



# PROGRAM

*Learning from the Pandemic: Possibilities and Challenges for Mothers and Families*

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# ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

Learning from the Pandemic: Possibilities and Challenges for Mothers and Families brings together scholars, practitioners, and activists to explore the impact of the pandemic on mothers and families around the world while considering strategies for the post-COVID climb-out. Combining multidisciplinary and intersectional perspectives, we will examine the impact of the pandemic on mothers' wellbeing, and care and wage labour in the context of employment, schooling, resettlement, and family relationships.

Understanding the issues brought to light and exacerbated by the pandemic is only the first step. The second is translating this knowledge into strategies for social change.

## ABOUT THE ORGANIZERS

### THE MOTHERS MATTER CENTRE

The Mothers Matter Centre — previously known as the Home Instruction Program for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) Canada — is a not-for-profit, registered charity incorporated in October 2001. They are a virtual, national consortium of organizations dedicated to serving socially isolated and low economic status mothers and their families.

### YORK UNIVERSITY

York is a leading international teaching and research university and a driving force for positive change. Empowered by a welcoming and diverse community with a uniquely global perspective, York University prepares students for their long-term career and personal success.

### DEMETER PRESS

The press is named in honour of the Goddess Demeter, herstory's most celebrated empowered and outraged mother. Demeter Press: Publishing on Mothering, Reproduction, Sexuality and Family. Demeter is an independent feminist press committed to publishing peer-reviewed scholarly work, fiction, poetry, and creative non-fiction on mothering, reproduction, sexuality and family. Demeter is partnered with Journal of the Motherhood Initiative and sistered with IAMAS - International Association of Maternal Action and Scholarship.

# PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

# DAY 1

## *Program at a Glance* *May 5, 2022*

### Indigenous Welcome and Conference Opening

7:30 AM 7:45 AM

Elder Rose Guerin, Musqueam First Nations

### Words of Welcome

7:45 AM 8:00 AM

**Andrea O'Reilly**, Professor of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies at York University and Founder of the Journal of the Motherhood Initiative

**Debbie Bell**, CEO & President of the Mothers Matter Centre

### Plenary

*Black Mothers and Families Strained Resilience:  
Surpassing all Expectations Despite Ongoing Systemic  
Violence Pre and During the COVID-19 Pandemic*

8:00 AM 8:45 AM

**Dr. Delores V. Mullings**, Memorial University

**Dr. Olasumbo Adelakun**, Independent Consultant and Author

Dr. Jennifer Clarke, Private Practitioner

*Chair, Andrea O'Reilly*

### Break

8:45 AM 9:00 AM

# DAY 1

## *Program at a Glance* *May 5, 2022*

**Block A1, A2, A4, Panel A3**

9:00 AM 11:00 AM

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**Break**

11:00 AM 11:30 AM

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### **Plenary**

*Mothering During COVID-19:  
Mothers as Protectors*

11:30 AM 12:30 PM

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**Janthima Arimare**, HIPPY Mother, Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society (former)

**Stacy Pascal**, HIPPY Home Visitor, Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre

**Subhita Nair**, HIPPY Home Visitor, Regina Immigrant Women Centre

*Chair, Debbie Bell*, CEO & President of the Mothers Matter Centre

**Break**

12:30 PM 12:45 PM

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**Block B1, B3, Panel B2**

12:45 PM 2:45 PM

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# DAY 2

## *Program at a Glance* *May 6, 2022*

### Plenary

*Newcomer and Refugee Mothers During the  
COVID-19 Pandemic: What Have We Learned?*

7:15 AM 8:00 AM

**Dr. Margo Hilbrecht**, Executive Director of the Vanier Institute of the Family and adjunct Professor in the Faculty of Health, Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies at the University of Waterloo

*Chair, Natasha Vattikonda*

### Block C1, C2, C3

8:00 AM 10:00 AM

### Break

10:00 AM 10:30 AM

### Plenary

*Post-Pandemic Recovery and Healing: The  
Intersectionality of Gender, Race, and Family Status*

10:30 AM 12:30 PM

**Renée E. Mazinegiizhigo-kwe Bédard**, Western University

**Zaje Harrell**, Ph.D., Principal and Conscious Endeavor, LLC

**Perlita R. Dicochea**, Ph.D., Communications/Events Associate & Program Coordinator  
Center for Comparative Studies in Race & Ethnicity Stanford University

*Chair, Dr. Andrea O'Reilly*

### Break

12:30 PM 12:45 PM

### Block D2, D3

12:45 PM 2:45 PM

# DAY 3

## *Program at a Glance* *May 7, 2022*

### Plenary

*Women and Pandemics: on the Frontlines at  
Home and in the Field*

7:15 AM 8:00AM

**Dr. Erin Sorrell**, Member of the Center for Global Health Science and Security, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at Georgetown University, and the Director of the Elizabeth R. Griffin Program at the Center for Global Health Science & Security

*Chair, Natasha Vattikonda*

### Block E1

8:00 AM 10:00 AM

### Break

10:00 AM 10:30 AM

### Closing Discussion

*Beyond a Vaccine: Where Do We Go From Here?*

10:30 AM 11:30 AM

**Andrea O'Reilly**, Professor of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies at York University and Founder of the Journal of the Motherhood Initiative, Publisher of Demeter Press,

**Debbie Bell**, CEO & President of the Mothers Matter Centre

**Dr. Erin Sorrell**, Member of the Center for Global Health Science and Security, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at Georgetown University, and the Director of the Elizabeth R. Griffin Program at the Center for Global Health Science & Security

