

Welcome to Issue 8 of **INStAnt!**

Your INSA Membership is a great support for the work we do together, and we hope that INStAnt! – the Members' newsletter – also supports you in your work. This June 2022 issue includes an invite to contribute to a special issue of Frontiers, an update on the Conference, an introduction to the newly formed INSA Scientific Committee, and a description of the new book on mental health and school attendance.



International News

'The Unlearning of School Attendance: Ideas for Change'

Our children are traumatized--whether from war, school shootings, climate change, policing, pandemic, or natural disaster. The world has changed. Schooling is different. Our practices and interventions must be too. Getting children to a physical place for learning must not be our only way of engaging and teaching. Because education is integral to our societies, we must unlearn how we respond to school presence, attendance, absenteeism, and its correlates of school attendance problems. INSA has teamed up with open access journal Frontiers in Education and Psychology to host a special call on Unlearning Attendance. Abstracts are due by end of June with full manuscripts due on a rolling submission until end of August. See Call and fees for submissions [here](#).

'Making Waves to Advance School Attendance'

INSA has been awash with submissions for the [2022 Conference](#) in the Netherlands, October 5 to 7. With over 110 submissions from 21 countries, the conference will be rich in content and collaboration. The preliminary program is [available here](#). Our Keynote and Invited Speakers will share from their rich experience on the following topics:

- **Worldwide increase in attendance: An agenda for 2030**
([Malin Gren Landell](#), Sweden)
- **Addressing the whole person: Developmentally informed strategies to align and empower youths, parents, and schools**
([Anne Marie Albano](#), USA)
- **Our journey for school attendance: The perspectives of youth representatives**
([Merlijn Goldsack](#) + JongPIT + Self-Wisdom Advisory Council, The Netherlands)
- **The tip of the iceberg! Why we need trauma-informed responses for school attendance difficulties**
([Catriona O'Toole](#), Ireland)
- **The puzzle of school avoidance: Working together to put the pieces in place**
([Jayne Demsky](#), USA)
- **Therapeutic approaches with 'difficult to help' youths experiencing chronic absence**
([Martin Knollmann](#), Germany)

Be part of the conversation, there are 5 places left for hosting a Round Table Discussion. The call for presentations and workshops has closed, but there is still space to share your work via the Marketplace. Submit a proposal for a Round Table Discussion or the Marketplace [via this link](#), until June 24.

Share the news of this conference with colleagues so they can also take part in this exclusive opportunity to connect with professionals from around the world. Read about [the advantages of networking](#) at INSA's Conferences. [Register before June 30](#) to secure a room at the conference venue. We look forward to welcoming you to Egmond aan Zee in October.

The 2022 INSA Conference Committee

Irma de Wit, David Heyne, Vincent Fafieanie (The Netherlands)

Jo Magne Ingul (Norway), Jayne Demsky (USA), Lana Van Den Berghe (Belgium)

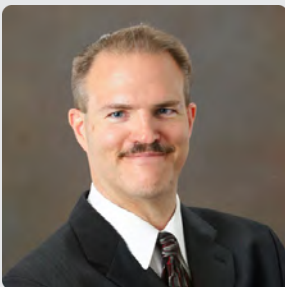
INSA News About INSA

'A New INSA Committee is Born'

The INSA family continues to grow; we are pleased to announce the creation of the INSA Scientific Committee. The Committee, brought together via INSA's Executive Team, commenced in February 2022. It comprises four members (Gil Keppens as Chair, Christopher Kearney, Carolina González, Laelia Benoit) representing four disciplines (sociology, psychology, education, psychiatry) and four countries (Belgium, USA, Spain, France). A primary goal for the Scientific Committee is to advance [INSA's Mission](#) to promote school attendance and respond to school attendance problems by compiling, generating, evaluating, and disseminating information about these topics. The Committee aims to build bridges for a coherent and coordinated approach to school attendance and its problems by crafting a shared research agenda comprising common goals and actions across jurisdictions. This involves developing research collaborations, securing support from national and international funding sources, and linking academic/research work with the work of other stakeholders such as educators, practitioners, policymakers, and families. The Scientific Committee is deeply grateful for the confidence entrusted to us to serve the INSA community. See below for an introduction to the members of the Scientific Committee.



