



From the Desk of Executive Director, IMUSA

Dear IMUSA Members,
I wanted to take a moment to acknowledge some recent efforts and achievements.

Trainers: Several weeks ago our Trainers met for several days brainstorming materials, compendiums and strategies. These dedicated members left their homes and families converging on Seal Beach, CA for day of hard work. I cannot thank you enough for your time and efforts. All of which will lend to an amazing year of Trainings. Specifically, Jody, Linda, Olga, Michael and Justine as a trainer candidate.

Barbara Z: While Barbara has stepped down from her Board position, she has continued to labor hard and with amazing results. We are not a CE Provider for the National Association of Social Workers! Good work and kudos to you Barbara! I invite you to go to the website to see the many other organizations that have solely acknowledged IMUSA as their only provider!

Michael, Linda, Kristine, Angie, Olga and Justine: The Board took few breaks and burned midnight oil to finalize what we did in 2013 and all collaborate where we want to be in 2014. It reaffirmed why we are all here and showed me such dedication and passion. I am so happy to a part of this team and its members.

New Board Members: Sara, Jennifer and Jodi, our new team of talent made it very clear they are here to bring reality to the goals of IMUSA and to the masses! We welcome you and thank you for your commitment.

And lastly, we must acknowledge both Angie and Joe Garcia for opening up their home to the Board and Trainers. Thank you again for a truly serene setting.

A Note from the Membership Coordinator

Thank you for your continued support of Infant Massage USA®!

Having correct information is important to us. I am asking you to take a moment to log into your profile and review the information.

We have 2 entry points from our website (www.infantmassageusa.org); from the Membership tab, scroll to the bottom of the page. You have 2 choices: you can update your profile information or renew your membership. Your user ID is your *email address* that is on record with Infant Massage USA. You set your password the first time you access the membership area.

CEIMs, if you have requested to be listed in the CEIM Directory please take a look; you can have a telephone number and/or email address listed. Your email address does not have to be the same as the one used for your newsletters. If you are not listed? Please contact me.

Students, if you need assistance as you complete your certification process, please don't hesitate to contact your trainer or our office. We are here to help.

As always, if you have any questions or suggestions please don't hesitate to contact me.

Chris Elkanick, Membership Coordinator
Membership.info@infantmassageusa.org

2014

We are in the first architectural design phase for the creation of a brand new website, built to fully support, brand and market our CEIMs and Trainers. Concurrently, we are designing branded materials!

What's next? What I think is most important right now is hearing from you. What do you need? How can I as the Executive Director, and the Board help you succeed?

I look forward to hearing from you,

Kindest regards,

Mercedes

Mercedes Del Castillo
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Nurturing Touch in Uganda

Two representatives of Infant Massage USA and the International Association of Infant Massage celebrated the New Year by providing opportunities for nurturing touch in Uganda. Michael Curtis, International Trainer and CEIM, and Justine Tutuska, International Trainer Candidate and CEIM spent two weeks in the Rakai region of Uganda, along with four students and alumni of Daemen College, where Justine is a Department Chair and Assistant Professor.



Our partner program, Bethlehem Parent School (BPS) and Orphanage provides education and care to over 600 primary school students during the school year and

'Kangaroo Care' May Have Positive Longterm Effects For Babies (STUDY)



For babies born prematurely, being held in their parents' arms, directly

against their skin, for a few hours per day is believed to enhance development. Now, new research that followed children until age 10 suggests that the benefits of such skin-to-skin contact may be longer-lasting than previously thought.

In the study, the researchers asked 73 mothers to give their babies skin-to-skin contact for one hour per day for two weeks. For comparison, the researchers also looked at 73 premature infants who only spent time in an incubator undefined the standard form of care for premature infants.

