

CHILDREN AND THE NEWSPAPER

NOT SEEN, NOT HEARD
– BUT SCARED

THE OFFICE OF THE PRESS OMBUDSMAN
DUBLIN 6TH OF DECEMBER 2010

Magne Raundalen, child psychologist
Center for Crisis Psychology, Bergen

INTRODUCTION

- A FEW GLIMPSES FROM MY EARLIER STUDIES OF CHILDREN & NEWSPAPERS
- CHILDREN IN THE NEWSPAPER
- THE NEGATIVE PORTRAYING OF YOUTH

Children in Newspapers

- a global content study -

by Magne Raundalen and Jan Vincens Steen*



Short report from the study

- The "Children in Newspapers" global project asked children at the age of 10-12 years to read their local newspaper for one week, cutting out, discussing and categorising articles on child issues or articles that portrayed children.

The goals of the study

- The goals of the global project were to:
- increase consciousness about children's diversity
- examine the way children believe that newspapers reflect this

Participants & collaboration

- Seventy classes from 24 countries on all the five continents sent in reports. In most cases, the newspaper studied was the initiator or an active partner in the project.
- The study was supervised by their school teacher during the whole week.

The feedback

- The feedback from teachers and newspapers was very positive; children enjoyed the work and teachers reported animated discussions and positive learning effects. Similarly, the newspaper staffs found new grounds for communication with schools and with the young.

What the children studied % of the stories they found

- Children as victims (31.03%)
- Children in school (18.06%)
- Children are brilliant (16.59%)
- Children in politics (9.62%)
- Children as wrong-doers, breaking the law (7.69%)
- Children helping others (4.42%)

What made us happy

- As much of the news was depressing, children loved reading good news.
- They enjoyed reading about children who have been helped, such as a single child whose life was saved at a hospital or a group of refugees starting a better life, and were particularly interested in finding out about how to help Iraqi children during and after the war.
- Many also expressed satisfaction with the anti-war protests taking place around the world, especially those run by children.

What made us sad

- It was also important for children to be able to express their sadness and concerns.
- Most classes writing in late March/early April 2003 voiced concerns about the war in Iraq.
- Abuse and violence against children ranked highly, so did young boys in prison, high school fees, the murder of a father and son witnessed by other children, child poverty.
- The general lack of good news and the shortage of children's views in the newspaper.

Summary of reports

- There are repeated reports from the children that newspapers should give wider coverage to children's issues, in particular "bad news" should be balanced with more examples of improvements in children's lives.
- Children also want to read more that touches on their daily lives presented in a way that is adapted to their level of understanding or, as one class put it: "More about children, children like us."

Recommendations

- The children were even invited to make recommendations to those running the newspapers – and they did not hesitate to do so. One class wrote that it was "cool to think that people at our age could make a difference in the world".

Radical advices from the kids

- Some also gave radical advices: "The newspaper should put the violent stuff in the back or in a separate section, instead of on the front page because the children get scared."
- Or this one: "We recommend the newspaper to print less advertisements to win more space for articles about children."

A special report from a boy 11

- "It was a hell of a job, but it was the best week at school I ever had!"

boy 11 – Northern Ireland

The four studies on youth

- Collaboration between Swedish and Norwegian newspapers 1994-2000
- The journalists administered a systematic survey to groups of youngsters 14-17 yrs
- After this they made a free interview of the group on the topics from the survey
- A special issue was the youth portrait conveyed by the press

Youth conclusions

- 75% of the youngsters' blamed the press and the media for a general negative attitude towards youth. Some even compared it with racism and called it 'youth hate.' During the years – 1994 to 2000 – the students report some betterment!
- Interesting discussion between the boys and the girls.

NOW: TWO MAIN ISSUES

- NO 1 : THE CHILD RIGHT CONVENTION
- NO 2 : THE FEAR FACTOR

THE CHILD RIGHT CONVENTION

- ARTICLE 17

” State Parties recognize the important function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from diversity of national and international sources especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health.”



T. Ahern

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et

LIVE
O'TOOLE

arriage
aw 49
Latvian
rides has
Justice
Ahern.
ils have
lian and
ey are to
Ireland.