*Chair, Natasha Vattikonda*

**COMPLETION OF CONFERENCE**

# DETAILED AGENDA

# DAY 1

May 5, 2022

# Block A

**A1: Motherwork; Session One**  
Chair, Linda Ennis

## **A1** **The Work of Disability: How COVID-19 Pushed the Post-Secondary Sector to Provide Solutions to Accommodating Students with Diverse Educational Needs**

9:00 AM-  
9:30 AM  
(PDT)

*Elizabeth Brulé, Assistant Professor, Department of Gender Studies, Queen's University*

A year and half into the pandemic, students with disabilities and mental health difficulties have seen a change in post-secondary accommodation services: increased access to counselors, accommodation resources and a more compassionate faculty. But are these changes enough? Do caregivers continue to provide their adult children with the educational supports needed for them to succeed? Using Queen's University as a case study, this presentation will examine what resources and service provisions have been instituted since the university reopened its doors in the fall of 2021. Using a feminist anti-racist, anti-colonial analysis, I will examine how a select number of students with disabilities at Queen's have accessed accommodation services. In doing so, I will attend to the ways in which postsecondary institutional practices and policies continue to influence the social organization and the social relations of students' work of disability and that of their caregivers.

## **A1** **Social Conditions, Cultural Inheritances, and Normative Motherhoods in Times Of Covid-19**

9:30 AM-  
10:00 AM  
(PDT)

*Ana Carolina Eiras Coelho Soares, UFG*

This panel presents the partial results of a broad investigation, entitled: "Social conditions and cultural heritage of life in times of COVID-19", on the impacts of COVID-19, in the first half of 2020, on the life of the university community of the Federal University of Goiás (UFG). The survey, which was open to the entire community, reinforced the unequal gender division with the results: there's a greater interest among women mothers university students in answering, showing that the issues brought up concern mainly them more than men in Brazil.

As the questions asked were about domestic care and childcare routines, two reactions were noticed: first, we had many more answers from women than men, since it was an elective survey, and second, the people who answered were mostly cisetero mothers. The survey that was initially designed to diagnose the impacts of the pandemic on academic life became a discussion about heteronormative motherhood, determined by the parameters of the respondents. The immediate association of the questions of domestic care and care of the people who were living in the house, whether children or adults, brings about the reflection of the idea of the parameters of the good mother, who should always be the central provider and expend an huge amount of time and energy, besides having "socially taken for granted skills" for the care and organization of the tasks of the private sphere.

# DAY 1

May 5, 2022

# Block A

**A1: Motherwork; Session One**  
Chair, Linda Ennis

## A1

### Why the Focus on "Doing" Rather than "Being"?

10:00 AM-  
10:30 AM  
PDT

*Dr. Linda Ennis, Psychoanalytic Therapist, Marriage, Divorce & Parent Consultant, Family Mediator, Author, and Lecturer*

During the pandemic I couldn't help but notice how the focus, pertaining to children's well-being, has been around their school performance, which kept mothers especially very busy being teachers! Not enough of a focus has been on the levels of anxiety that children felt, often a reflection of their parents' anxieties and/or their own pre-existing ones, which will be expanded upon in my upcoming collection, entitled "Are the Kids Alright? The Impact off the Pandemic on Children" (Demeter Press). Perhaps, it is time to reflect upon the need to shift from being recognized for one's performance to how we feel and who we are.

This talk will examine Winnicott's theories, discussing the being -doing phenomenon, the true/false self theory and good-enough mothering, as opposed to intensive mothering. One of the elements, that Winnicott considered could be lost in childhood, was, what he called, the sense of being, which is primary, while the sense of doing is an outgrowth of it and can result in a false sense of self.

In addition, strategies used by mothers to increase resilience, both in themselves and in their children, will be provided.

## A1

### The Myth of the "Good Mother" in the Time of a Pandemic: Expectations and Experiences of Motherhood during COVID-19

10:30 AM-  
11:00 AM  
(PDT)

*Dr. May Friedman, X University*

*Dr. Jacqui Gingras, X University*

*Lucas Martignetti, Ontario Tech University*

*Kori Kostka Lichtfuss, Ontario Tech University*

Motherhood, at the best of times, can be a difficult experience. For mothers experiencing oppression from intersecting identities, such as those who are single mothers, mothers who experience racism, homophobia, or oppression based on disability or madness, motherhood can be exponentially more overwhelming. Driven by maternal expectations that are informed by colonialism, mothers are forced into conditions where failure is guaranteed and success is elusive and undefined. This study examines how the unrealistic and overwhelming conditions of motherhood are influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic. An open ended questionnaire was created and shared through social media venues, including a range of mothering Facebook groups, between June and September 2020. Eighty self-identified mothers responded, providing first person accounts of their experiences mothering during the COVID-19 lockdown. Respondents reported difficulty defining what a "good" mother is, that they felt they were failing maternal expectations placed upon them, and that in some cases the conditions of the pandemic created alternate expectations that could lead to increased freedom compared to life before the pandemic.

# DAY 1

May 5, 2022

# Block A

A2: Mothers and Paid Labour; Session One

Chair, Dr. Ketoki Mazumdar

## A2

9:00 AM-  
9:30 AM  
(PDT)

### **Making Gender Equality 'Make Sense': Challenging the Invisible Influence of the 'Femaleness' of Care**

*Abigail Connolly, International Christian University, Tokyo*

I conducted multi-method research on the lived experiences of English-speaking mothers in Britain and Japan during the COVID-19 pandemic. I examined gender norms, particularly the 'femaleness' of caregiving, and applied Cooperative Conflict theory to understand decision-making between opposite-sex couples.