At age 10, the children who had received maternal contact as infants slept better, showed better hormonal response to stress, had a more mature functioning of their

a large group of secondary level students over their Summer break in January. Many of these students are orphans and while cared for with love and compassion, are often faced with the limited resources of the area, such as food shortage, lack of electricity and hours of daily chores in terms of digging, fetching firewood and cooking.



[To read the full article](#)

Infant Massage: An Innovative Approach to Early Childhood Mental Health

The *Achievement Centers for Children* has been serving children with disabilities throughout *Cleveland* since 1940. Infant Massage USA Board Member Kristine Snell works there and helped to create this film - "Achievement Centers for Children presents *Infant Massage: An Innovative Approach to Early Childhood Mental Health*." It is a short film about everything from the benefits of infant massage to how to start your own infant massage program.



For more information, contact Kristine Snell at kristine.snell@achievementctrs.org

nervous system and displayed better thinking skills.

[To read the full article](#)

How Cuddling Saves Tiny Babies

Babies are less obvious creatures than they seem. Yes, their list of demands is short and straightforward: they need food, sleep and frequent diaper changes. And they make their wishes known in an equally direct way undefined with an ear-splitting wail that is as hard to bear as it is impossible to ignore.

But then, too, there is the need to be cuddled.

[To read more](#)

Research reveals importance of early parent-child relations in emotional development

Researchers found that the quality of the relationship in the first 18 months of life predicted the way in which the brain regulates experiences of positive emotion in young adulthood, 21 years later.

The paper "Making an effort to feel positive: Insecure attachment in infancy predicts the neural underpinnings of emotion regulation in adulthood," reports that the brain activity linked to experiencing positive emotions differed between those who were securely attached to their mothers in infancy and those who did not have a secure attachment. The second group engaged additional brain regions when trying to increase their positive emotions, but to less effect.

[To read more:](#)

Newborn baby's smell is as addictive as drugs or food: study



TORONTO – For women, smelling a newborn baby feels as good as drugs are to addicts or cheeseburgers to those just breaking a fast, new Montreal research suggests.

A University of Montreal scientist says a newborn baby's odour lights up the reward centres in our brain in a way other scents can't. And for women – specifically moms – the experience, a rush of dopamine to the brain, is heightened.

The reaction is so strong, it exists even if the baby isn't in front of you. It's chemistry between mom and baby.

"What we've shown for the first time is the odour of newborns – which is part of these signals – activates the neurological reward circuit in mothers. These circuits may especially be activated when you eat while being very hungry, but also in a craving addict receiving his drug. It is in fact the sating of desire," lead researcher Dr. Johannes Frasneli said.

[To Read More:](#)

Marketing Your Classes Through Your Students

Someone contacts you about your class and wants to register. Great! Sign them up.

And as you do it, ask them if they know anyone else interested in the class. Parents love to do things with their friends. Maybe they will call a friend and invite them to join the class too. Or perhaps they will mention it on their Facebook or a list-serve they subscribe to.

You might also want to ask them on that initial phone call (or at the first class) how they found out about your infant massage class. It will give you clues about what marketing you are doing that is working. Note down their answers. It takes a lot of work to market our classes, and you want to make sure you are putting your money and time in ways that are effective. Keep these notes and review the information when you next plan your class marketing strategy.

As your class start date approaches, if your class is not full, send an email to or Facebook the people who are signed up and give them a chance to pass the information on to their friends: "I still have a few spaces left in the March 20th Infant Massage Class . . ."

Towards the end of the class series, or earlier if you have a new class coming up, pass out copies of your brochure, card or flyer about upcoming classes. Ask the parents to tuck them away in their diaper bag to give to other parents who might be interested or post them on bulletin boards.

You might want to take a group "graduation" photo of your class and send it to the parents via Facebook with a thank you for coming. That will make it easy for them to post it on their own

page and share it with family and friends – this lets other families know about your classes.

Most people who come to your classes will have been referred by someone else. Make it easy for your students to support your classes, and their friends who are parents. *by Jody Wright*

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