



ISBNPA

Mental Health and Wellbeing SIG

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Newsletter November 2025
ISBNPA Mental Health and Wellbeing SIG

WELCOME TO OUR END-OF-YEAR NEWSLETTER

Dear ISBNPA Members,

As we wrap up 2025, I'm thrilled to reflect on what has been a landmark year for our SIG—and to share some exciting updates with you all.

The recent ISBNPA conference in New Zealand was an absolute highlight. It was inspiring to see the caliber of work being presented, particularly the growing focus

on mental health and wellbeing within physical activity research. Meeting so many of the incredible researchers and practitioners driving this work forward was genuinely energizing. For a young SIG like ours, it was gratifying to feel we had a meaningful presence at the conference, and it was wonderful to finally connect with many of you face-to-face.



As we close out our first full year as an official SIG, I'm pleased to reflect on how far we've come. Within our leadership team alone, we've celebrated major milestones: two PhD thesis submissions (congratulations to Dr. Remskar and Dr. Frazier—can't wait to use those titles officially!), and one of us welcomed a new baby. These personal achievements remind us that we're not just colleagues but a community supporting each other through all of life's chapters—very fitting for a mental health and wellbeing SIG.

Looking ahead to 2026, we're excited about the next phase of our SIG and expanding how we engage with our members. Your voice matters in shaping our direction, which is why we're asking you to complete our Membership Snapshot Survey (linked below). Your input will directly influence our strategic priorities and programming for the coming year.

As we head into the festive season, I want to thank each of you for being part of this community. Please take time to rest, recharge, and prioritize your own wellbeing over the break.

We look forward to reconnecting with you all in 2026!

Jacinta Brinsley

Chair, Mental Health and Wellbeing SIG



OUR FIRST YEAR IN REVIEW



THE 2025 ISBNPA CONFERENCE IN AUCKLAND

It was wonderful to see so many familiar and new faces at the 2025 ISBNPA Annual Meeting in the stunning, if somewhat chilly Auckland!

Our SIG was especially well represented, with 45 presentations focused on mental health and wellbeing - a clear reflection of the growing recognition of this important area within the ISBNPA community. Presentations covered diverse themes, from culturally

grounded youth wellbeing and caregiver mental health, to exercise-based mood interventions, migrant wellbeing, digital health support, and the role of physical activity in reducing stress and enhancing overall mental health.

We extend a huge thank-you to everyone who presented, attended sessions, and contributed to lively discussions throughout the conference. Your energy and insights continue to drive our field forward. We look forward to seeing you all in Spain in 2026!



AWARD WINNERS

Victoria Whiteford, PhD candidate, The University of British Columbia MH&W SIG Travel Fund and ISBNPA Best Student Presentation

"I presented on the final phase of my PhD; a project I have termed REACH. This involved a 12-week single-arm feasibility trial to test a free community-based exercise program for women with clinical depression. This was delivered within a community-based exercise clinic in Vancouver. To further support the women throughout the program I developed a behaviour change counselling manual, to guide delivery of behaviour change support. The behaviour change counselling manual was used during behaviour change counselling sessions, which were delivered by me. The program proved to be successful, and findings provide support for the plausibility of an antidepressant effect from participation in an exercise-based program among women with depression in a community-based setting. We found that self-reported depression improved considerably from baseline to post-program. All participants described the program as a positive and enjoyable experience, with all recommending the program to 'other women like them'. Important program components identified by the women included having scheduled session times each week, the provision of behavioural support, the knowledge and expertise of exercise professionals, and free access to an exercise clinic.

I would also like to say a huge thank you to the Mental Health and Wellbeing SIG for awarding me with the Mental Health and Wellbeing Conference Travel Grant. This provided me with the opportunity to attend ISBNPA in Auckland, Aotearoa (New Zealand) 2025 for which I am very grateful."

Dr Sarah Hunter, Senior Research Fellow, Caring Futures Institute, *Flinders University*,

Best MH&W SIG Presentation: ‘Caring for Caregivers: A Prevention Program to Support Parent’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Needs’

“I presented on a project that aimed to co-design and implement an evidence-informed program to support caregiver mental health and wellbeing to improve parents’ capacity to care for themselves and their children, encourage self-care practices, and ultimately improve the food and movement opportunities for children and families. Two feasibility trials were conducted to determine whether implementing the co-designed program “Caring for Caregivers” into routine services is acceptable, feasible, and improves the wellbeing of caregivers. One was delivered as week 3 of the 4-week Child and Family Health Service Early Parenting Groups and the second was as a standalone antenatal class delivered at the Women’s and Children’s Hospital. Overall, the program was deemed acceptable and feasible and demonstrated capacity to improve the wellbeing of parents.

