

FMS Foundation Newsletter

April 1, 1992

Dear Friends,

Thank you all for the tremendous outpouring of support that has come with your dues and donations. The very generous gifts of money that some of you have been able to give along with pledges of future funding mean that we can proceed to set up a serious organization devoted to accomplishing the goals set out in our mission statement. What we can accomplish will depend both on our individual efforts and on our collective resources. Do what you can. What can be more important than helping our children come back and working to see that others do not have to experience what we and our children have experienced?

Help comes from you in so many ways: the graphic designer who took charge of our logo; the person who is helping us write grants and is taking us to funding agencies; the person who is reproducing the FBI report; the person who is coming to stay for two days to see that our bookkeeping is of the highest standard; the person who is helping prepare press releases; all the people who are writing letters, contacting reporters and sharing stories; all of you who write with encouragement. Thank you all.

In just a few months most of us have moved from a situation in which we were enduring heart-breaking pain in isolation to being part of a group of more than 260 families who recognize that what we are experiencing is a phenomenon of our times. It still hurts, but it helps explain a little what is happening.

As you will see from some preliminary survey data that we share with you, as a group we are generally well-educated, above average economically, and over 50 years old. We span, however, the religious, political, professional and regional diversity of our country. Groups such as ours have a tendency to fractionalize: we are highly stressed, we get hurt feelings, we get frustrated because results are not fast, we have different opinions about how to do things. To accomplish what we need to do, we must focus on our common goal to help our children.

Pamela

ORGANIZATION

We are currently writing by-laws for all the functions that must be carried out by an organization such as ours. That is being done in conjunction with our legal support. It will be done well. We need to find office space, purchase a FAX machine and organize files. This will get done. We are setting up scrupulous bookkeeping methods and putting in motion systems for handling increasing amounts of mail. We are organizing

volunteers. We are exploring funding agencies. We expect to announce the first FMS Fellows soon. The basic issues of forming an organization are moving along.

Of great concern to many of us, however, is structuring the connections between the diverse groups that are forming so that our efforts are well organized yet creative, solid in communication yet open for fast growth. To work quickly, we need to avoid unnecessary duplication and we need to benefit from each person's and each group's experience. The newsletter can help as a filter and conduit of information.

In addition, we will take the advice that many of you have given and appoint regional liaisons. That should be done within the next few weeks along with some guidelines that groups can discuss.

READINGS YOU RECOMMEND

"Salem's dark hour: Did the Devil make them do it?" by Bruce Watson *Smithsonian Magazine*, April 1992

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH ASKS FOR YOUR HELP

Frank Putnam, a Senior Investigator at the National Institutes of Health is doing a study tracking pernicious rumors as they sweep across the country on the child-abuse circuit. He hopes to undermine the process by producing clear evidence of the role of rumor in the creation and transmission of false information and allegations. If you hear or read the following statement would you let him or us know:

"Dr. Putnam of the NIMH has found that 20% to 50% of multiple personality disorder patients have histories of satanic ritual abuse."

Please record:

- 1) When you read or heard it (Date),
- 2) Where (geographic location),
- 3) Source (e.g. newspaper article, workshop, handout),
- 4) Approximate number of people involved (e.g. workshop attended by 100 therapists).

Frank W. Putnam, M.D.
Bldg 15, NIMH, Bethesda, MD 20892
301-496-4406

SOME PRELIMINARY SURVEY RESULTS

Holly Wakefield and Pam are working together on the survey. Holly is looking at the psychological instruments that are included and the office has arranged for the data to be entered into a database. We will analyze the data first to meet the needs and interests of those who will be making presentations. Dr. Harold Lief, for example, will be making a presentation on false memories in June at a conference for family therapists. Holly Wakefield and Ralph Underwager have organized a symposium on false memories for a psychological conference this summer.

We expect that people will soon tell us that we must have a control population in order to make the most sense out of our data. But how could we do that before we have found out who we are? This is a very important survey.

The following information is based on the first 73 returned questionnaires. (6 others returned incomplete: 2 were not appropriate cases, 2 elected not to do the questionnaire, 2 unknown.)

Socioeconomic status when accusing child was growing up.