E 10

DON'T JAIL MUM FOR KILLING OUR DAD



GUILTY: Anne



BEATEN: Patrick



PLEA: Linda

Daughter begs judge for mercy

THE daughter of a woman who bludgeoned her sleeping husband to death with a hammer has begged the judge not to jail her mother.

Anne Burke (56), who admitted hitting husband Patrick over the head 23 times in their Co Laois home, will be sentenced for manslaughter today.

Her daughter Linda (22) said her mum was sorry and was living in a prison of her own making every day.

■SEE PAGE SIX

AN WHO CONNED LOVER FAKED HER OWN DEATH PAGE FIFTEEN

Se hvor lenge
**super-
sommer'n
varer!**



SIDE 36 OG 37

Dagbladet

Torsdag 3. juli 2008

Nr. 179. Like 27. 140. årgang. Lesesalg kr 11,00 € 3 utenfor Norden

PLATE-ANMELDELSE

KATRINE MOHOLT

«Padde-
flat og
karakterløs»

ANMELDT AV SIGRID HVIDSTEN SIDE 53

PAPPA DREPTE MAMMA I SKOLEGÅRDEN



Politiet RAKK IKKE FRAM

BARNA TIL STEDE: Politiet var rett i nærheten, da kvinnen (31) utløste voldsalarmen. Men de klarte ikke å hindre drapet som skjedde med barna til stede. **SIDE 8, 9 OG 11**

Norske Ståle og kona
**SKUTT MENS
DE SOV**

SIDE 14 OG 15

Modell:
Jeg ble
veldig brun

**ADVARER
MOT NY TREND**

Vil bli
slank, brun
og kåt
SIDE 6

DIRECT MAIL TO THE PRESS

- ARTICLE 17 e)

"States Parties

should encourage the development of appropriate guidelines for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her well-being."

Other promises in Article 17 CRC

- A) encourage the mass media to disseminate information and material of social and cultural benefit to the child and in accordance with the spirit of Article 29 (addresses children's education)
- B) encourage international co-operation in the production, exchange and dissemination of such information and material from a diversity of cultural, national and international sources.

The developing view of children

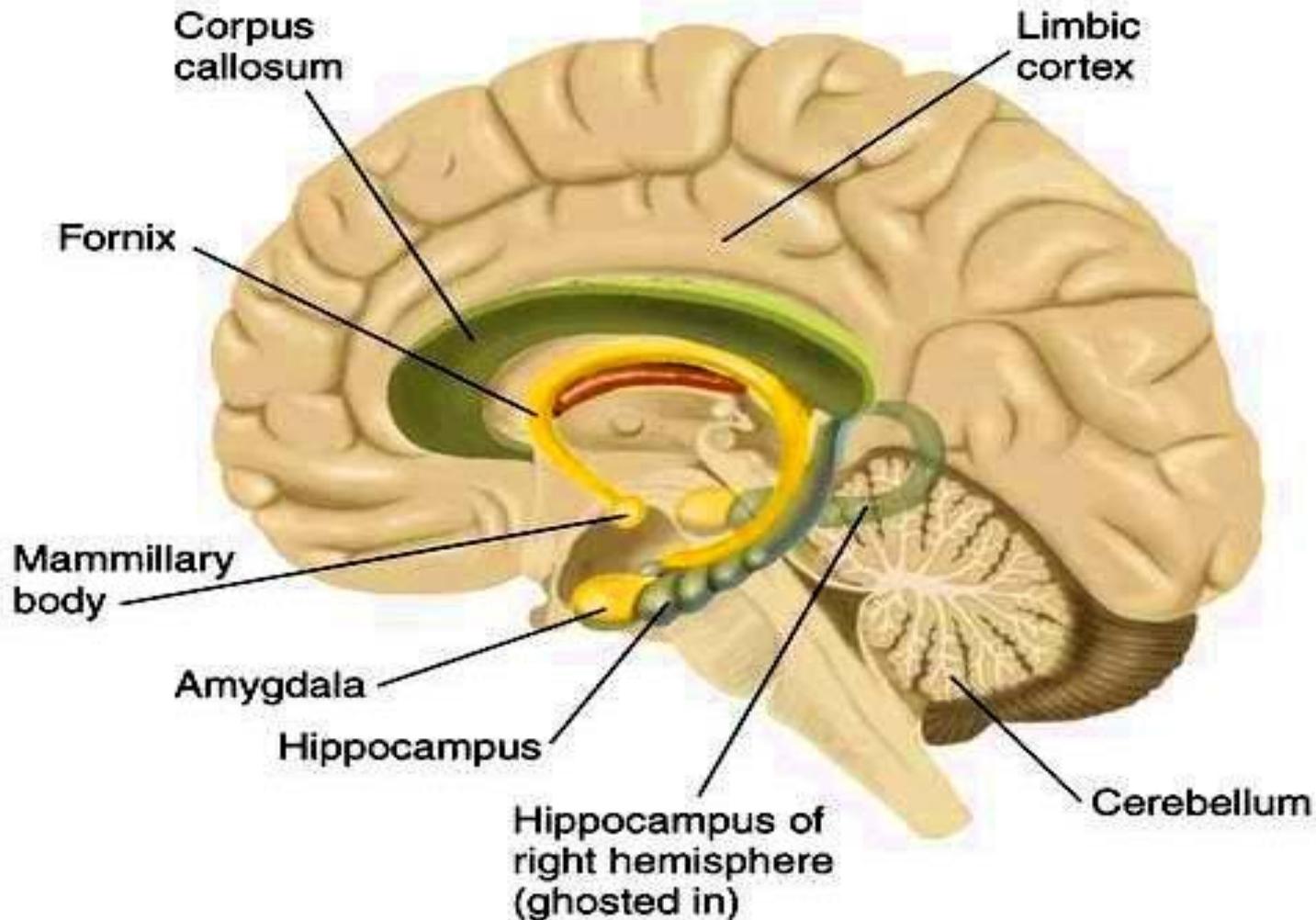
- The obedient child – most popular before Hitler
- Children's needs – based on child psychology
- The competent child – the interacting child
- Children as researchers – the scientist in the crib
- The malleable child – the workable child brain