Mothers in my research who took on more caregiving did so because it 'made sense' (financially, practically) not through preference or gender role beliefs. They were affected by 'motherhood' the institution. Lockdowns took place against a backdrop of social stratification where caregiving (unpaid or paid) is valued less than paid and other forms of employment. It often does not 'make sense' for parents to challenge gender norms. We need purposeful macro-level policies for gender equality which mitigate against the invisible influence the female caregiver norm will have on their interpretation and implementation.

During the stress of the pandemic, the mothers in my research also valued and enjoyed time with their children. They enjoyed 'mothering' the experience. We must change the narrative on care as something 'less', and the association between caregiving and femaleness. Yes, mothers need access to the workplace, but fathers also need access to caregiving and the benefits it brings.

## A2

9:30 AM-  
10:00 AM  
(PDT)

### **Occupational Stress and its Impact on Working Mothers During the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Discourse Analysis of an Online Forum**

*Samar Khan, PhD Candidate in the Gender, Feminist, and Women's Studies program at York University*

Through discourse analysis methodology of an online forum (Babycenter) and a review of the existing literature, this paper aims to examine the interceding role of work and the moderating role of resilience in the relationship between perceived stress and mental well-being of working mothers during the initial months of the COVID-19 pandemic. Occupational stress is stress that involves work. It is understood to be one of the major health hazards of the modern workforce. Experiences of workers include physical debility, substance abuse, and a plethora of familial difficulties. Working mothers, by definition, refer to women who are mothers that work outside the home for income as well "work" at home to raise their children. While work and family are pertinent in a woman's life, she is faced with a dilemma: to either be a full-time worker or a full-time mother; yet, she tries to balance the two, which in turn subjects her to stresses. Not only do these mothers have to manage the domestic sphere, but they also have to manage/maintain their jobs. Yet, adhering to this hope of the work/life balance affects a working mother's ability to maintain paid employment or gain a promotion, because she has to, at times, prioritize taking care of her children. Hence, the mother's work stress is directly linked to their mental state of overload and strain that in turn may project lower parent-child reception and higher conflict. Hence, the invisible load of mothering, coupled with feelings of social isolation, lack of acknowledgement, guilt (of being labelled a "bad" mother), self-blame/helplessness, and the struggles to deal with occupational stresses has taken its toll on the mental health of working mothers.

# DAY 1

## May 5, 2022

# Block A

## A2: Mothers and Paid Labour; Session One

Chair, Dr. Ketoki Mazumdar

### A2

#### Re-Imagining Mothering and Career: Insights from a Time of Crisis

10:00 AM-  
10:30 AM  
PDT

*Jenna LoGiudice, Associate Professor and the Midwifery Program Director, Fairfield University's Egan School of Nursing and Health Studies*

*Evelyn Bilius Lolis, Associate prof. of School Psychology & Special Education, Fairfield University*

*Kathryn Phillips, Associate prof. in the Egan School of Nursing and Health Studies, Fairfield University*

The full impact of COVID-19 on mothers with professional careers in the United States is still unfolding; however, there are insights to be gained from these mothers who maintained careers and then had their work and their children's education structures abruptly change to reduce the spread of COVID-19. As vaccine eligibility expands to include younger children, "normal" events continue to become more accessible. Whether mothers will return to their careers and business as usual, or use the insights gained from this period to create a new work-life paradigm, is a lucrative matter for science. This presentation will explore critical insights that have emerged from career women in order to understand how they have adapted, changed, or possibly even re-envisioned mothering post early pandemic. Six thematic insights have been extracted through a collection of targeted reflective essays (N=32) written by a diverse sample of mothers in the United States across a myriad of careers. Mothers who are small business owners, teachers, doulas, and healthcare professionals, among others, have contributed their voices. The contributors include married mothers, including same sex marriage, single/divorced mothers, and widowed mothers. Findings will be packaged into a toolkit of the six insights, and the lessons learned from these mothers (now far enough removed from the initial pandemic onset) recognizing that in this time of crisis, new ways of living have emerged.

### A2

#### Lived Experiences of Urban Indian Mothers During COVID-19 in India

10:30 AM-  
11:00 AM  
(PDT)

*Dr. Ketoki Mazumdar, Professor of Psychology, Mumbai, India*

Although pandemic-related stressors have affected everyone, mothers have faced a greater impact, largely due to the sudden increase in responsibilities of caring for their family and children along with playing multiple roles. Being restricted to living under the same roof 24/7 has posed a challenge for many mothers, with the pressure of striking a balance between professional and household chores, often leading them to disregard their own needs. Indian mothers have not received adequate attention with respect to their challenges and mothering experiences. This study utilized a feminist framework to explore the lived experiences of 30 urban Indian mothers of children aged 10 years and below in the context of COVID-19. Through the qualitative research method of in-depth unstructured interviews, the study identified the following overarching themes: Challenges in mothering, Inequality of gender norms, Support and Self-compassion, Self-care and Gratitude. The findings indicated heightened stress in mothers - juggling among homeschooling, managing the household, and working remotely - with limited help. The situations within the family magnified gender inequalities towards an unbalanced division of workload. However, results also indicated how the pandemic gave mothers more opportunities to spend time and build deeper interpersonal relationships with their families. Mothers reported this period as an occasion to being compassionate towards themselves while going through a challenging period. The findings bolster the need to create systemic changes for enforcing stronger policies around gender equality and to recognize unpaid care and domestic work and build a more equitable society for women.

# DAY 1

May 5, 2022

# Block A

Panel A3

Chair, Fiera Lo

**A3**

## From Fear to Free: Selling Opportunities to Mothers

9:00 AM-  
10:00 AM  
(PDT)

*Suchana Bhowmik, HIPPY Coordinator, Saskatoon Open Door Society*

*Sophie Yang, HIPPY Home Visitor, Saskatoon Open Door Society*

*Mustafa Elhawi, HIPPY Coordinator, Alberta Immigrant Women & Children Centre*

*Florida Kidane, HIPPY Home Visitor, Alberta Immigrant Women & Children Centre*

*Marina Filatova, HIPPY Home Visitor-Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society*

Fear limits mothers' ability to take risks. Learn from the experience of coordinators and home visitors of the Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) program about the real struggles of frontline workers and how they empower mothers while being empowered to climb up. In this session, the panelists invite you into their professional and personal journeys beyond what you read in research reports.



