**Report on the Committee on Child Abuse "Inter-Committee Project on Child Abuse"**

This is a new Committee that started in conjunction with six other conjoint committees at the IPA meeting in Boston, 2015.

Committee Members are:  Mali Mann, USA, Chair; Gertrude Schlesinger-Kipp, Germany; Joshua Urban, Israel and Most recent member, Elizabeth Tuters (Canada)

Our plan is to meet regularly to facilitate the development of conferences both regionally and internationally.  We also plan to create outreach programs and develop educational ideas for psychoanalytic clinicians.  The chair of the committee, Mali Mann, M.D had presented a clinical analysis of a child abuse case at the “Abused Child” conference sponsored by COWAP/IPA in Nervi, Genova on September 2, 2016.  The conference was attended by the President of IPA Stefano Bolognini.  The conference covered a wide range of topic related to clinical and theoretical ideas including a discussion of the role of the judiciary in child abuse.  Procedures for the protection of the victims of abuse were also highlighted.

 The committee has planned an all-day pre-congress child abuse meeting on Tuesday July 25, 2017 for the IPA/ Buenos Aires meeting. In addition there will be another conference in May of 2017 in Toronto Canada.

Our committee is currently discussing various aspects of ethical and legal dilemmas facing the child analyst who encounters such cases. The child analyst irrespective of her or his clinical discipline must report child abuse to the proper legal authority.

Our committee has delineated the specific conundrum that child abuse poses to the psychoanalytic clinician.  Reporting child abuse in a therapeutic situation can have a dramatic negative impact on a therapeutic relationship.  We all know children and adolescents may have ongoing relationships with parents, guardians, extended families, peers, government agencies, schools, and other interested parties. These relationships may be direct or indirect, personal or professional, mediated via direct person-to- person contact or through electronic media. As child analysts are always aware of these significant relationships, their importance to the children or adolescents, and the manner in which the practitioner could influence these relationships in order to benefit the welfare and development of the youths.

Of course, in cases where we are clearly involved from the beginning as an evaluator, communicating with legal authorities or guardians is less problematic.  Consultation limited to the provision of evaluation is sometimes requested by, and provided to, societal entities, e.g. schools, social agencies, juvenile justice, legal and other court systems. In these circumstances, we, as Child Analysts from the outset, clearly delineate the professional’s limited role, to both the child or adolescent and the family. We should also note that the professional’s primary responsibility for rendering scientifically sound psychoanalytical/medical/psychological opinion may run counter to the preferences of the child. We must take into account and actively consider the needs of the child or adolescent and their families, when we are confronted with abusive situations in which the welfare of children and adolescents are jeopardized.