

EDITORIAL

**Maternal-Child Health and Wellbeing in a Global Pandemic:
Promotion, Prevention, Intervention**



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We have the privilege of writing this editorial as the outgoing Graduate Student Co-Chairs and past Graduate Scholars for the Lillian Meighen Wright Maternal-Child Health Scholars Program at York University. We are also strong maternal-child health and early child development advocates. We engage in doctoral research that advances knowledge about maternal-infant interactions in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and the impact of maternal stress on child outcomes (Shiff). Likewise, we examine early neurodevelopmental trajectories in neurologically vulnerable children, with consideration of the influence of early experiences of risk and protection (Bondi).

This issue of the INYI Journal highlights works presented during the 6th Annual Meighen Wright Maternal-Child Learning Academy that took place on July 18 and 22, 2022, for which we served on the planning committee. The primary objective of this two-day event was to co-learn and engage in discussions on maternal-child health and wellbeing in the context of the global COVID-19 pandemic. This event uniquely featured presentations spanning across members of academia, service, and community sectors with discussions about research, practice, and policy implications. The Learning Academy entailed panel presentations, poster presentations, and discussions with both

international and local presenters and attendees. For further details see in this issue a summary of the event by Dr. Luz Maria Vazquez.

The first research article featured in this issue is from Katherine McGuire, undergraduate student in Psychology, and Professor Michaela Hynie of York University. They conducted a qualitative study to explore refugee mothers' experiences of virtual social support throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Their interview findings revealed the necessity of social support for this population and highlighted important challenges to virtual service provision as well as barriers specific to the mothers' intersecting identity markers related to gender, culture, and migration status. The authors provide insights into service providers' strategies to identify and better address mothers' needs.

The second article featured in the issue is from Danielle Washington, doctoral candidate in Nursing, at York University. Washington reviewed and summarized the literature on the mental health consequences of adolescent mothers' experiences of interpersonal violence during the post-partum period (such as depression and anxiety). Washington highlights the role of gender inequality through the lens of an evidence-based framework and makes important recommendations for interventions (summarized in Table 1).

The third article featured in the issue offers an international lens from Professor Ana Beatriz Azevedo Queiroz of Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, and colleagues, in Brazil. Azevedo Queiroz conducted an integrative review including publications in Portuguese, English, or Spanish exploring reproductive planning in Brazil during the COVID-19 pandemic. Discussion spanned across three key themes including reproductive planning as an essential service, weaknesses in the provision of sexual and reproductive health services, and women as a vulnerable group (presented in Table 2).

Taken together, the articles in the issue offer interdisciplinary perspectives (such as nursing and psychology) regarding different aspects of maternal-child health impacted amidst the COVID-19 pandemic including social supports, mental health consequences of interpersonal violence, and reproductive planning. They capture marginalized and high-risk populations most effected by the pandemic, including refugee mothers, adolescent mothers' post-partum, and women with reproductive needs in developing contexts. Higher-level themes regarding the importance of considering socioeconomic and cultural contexts and the reality of gender inequality and stagnancy in reproduce rights are addressed. System-level findings related to social supports, mental health interventions, and health system changes that are necessitated during the period of heightened risk are also outlined throughout these publications.

An overview of our 6th Annual Meighen Wright Maternal-Child Learning Academy is available via an online summary video

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r9sFelse8Dw>), as well as online event details, including biographies and abstracts (<https://nkhanlou.info.yorku.ca/files/2022/07/Booklet-LMW-6th-Learning-Academy-July-2022.pdf?x96015>).

Guest Editors, INYI Journal

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