out the online questionnaire, and a significant reduction in the exposure to domestic or personal violence. The overall picture was one of significant treatment gains over the course of psychotherapy, which is still continuing.



Isha Be-Shela – Counselling Service for Women and Men in the Negev

The Center's counselling service, which is the first counselling service in the Negev designed specifically to meet the needs of women and now men, has now been operating for 12 years. During these years, this service has become a well-known and highly regarded psychotherapy service in the Negev. This is reflected in both the growing number of clients who seek our counselling services and in the growing number of referrals from the professional community. Since the beginning of the project, we have seen over 700 women and men in psychotherapy treatment, with around 50 persons in treatment at any given time, with the average age of 30. A majority of them are BGU students. At this current time, we have a very long waiting list and the lockdowns have increased it. Currently we have 10 psychotherapists and are hoping to recruit more highly qualified staff to join the project. All of our psychotherapists meet regularly for supervision with either **Ms. Sarit Pinhasi** or **Ms. Neta Magen**. **Ms. Noah Sitton**, the clinical director, aided by **Ms. Limor Niego**, while Noah is on leave of absence, are the clinical coordinators who conduct the intakes and connects between those looking for therapy and the available psychotherapist. Each psychotherapist has their own expertise ranging from complex trauma, eating disorders, health-related issues in psychotherapy including substance abuse, the use of CBT, family therapy, and art and movement in psychotherapy, among other topics. This year we added two new therapists to replace some of our therapists who left to open private practices.



Isha Be-shela
Psychotherapy for Women

Publications and Academic Activities of Center Researchers and Scholars (Listed in Alphabetical Order by Last Name)

With great pride, we share with you the publications and academic activities of the Center's researchers and scholars during 2020.

Dr. Samira Alfayumi-Zeadna

Publications:

Bar G, Harlev A, **Alfayumi-Zeadna S**, Zeadna A, Bord I, Har-Vardi I, Lunenfeld E, Levitas E. Recurrent implantation failure: which patients benefit from endometrial scratching prior to IVF? Arch Gynecol Obstet, 2020 Mar;301(3):817-822. doi: 10.1007/s00404-019-05424-1.

Daoud N., **Alfayumi-Zeadna S.**, Tur-Sinai A., Geraisy N., Talmud I. Neighborhood disorder and inequalities in anxiety among Palestinian-Arab and Jewish women in Israel. International Journal for Equity in Health, 2020 Dec 9;19(1):218. doi: 10.1186/s12939-020-01339-5.

Under review:

Alfayumi-Zeadna S., Froimovici M., O'Rourke N., Azbarga Z., Alkatnany A., Okby-Crinon R., Zoabi-Salman L., Grotto I., Daoud N. Direct and indirect Pathways to Prenatal Depression Symptoms in Arab-Bedouin Women: the contribution of Stressful Life Events and Social Support.

Alfayumi-Zeadna S., Froimovici M., O'Rourke N., Azbarga Z., Alkatnany A., Okby-Crinon R., Zoabi-Salman L., Grotto I., Daoud N. Effectiveness of Culturally Based Intervention in Healthcare Services for Reducing Postpartum Depression among Minority Bedouin Women in southern Israel: A Non-Randomized Clinical Trail.

Prof. Aya Biderman

Publications:

Environmental Epidemiology: [October 2019 - Volume 3 - Issue - p 325](#)

doi: 10.1097/01.EE9.0000609568.95007.1d

Treister-Goltzman, Y., Peleg, R., & **Biderman, A.** (2020). A comparative study of iron deficiency anemia in Bedouin and Jewish women of childbearing age in Southern Israel. *Population Health Management*, 23(3), 271-271.

Prof. Julie Cwikel

Publications:

Alexander Binun, A. **Cwikel**, J. Dolev, S. Hershfinkel, R. (2020). Machine Learning by Actigraph Data for Detection of Postpartum Depression. Paper presented at CSCML, Ph.D. track.

<https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=cscml2020>

Cwikel, J., Sergienko, R., Gutvitz, G., Abramovitz, R., Slusky, D., Quastel, M., & Sheiner, E. (2020). Reproductive Effects of Exposure to Low-Dose Ionizing Radiation: A Long-Term Follow-Up of Immigrant Women Exposed to the Chernobyl Accident. *Journal of Clinical Medicine*, 1-23., 9(6), 1786.