Alison Gopnik, Andrew Meltzoff & Patricia Kuhl:
"The Scientist in the Crib" - Washington, 1999.

NO 2 – THE FEAR FACTOR

- HOW FEAR AFFECTS THE BRAIN
- THE NEUROTOXIC EFFECT
- OF THE HPA STRESS SYSTEM
- HARM THE MEMORY FUNCTION
- AFFECTED HERE AND NOW
- AND IN THE FUTURE
- HOW FRONT PAGES ADD TO THIS
- INDIRECT EVIDENCE OF DAMAGE
- NEW LEGISLATION IN NORWAY (§ 30)

CHILD-BRAIN-PROTECTION



Understanding reduce fear - working with concepts

- Thought illnesses
- Erratic thoughts
- The cleaning machine
- The gas pedal or stepping on the brakes
- Chaos in the puzzle
- The instruction book – the manual

EXAMPLES OF FRONT PAGES NORWEGIAN & IRISH

- QUESTION FOR THE DAY:
WHY DO THE NEWSPAPER OFTEN USE
CHILDRENS' LANGUAGE LIKE MUM AND DAD
ADDRESSING THEIR ADULT BUYERS?

VG

Nr. 125
Torsdag
8. mai
2008
Uke 19
Kr. 10,00

HER SIKRER
POLITIET DET
DE MENER
ER DRAPS-
VÅPENET

**POLITIET
OM SIKTET
PAPPA (29):**

Foto: ALF ØYSTEIN STØTVIG

Tror han
DREPTE
datteren (5) med
SLEKTE



GANG RAPE JUNIOR CERT GIRL

Victim, 16, dragged down city alley



CARE
Victim was taken to Cork Hospital

By **MICHELLE O'KEEFE** and **KATHRYN HAYES**
A BRUTAL gang dragged a schoolgirl into an alley and raped her as she celebrated her junior Cert results.

The terrified 16-year-old victim was forced to endure the horror ordeal after the sick mob attacked

her down the isolated lane in Limerick city centre.

The vile perverts targeted the girl as hundreds of teenagers poured out on to the streets following specially-held discos.