Gil Keppens is a sociologist and post-doctoral fellow of the Research Group TOR at the Department of Sociology (Vrije Universiteit Brussel) in Belgium. For 10 years Dr Keppens has been involved in research focusing on school attendance and its related problems. During this time, he has conducted face-to-face in-depth interviews with adolescents truanting from school, principals, teachers, and education professionals; he developed and implemented a school survey on non-attendance among a representative sample of nearly 4200 students; he examined cross-sectional and longitudinal administrative attendance data; and he conducted a case study and participant observation, following the development and implementation of an intervention for school non-attendance. With the support of a postdoctoral fellowship, he is currently investigating patterns in school attendance data from a longitudinal and comparative perspective. In these next years he will focus on the conceptualization and measurement of school absenteeism in administrative data, and contribute to comparative cross-national research on school attendance.



Christopher A. Kearney is Distinguished Professor and Chair of Psychology at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), USA. He is also the Director of the UNLV Child School Refusal and Anxiety Disorders Clinic. Dr Kearney received his BA in psychology and sociology from the State University of New York at Binghamton and his MA and PhD in (clinical) psychology from the State University of New York at Albany. He completed his internship at the University of Mississippi Medical Centre before moving to Las Vegas. Dr Kearney's research interests include school attendance problems and school refusal behaviour, selective mutism, posttraumatic stress disorder in maltreated youth, perfectionism, and other anxiety-related conditions in children and adolescents, as well as issues of quality of life in persons with severe handicaps.



Carolina González holds a PhD in educational research and works as a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Developmental Psychology and Teaching at the University of Alicante (Spain). Her main line of research focuses on school attendance problems and their relationship with other psychoeducational variables. She is a member of the SOCEDU Research group (Research in Intelligence, Social Competence and Education) and has participated as research member in international projects (FONDECYT PROJECT) and research groups (GIDECAP GROUP). She has headed two projects funded by Spanish public institutions, about identifying risk profiles of school refusal behaviour and has participated in two other national projects on school absenteeism. Predoctoral and postdoctoral stays abroad at the University of Plymouth (United Kingdom) and the University of Bío-Bío (Chile) reinforced her commitment to the investigation of school attendance and its problems.



Laelia Benoit is a Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist and Associate Research Scientist at Yale University's Child Study Center in New Haven, USA. She works in collaboration with the Centre de Recherche en Épidémiologie et Santé des Populations (CESP) in France. Dr Benoit completed her medical and psychiatry training in Paris. She received her MA in Social Sciences from the School of Advanced Studies in Social Sciences (EHESS), and her PhD in Public Health and Sociology from the Université Paris-Saclay in Paris. She received a Fulbright award before moving to New Haven. Dr. Benoit's research interests include school attendance problems, school refusal behaviour, ecological and climate change anxiety, access to care for underrepresented minorities, early intervention in mental health, implementation research, and citizen research approaches. Her teaching at Yale School of Medicine, University of Paris, and University of São Paulo focuses on qualitative research methods, psychology, and social science.



News from the UK

'Mental Health and Attendance at School'

The 2022 book '[Mental Health and Attendance at School](#)' is a comprehensive, practical guide on links between mental health and attendance, edited by Katie Finning, Tamsin Ford, and Darren Moore. From the description on Amazon: "The interface between mental health and schools has become a major focus of policy and practice. School attendance is important and impacts a range of outcomes, from academic performance to children and young people's mental health. In this book, experts from the education and mental health sectors have collaborated to produce a practical guide to mental health and attendance at school that will be of interest to both researchers and practitioners across this interdisciplinary field. The book covers topics such as the importance of a multidisciplinary approach; terminology and socio-political considerations; school attendance problems in relation to emotional, behavioural and neurodevelopmental disorders; special educational needs; school factors and influences; and attendance of vulnerable children. Its aim is to offer practical advice and key information to practitioners from both clinical and educational sectors so that they can work more effectively to enable children and young people to thrive."

To share your news with other INSA Members – whether it be about practice, research, policy, or resources – simply send us an email at info@insa.network. With best wishes for your work,

INSA's Executive Team

David Heyne (The Netherlands)

Carolyn Gentle-Genitty (USA)

Glenn Melvin (Australia)

Gil Keppens (Belgium)