Cwikel, J., & Friedmann, E. (2020). E-therapy and social work practice: Benefits, barriers, and training. *International Social Work*, 63(6), 730-745.

Cwikel, J., Sergienko, R., & Sheiner, E. (2020). 733: Reproductive outcomes among immigrant women exposed to the Chernobyl accident. *American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology*, 222(1), S464.

Shlomi Dolev; Sergey Frenkel; Julie **Cwikel** ; Victor Zakharov (2020). Probabilistic Models of Psychological Aspects in Computer-based Social Interactions

International Conference Engineering Technologies and Computer Science (EnT)

Submitted

Cwikel, J, Sheiner, E., Sergienko, R. Slusky, D. and Quastel, M. (2020). Hospitalizations in a historical follow-up study of Chernobyl exposed immigrants in the Negev, Israel. (Revise and resubmitted)

Cwikel, J. & Simhi, M. (2020) The use of the hackathon model in social work education. (Revise and resubmitted).

Simhi, M. **Sarid**, O. **Rowe**, H. **Fisher**, **Cwikel** J. Is a cognitive-behavioral intervention for women managing postpartum anxiety and depression symptoms more effective by individual phone or group format? (Revise and resubmitted).

Research Grants

2018-2020: The use of actigraph monitoring to identify early women at risk of Post-Partum Depression. Social Science Faculty grant for multidisciplinary research. Co-investigators: Prof. Shlomi Dolev (Computers), Dr. Liat Titotsky (Psychology) and Dr. Aviad Hadar

2020- 2021 - Assessment of voice markers of depression and other clinical states among medical staff treating patients with Corona Covid-19 and community residents during the Corona Crisis of 2020. President's special fund for Corona and private donor. Co-investigators with Dr. Dan Vilenchik, Dr. Alison Stern Perez, Mr. Ruslan Sergienko and clinical staff from Soroka.

Dr. Johanna Czamanski-Cohen

Publications:

Czamanski-Cohen, J., Wiley, J., & Weihs, K. L. (2020). Protocol for the REPAT study: role of emotional processing in art therapy for breast cancer palliative care patients. *BMJ open*, *10*(11), e037521.

Czamanski-Cohen, J., Galili, G., & Allen, J. J. (2020). Examining Changes in HRV and Emotion Following Artmaking with Three Different Art Materials. *JoVE (Journal of Visualized Experiments)*, (155), e60376.

Schultz, M., **Czamanski-Cohen, J.**, Bentur, N., Mohsen-Byadsi, S., Artsieli, Y., & Bar-Sela, G. (2020). Multidisciplinary staff perspectives on the integration of spiritual care in a new setting: Israel. *Palliative & supportive care*, *18*(4), 431-436.

Czamanski-Cohen, J., Galili, G., Allen, J.B. (in press). Measuring changes in HRV while creating art with 3 different materials. *JoVE*, 1-4.

Grants

2018-2021 RO1 (1R01NR017186-01A1) The REPAT study. Role of emotional processing as a mechanism of Art Therapy in palliative cancer patients: a mechanistic study. With Dr. Karen Weihs. NIH.

Dr. Ofer Emanuel Edelstein

Publications:

Edelstein, O.E. PI, Vered, I. C, & Sarid, O. PI (2020). Correlates of participation in physical activity among older women in Israel: Does ethno-cultural background matter? *Health Promotion International*, (Accepted).

Edelstein, O.E. PI Wacht, O. C, Greenstein-Cohen, O.C, Reznik, A.C, Pruginin, I. C, & Isralowitz. R.PI . (2020). Does religiosity matter? University student attitudes and beliefs toward medical cannabis. *Complementary Therapies in Medicine*, 51, 102407.

Edelstein, O.E.,PI Wacht, O. C, Isralowitz, R.PI , Reznik, A. C, & Bachner, Y.G.PI (2020). Beliefs and attitudes of graduate gerontology students about medical marijuana use for Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease. *Complementary Therapies in Medicine*, 52, 102418.