A Garda spokesman last night said: "We are looking to speak to two to three people in connection with the incident. We are very

TURN TO PAGE 10



UNGE KVINNER
**JOBBER
 SEG SYKE**

SIDE
 28
 OG
 29

Dagbladet

Fredag 2. februar 2007

Nr. 32 Uke 5.139. Årgang. Lesesalgkr 15,00



NYE RITUALER OG SOSIALE KRAV

Kunsten å
 legge seg flat

JOHN OLAVE GELAND
 KOMMENTAR, SIDE 3



TV

En nettpirats
 bekjennelser

SIRI HØSTMÆLNGEN
 FREDAG, SIDE 36 OG 37



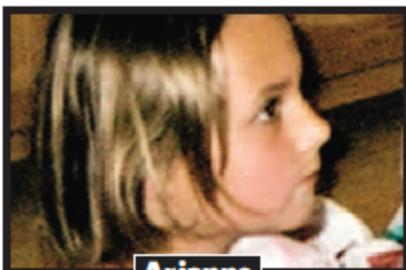
Unge idealister
 I FENGSEL

SPORT
 MAGASIN

Engle-
 ving

Larviks
 Kari Mette
 Johansen

FAMILIEDRAPET I STAVANGER



Arianne



Victor

KVALT MENS DE SOV

DREPT AV PAPPA: Atle Thomas Johansen (45) tok livet av Arianne (12), Victor (8) og kona Hilde (45). Før han tok sitt eget liv, varslet han arbeidsgiver på e-post. Politiet mener hardt press i en ansvarsfull oljejobb og problemer med et privat byggeprosjekt kan ha utløst de grufulle drapene. **SIDE 4, 5 OG 6**

Betaler ansatte
 i fly- og kreditt-
 kortselskaper:



Overvåket
**KONGE-
 familien**

SIDE 46

NORSKE
 REINERT
 skal lage
 Beyonces
 neste video

SIDE 47





SCANDAL: O'Donoghue

O'Donoghue
in battle
to hang on
to his job

UNDER-PRESSURE
Ceann Comhairle John O'Donoghue is this morning preparing to fight for his political life over the scandal surrounding his expenses.

Government sources have told *The Star* that his position is "untenable".

■ SEE PAGE SIX

JAIL FOR WOMAN WHO POURED PETROL ON BABY

DEFIANT: Majella McCarthy spits at TV camera yesterday



A WOMAN who doused her dad, a toddler and the child's mother in petrol has been jailed for three years.

A judge yesterday said Majella McCarthy (26) was "a clear danger to the public".

Disturbed McCarthy

■ By KATHRYN HAYES

flew into a rage and attacked her dad John in their Co Clare home.

She then went outside and poured petrol over 18-month-old Aisling Kelly and her mother Mary in their car.

