



*A PROPOSAL FOR SUPPORTING:*  
**THE INTERNATIONAL MA PROGRAM IN  
APPLIED CHILD DEVELOPMENT**  
A GRADUATE PROGRAM FOR PROFESSIONALS  
FROM DEVELOPING COUNTRIES





*A Proposal for Supporting:*

## **The International MA Program in Applied Child Development:**

A Graduate Program for Professionals from Developing Countries  
to enhance the well-being of at-risk children.

Students from developing countries have extremely limited options world-wide to study child development within the context of their unique cultural, societal, and educational settings. While the child development field in North America and Western Europe has witnessed a significant increase in new graduate programs in the past decade, these programs have focused primarily on issues pertaining to western societies.

**The International MA Program in Applied Child Development** is designed to prepare the next generation of international experts who will focus on basic research questions regarding the nature of child development and its implications and applications for the "real-life" of children and their families in developing countries. The International MA Program in Applied Child Development was established with the goal of improving the lives of at-risk children around the world. The unique



program is set to train professional leadership that will enhance the well-being of children and their families in countries-in-need, with a particular emphasis on African nations.

**The University of Haifa.** The University of Haifa is the only liberal arts university in northern Israel, and the most pluralistic institution of higher education in the country. Founded in 1963, the University of Haifa developed a world-class academic institution with over 18,000 students. The University's 1,200 faculty members serve six Faculties: Humanities; Social Sciences; Science and Science Education; Law, Social Welfare and Health Studies; and Education. The University also has five Schools: Business Administration; Social Work; History; Public Health; and Political Science. Within its academic structure, the University encompasses numerous research centers and institutes that focus on a wide range of subjects and fields.

The University of Haifa is particularly noted for the quality of its academic programming in the social sciences. We are very proud of our recent ranking as **#1 in Israel in humanities and social sciences** and **#113 out of over 2,800 institutions worldwide** by the 2010 SCImago Institutions Rankings. This is an exceptional achievement and a strong reflection of the University of Haifa's standing on the global academic map.

**The Need.** In September 2000, building upon a decade of major United Nations conferences and summits, world leaders came together at United Nations Headquarters in New York to adopt the United Nations Millennium Declaration, committing their nations to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty and setting out a series of time-bound targets - with a deadline of 2015 - that have become known as the Millennium Development Goals.

And while some progress has been made in achieving these goals, the latest UNICEF report entitled, *The State of the World's Children 2012*, makes it clear that a great deal of work still lays ahead. In commenting on the report's findings, Mr. Anthony Lake, UNICEF's Executive Director, states: "We must do more to reach all children in need, wherever they live, wherever they are excluded and left behind...If we overcome the barriers that have kept these children from the services they need and that are theirs by right, then millions more will grow up healthy, attend school, and live more productive lives."



Moreover, the World Bank points out that there are significant economic costs associated with underfunding child and youth services in developing countries. "Failing to invest in children and youth triggers substantial economic, social, and political costs. Given the cumulative nature of human development, under investments in children and youth are difficult to reverse later in life, and the price for society is high. Negative outcomes resulting from misaligned investment strategies include truncated human and social capital accumulation (e.g. school drop-out, poor labor market entry) and negative conduct (e.g. substance abuse, crime and violence, risky sexual behaviors). Moreover, evidence shows that such behaviors are likely to be transferred to the next generation, creating a vicious cycle of social exclusion and negative behaviors." (*Child & Youth Development*, August 2010). Although it is impossible to put a value on a human life, the World Bank concludes that in many countries the overall damage to society amounts to several percent of GDP per year.

One important way to reverse these disturbing trends is to increase the quantity and professional knowledge of child care professionals dealing with children who are growing up in these toxic environments.

