



# Connections

## Dr. Nick Cunningham is Levenback Speaker

*New York Zero-to-Three's 12th Annual Hedi Levenback Memorial Evening with a Zero-to-Three Pioneer has been scheduled for Thursday, December 2, 2010 and you are invited to join us for a night that will leave you nourished both professionally and emotionally.*

*Get caught up in an insightful interview with a brilliant raconteur, Nick Cunningham, pediatrician and tireless advocate for practice that supports parents and infants in the critical period when "they fall in love with each other." His fascinating personal and professional history will be explored, with special attention paid to how his wisdom and experience can frame the successes and challenges early childhood professionals face today. Dr. Cunningham will be interviewed by NYZTT Board Member Martha Edwards, PhD, Director, Center for the Developing Child and Family, Ackerman Institute for the Family.*

*Born in Vienna a decade before the Second World War, Hedi Levenback, M.S., M.S.W., was a New York Zero-to-Three Network founding member and a peerless advocate for children. She, herself, was a pioneer in the development and implementation of policy and regulations for infants attending preschool daycare programs in New York City. A committed advocate for early childhood education, she served on the Early Childhood Council of New York and wrote on the topic of selecting play materials for early childhood group therapy. Mother of two and grandmother of five, Hedi Levenback will long be remembered for her loving dedication and commitment to young children everywhere and for her grand capacity to knit people and resources together. Her presence among us is sorely missed. ■*

## New York Zero-to-Three's Efforts Recognized

# Network Receives 2010 Community Leadership Award

The Center for Children's Initiatives presented the New York Zero-to-Three Network with its Community Leadership Award for excellence in leadership and advocacy at the annual Champions for Children Awards Luncheon, Oct. 18, 2010 at the Yale Club in New York City. The Network is the only organization in New York State that focuses its work exclusively on the needs of infants and toddlers and their families.

Through commitment and hard work," said CCI Executive Director Nancy Kolben, "this group of dedicated practitioners and advocates has leveraged very modest resources to be a force for change." She pointed to the interdisciplinary team the Network has built over the past two decades "who all give the gift of time to ensure the work of NYZTT gets done—to provide a forum for a cross-disciplinary approach to both practice and policy and to bring issues to the forefront of public attention."



Nancy Kolben, from left, Executive Director, CCI, presenting Community Leadership Award for excellence in leadership and advocacy to Priscilla Lincoln and Evelyn Blanck, co-presidents, NYZTT, with Julie Fenster, President, CCI Board of Directors at Oct. 18, 2010 Champions for Children luncheon sponsored by CCI at the Yale Club in New York City.

Of special significance, she noted, was the Network's conscious decision to "create an effective advocacy strategy." NYZTT undertook the "daunting task" of documenting how New York City was doing in meeting the needs of its most "at-risk" families. The resulting report, "*Unequal from the Start*," documented the uneven allocation of resources and the toll on families, with a focus on neighborhoods.

NYZTT Co-Presidents Priscilla Lincoln and Evelyn Blanck accepted the award at the luncheon from Ken Rosato, Anchor for *WABC Eyewitness News This Morning* and *At Noon*. In his introduction, Mr. Rosato called the NYZTT report "a stellar example of the power of information." Its publication and numerous forums on the contents enabled NYZTT to join with multiple statewide advocacy coalitions, sit on statewide advisory councils, and participate in a national ZERO-TO-THREE Project to build the Infancy movements in states across the country.

Pediatrician Elizabeth Isakson, the Network's Secretary and author of the report, was keynote speaker at the luncheon. "I want you to get as passionate as I am," she told the over 200 guests, "about helping our most vulnerable babies be ready for school and have the cognitive and emotional skills to lead a successful life." She pointed to the work of James Heckman and other economists that show intervening from birth or earlier saves government dollars later and leads to completing school, staying out of the justice system, and productive employment. ■