■ SEE PAGE FOUR

She spits at TV3 camera after three-year sentence

Dagbladet

Tirsdag 18. september 2007

Nr. 255. Like 38. 139. årgang. Løssalg kr 10,00

1,3 MILLIONER LESERE HVER DAG

Halberg ut mot forfatterkolleger

- Overflatiske og overvurderte



SIDE 50 OG 51

TOK SEG INN HOS
KVINNELIG NABO

**- JEG
VAR
fryktelig
FULL**



SIDE 5

SIKTET:
«Pornopung»-
forfatter Mads Larsen

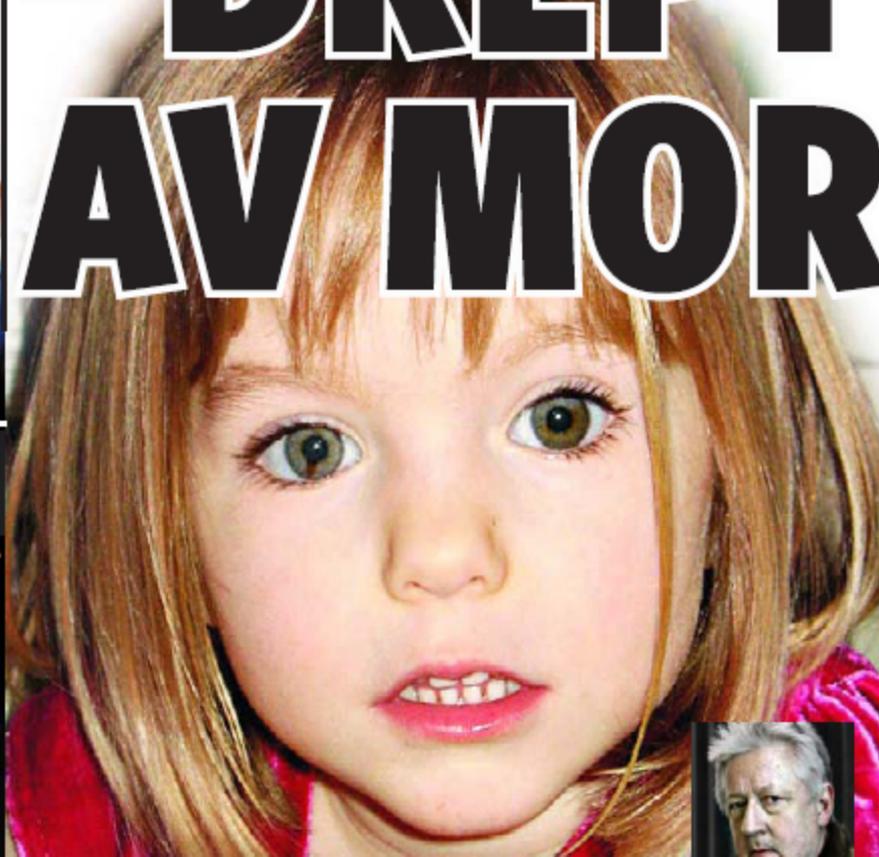
RBK-TØRUM

**- MÅ
GÅ**



Nordens fremste ekspert på draps-
etterforskning støtter polititeori:

- DREPT AV MOR



MUM WILL STILL COME FOR ME

EXCLUSIVE

By **PATRICK O'CONNELL**

THE heartbroken young son of tragic Joselita da Silva still believes his mum is coming home to bring him to Ireland.

Douglas (13) refuses to accept that his devoted mother is dead.

■ SEE PAGE 8



SO SAD: Douglas is still waiting for mum Joselita to come home to him

Son of tragic Joselita doesn't believe she's dead

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crash
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last
as sent
ly (24)
26)
ed and
ere
4

**FALT I
KIRKE-
DØDE**

● SIDE 7

Slik får du et
**PERFEKT
JULETRE**

● SDE 17



Foto: SCANPIX

Dette krever
ekspertene i
**RENTE-
KUTT!**

RENTEMØTE I DAG
SIDE 4 OG 5

V G

Nr. 346
Onsdag
17. desember
2008
Uke 51
Kr. 11,00

Foto: PRAVAT



TILFELDIG OFFER:
Ann-Mari Solås (32)

Foto: GER OTTO JOHANSEN



MAMMA DREPT

mens barna
ringte etter
HJELP

● SIDE 8, 9, 10 og 11

reise

STOR UTSTILLING I LONDON FREM TIL MARS:



SEE PAGES 6 AND 7

8 AND 9

SCHOOLGIRL SEX HORROR

► SHAME Irish young lured into sex trade

15-yr-olds forced to become prostitutes by evil criminals

By AINE HEGARTY

EVIL pimps are forcing girls as young as 15 into the sex trade, a report said yesterday.

Support group Ruhama revealed young Irish women controlled by

criminals are sleeping with pervert punters to make ends meet.

Ruhama chief Kathleen Fahy said: "They don't have the support necessary to help them. They are afraid and see no way out."

FULL STORY: PAGE 5



Danse-Jenny

RØMTE
etter sjokket

SIDE 52 OG 53

Tidligere Knutby-pastor Helge Fossmo om

Foto Privat

- **Drapene**
- **Løgnene**
- **Sexen**

SE DE PRIVATE BILDENE

MAGASINET, SIDE 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34 OG 35

NYTT
magasin

Magasinet

FORFATTERE
AVSLØRER
Derfor blir
du hekta på
deres bok

Dagbladet

Lørdag 20. september 2008

Nr. 258. Uke 38. 140. årgang. Lesesalg kr 20,00 € 3 utenfor Norden

MOR ADVARTE MOT EKS-KJÆRESTEN


Foto: Privat

Snakker ut i **Dagbladet**
**BARNEDRAPET
I KRAGERØ**

- Det er så tomt og stille sier
Gitte Bohnhorst (25). Det har
gått fire måneder siden datteren
Alexandra (5) ble drept av sin
egen pappa.

SIDE 6, 7, 8 OG 9

- Hvordan
kunne han
DREPE
datteren vår?



