

The contributors

Beth R Crisp is Associate Professor of Social Work at Deakin University in Australia, where her colleagues include Jane Maidment. Her social work career has primarily been in public health research and social work education, both spheres in which she regularly facilitates large ad hoc groups. Prior to returning to Australia in 2005, she was responsible for a number of projects to develop new resources for social work educators funded by the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) and the Scottish Institute for Excellence in Social Work Education (SIESWE).

Mark W. Fraser holds the John A. Tate Distinguished Professorship for Children in Need and serves as Associate Dean for Research at the School of Social Work, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He directs the 'Making Choices' Project, a school-based social and character development program focused on preventing drug use, delinquency, and other social problems. Interventions take place in large and small classroom groups. Dr. Fraser has written more than 100 articles and chapters on child behavior, child and family services, and research methods. With colleagues, he is the co-author or editor of seven books.

Maeda J. Galinsky is a Professor at the School of Social Work, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She has been a co-principal investigator on the 'Making Choices' project, a project that utilizes a manualized curriculum for groups. Dr. Galinsky has published widely in the area of groupwork theory, practice and research, including articles on support groups, open-ended groups, technology-based groups, and evaluation of groupwork practice. She is especially interested in intervention research involving groups. She has authored, co-authored or co-edited over 80 articles and book chapters and four books.

Mary Larkin is a Senior Lecturer in the Social Work Division at De Montfort University, Leicester. She is also Programme Leader for two

undergraduate courses – BA Health Studies and BSc in Public and Community Health. She completed a PhD last year on the experiences of former carers. Her research interests include the impact of caring on peoples' lives post-caring in particular and, more generally, the lives of vulnerable groups in health and social care.

Jane Maidment began her social work career in New Zealand where she worked in older persons health. For many years she was involved in facilitating education/support groups with people caring for a relative with dementia, as well as groups for people with a diagnosis of early dementia. Since shifting to Australia in 1999 most of her groupwork experience has been derived from classroom teaching. This article records 'an experiment' of using 'speed dating' in this context. Jane's main areas of research are social work practicum education, working with diversity and more latterly exploring the use of craft as a vehicle for promoting social connectedness.

Nick Pollard is a senior lecturer in occupational therapy at Sheffield Hallam University. Before September 2003 he worked in mental health in Doncaster and Sheffield. He has facilitated and led writing groups and worked with mental health users and other groups in developing community based occupational opportunities. Nick has a long history of involvement with community publishing groups, including convening writing groups and, until recently, editing the Federation of Worker Writers and Community Publishers magazine *Federation*. 'Voices Talk, Hands Write' continue to meet and write together as an independent group.

Mary A. Terzian is a Postdoctoral Research Associate at Duke University's Center for Child and Family Policy. Dr. Terzian conducts research on gender-, age-, and ethnic-sensitive pathways to drug abuse. She obtained her Ph.D. in Social Work from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. As part of her work on the 'Making Choices' intervention study, she helped to design, implement, and evaluate group activities for elementary school students. Prior to this, she had worked with couples, families, and residents of a group home, within inpatient and outpatient mental health settings.