

# MIFGASH

JOURNAL OF SOCIAL-EDUCATIONAL WORK

- > Eating behavior and risks of eating disorders among adolescents in Israel
- > The relationship between a sense of coherence, body image and disordered eating among adolescent girls
- > Identity level and identity profile among children in boarding schools
- > Face to face with teenagers using Facebook
- > Motivational interviewing: Principles, research and application



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## **Address of Editorial Board:**

EFSHAR Association

P.O. Box 53296,

Jerusalem 91531, Israel

Tel: +972-2-6728905

Fax: +972-2-6728904

[mgilat@efshar.org.il](mailto:mgilat@efshar.org.il)

[www.efshar.org.il](http://www.efshar.org.il)

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**Address of Editorial Board:**

EFSHAR Association  
P.O. Box 53296, Jerusalem 91531, Israel  
Tel: +972-2-6728905; Fax: +972-2-6728904  
E-mail: [mgilat@efshar.org.il](mailto:mgilat@efshar.org.il)  
[www.efshar.org.il](http://www.efshar.org.il)

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# CONTENTS

<b>Eating behavior and risks of eating disorders among adolescents in Israel</b> Bracha Katz . . . . .	9
<b>The relationship between a sense of coherence, body image and disordered eating among adolescent girls: Identifying groups at risk</b> Yael Latzer, Zohar Spivak & Orna Tzischinsky . . . . .	31
<b>Identity level and identity profile among children in boarding schools compared to children living with their parents</b> Yael Wilchek-Aviad . . . . .	55
<b>Face to face with teenagers using Facebook</b> Meyran Boniel-Nissim & Michal Dolev-Cohen . . . . .	79
<b>Motivational interviewing: Principles, research and application</b> Alvin (Itzhak) Lander & Vered Slonim-Nevo . . . . .	95
Book reviews . . . . .	121
Abstracts . . . . .	I-IV



# ABSTRACTS

## Eating behavior and risks of eating disorders among adolescents in Israel

**Bracha Katz**, PhD, Department of Criminology, Western Galilee College, Israel

This study investigates the prevalence of adolescents (boys and girls) at risk of developing eating problems and the social and weight characteristics of those at risk.

Participants included 323 Jewish pupils, grades 7 to 12, who completed the self-report EAT-40 and a structured questionnaire on personal and weight characteristics. The risk index was measured by the 40 items that comprised the questionnaire.

The findings indicate that 47.1% describe themselves as full-figured, fat or very fat and 45.3% have a desire to lose weight. Findings show that 75.8% of the adolescents who define themselves as full-figured and 36.4% of those who describe themselves as obese were in the normal weight range. Of all the respondents, 6.1% are at risk of developing eating problems. There were significant differences between subjects at risk and the other subjects with regards to their gender, their satisfaction with their weight and the desire to lose weight and their age.

**Keywords:** Eating behavior and attitudes, disordered eating, weight, adolescents, Israel

## The relationship between a sense of coherence, body image and disordered eating among adolescent girls: Identifying groups at risk

**Yael Latzer**, D.Sc., Professor, Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences, Haifa University & Eating Disorders Clinic, Psychiatric Division, Rambam Medical Center, Haifa, Israel

**Zohar Spivak**, Otot – NPO for youth at risk and Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences, Haifa University, Israel

**Orna Tzischinsky**, D.Sc., Professor, Psychology Department, Emek Yezreel Academic College, Israel

Disordered eating represents a complex of thoughts and behaviors, from a negative body image up to Anorexia and Bulimia nervosa. Among the multiple risk factors are socio-cultural and intra-personal factors.

A high sense of coherence is a significant resource for coping with stress, and functions as a protective factor against Eating Disorders (ED). The aim of this research was to examine the relationship between a sense of coherence, body image, and disordered eating among adolescent girls, and identify groups at risk among adolescents in Israel. In this study 248 girls, ages 12–19, completed self-report questionnaires which included demographic, Eating Disorder (EDI-2, EAT-26) Sense of Coherence (SOC) and Body Shape Questionnaires (BSQ). An analysis of the findings shows a statistically significant negative correlation between disordered eating, body image and a sense of coherence. Of the entire sample 22% were found to be in the group at risk of developing eating disorders due to a low sense of coherence and a more negative body image. No statistically significant differences were found between the study variables in the different age groups. The study model indicates that a sense of coherence is a strong predictor of pathologies associated with eating disorders. Thus ED prevention programs should focus on strengthening the individual's sense of coherence.