OW John O'Donoghue
t 'Johnny
sh' face
e music

EOIN REYNOLDS
OUR and Fine Gael
night turned
Johnny Cash-
noghue, telling
it's time to pay.
the Ceann
airle tried to hang
his plum job,
r leader Eamon
re demanded all
leaders decide
to do with him.
blasted his antics
acceptable to the
ers".
e Gael's Enda
said O'Donoghue
e forced to return
ified expenses.

SEE PAGE 10



es Chelsea
T in league
Man

LEFT TO DIE IN THE ROAD

Lad killed by hit-and-run

By JOHN FALLON

A TEENAGER was left for dead at the side of a road after a hit-and-run smash yesterday.

The 19-year old, named locally as Andrew Walsh from Fethard, Co Tipperary, was

killed instantly when the car struck him as he walked on a country lane in Co Galway.

The 21-year-old suspect driver allegedly abandoned his overturned vehicle and fled the scene but was arrested later.

A Walsh family friend said: "He was out

TURN TO PAGE 4



TRAGIC Andrew Walsh was just 19

Dagbladet

Torsdag 25. oktober 2007

Nr. 292. Uke 43. 89. årgang. Lesesalg kr 15,00 €3 utenfor Norden

1,3 MILLIONER LESERE HVER DAG

**EKSTRA
BOK**

Novellesamling
KARIN FOSSUM

TO MAGASINER

NÅDELØS SJØLKRIKIKK I SV

«ALT VI TAR I
BLIR TIL DRITT»



SIDE 10 OG 11

RBK-VALENCIA 2-0

**SOLLIED-JA
TIL RBK**

Morten
Pedersen,
kommentar



Foto: Scampix

Julie Watnans (25) datter ble drept i Overhalla

**- Cicilie ble
DREPT
fordi hun var
REDD**

BUNNLØS SORG: Samme dag som Julie Watnans datter Cicilie (7) ble brutalt drept i Overhalla, fødte hun sønnen Sigur. Nå frykter hun at også han skal dø. I går snakket hun om sin bunnløse sorg. **SIDE 6, 7 OG 8**



**- Toft å
se Bahadir
Mirzaolimov
i retten.**



**'He raped my
mother in
front of me'**

WE ARE SCHOCKED, NOT SCARED

- CHILDREN DO NOT DIFFERENTIATE
- THEY ARE EASILY SCARED

WE HAVE TO EXPLAIN THAT WE ARE SCHOCKED BECAUSE OF THE UNUSUAL EVENT AND OF COURSE BY THE HORROR OF THE ACT

The front page 1

- **Clear message 1:**
- **Every newspaper has a children's page – the front page. Children are unable to protect themselves against a newspaper's front page. Children's eyes encounter these front pages in the public domain and on coffee tables in their homes right up until the time they go to bed. Frightening front pages placed in the paths of children may therefore be interpreted as a breach of one of the basic tenets of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that the best interests of the child must be our primary consideration.**

Front page 2

- **Clear message 2:**
- **When children are frightened by front-page news, parents need help and advice about what they should say to lessen children's fears and concerns. Editorial offices should take a more active responsibility by printing proper guidelines for parents. It is disturbing that children are burdened with fear because adults assume no responsibility.**