# DAY 1

May 5, 2022

# Block A

## A4: Advocacy and Activism: Session One

Chair, Natasha Vattikonda

### A4

#### Stories of Parent-Child Relationships while Participating in the Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters Program (HIPPY)

9:00 AM-  
9:30 AM  
(PDT)

*Camilla Enns, MA student in Counselling Psychology at Simon Fraser University*

Multicultural HIPPY is a school readiness program for newcomer families in Canada with preschool-aged children. This research explored mothers' perceptions of the impacts of Multicultural HIPPY on parent-child relationships. Ten mothers from six HIPPY sites across Canada were interviewed about their experiences in the program. Mothers were asked how HIPPY influenced their relationship with their child, their parenting approach (e.g., behaviours, values, and beliefs), and their child (e.g., academic skills, social-emotional skills, and general well being). Of particular interest to this report, they were also asked about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their family relationships and experience of HIPPY. Data analysis is currently underway. Emerging themes include increased parent-child bonding through new shared experiences, changes in parenting values and approaches, improved confidence and communication in both parents and children, and finding ways to adapt to family life amidst the pandemic. Insights from this research may be used to attract additional families or funders to the program, identify areas for program development in the domain of parent-child relationship building, and guide program development as the pandemic continues.

### A4

#### Kindness and Compassion: Increased Need for Connection in COVID Times

9:30 AM-  
10:00 AM  
(PDT)

*Joy Escalera, Manager of RAP and Settlement Services at Westman Immigrant Services*

*Ana Evangelista, Family Program Facilitator at Westman Immigrant Services*

As happened in many organizations around the world, Covid-19 quickly and clearly delineated a number of challenges for our clients and for us, such as digital literacy and mental health issues. It was critical to address the needs of our clients and to care for our own staff and their families. We quickly adjusted to offering online and phone assistance, and our staff worked throughout the pandemic, as it became apparent how crucial the role of the settlement organization was for our clients. We provided devices and technological advice and set-up assistance if clients needed it, and tried to address the variety of mental health needs that materialized as a result of the pandemic. While we have always strived to provide kind and compassionate service, the need for that type of connection grew in the face of COVID-19, for all of us.

# DAY 1

## May 5, 2022

# Block A

## A4: Advocacy and Activism: Session One

Chair, Natasha Vattikonda

### A4

#### Make Mothers Matter and Covid-19

*Valerie Bichelmeier, Vice-President & Head of the UN delegation, Make Mothers Matter*

10:00 AM-

10:30 AM

(PDT)

At the outset of the pandemic, MMM's response was to reach out to its associate members around the globe, to hear first hand about their experiences on the ground in tackling the crisis. We launched two projects in parallel:

- 'MMM Voices Covid-19': a series of video interviews with our member organisations where they shared their specific challenges, how they addressed them, and what they demanded from policymakers at national and global levels
- A 'solidarity project' together with 7 other international NGOs, all UNESCO partners, to interconnect their grassroots networks so that they can share reliable information and best practices. The project report shows among others the critical role mothers played throughout the crisis, and the key role that local NGOs play in developing countries in answering people's needs.

As the crisis further unfolded, MMM also strengthened its international advocacy by calling for more systemic changes. Covid-19 has really shown what matters to the lives and wellbeing of people, and the failures of our current social and economic systems to deliver. It has also clearly highlighted the critical role of families and mothers' unpaid work of caring and educating children, but also how they are penalized for doing this essential yet mostly invisible work. The covid-19 crisis provides a unique opportunity to address these issues and initiate the necessary systemic changes.

In its presentation, MMM will share what was learned through its grassroots projects and how it strengthened its international advocacy to bring about systemic change.

### A4

#### Exploring Barriers and Pathways to Wellbeing and Sources of Resilience of Refugee Mothers in Calgary during the COVID-19 Crisis: the Role of HIPPY

10:30 AM-

11:00 AM

(PDT)

*Chloe Zivot, PhD Candidate in Public Health and International Development at Guelph University*

It is critical to explore barriers faced by refugee mothers and families during the COVID-19 period and to identify sources of resilience that can be leveraged now and in the future to promote individual and household wellbeing. From November 2020 to June 2021, we conducted in-depth interviews with mothers from refugee backgrounds (n=28) resettled in Calgary, Alberta, currently participating in the Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) program. Interviews were conducted using Microsoft Teams and sought to better understand the pandemic experiences of daily life and perceived wellbeing of participating mothers and their families. According to our findings, refugee mothers and families in our study experienced widespread disruptions to education, employment, and parenthood that contributed to decreased mental and overall wellbeing. Mental health was further impacted by much increased levels of social isolation as well as high levels of fear pertaining to the spread of the COVID-19 virus itself. Finally, mothers discussed barriers to accessing healthcare services and reliable health information during the pandemic. In the face of these challenges, mothers expressed high levels of resilience and identified tangible environmental, social, mental, and physical resilience factors that supported mother and families in coping with the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis. Additionally, our findings suggest that participation in HIPPY played a substantial role in pandemic resilience of participating mothers and families, speaking to the potential of home-based intervention models in mitigating household hardship during current and future public health crises.