**The Program.** The International MA Program in Applied Child Development is offered through the University of Haifa's Center for the Study of Child Development in conjunction with the University's International School. Thanks to the expertise, experience and interest in child development accumulated at the Center, the applied developmental program is uniquely positioned to help bridge the science-practice gap at the international level and make an impact on the lives of at risk children in developing countries. With this international focus, the Applied Child Development Program is set to advance the following objectives:



- Provide scientific and professional skills in transforming knowledge from basic human development research to various applied issues (e.g., child care, nutrition, infant and young children morbidity and mortality, academic motivation in schools, orphanages and children raised in institutions, foster care, adoption, political violence and child soldiers, and effective parenting).
- Train professional leadership that will enhance the well-being of children and their families in countries-in-need, with a focus on prevention and intervention, in order to promote family functioning as well as social and community network and support (see Appendix for list of admission requirements). Examples include the after effects of disastrous conditions such as HIV, war zones and political violence, genocide, and child soldiers.

The Program will consist of 40 credit hours taken in one calendar year. Parts of the Program will be based on the existing MA program in Child Development and part of will consist of concentration-specialty classes-experiences to enhance international expertise. (see Appendix)

Successful completion of the 40 required credit hours will lead to a:

- MA in Child Development  
AND
- Certificate in International Child Development

Administrative support for the program is provided by the University of Haifa's International School, which has been running a successful Study Abroad Program for 35 years. The School has a worldwide reputation for its academic accomplishments, emphasis on cultural immersion with the local population, and caring environment by providing a rich selection of social and cultural extracurricular activities.

**Alliances.** The Center for the Study of Child Development maintains excellent collaborative relationships with scientists in major international institutions, including:

University of Utah, University of Jena (Germany), University of Maryland at College Park, University of Lausanne (Switzerland), Leiden University (the Netherlands), The World Bank, University of California, Berkeley, University of California, Davis, University of California, San Francisco, New School for Social Research (NYC).

These ongoing professional contacts have served to strengthen the program.

### **Leadership.**



Abraham (Avi) Sagi-Schwartz is Professor of Psychology, Director of the Center for the Study of Child Development, and Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Haifa.

Prof. Sagi-Schwartz also has held visiting positions at the University of Utah, Regensburg University (Alexander Von Humboldt Research Scholar, Germany), the University of Maryland at College Park, and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. Prof. Sagi-Schwartz also held the rotating Mary Main Chair on Attachment across the Life Span at Leiden University, and in the years 2005/2006 he was a Jennings Randolph Senior Fellow at the United States Institute of Peace, Washington, DC.

Prof. Sagi-Schwartz main research interests are in the area of attachment and socioemotional development across the life span and across cultures. He has special interest in transforming basic knowledge generated by child development research to various policies and interventions that may advance the well-being of children across the world.

His work has been supported by major research grants including NIH, the Ford Foundation, Israel Academy of Science, U.S.-Israel Bi-National Science Foundation, Israeli Chief Scientist Offices of Education and Health, the German-Israeli Foundation for Scientific Research and Development (GIF), and the German Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF), and the Bernard Van Leer Foundation.

His published work includes many contributions to edited volumes and articles in leading journals of psychology, psychiatry, pediatrics, family, law, and human development. Also, he is Associate Editor of *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*. Prof. Sagi-Schwartz is the recipient of the 2007 Society for Research in Child Development Award for Distinguished International Contributions to Child Development.



**Funding Request.**

The University of Haifa is seeking start-up support of \$520,000 and ongoing support to fund the International MA Program in Applied Child Development of \$440,000 per year for 4 years.

| <b>Item</b>                     | <b>Detail</b>  | <b>Expenses (1<sup>st</sup> year)</b> | <b>Expenses (years 2-5)</b> |
|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Start-up                        |  | \$80,000                              |                             |
| Yearly operational budget       | teaching and instruction, academic and administrative coordination, travel expenses for international lectures invited to teach, | \$270,000                             | \$270,000                   |
| Supporting student scholarships | 15 students x \$10,000   | \$150,000                             | \$150,000                   |
| Marketing                       |  | \$20,000                              | \$20,000                    |
| <b>TOTAL:</b>                   |  | <b>\$520,000</b>                      | <b>\$440,000</b>            |