**Keywords:** eating disorders, adolescents, sense of coherence, body image, adolescent girls in Israel

## Identity level and identity profile among children in boarding schools compared to children living with their parents

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**Yael Wilchek-Aviad**, Ph.D., Department of Criminology, Ariel University, Israel  
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In this article an attempt was made to examine whether a boarding school indeed functions as a “habitat” for adolescents, providing them with better social integration skills later on, or in fact it functions solely as a “shelter”. Identity formation level and identity formation profile (Tzuriel, 1990) were the variables used to examine this issue. These variables were chosen based on previous study findings, which have indicated a positive association of these variables with the ability to adjust and proper functioning, in the present and in the future. The research group included 207 students, grades 8–12, living in boarding schools in the center of



Israel. The control group included 215 students living at home with their parents and studying in schools located also in central Israel.

The findings indicate that the scores of “ego identity” of the youth in boarding schools were higher than the scores of the students living at home on the variable overall profile index of self-identity. Similarly, their scores with regard to commitment, purposefulness, solidity continuity, meaningfulness and physical identity were also higher than those of the youth living at home. These findings strengthen the assumption that the boarding school serves as a habitat and not just a shelter.

**Keywords:** boarding school, identity level, self-identity profile, habitat

## Face to face with teenagers using Facebook

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**Meyran Boniel-Nissim**, Ph.D., Faculty of Education, University of Haifa, Israel

**Michal Dolev-Cohen**, Ph.D., Oranim Academic College, Israel  
 .....

Children and teenagers are often highly skilled in their use of the internet. One of the most popular social network sites (SNS) they use is Facebook. Social networks provide a free and accessible place for children and youth to examine their identities and establish their social status. Although Facebook only allows friendship on the site for people declaring that they are over the age of 13, younger children can find a way to join. Locating this age group for research is challenging, due to the fact that they declare fictitious ages. As such, this research used qualitative methods through interviews with three focus groups of children, Facebook users, under the age 13 (N=17).

The goal of the study was to learn about the teenagers’ perceptions of using Facebook and its effects on their friendships (online and face-to-face). The main issues that emerged during the interviews were: (1) the importance of being on Facebook, (2) lying as a tool for joining a social network online that is prohibited for their age, (3) Facebook uses and (4) friendship in light of Facebook friends and face-to-face friends. In light of these findings, recommendations for intervention as well as reservations and limitations are provided for educators and therapists.

**Keywords:** social network, Facebook, children, friendship, elementary school

## Motivational interviewing: Principles, research and application

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**Alvin (Itzhak) Lander**, Ph.D., Department of Social Work, Sapir College, Israel

**Vered Slonim-Nevo**, Professor, Ph.D., The Spitzer Department of Social Work, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel

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Motivational interviewing, as described in this paper, may contribute to the practice of a variety of helping professionals working in a number of fields: mental and physical health, welfare, education, addictions, and delinquency. This model may be used along with other more traditional interventions, or it may stand alone as a short-term therapeutic model. The ideological principles that characterize motivational interviewing – collaboration between therapists and clients, strengthening the inner motivation of clients for change, and respect for the autonomous wishes of clients – are appropriate for therapeutic work with individuals, families, groups, and communities coping with difficulties. The clinical principles of this model – the expression of empathy toward clients, building discrepancy between clients' values and behaviors, rolling with resistance, and support and encouragement of client's capabilities – are also likely to contribute to therapeutic work. The variety of existing research studies that have examined the effectiveness of motivational interviewing with a range of difficulties generally point to positive outcomes. This paper includes three parts: a description of the principles of motivational interviewing, a survey of the empirical findings related to its effectiveness and a case study about father-child relations demonstrating application of the model.

**Keywords:** motivation, motivational interviewing, therapeutic approaches, change

**תיקון טעות**

בגיליון 37 (יוני 2013) במאמר: "למה לא להיות דוקטור?" – אנשים עם לקויות למידה מספרים על הצלחתם באקדמיה, מאת יעל פרופר ויוליה מירסקי (עמ' 89), נשמטה הערת השוליים הבאה:

תודות לד"ר טלי היוש, לד"ר גילה ווגל ולאורה כהן שתרמו בהערותיהן והארותיהן לעיצובו הסופי של מאמר זה.