# DAY 1

May 5, 2022

# Plenary

Chair, Debbie Bell

## Mothering During COVID-19:

## Mothers as Protectors

**11:30 AM- 12:30 PM**

**Janthima Arimare** , HIPPY Mother, Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society (former)

**Stacy Pascal** , HIPPY Home Visitor, Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre

**Subhita Nair**, HIPPY Home Visitor, Regina Immigrant Women Centre

In 2021, Madame Sophie Gregoire Trudeau and Dr. Sharon Johnston engaged in a discussion series with refugee, newcomer, and Indigenous mothers in the HIPPY program about their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Topics ranged from fear of leaving the house to food insecurity and everything between. The series went into detail how COVID-19 and its mandated social isolation measures have magnified the daily hardships and isolation experienced by many HIPPY families, but how, through it all, HIPPY mothers continued to demonstrate remarkable resilience and resourcefulness. In this panel, we invite three mothers featured in the original video to share their experiences since the series took place, discuss the long-term impacts of the pandemic, and reflect on their role as protectors of their families

# DAY 1

## May 5, 2022

# Block B

### B1: Motherwork; Session Two Chair

Chair, Rebecca Jaremko

## **B1** The Motherhood, Media and Childhood Extension Project: an experience report at the Federal University of Pernambuco, Brazil

12:45 PM-  
1:15 PM  
(PDT)

*Dr. Maria Collier de Mendonça, Professor at the Communication Department, Federal University of Pernambuco, Brazil*

Mothers all over the world are feeling overwhelmed and exhausted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Academic mothers, particularly, have been struggling with deadlines and productivity demands. In fact, mothers are experiencing the most challenging time in the recent history of Brazil, while working and mothering the children from home. In this presentation, we argue Brazilian academic mothers' challenges, which were already pervasive and inherent in the Brazilian society before COVID-19, have become even more taxing due the current right-wing government's policies that have exacerbated existing inequalities. Based on a literature review and quantitative and qualitative data, we present key findings of the research project—Brazilian Mothers, Media, and COVID-19—to illustrate the difficulties the pandemic has caused for Brazilian mothers. We note how patriarchal motherhood still shapes the ways many of Brazilian women mother their children, as they remain isolated, deal with maternal roles individually, and have little social or governmental support. Finally, we highlight the need for Brazilian mothers to learn how to mother their children with media literacy; and conclude by encouraging further collaboration among academic mothers in Brazil.

## **B1** Motherhood as Enlightenment

1:15 PM-  
1:45 PM  
(PDT)

*Susie Fishleder, CIIS in Women, Gender, Spirituality and Social Justice*

It is time for a spiritual revolution of motherhood.

The COVID-19 pandemic revealed the painful truth that our capitalist society does not value motherwork. When millions of women left the paid workforce for the unpaid work of motherhood, many were forced to evaluate what truly gives their life meaning and purpose. As we emerge from the pandemic, we have the opportunity to redefine motherhood, not as a patriarchal institution, but as a potentially enlightening experience that offers spiritual awakening.

Within the study of feminist theology, it is clear that many religious institutions have long denied women access to participation in spiritual experiences. With a new appreciation for motherhood's potential as a spiritual journey, we can see how the everyday acts of motherhood, both pleasant and unpleasant, are opportunities for enlightenment and empowerment for mothers.

Centering diverse personal experiences of mindful mothers, this paper explores several common points found at the intersection of motherhood and spirituality: experiencing compassion toward other humans, offering acts of service to the good of humanity, releasing the Ego, and being completely present in the moment as a witness to the human experience.

# DAY 1

May 5, 2022

# Block B

**B1: Motherwork; Session Two Chair**  
Chair, Rebecca Jaremko

## **B1** Putting Collective Care to the COVID-19 Test

1:45 PM-  
2:15 PM  
(PDT)

*Pamela Downe, Professor of Archaeology and Anthropology,  
University of Saskatchewan*

The principles of cooperative and collective care ground the experiences of Indigenous mothers and families who are affected by HIV and Hepatitis-C (HCV). Collective care holds long-standing cultural value in communities that advance a shared approach to childcare and kin connectivity. Even though these principles are in opposition to the expectations of Eurocentric intensive mothering that inform most Child and Family Services policies in Canada, they have endured. However, cooperative and collective care strategies rely on in-person and extended family interactions. The public health responses to the COVID-19 pandemic disallowed much of the inter-household support on which those already rendered vulnerable by HIV/HCV rely. This paper explores (1) the effects of COVID-19 and Indigenous mothers and families in Saskatchewan who are also affected by the HIV and HCV epidemics; (2) the disruptions and adaptations to collective care; and (3) the implications of ensuring that continuance of collective care for future pandemic planning as well as post-pandemic community development programs and cultural safety initiatives.

## **B1** COVID 19 and Motherwork: Better off Solo

2:15 PM-  
2:45 PM  
(PDT)

*Rebecca Jaremko, Faculty member, Robson Hall Law School, University of Manitoba. PhD, LLM, LLB, MBA. Lawyer for twenty years; mother; writer*

The early days of the COVID 19 pandemic led to a "boom" in marital and cohabitant separations in North America. In this discussion I look at Canadian family law and social analyses to explore how mothers who separated from their spouses during the pandemic were often relieved of some of the most brutal unpaid labour burdens imposed by the lockdowns. The case of pandemic divorces provides a revealing instance showing how traditional patriarchal discourses valorizing marriage as the optimal context for child rearing are clearly refuted by lived reality. Put more simply, many mothers are better off solo.

