Reducing Trauma as a Barrier to Learning

May 10, 2006
8:15 – 3:00
Hogan Center, College of the Holy Cross
Worcester, MA
Sponsored by the Massachusetts Department of Education

Presenter Biographies

Bessel van der Kolk
Keynote Address

Bessel A. van der Kolk, M.D., has been active as a clinician, researcher, and teacher in the area of posttraumatic stress and related phenomena since the 1970s. His work integrates developmental, biological, psychodynamic, and interpersonal aspects of the impact of trauma and its treatment. His book *Psychological Trauma* was the first integrative text on the subject, painting the far ranging impact of trauma on the entire person and the range of therapeutic issues which need to be addressed for recovery.

Dr. van der Kolk and his various collaborators have published extensively on the impact of trauma on development, such as dissociative problems, borderline personality and self-mutilation, cognitive development in traumatized children and adults, and the psychobiology of trauma. He was co-principal investigator of the DSM IV Field Trials for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. His current research is on how trauma affects memory processes and brain imaging studies of PTSD.

Dr. van der Kolk is past President of the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies, Professor of Psychiatry at Boston University Medical School, and Medical Director of the Trauma Center at HRI Hospital in Brookline, Massachusetts. He has taught at universities and hospitals across the United States and around the world, including Europe, Africa, Russia, Australia, Israel, and China.
Joel M. Ristuccia
Flexible Framework Presentation

Joel M. Ristuccia, Ed.M., is a certified School Psychologist who received his undergraduate degree from Yale University and his Ed.M. from Harvard University. Mr. Ristuccia began working with schools and Special Education students in 1975 and for the past fifteen years has developed and worked in program for students with Social/Emotional disabilities. Mr. Ristuccia is a co-author of *Helping Traumatized Children Learn.*

Susan Cole
History of *Helping Traumatized Children Learn* Presentation

Susan Cole is the director of the Trauma and Learning Policy Initiative and has served at Massachusetts Advocates for Children (MAC) for 18 years as legal director and director of the Children’s Law Support Project. Currently, she holds a joint appointment as senior program manager at MAC and as clinical instructor at the Hale and Door Legal Services Center of Harvard Law School. Ms. Cole holds a J.D. from Northeastern University, a Master’s in Special Education from the University of Oregon, and a B.A. from Boston University. She is a co-author of *Helping Traumatized Children Learn.*