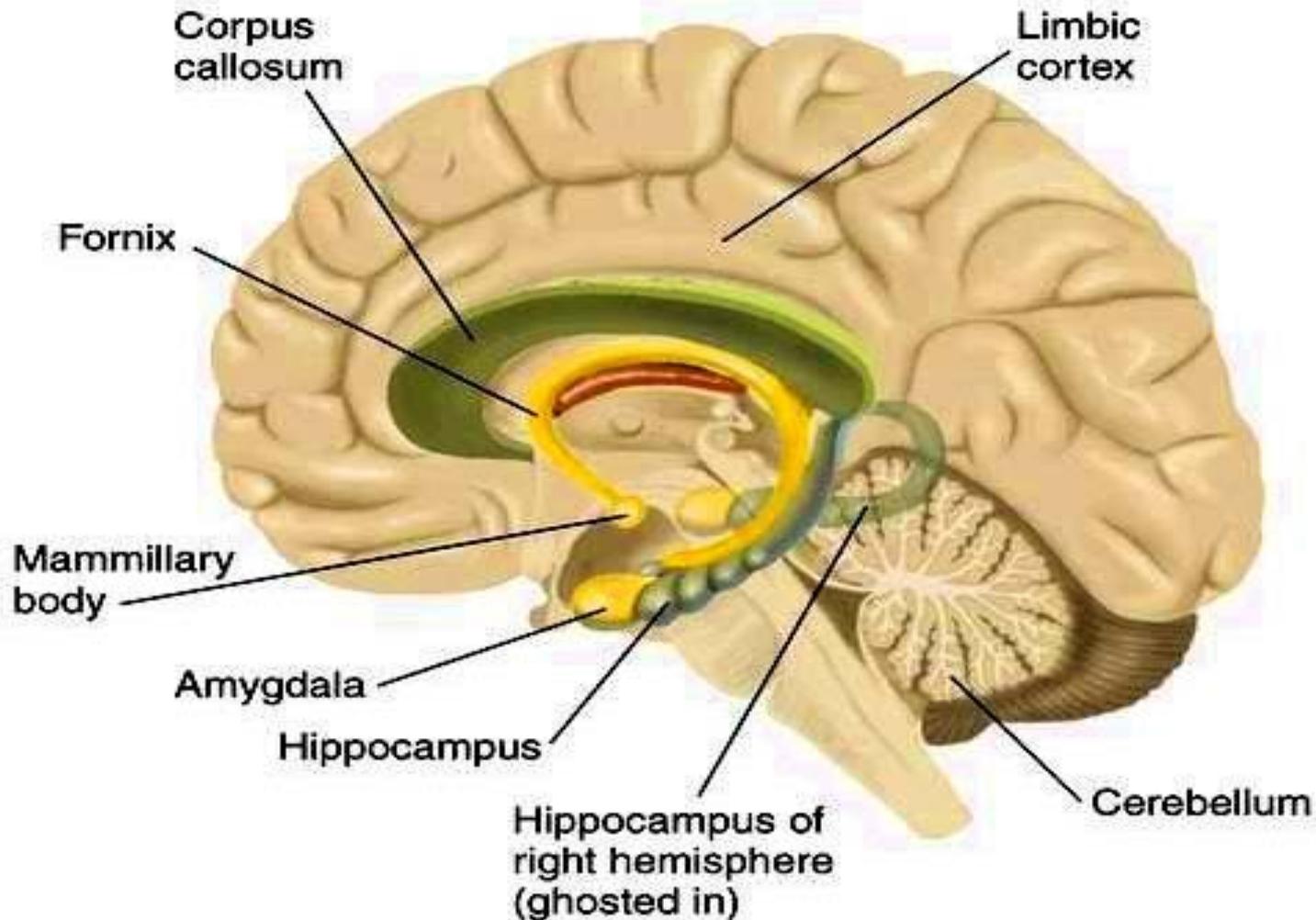
Front page 3

- Clear message 3:
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child requires that we protect children against frightening news: "Parties recognize the important function performed by the mass media and shall encourage the development of appropriate guidelines for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her well-being." (Article 17e)

Front page 4

- *Many children can have problems*
- We must always consider that groups of vulnerable children can develop long-term reactions after seeing only one frightening front page. Many children are vulnerable because they have experienced traumas, or because they been under a great strain. These children can perceive frightening front pages in a way that is harmful to them.

CHILD-BRAIN-PROTECTION



ADVISING PARENTS A NEW TREND IN NORWAY

- STARTED WITH WORLD TRADE CENTER 2001
- HIGHLIGHTED IN THE IRAQ WAR 2003
- THE TSNUNAMI 2004-2005
- JOSEF FRITZL 2008
- NATIONAL CRISIS
- A DEMAND FOR ADVICES ON INTERNET ABOUT HOW TO COMMUNICATE AND EXPLAIN TO CHILDREN AT DIFFERENT AGE-LEVELS
- NEWSPAPER'S FOLLOW-UP?



Magne Raundalen og
Jon-Håkon Schultz

kan vi snakke med barn **om alt?**

Pedagogisk Forum

ADVICES FROM THE MINISTER

- MINISTER OF CHILD AND EQUALITY ANNIKEN HUITFELDT:

"We should talk openly to our children, we should not cover up the crisis, but we should not inflict problems upon the children when the news have not reached them yet."