The key learnings from this project:

- Always best to co-design programs with consumers and service partners to ensure what is developed is feasible to deliver within routine services and aligns to the needs of the community
- Best to identify the needs of consumers first and then identify the best-evidence to meet those needs and tailor the evidence accordingly. Don’t start with the evidence!”



A GROWING COMMUNITY

We're so thrilled with how quickly our community has grown over the past year - there are more than 50 ISBNPA members working in the mental health and wellbeing space!

To help us make sure the SIG meets our members' needs, we want to get to know you all a bit better. Our hope is that by understanding who is in our community and what you're working on, we can be responsive, help foster connections and provide an avenue for international collaboration and impact.

Complete our quick (< 5 minutes!) Membership Snapshot Survey [HERE](#)

MEMBER SPOTLIGHTS

Publications

Frazier, Remskar...Brinsley. 2025. How yoga interventions are operationalized and reported in the context of mental health and wellbeing RCTs: a systematic review and qualitative synthesis. BMC Complementary Medicine and Therapies. In press

This paper is kind of special in that this is the product of a conversation at a cafe in Sweden between three girls who happen to all be doing yoga/mindful physical

activity based research.

Why did we write this paper?

Well, yoga is a lot of things to a lot of people and that's great, but that can also be very challenging when it comes to interpreting and more importantly, translating the evidence into practice. We wanted to explore what researchers were referring to when they used the term 'yoga' in the context of mental health. What does the term 'yoga' largely reflect when used in modern times in the context of health research?

Key takeaways:

- While researchers predominantly conceptualize yoga as a mind-body practice, there is substantial heterogeneity in how yoga is defined and implemented across interventions. This variability, coupled with the gap between traditional frameworks and modern applications, highlights the need for more standardized approaches to defining and reporting yoga interventions.

Frazier et al. 2025. Patience is a virtue: lessons from a participatory approach to contextually tailor and co-create an employee wellness intervention for community health educators. Frontiers in Public Health. doi: 10.3389/fpubh.2025.1634264

Key takeaways:

- Co-creating intervention materials with end-users led to specific adaptations: using inclusive imagery, clarifying time commitments upfront, and scheduling around peak busy periods.

Community health educators valued yoga principles (movement, breath, mindfulness) both for personal flourishing and as translatable skills for the communities they serve.



ISBNPA

Advancing Behavior Change Science

CADIZ, SPAIN

27 - 30 MAY, 2026



The 2026 annual meeting of the International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity will be convened in Cadiz, Spain, from May 27-30, 2026.

Here are some key dates:

15 December Opening late-breaking abstracts submissions (deadline March 4)

14 January Deadline dare2share sessions submissions

31 March Early Bird Registration Fee Ends

OPPORTUNITIES

Funding - Australia

MRFF – Preventive and Public Health Research Initiative – 2025 Maternal Health and Healthy Lifestyles Grant Opportunity. **Applications close 3 December 2025.**

MRFF – Emerging Priorities and Consumer-Driven Research Initiative 2025 Childhood Mental Health Research Grant Opportunity. **Applications close 25 March 2026**

Funding - UK

MRC Neurosciences and Mental Health Research Grant - from mid-December 2025, a new flexible research grant combining programme and project funding with no closing dates, allowing researchers to apply at any time

WANT TO STAY ON THE LOOP? BECOME A MEMBER

You can become a member of this SIG by going to your membership profile and adding the SIG to your preferences, alternatively you can complete this short form: <https://forms.gle/M1Q7nkxeq39AvMxM9>

SIG membership is only available for ISBNPA members - renew your membership today [HERE](#).

2025 SIG Committee Members

Chair: Jacinta Brinsley (Australia)

Secretary: Mary Frazier (USA)

Communications: Masha Remskar (USA)

Newsletter: Jasmine Petersen (Australia)

Membership: Gareth Jones (UK)



International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity | www.isbnpa.org 1300 S.
2nd St Suite 300 | Minneapolis, MN 55454 US

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