## Meet A New York Zero-to-Three Network Board Member

# Carole J. Oshinsky, MLS, Treasurer and Co-Director, NYZTT Infancy Leadership Circles Project



Carole Oshinsky has served in many capacities on the New York Zero-to-Three board during her 15-year membership, including Communications Committee chair, secretary, and co-president. Her longstanding interest in child public policy began when she experienced first-hand the lack of information and struggles of mothers who wanted to breastfeed. "Motherhood propelled me to be an activist," she says, first by becoming a La Leche League leader; later, after coping with a child's early learning challenges, by speaking to professionals and parent groups. "I had to share with others what I learned and help set other families on a good path." Carole brings to the Board her 25 years at the National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP), where she was head librarian and publications manager. At NCCP, she worked with eminent researchers in early childhood and wrote daily about the vast differences in how children fare from state to state based on services and income. This spurred Carole to start the Network's first policy committee. As co-chair from 2004-2008, she oversaw the development and release of the Network's first report: *Unequal from the Start: A Check-up on New York City's Infants and Toddlers*. Its publication in May 2008 brought NYZTT recognition by statewide coalitions, including Winning Beginning NY and New York Children's Action Network. It also led to participation by NYZTT in statewide forums on early childhood with state and local administrators and professional groups, and invitations to join work

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groups thinking about the fragmented systems of services for babies. The report inspired the state Council on Children and Families to prepare a workbook and DVD titled, "Using Data to Build Comprehensive Systems for Infants and Families," which Carole hopes will be used at Infancy Summits in different regions around New York State in the next year. A segment features Carole, President Evelyn Blank, and Secretary Liz Isakson (report author) talking about how the report came into being and key findings. The three also presented a session on this topic at the December 2008 ZERO TO THREE National Training Institute. Carole was selected to be a ZERO TO THREE Birth to Three State Advocacy Leader for New York in March 2008 along with Jackie Jones of Buffalo. Both received two years of training on how to connect infant-toddler professionals to the state policy process. Carole and Jackie have been using these lessons, in cooperation with NYZTT and Winning Beginning NY, to establish Infancy Leadership Circles around the state to be the voice for very young children in state and local policy work and to help build better systems of services. The circles played a key role in defeating parent fees for Early Intervention services and advocating for a fiscally sound and high-quality EI program. An avid reader and vegetable gardener, Carole is grandmother to seven children, age 8 and under. She is committed to continuing her role as a catalyst and child policy advocate. ■

## New York Zero-to-Three Network

Fostering collaboration among those who work with babies, toddlers and their families

# SAVE THE DATE!

### **DECEMBER 2, 2010**

12th Annual Hedi Levenback Memorial Evening with a Zero-to-Three Pioneer  
An Interview with Dr. Nick Cunningham by Martha Edwards, PhD  
Fee is \$20 for all  
Register online at our website

### **JANUARY 11, 2011**

Clinical Roundtable  
The Bidirectional Relationship Between Movement and Social-Emotional Development.  
with Susan Rabinowicz  
Fee is \$20 for members  
Register online at our website

### **FEBRUARY 3, 2011**

Clinical Roundtable  
An Evening with  
with Rebecca Shahmoon Shanok, MSW, PhD  
Fee is \$20 for members  
Register online at our website

### **MARCH 3, 2011**

Clinical Roundtable  
Brainstorm Along with the Experts: Discussing Challenging Infant and Toddler Cases  
Jane Hochman, EdD, Priscilla Lincoln and Harriet McGurk  
Fee is \$20 for members  
Register online at our website

### **JUNE 9, 2011**

Clinical Roundtable  
Enhancing Discipline-Specific Practice Across Allied Health Professions Through Reflective Supervision: A View from Speech-Language Pathology  
with Elaine Geller  
Fee is \$20 for members  
Register online at our website

*The Levenback Lecture and the Roundtables will all take place at the Ackerman Institute for the Family, 149 East 78th Street, NYC (between Lexington and 3rd Avenues)*

### **MAY 13, 2011**

## 15th ANNUAL SPRING CONFERENCE

Practical Applications of Attachment Research: Interventions for Infants, Toddlers and Their Families

featuring plenary speakers  
Beatrice Beebe, PhD  
and  
Esther Cohen, PhD

Breakout Sessions!  
Emily Fenichel Award!

More info to come