ADVISING PARENTS – WHY TALKING AND EXPLAINING

- The emotional brain remembers it all
- The language brain remember only bits
- The language brain needs to be updated
- If not the whole brain my disturbed
- To tell, write, draw, dramatic play may help
- We have to visit the worst memories
- Some may be traumatized
- New methods are in the making!

Due care no 1

- *When children have been killed:*

Avoid showing pictures of the child(ren) and use of the word "child(ren)". The killing of children should not be censored from the front page, but such matters should not be used to sell newspapers. The main intention should be to shed light on what has happened and to analyze everything that could have been done to prevent the disaster from occurring. To do this appropriately, the inside pages must be used.

Due care no 2

** When parents have taken the lives of children:*

Avoid using images of children.

Avoid using words such as

“killed by his//her/their mum, dad, mother and/or father”.

The killing of children by parents is one of the most frightening things a child can be exposed to by a thoughtless front page.

Front pages of this kind can evoke a sudden fear in all children

– and for vulnerable children this can create a permanent sense of terror and fear.

Due care no. 3

- *In instances where children and families have been killed:*
- Avoid printing detailed information about the methods used, e.g. use of weapon, knife, hammer and words such as "strangled". Children's imaginations are far less controllable than the minds of adults. Their imaginations can torment them for a long time in the form of nightmares and other harmful fears. The same ethical rules shall apply when children are injured or die in accidents and disasters.

First degree

- **First degree:** National and international crises that occur far away from the child but which are brought close to home through massive media coverage, e.g. the attack on the World Trade Center, the Iraq War and tsunamis.

Second degree

- **Second degree:** The same as first degree crises, but where children are especially involved and have a stronger sense of identification, e.g. the school hostage drama in Beslan where 187 children were killed, the bombing of Gaza, and the story of Josef Fritzl.

Third degree

- **Third degree:** These crises affect children who are closely related to or affiliated with victims or who are themselves victims, e.g. friends of children who have been killed and children whose father has killed their mother.
- *These suggestions for special ethical guidelines for front pages were made by Magne Raundalen and Jon-Håkon Schultz.*

challenges

- PARENT ADVISORY PROGRAMME
- IMPORTANT ROLE OF THE PRESS
- THE FRONT PAGE – SURVEY AMONG 1000 NORWEGIAN JOURNALISTS – 80% SUPPORTED US
- WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CHILD'S EXPOSURE TO THE FRONT PAGE – THE EDITOR OR THE PARENTS?
- HOW TO EXPLAIN THE FINANCIAL CRISIS TO CHILDREN?

OTHER TOPICS

- CHILDREN IN THE NEWSPAPER
- DESINFORMATION TO THE PARENTS
- SUPERPARENTS VS CURLING PARENTS
- HOW TO EXPLAIN THE FINANCIAL CRISIS

MORE FROM CRC

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) recalls the basic principles of the United Nations and affirms that children, because of their vulnerability, require special care and protection.

CHILDRENS' RIGHTS CONTINUED

- It emphasises that children have the right to freedom of expression including the freedom "to seek, receive and impart information of all kinds" (Article 13), to protection from unlawful or arbitrary interference in their privacy (Article 16) and to protection from all forms of mental and physical violence, injury, abuse and other damaging influences (Article 19).

CRC CONTINUED

- The CRC encourages the mass media to provide access to and disseminate information of social and cultural value so that children may benefit and develop under positive influences (Article 17).
- Article 16 of the CRC states that "no child shall be subject to arbitrary and unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his or her honour or reputation."

Some references

- References:
- Michael Argyle: *Co-operation – the Basis of Sociability*, Routledge, London and New York, 1991.
- Artin Göncü (ed.): *Children's Engagement in the World. Sociocultural Perspectives*, Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Cathie Holden and Nick Clough (eds.): *Children as Citizens. Education for Participation*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 1998.
- Alison Gopnik et al.: *The Scientist in the Crib*, Washington, 1999.
- Magne Raundalen/Jan Vincens Steen: *Nordic Children in Newspapers, Report*, Oslo 2002
- Magne Raundalen/Jan Vincens Steen: *Children in Newspapers – global content study, Report*, Oslo 2004

WARNING

- I AM NOT A SPECIALIST IN PRESS AND MEDIA RESEARCH
- I AM ONLY A CHILD PSYCHOLOGIST
- BUT ANYWAY THANKS A LOT FOR INVITING ME AND LISTENING TO MY MESSAGES