**Donor Recognition.** The University of Haifa prominently recognizes its donors and will be honored to pay tribute to your generosity with graduated levels of recognition, including:

- Acknowledging your support in University media publications, wherever possible.
- Recognizing your donation through appropriate signage.
- Honoring the donor at a special dedication ceremony. These joyous occasions are often attended by family members and guests.
- Receiving periodic updates regarding the program and its participants.

**Conclusion.** The University of Haifa has a well-earned reputation for addressing the needs of underserved population groups in Israel. Through its expanding international programs, the University is firmly committed to sharing local expertise and building bridges with professionals in developing countries. With your support, the University of Haifa seeks to train the next generation of applied child care professionals working in developing countries – helping them to achieve the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals.

The University of Haifa would like to express its appreciation to you for considering this vital project and would be delighted to provide additional information per your request.

## APPENDIX – Curriculum

### Mandatory core courses (16 hours)

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| Advanced Developmental psychology             | 4 credit hours |
| Applied Developmental Psychology              | 4 credit hours |
| Selected issues in child development research | 4 credit hours |
| Final project seminar                         | 4 credit hours |

### Core courses (select 8 hours)

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Cognitive and perceptual development                     | 4 credit hours |
| Language Development and Emerging Literacy               | 4 credit hours |
| Parenting and attachment                                 | 4 credit hours |
| Early socioemotional development and intervention        | 4 credit hours |
| Environment, genetics, and developmental neuropsychology | 4 credit hours |
| Developmental psychopathology                            | 4 credit hours |

### International track courses (select 8 hours)

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Health and nutrition in developing countries | 4 credit hours |
| Early child care in developing countries     | 4 credit hours |
| Cross cultural issues in child development   | 4 credit hours |

### Elective courses (select 8 hours)

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Children at risk   | 4 credit hours |
| Observation methods with parents and children  | 4 credit hours |
| Psychological assessment of young children   | 4 credit hours |
| Developmental prevention and intervention methods  | 4 credit hours |
| Early development observation methods  | 4 credit hours |
| Assessment of programs for young children  | 4 credit hours |
| Selected social issues (e.g., early care, orphanage, foster care, adoption, traumatic stress, children and the legal system, political violence and child soldiers). | 4 credit hours |

## **APPENDIX – Admission Requirements**

- Bachelor's degree in a range of academic disciplines that provide service to children: Social work, occupational therapy, speech and language pathology, physical therapy, nursing, early child education, psychology, law, and any other discipline that involves working with children (Grade Point Average 85)
- At least three years of experience working with children and families
- Proficiency in English (TOEFL Test)
- Three letters of recommendation from university faculty members and senior professionals in the field
- Admission Interview (by phone/Skype)



**The University of Haifa**, the largest comprehensive research university in northern Israel, sits atop Mount Carmel and presently serves a student body – the most pluralistic in the country – of more than 18,000 undergraduate and graduate students.

The University of Haifa is dedicated to academic excellence and social responsibility. Its location provides a unique backdrop for novel interdisciplinary programs, cooperative endeavors with academic institutes around the world and a diverse student body primed to address regional challenges and universal social issues. Jews, Arabs, Druze, new immigrants, IDF officers and security personnel come together to study, research, socialize and share knowledge in an atmosphere of coexistence, tolerance and mutual respect.

Instruction is offered within six faculties: Humanities, Social Sciences, Law, Natural Sciences, Social Welfare and Health Sciences and Education; and the Graduate School of Management. The University's dual mission of first-rate higher education and service to the community at large is manifested in the equal educational opportunities open to all sectors of society and in its many forms of programs promoting social outreach.

#### **Contact Information**

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