# DAY 1

May 5, 2022

# Block B2

Mother and Paid Labour; Session Two

## B2 Mother and Paid Labour; Session Two (Panel)

12:45 PM-

*Jennifer Long, Artist, Art Administrator and Curator*

1:45 PM

(PDT)

*Natasha Lan Artist and curator, pursuing a MA at the University of Toronto*

*Lara Bozabalian, author of two poetry collections and Canadian bestseller of The Cartographer's Skin*

For mother-artists, making time for a creative practice is habitually challenging. It is an active pursuit, often requiring determination, enforced boundaries, and, ultimately, finding time when there is none. During the COVID-19 pandemic, increased workloads involving childcare and online schooling have fallen disproportionately upon mothers. These demands taxed womyn caregivers in all fields, many of whom were already spread thin, between their life/work responsibilities. It has caused daily intermittent barriers, juggling multiple roles in tandem.

This panel discussion will reflect on how three mother-artists and arts workers carved out space to engage in their artistic pursuits, amidst the many stressors and responsibilities of daily life exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the importance of further cultivating community within these endeavors. The speakers will share how their experiences have been positively impacted by cultivating womxn centred support systems and dialogue on possible futures. The mother-artists will discuss avenues to create and sustain intersectional, intergenerational communities that strive to open lines of communication and support for all members of the community.

# DAY 1

May 5, 2022

# Block B

**B3: Advocacy and Activism; Session Two**

Chair, Alyson Renaldo

## **B3 Re-Evaluating Our Relationship to Resilience...**

12:45 PM-

1:15 PM  
(PDT)

*Alyson Renaldo, Professor of English and Critical Thinking at Humber College*

Through anecdotal and expert perspectives this offering considers how much Black people in developed nations (particularly women), ought to continue cleaving to our legacy of resilience, or whether we may wish to be more intentional about creating space to craft a broader narrative that has more Black women as (current) objects of care, instead of (historic) sources of caregiving.

Whilst the Covid-19 pandemic has provided us with yet another opportunity to (justifiably) marvel at the resilience of the Black population, it has also provided non-frontline workers unexpected time for introspection, which during normal times would have been spent en route to conferences, meetings, rallies, classrooms, faith services etc.

Could it be time to refine our course and regard resiliency as a temporary stop towards collectively self-actualisation, instead of maintaining it in our collective consciousness as a fixed and fundamental modality of life? We'll explore this question more deeply here.

## **B3 Home Education and Building Community Before and During the Pandemic in the U.S.**

1:15 PM-

1:45 PM  
(PDT)

*Dannielle Joy Davis, Saint Louis University, School of Education*

The coronavirus and required social distance measures have halted face to face instruction in schools worldwide (Davis et al, 2020). Likewise, a record number of Midwestern city and county residents in the United States quickly shifted to online home education during the Spring of 2020. While some school districts offered ample technology, engaging contemporary curriculum, and regularly utilized video platforms to interact with students, other less prosperous districts held the capacity to provide a mere fraction of these resources (2020). The pandemic has illuminated longstanding racial and social inequities. Nevertheless, despite some educational practitioners' and administrators' concern of the pandemic's negative influence upon the socialization of youth, Davis Academy, a homeschool, strategically incorporates community engagement within its educational practices throughout the COVID-19 crisis. This includes countering isolation and social disengagement via face to face or virtual small group learning, sharing knowledge with the community, engaging elders, and maintaining long term mentoring connections.

# DAY 1

May 5, 2022

# Block B

**B3: Advocacy and Activism; Session Two**

Chair, Alyson Renaldo

## **B3 Maternal Well-Being and the 'Burden of Self-Care': Challenging Individualized Covid-19 Coping Strategies**

1:45 PM- Gillian Anderson, Chair, Professor Department of Sociology,  
2:15 PM Vancouver Island University

(PDT) Sylvie Lafrenière, Professor, Sociology Department, Vancouver Island University

Whitney Wood, Canada Research Chair in the Historical Dimensions of Women's Health  
Department of History, Vancouver Island University

Our study of 805 Canadian mothers revealed mothers had little time for themselves and struggled to navigate the pandemic without their go to social support networks. To alleviate the stressors and complexities of pandemic life, mothers employed a number of coping strategies. These "self-care" routines ranged from physical exercise and meditation to self-medicating with drugs and alcohol. While recognizing the importance of "self-care" as a form of personal agency and praxis, the recurring emphasis and reliance on individualized coping mechanisms, as well as the gendered (and at times, outright) dismissal of these same self-care activities, remains deeply problematic. It represents a major obstacle in the path towards mothers' "post-pandemic" recovery. During periods of extended lockdown and social distancing, positioning maternal well-being and "self-care" as mothers' obligation rather than a broader societal responsibility, precludes the advancement of structural solutions to better address the needs of all mothers. This is especially true for mothers rendered most vulnerable by the inequities created and sustained by patriarchal capitalism. Results from this project have the potential to inform the collective pursuit of social supports to help mothers cope on the home front and to shape the implementation of pandemic responses going forward.

## END OF DAY 1

# DAY 2

May 6, 2022

# Plenary

Chair, Natasha Vattikonda

## Newcomer and Refugee Mothers During the COVID-19 Pandemic: What Have We Learned?

**7:15 AM- 8:00 AM**

**Dr. Margo Hilbrecht**

Professor in the Faculty of Health, Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies,  
University of Waterloo

The Vanier Institute of the Family is a national, charitable organization established to advance knowledge of families and family diversity in Canada. Although no family was untouched by the COVID-19 pandemic, research has shown that women and vulnerable population groups have been disproportionately affected. This presentation shares findings from COVID-19 Impacts: Newcomer and Refugee Mothers in Canada, a collaboration between the Vanier Institute and the Mothers Matter Centre (MMC) launched to gather data and insights on the experiences of mothers enrolled in three of MMC's programs. An online survey explored how the pandemic had affected mothers' health and well-being, work and household finances, and family relationships, and asked them to describe, in their own words, how their circumstances could be improved. Surveyed newcomer and refugee mothers shared many similarities with other mothers in Canada during the pandemic including lower levels of mental and physical health, a substantial increase in unpaid work, and a decrease in paid employment.

