



November 2009



The Forgotten Children Conference

Two hundred delegates from 25 countries across Europe came together in Vilnius, Lithuania on Thursday and Friday, 26th/27th November to attend The Forgotten Children conference which was hosted by EUFAMI in association with its Lithuanian member association, LSPŽGB. The conference focused on the issues and challenges faced on a daily basis by children of parents with mental illness. The conference concluded with the release of the Conference Declaration which called on health, social and school staff professionals to provide regular support to these children and their families. In addition the delegates, through the declaration called for an understanding of their situation within their local communities. A comprehensive Call to Action, which included the establishment of an Action Network, was also announced at the end of the conference.

The complete Conference Declaration can be viewed at www.eufami.org



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First 'Services to Public Health Award

The European Public Health Alliance (EPHA) has awarded its first 'Services to Public Health Award' to Mr John Bowis, former MEP and leading health advocate to honour his lifetime achievements as a champion for public health. The award was presented by Commissioner Ms Androulla Vassiliou at the EPHA Annual General Assembly 2009. EUFAMI sends its congratulations to John and wishes him well for the future. John is a long time friend of EUFAMI and is a major supporter of its aims and mission.

Empty eyes - a thrilling literary novel for adolescents

This new book, written by Leen van den Berg, tells the story of a girl, Hannah, and her family situation, in the form of a diary. Her mother is eventually diagnosed as suffering from a mental illness. The book has been published in Dutch (*Lege ogen*) and in French (*un regard insondable*). A successful theatre adaptation is travelling all over the country in Belgium, with about 120 performances.

The book is intensively used by health workers and by SIMILES, the Belgian self-help group for children and partners of people with a mental disease. It is considered by them as an important instrument of information, prevention and support among youngsters.

European Union gives two prizes for articles about schizophrenia - winners of the EU Health Journalism Prize announced at an award ceremony in Brussels

At an award ceremony held in Brussels recently, the European Commissioner for Health, Ms Androulla Vassiliou, announced the three winners of the first EU health prize for journalists. French Journalist Estelle Saget, author of the article "Schizophrenia explained to family and friends" for 'L'Express' won the first prize (*we reported last month that this article had been nominated to represent France*). Lithuanian journalist, Audrė Srėbaliėnė, author of an article on donating bone marrow for 'Ekstra', in second place, and Romanian journalist, Emilia Chiscop, writing in 'Ziarul de Iasi' in third place, for her article on a young doctor coping with schizophrenia. The aim of this prize, launched in February of this year, is to award high quality journalism that helps citizens better understand health issues, especially those related to the 'Europe for Patients' campaign. For more information about the EU health prize for journalists and to read the winning articles and the short listed articles, please refer to the Europe for patients' website:

http://ec.europa.eu/health-eu/europe_for_patients/index_en.htm

The 2009 UNAFAM Prize for Research

Each year, the UNAFAM Board awards a Research Prize to a young scientist, having defended a PhD work in the field of psychosis, including neurosciences, clinical or cognitive sciences, or disabilities studies. In 2009, the Board has awarded Aurelie ROYER, a young neuro-psychologist in a psychiatric ward of Bellevue University Hospital, Saint Etienne, France, who graduated on 2008 with the Montpellier University.

Her work shows that decreasing cognitive deficits in schizophrenia patients after training by a cognitive remediation program, which results in improving everyday life adaptation, induces clear changes in brain activation during executive processes. Neuro imaging gives evidences for new neural networks be activated or deactivated ; it shows much larger fronto-parietal activations than in normal subjects (planning processes), and deactivations elsewhere as well (inhibition processes, resistance to distraction), allowing finally better cognitive resources allocation. UNAFAM is the French member association of EUFAMI.

New Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy (DG SANCO) nominated

Mr John Dalli from Malta has been nominated as the new EU Commissioner for Health and Consumer Policy. When ratified in January, he will replace the outgoing Commissioner, Ms Androulla Vassiliou who will move to the Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth portfolio. Mr Dalli has been in charge of Social Policy in the Maltese government. EUFAMI looks forward to meeting with Mr Dalli and wishes him well in his new role at the EU.

For more information, please look at the web site www.eufami.org or contact EUFAMI at info@eufami.org

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