Edelstein, O.E. PI, Achdut, N.C, Vered, I.C, & Sarid, O. PI (2020). Determinants of bone mineral screening behavior among three ethno-cultural groups in Israel. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17, 6138.

Dr. Ephrat Huss

Edited volumes:

1. Huss, E. & Bos, E. (in press). (Eds.). *Social work research using arts-based methods*. Policy Press.
2. Boss, E. & Huss, E. (in press). (Eds.). *Using arts to transform society*. Routledge.

Publications:

Ben Asher, S., Sagy, S., Srour, A., Walden, T., **Huss, E.**, Shahar, E., & Alsrailha, K. (2020). Hope among refugee children attending the International School of Peace on Lesbos. *Journal of Refugee Studies*. (Q1) <https://academic-oup-com.ezproxy.haifa.ac.il/jrs/article/doi/10.1093/jrs/feaa003/5818953>

Segal-Engelchin, D. &, Achdut, N. & **Huss, E.** & Sarid, O. (2020). CB-Art interventions implemented with mental health professionals working in a shared war reality: transforming negative images and enhancing coping resources *J. Environ. Res. Public Health* 2020, 17, 2287

Huss, E., Ben Asher, S., Shahar, E., Walden, T., & Sagy, S. (2020). Creating places, relationships and education for refugee children in camps: Lessons learnt from the ‘The School of Peace’ educational model *Children & Society* DOI: 10.1111/chso.12412

Gil-Schwartzberg, T., **Huss, E.**, & Slonim-Nevo, V. (in press). Exploring the concept of social art through a single session social art activity as a space of psychological and social agency for refugee populations. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*. (in press)

Lectures:

February 2020 Art & Education for Social Justice Symposium. Greetings 2020 AESJ Attendees, February 21-23, 2020

Invited lecture: Turin Family Social Work Conference “Creative Genograms in Family therapy” 2ND International Scientific Conference on Research on Family Services, 23RD –25TH MARCH, 2020 ,Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń, Poland PROGRAMME

Invited lecture: Using the theory of Embodied Socially Embedded Aesthetics as a Theoretical Base for Socially transformative arts Hosted by The University of Georgia’s Lamar Dodd School of Art and The School of Social Work (in partnership with Florida State University)

May 20 EFAT European art therapy association. Addressing Covid Crises in community engagement through the arts.

Dr. Michal Liebergall-Wischnitzer

2020 Current Department Head, Clinical Nursing, Hadassah Medical School.

Michal Liebergall-Wischnitzer , David Shvieky , MD,2 Yuval Lavy , Anna Woloski Wruble , Anita Noble , Adi Vaknin . Paula Method (Circular Muscle Exercise) for Urinary Incontinence Symptoms of Women with Multiple Sclerosis: A Pilot Study. *The journal of alternative and complementary medicine*, 26 (7), 652–653

Michal **Liebergall-Wischnitzer** , Anna Shaphir , Amy Solnica , Drorith Hochner-Celnikier Are Paula Method exercises effective for gastrointestinal reactivation post-elective cesarean delivery? Randomized controlled trial. Journal of Advanced Nursing. DOI: 10.1111/jan.14681. Accepted for publication, November, 2020

Dr. Merav Rabinovich

Publications:

Rabinovich, M. (accepted). Elephant in the room: Relationships between categories methodology for case study metasynthesis. Journal of American Psychoanalytic Association.

Rabinovich M. (2020). Relationships between categories: The context of the symptom in practice. Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy, 50(2), 95-103.

Prof. Orly Sarid

Publications:

Achdut N and **Sarid** O. (2020). Socio-economic status, self-rated health and mental health: The mediation effect of social participation on early-late midlife and older adults. Israel Journal of Health Policy Research, 9, 4 <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13584-019-0359-8>

Edelstein OE, Vered I, & Sarid O. (2020). Correlates of participation in physical activity among older women in Israel: Does ethno-cultural background matter? Health Promotion International <https://doi.org/10.1093/heapro/daaa030>

Edelstein O, Achdut N, Vered I, & **Sarid** O. (2020). Determinants of bone mineral screening behavior among three ethno-cultural groups in Israel. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health. 17, 6138

Goren G, **Sarid** O, Philippou & Taylor A. (2020). Sense of coherence mediates the links between job status prior to birth and postpartum depression: a structured equation modelling approach. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health.