Still, there were important differences related to overall quality of life, changes to family roles and responsibilities, and family finances. These findings offer unique insights into the experiences and well-being of newcomer and refugee mothers during a public health crisis and highlight areas where more support could be provided. As we continue to navigate the pandemic and adapt to new contexts, their experiences can inform and facilitate evidence-based decision-making to support these mothers and their families.

# DAY 2

May 6, 2022

# Block C

## C1: Motherwork; Session Three

Chair, Poh Tan

### C1

#### Visualizing Care: Entanglements of Pregnancy and Video-Conferencing Software during COVID-19

8:00 AM-  
8:30 AM  
(PDT)

*Kelsey Marr, PhD Candidate, Interdisciplinary Studies (Medical Anthropology, Gender Studies), University of British Columbia Okanagan and Guest Researcher, Forum for Gender Studies, Mittuniversitetet*

From May 2020 until September 2021, health authorities in Sundsvall, Sweden, banned partners from attending ultrasound appointments. Midwives and maternity care centers subsequently adopted policies allowing for video-conferencing calls to bring partners “into the room.” Despite assumptions that such policies would provide connection and support between partners, interlocutors expressed heightened experiences of being “made invisible.” In this paper, I draw upon ethnographic research conducted in Sundsvall and Facebook-hosted mammagrupper (Swedish pregnancy support communities), as well as ethnographic interviews with people pregnant during the COVID-19 pandemic. In conversation with Kukla’s (2005) tertiary framing of pregnant bodies as public spaces, I unpack how by making pregnant bodies more consumable through video-conferencing software, both pregnancies, and the pregnant person themselves becomes less visible. To “de-invisibilize” themselves and maintain intimate connections with both their partner and unborn child, interlocutors engage in feminized care practices, both during and after ultrasound appointments. As pandemic-related restrictions have lifted, critical examination of the pandemic-mitigation strategies employed by health authorities highlight enduring inequalities in access to reproductive and maternal health care.

### C1

#### Mothering in a Pandemic

8:30 AM-  
9:00 AM  
(PDT)

*Poh Tan, PhD Student in Education at Simon Fraser University and PhD from the University of British Columbia*

I was in my last year of my doctoral studies, my children’s school plans were scheduled, and I had just begun a new research collaboration when COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic. My roles as a mother, researcher, and educator, which once segregated by time and place, collided when our university closed. Every aspect about each role merged, and my professional and personal world collided in an online meeting. Attempts to keep each role separate, and to maintain a perceived professional identity were futile even with a locked office door. Through the chaos and collision between my three identities, eventually created a calmness, acceptance, and eventual pride to share and invite the “outside” world into my home through Zoom meetings. I will share with my audience, spoken words through poetry, visual experiences through photography, and emotions through audio that helped me move from a place of separate identities to one that embraces a fluid “oneness” with each other.

# DAY 2

May 6, 2022

# Block C

## C1: Motherwork; Session Three

Chair, Poh Tan

### C1

#### **Mothering, Masking Up, and Sarah Blake's Clean Air: A Maternal Ecocritical Reading**

9:00 AM-  
9:30 AM  
(PDT)

*Carolina Toscano, Ph.D. Candidate in Comparative Literature at the University of Washington, Forum for Gender Studies, Mittuniversitetet*

In "Guilt and Fury: How Covid Brought Mothers to the Breaking Point," Natasha Walter writes: "What's going on is that before the pandemic, we were papering over the cracks of a still unequal society." During the last two-plus years, Covid-19 exposed fissures in the framework of how societies treat mothers. This paper analyzes those challenges in the context of a newly published cli-fi thriller novel, *Clean Air*, by Sarah Blake. *Clean Air* is a matrifocal novel that tells the story of Izabel, a mother who survives a climate catastrophe where pollen from trees and plants overtakes the earth. The human beings who survive this event cannot go outdoors without masks, mirroring our experience during the first months of the pandemic.

This project explores how critical issues related to mothering are amplified in the contexts of major social upheavals: pandemics, wars, or in the case of this novel, major climate crises. The intersection of ecocriticism and maternal theory provides a valuable lens to analyze maternal anxiety, maternal ambivalence, work-life balance, maternal guilt, grieving daughterhood, and imperfect motherhood, all present in descriptions of this alternate reality. The guilt and fury Natasha Walter describes are in the undercurrent of the maternal experience portrayed in this novel. However, I argue that the novel goes further than addressing the problems inherent in how we treat mothers under these circumstances. It provides helpful advice on moving forward, mothering on your own terms, and choosing happiness, suggesting a path toward accepting ourselves as imperfect mothers and humans.

### C1

#### **Out of the Flames and into the Fire: Drawing the Effects of the Pandemic on a Single Parent Family**

9:30 AM-  
10:00 AM  
(PDT)

*Fred P Lawrence*

As an artist, PhD researcher and single mother to three teenagers, I have raised my children since alone and for the past 6 years living at a distance from my immediate family. I have depended a great deal on the support provided by my local schools, community and friends. However, with this support structure decimated during the Pandemic, I turned to my ex-husband to request more support in the care of our children, which backfired with devastating long-term consequences. In addition to the effects of the Pandemic itself, revealing my vulnerability led to a cascade of issues around the education, health and well-being of my children, a forced absence from my PhD research and an acrimonious custody battle that is still currently in process. While the court case continues, I am not allowed to reveal any information regarding the case, and in response I have had to change my approach to my research and my practice of drawing. Unless it is sentimental, information which has previously fed into my autoethnographic approach to drawing is now forbidden in my research. The drawings have had to be removed online and embargoed until the children reach the age of consent as the law now prohibits me from commenting on any difficulties involving the children on social media. Taking a cautious approach, I explore through an embodied and performative approach to drawing the maternal body – of being attacked, vilified, slandered, and shamed as I am held up against the impossible standard of the ideological patriarchal mother.

