

# Testimonials from Participants of Past ISSA Conferences

## 2009

*The conference was truly inspiring.*

STUART SHANKER

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D Phil (Oxon), Director, the Milton & Ethel Harris Research Initiative, Distinguished Research Professor of Philosophy, Psychology & Education; Director, The Canada-Mexico-Cuba Research Initiative; Co-Director, The Council of Human Development; Past President, The Council of Early Childhood Development, USA

*I would like to congratulate ISSA for organizing such an extraordinary conference in Bucharest. The plenary and parallel sessions were very informative and it was a real pleasure to hear eminent experts in neuroscience and ECD. I am honored to have been invited to this international event. I found the participation in the roundtable discussion and being interviewed by the Romanian television extremely beneficial for my personal and professional development, as a language expert and as a member of the ECD team in Republika Srpska (Bosnia and Herzegovina).*

DR. DRAGANA LUKIC

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Ministry of Education and Culture of Republika Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina

*Thank you very much for the wonderful days I had at the ISSA Conference in Bucharest! I have learnt a lot, I have met interesting people, I enjoyed the party to celebrate 10 years of ISSA! I was very impressed by the roundtable meeting – ISSA did an excellent job in organizing this.*

ANKE VAN KEULEN

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Bureau MUTANT, European DECET Network, Child Care International, The Netherlands



*Thank you for the highly professional, well organized, and joyful conference. We are looking forward to future cooperation.*

MEELI PANDIS

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Education Advisor, Continental Branch Office CEE/CIS/Baltics, SOS-Kinderdorf International, Estonia

*Congratulations on the success of both the roundtable and the ISSA Conference! SOS Children's Village will take up a lot of new ideas beyond the area of education stemming from the inputs and discussions there, I am sure.*

DR. BARBARA SCHRATZ-HADWICH

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International Office Programme Development Head of Child, Youth, Family, and Community Development  
Department SOS-Kinderdorf International, Austria

*Thank you for having organized such an invigorating conference.*

PASCALE CAMUS

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Advisor in Education, France

*The visit to Romania was great! Thank you for a wonderful and interesting conference!*

TIIU TAMMEMÄE

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Tallinn University, Estonia



# 2008

*We would like to thank the organizers from ISSA for so generously including UNICEF in the conference programme. We would like to acknowledge the warmth and hospitality we received from them as well as the immense effort they put into planning a series of events that were of such high quality and executed with remarkable finesse and precision.*

DEEPA GROVER

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Regional Adviser, Early Childhood Development, UNICEF R.O. CEE.CIS

*The sessions I visited were truly transformative to me. The entire conference experience was a gift.*

DR. SHARON LYNN KAGAN

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Co-Director of the National Center for Children and Families, Associate Dean for Policy at Teachers College, Columbia University, National Center for Children & Families and Professor Adjunct at Yale University's Child Study Center, USA

*Thank you for a professionally fulfilling event. Well done!*

NURPER ULKUER, PH.D

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Senior Advisor, Chief, Early Childhood Development Unit/PDO, UNICEF

*ISSA 2008 was a powerful conference experience, with plenaries and workshops to stimulate conversation and provoke thinking. The city of Budapest made a perfect setting and created opportunities for enjoying architecture, dining and the outdoors, as well as each other. ISSA's partnership with the World Forum Foundation brought greater diversity to the event through Global Leaders for Young Children and the International Working Group on Peace Building with Young Children, both projects of the World Forum. This partnership continues through collaborations that will strengthen the World Forum 2009 and ISSA's next conference in Bucharest, 2009.*

BONNIE NEUGEBAUER

World Forum Foundation, USA



*I found the 2008 ISSA Conference to be very informative and inspiring. It is amazing to realize that quality early childhood opportunities are happening locally, regionally and globally because individuals within ISSA member organizations are committed to making them happen. Thanks for a well organized conference. I was able to network with colleagues and make new friends.*

PATTY JUNO

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American International School of Budapest, Hungary

*A highly successful conference.*

DR. RICHARD KOHL

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Technical Director and Project Director, Scaling Up, Management Systems International, USA

*It was such a powerful mix of people: community and NGO leaders, international organizations and governmental representatives, researchers and practitioners. I felt that these people had a capacity to make a difference in the entire early child education area. In addition, it was great to be part of the wonderful ISSA community and enjoy the positive atmosphere created by the organizers. Great team work!*

DR. AUDREY OSLER

[a.h.osler@education.leeds.ac.uk](mailto:a.h.osler@education.leeds.ac.uk)

Director, Centre for Citizenship and Human Rights Education, University of Leeds, United Kingdom

*A great conference! I was really impressed how perfectly it was organized, both from the content and from the logistical point of view. I have learnt a lot!*

TEREZA ORGONDZINSKA

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President, Comenius Foundation for Child Development, Poland

*I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for organizing this event that enabled us to share our experiences and broaden our network.*

DIDEM AKAN

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Education Assistant – UNICEF Turkey



*Many thanks for a really wonderful event.*

MARGARET WOOD

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Team Manager, Cambridgeshire Race Equality and Diversity Service Team for Traveller Education, United Kingdom

*Congratulations for a great conference. Budapest was a great venue and the events at the Parliament and Palace were indeed memorable! Once again, well done.*

YOUSSEF HAJJAR

[arcyh@gn.apc.org](mailto:arcyh@gn.apc.org)

Consultant, United Kingdom

*I would like to thank you for the great conference, I enjoyed being part of the conference.*

TIGRAN TOVMASYAN

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International Research and Exchanges Board Armenia, Armenia

*I wanted to say thank-you for hosting such an amazing conference. The presenters that I attended did a wonderful job. The social events were fantastic and the organization of the event went very smoothly.*

HEATHER CROSS

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Director, University of Washington Children's Center @ West Campus, USA

*I would like to express my gratitude to the ISSA Secretariat and Conference Organizing Committee for such a wonderful conference in Budapest. It was very well designed, organized and conducted event attracted so many professionals from many countries. ISSA and its recognition are growing, and highly professional level of the ISSA conference in Budapest is a clear indicator for this. We all recognize that hard work and commitment stay behind of this success, and thank you all for this!*

ULVIYA MIKAILOVA

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Director, Center for Innovative Educations, Azerbaijan



*I would also like to tell you how much I was impressed by the conference. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet many professionals, learn from interesting presentations, make new connections with people, and share experiences. You really did a great job! Everything was well organized, and I think everybody felt very comfortable. Thank you very much for all your hard work and commitment.*

RUZANNA TSARUKYAN

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Executive Director, "Step by Step" Benevolent Foundation, Armenia

*Just to say that I've reached home richer thanks to all of you who have taught me so much. Let me add just a few words (feedback) on the Conference:*

- It made me feel a fish in water again*
- Invaluable to be able to meet so many experts I use in my work*
- Excellency in organization, the ISSA team should make a conference to teach others how to make conferences like you do!*

SUZANA DUARTE

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Mozambique

*The conference was fabulous and we both got an enormous amount out of it. Thank you and congratulations for such an inspiring conference with such diverse and stimulating papers. The organization itself was noteworthy.*

DR KAYE CEDERMAN

Department of Reflective Pedagogy & Early Childhood Studies, Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick, Ireland