Reggev S, Odes S, Slonim-Nevo V, Friger M, Schwartz D, Sergienko R, Eliakim R, & **Sarid O.** (2020). Differential relationships of somatization, depression and anxiety to severity of Crohn's disease. *Journal of Health Psychology* <https://doi.org/10.1177/1359105320909879>

Segal-Engelchin D, Achdut N, Huss E, & **Sarid O.** (2020). CB-Art interventions implemented with mental health professionals working in a shared war reality: Transforming negative images and enhancing coping resources. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(7), 2287

Prof. Dorit Segal-Engelchin

Publications:

Even , D., Shvarts, S., & **Segal-Engelchin, D.** (2020). Medical social workers as mediators between physicians, patients, and the court: Case study of patients treated by irradiation for ringworm in childhood. *Social Work in Health Care*. DOI: 10.1080/00981389.2020.1822488

Hoffer, L., Shvarts, S., & **Segal-Engelchin, D.** (2020). Hair loss due to ringworm irradiation in childhood: Health and psychosocial risks for women. *Israel Journal of Health Policy Research*, 9:34

Segal-Engelchin, D., Achdut N, Huss E, & Sarid O. (2020). CB-Art interventions implemented with mental health professionals working in a shared war reality: Transforming negative images and enhancing coping resources. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(7): 2287.

Segal-Engelchin, D. & Shvarts, S. (2020). Does severity of hair loss matter? Factors associated with mental health outcomes in women irradiated for tinea capitis in childhood. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 7388; doi:10.3390/ijerph17207388

Prof. Ilana Shoham-Vardi

Publications:

Berger-Polsky, A., Daoud, N., Sergienko, R., Sheiner, E., **Shoham-Vardi, I.**, & Bilenko, N. (2020). Polygamy and birth outcomes among Bedouin women of the Negev: The contribution of social determinants and pregnancy complications. *Health Care for Women International*, 41(1), 54-74.

Daoud, N., Sergienko, R., & **Shoham-Vardi**, I. (2020). Intimate partner violence prevalence, recurrence, types, and risk factors among Arab, and Jewish immigrant and nonimmigrant women of childbearing age in Israel. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, 35(15-16), 2869-2896.

Daoud, N., Kraun, L., Sergienko, R., Batat, N., **Shoham-Vardi**, I., Davidovitch, N., & Cohen, A. (2020). Patterns of healthcare services utilization associated with intimate partner violence (IPV): Effects of IPV screening and receiving information on support services in a cohort of perinatal women. *PloS one*, 15(1), e0228088.

Nahum Sacks, K., Friger, M., **Shoham-Vardi**, I., Sergienko, R., Landau, D., & Sheiner, E. (2020). In utero exposure to pre-eclampsia as an independent risk factor for long-term respiratory disease. *Pediatric Pulmonology*, 55(3), 723-728.

Saban, A., **Shoham-Vardi**, I., Yohay, D., & Weintraub, A. Y. (2020). Peritoneal adhesions do not increase intra-operative organ injury or adverse neonatal outcomes during a repeated cesarean delivery. *Archives of Gynecology and Obstetrics*, 302(4), 879-886.

Grant: ISF with Dr. Tamar Wainstock . Recurrent Preterm Birth, Risk Association with Environmental and Genetic Factors.

Prof. Shifra Shvarts

Publications:

Even , D., **Shvarts**, S., & Segal-Engelchin, D. (2020). Medical social workers as mediators between physicians, patients, and the court: Case study of patients treated by irradiation for ringworm in childhood. *Social Work in Health Care*. DOI: 10.1080/00981389.2020.1822488

Hoffer, L., **Shvarts**, S., & Segal-Engelchin, D. (2020). Hair loss due to ringworm irradiation in childhood: Health and psychosocial risks for women. *Israel Journal of Health Policy Research*, 9:34

Segal-Engelchin, D. & **Shvarts**, S. (2020). Does Severity of Hair Loss Matter? Factors Associated with Mental Health Outcomes in Women Irradiated for Tinea Capitis in Childhood. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 7388; doi:10.3390/ijerph17207388