Upper class	1
Upper middle	23
Middle	40
Lower middle	6
Lower	0
No response	3

Current family income

Under \$15,000	1
\$15-19	0
\$20-29	3
\$30-39	6
\$40-49	5
\$50-59	5
\$60-69	8
\$70-79	3
\$80-89	7
\$90-99	2
\$100-149	6
\$150-199	2
over \$200	2
Did not answer	23

Marital Status of parents

Married	58
Divorced or Separated	12
Widowed	3

Satisfaction with marriage in the 58 married parents

At least one partner judges marriage to be fairly unhappy or a little unhappy 9(16%)

Both judge marriage to be happy to extremely happy 48 (84%)

Education of Accused Parents

	Father	Mother
Less than H.S.	5(7%)	2(3%)
H.S.	9(13%)	24(35%)
Some college	8(12%)	10(15%)
BA, BS, RN	23(34%)	23(34%)
Grad degree	23(34%)	9(13%)

Accusing Child

Male	7(10%)
Female	66(90%)

Accusing Child Education

H.S.	16(22%)
Some college or still in school	14(19%)
BA, BS	23(32%)
Grad degree (MA, MS, MBA, MD, Ph.D., JD)	20(27%)

Have you returned your questionnaire?

If not, please hurry up and do so. We must soon mark a cut-off time for the first serious analysis, but we want to include as many of you as possible. We want to provide the most accurate information about our children, us and our situation that we can. If you called the 800 number after 3/1/92, you may not have received your survey yet. You will. If you called the 800 number before 3/1/92 and have still not received a survey, please let us know and we'll find out what happened.

We will continue to present results of the survey in each newsletter

The following information comes from telephone interviews:

WHERE DO 264 FAMILIES LIVE?

AZ (2)	CA (16)	CO (5)	DE (1)	FL (7)
GA (4)	IA (1)	IL (8)	IN (6)	LA (1)
MA (2)	MD (2)	MI (14)	MN (3)	MS (1)
MT (1)	NC (3)	NJ (17)	NY (14)	OH (24)
OR (3)	PA (95)	SC (1)	TX (4)	UT (5)
VA (2)	WA (2)	WI (16)		
DC (1)	ON (Canada) (2)	ABROAD (1)		

Texas Area**MEETINGS**Philadelphia Area

Saturday, April 11, 1992
1:00 P.M.

You should already have a map to meeting.
Agenda

To form working committees for:
Programs for Meetings, Office Support,
Outreach to Professional Community,
Research for Fact Sheets, Publicity,
Newsletter, Fundraising.

Midwest Area

Saturday, April 25, 1992
1:00 P.M.

Benton harbor Michigan
Holiday Inn - Holidome
1-800-HOLIDAY
2860 M 139 South (49022)
I-94 exit 28

Ask for room in Holidome Area
Participants should make own reservations.
AARP prices.

R.S.V.P. Liz 708-827-1056 so that we can reserve a meeting room that is big enough. A collection will be taken to help offset some of the meeting expenses (\$50.). Lynn, one of the young women from Dallas who has recognized that memories of abuse may be false, will be present. She will tell about her experience and answer questions. Holly and Pam will have new information from the survey to present. Don't miss this meeting if you are in the Midwest neighborhood.

Southern California

Thursday May 7, 1992
7:00 P.M.

Contact Doug Wilson 619-943-75-72
Details to follow.

Florida

Saturday May 16, 1992
1:00 P.M.

Contact 800-374-7477

The Dallas workshop on March 20 and 21 was attended by mental health professionals, warm and well-organized parents, and caring young women who have abandoned their false memories of abuse. The workshop, for which continuing education credit was available, serves as a model for an outreach effort to the professional community. Holly Wakefield and Ralph Underwager prepared a interesting and well-documented program outline of the memory research. It was a very informative meeting.

Many people are asking about Dallas, "Who are the people? What's happening?" There are eight families who have come together after they learned about each other from an article about Gloria Grady by Glenna Whitley that appeared in D Magazine. All the families are involved with the same clinic. It is a very interesting situation and everyone is curious about what will happen.

We are examining the surveys carefully to see if any similar situations exist.

Notices

☞ Thanks to everyone who has sent us material that may be used for publication. Our stories will be told.

☞ Perhaps some siblings could write about what it is like to be the brother or sister of someone with false memories. We remember one young person commenting, "Who will ever want to date me or marry me if they learn about the mess that is in our family?" Another spoke of her heartbreak because her sister will not even come to her wedding. Several have spoken of the pain they are in to see their parents so grieved.

Don't worry if your story is not polished. Professional writers will help. All names and identifying references will be removed.

Label your story and send it to:

FMS Foundation
2020 1/2 Addison Street
Philadelphia, PA 19146

☞ Has your experience with false memories included being sued? Will you share what you have learned with others? Other families desperately need to talk to you. Please let us know if they may contact you.

☞ To order *Investigator's Guide to Allegations of "Ritual" Child Abuse*, January, 1992, by Kenneth Lanning, National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime, FBI, send us \$5.00. The FBI has run out of copies and funds to re-print, but we have permission to make copies.

"I want to help. What can I do?"

Here are some specific things that need to get done. Please help.

1.-We need to get ready to send out press releases about our national organization. You can help us do this by sending us the names and full addresses of your local newspapers, radio talk shows, and appropriate local television shows.

2.-We need to reach into the professional communities. We can start by putting caring doctors, psychologists, social workers, lawyers and writers on our mailing list. Then we can ask them to help us reach others. Please continue to send us names and addresses of interested people who should know about us.

3.-We need to continue to try to think of dignified ways to reach other families caught in the false memory web. If you put out flyers, be sure to get permission and place them in approved locations. Do you belong to a church or an organization that would let you put a notice in its newsletter?

HAVE YOU BEEN FALSELY ACCUSED ON THE BASIS OF RECOVERED "MEMORIES?" YOU ARE NOT ALONE. HELP US DOCUMENT THE EXTENT OF THIS PROBLEM. CONTACT: FALSE MEMORY SYNDROME FOUNDATION THROUGH THE INSTITUTE FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL THERAPIES, 1-800-568-8882.

4.-We need to continue to monitor the media and respond whenever we see that only one side of the story is being told. You can respond individually, but if you send us the article or information, we can also respond as an organization.

One of the things that we can look for and insist that the media do is report accurate information. The rumors and misinformation surrounding the false accusations based on recovery of repressed memories are shocking. In future letters, we will deal with some of these issues such as "body memories" that you have been asking about.

One piece of information that appears again and again but for which there is actually a lack of accurate data is the number of people who have been sexually abused. A figure often quoted is 1 out of 4 females, but we have recently seen 1 out of 3 and even 1 out of 2. A source frequently quoted is

National Committee for Prevention
of Child Abuse (phone 312-663-3520)
332 S. Michigan Ave.
Suite 1600
Chicago, Illinois 60604

Please write or phone to this committee and receive your own information. We have received the following information from them.

"The estimate that one in four girls and one in ten boys are abused prior to age 18 became widely known simply from being repeated. Retrospective surveys reveal great variation with 6% to 62% of females and 3% to 31% of males reporting to have experienced some form of sexual abuse."

We know and deplore the fact that sexual abuse and incest are terrible problems that have been hidden and under-reported. We are deeply concerned, however, about the fact that 65% of accusations of abuse are now unsubstantiated, a whopping jump from 35% in 1976 (*Woman's Day* 4/1/92, p 44). The danger in this is that genuine cases will be missed. The danger is that families are being destroyed unnecessarily. The danger is that our children may have to live for the rest of their lives thinking that they were victims of sexual abuse and incest when, in fact, it did not ever happen.

Issues that we should expect the media to report when giving statistics on the frequency of sexual abuse are:

- 1) limitations of retrospective data
- 2) confusion over the definition of sexual abuse
- 3) the question of reliability of any figures that come from data with variation of 6% to 62%.

QUESTIONS YOU HAVE ASKED

What is a pedophile? Pedophile is not in most dictionaries. It is a diagnostic term and is another way of saying 'child-molester.' The *DSM-III* notes under *pedophilia* (p 271, 1980) that "Heterosexually oriented males tend to prefer eight-to-ten year-old girls, the desired sexual activity usually being limited to looking or touching."

What is the *DSM-III*? The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (Third Edition) is published by the American Psychiatric Association. The book standardizes the diagnoses of mental disorders by specifying the number of and types of symptoms. With each edition, changes are made, some mental disorders are dropped and new ones added. Insurance companies generally only cover diagnoses listed in *DSM-III*.