# DAY 2

May 6, 2022

# Block C

C2: Mothers and Paid Labour; Session Three

Chair, Elizabeth Spradley

## C2 Embracing Knowledge, Resisting the Academy: Insights by Academic Mothers of Color on Radically Thriving past Covid-19

8:00 AM-

*Akanksha Misra, Assistant Professor of Gender and Women's Studies at the State University of New York at Plattsburgh*

8:30 AM  
(PDT)

*Jainey JungYeon Kim, Doctoral Candidate in the Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies Department at the University of Washington*

From May 2020 until September 2021, health authorities in Sundsvall, Sweden, banned partners from attending ultrasound appointments. Midwives and maternity care centers subsequently adopted policies allowing for video-conferencing calls to bring partners "into the room." Despite assumptions that such policies would provide connection and support between partners, interlocutors expressed heightened experiences of being "made invisible." In this paper, I draw upon ethnographic research conducted in Sundsvall and Facebook-hosted mammagrupper (Swedish pregnancy support communities), as well as ethnographic interviews with people pregnant during the COVID-19 pandemic. In conversation with Kukla's (2005) tertiary framing of pregnant bodies as public spaces, I unpack how by making pregnant bodies more consumable through video-conferencing software, both pregnancies, and the pregnant person themselves becomes less visible. To "de-invisibilize" themselves and maintain intimate connections with both their partner and unborn child, interlocutors engage in feminized care practices, both during and after ultrasound appointments. As pandemic-related restrictions have lifted, critical examination of the pandemic-mitigation strategies employed by health authorities highlight enduring inequalities in access to reproductive and maternal health care.

## C2 Pinterest, the Ideal Mother, and Covid-19

8:30 AM-

*Elizabeth Spradley, Associate Professor of Communication at Stephen F. Austin State University  
Education at Simon Fraser University and PhD from the University of British Columbia*

9:00 AM  
(PDT)

Alexis Madrigal (2014) of The Atlantic describes the social networking site Pinterest as a database or indexing of human intention, which is precisely why scholars should take note of Pinterest related trends affecting around 50% of U.S. adult women using the site (Pew Research, 2018). This study blends a popular market research methodology termed netnography with more traditional thematic analysis to immerse oneself in the work from home (WFH) pins and boards during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a Pinterest user, I created a WFH pin board shortly after the coronavirus pandemic ushered in mass sheltering-in-place in the U.S. in March 2020 and have maintained the board with sub-sections acting as themes until now. WFH pinning themes were identified using Braun and Clark's six-step methodology and include WFH: clothing, communication, opportunities, products, productivity, schedule, space, wellness, and family. Analysis reveals that working mothers became consumerist, pandemic projects. Themes related to clothing, communication, products, and space either implicitly or explicitly undermined dimensions of well-being. For example, space themed pins featured beautifully adorned and organized home offices in separate spaces from the remainder of the residence equipped with the latest technology for lighting and sound for video conferencing. These spaces appear as WFH projects to achieve the ideals as a working mother; yet, these spaces impose consumerist behavior and assume socio-economic capabilities that generate upward social comparisons of mothers. Impositions and assumptions suggested in the pins undermine financial, social, and psychological well-being.

# DAY 2

## May 6, 2022

# Block C

### C2: Mothers and Paid Labour; Session Three

Chair, Elizabeth Spradley

## C2

### **Professor, Mommy, & Me: Renegotiating Labor, Identity, and Family**

9:00 AM-  
9:30 AM  
(PDT)

*Rebecca R. Todd, Doctoral Candidate in the Department of Communication at the University of South Florida and Professor of Anthropology at Hillsborough Community College*

Nearly every aspect of human life was impacted by the COVID-19 global pandemic. When virtual spaces became the backdrop of everyday life in many homes, spacial and temporal expectations for work-life balance shifted dramatically, and many families were forced to absorb the shock as they renegotiated household norms. While the disease did not discriminate in terms of the lives and bodies it touched, the ripples it sent through society were disproportionately experienced by mothers, who were forced to negotiate tensions between their roles as workers, parents, and partners. From the vantage point of my experiences as a community college professor, doctoral candidate, and single mother, I explore the impact these unexpected disruptions had on various aspects of labor, parenting, and identity. Through the communication theory of resilience, I capture a snapshot of maternal and familial labor experiences within the household resulting from the global COVID-19 pandemic. Digital storytelling and interviews across three generations examine the daily lived reality, dynamic struggles, and unexpected rewards that emerge when various roles and responsibilities converge in the household during a time of crisis and reveal a collective process of cultivating resilience through multigenerational sensemaking that followed in the wake of a global disaster.

# DAY 2

May 6, 2022

# Block C

C3: Mothers and Paid Labour; Session Three

Chair, Natasha Vattikonda

## C3 Why Mothers Should All Be Mentally Fit

*Francisca Mandeya, Founder of Mothers United*

8:00 AM-

8:30 AM

(PDT)

The Sars-Cov-2 pandemic has loaded extra care work and worry for mothers, and their mental health and their children's is at risk.

Given the multiple stresses and unprecedented mental health challenges they are facing, mothers should all be mentally fit!

Mentally fit mothers are able to handle stress, anger, sadness, depression, overwhelm, frustration, grief, trauma etc with a positive mindset. They are able to "take their hands off the stove," as Shirzad Chamine of Positive Intelligence teaches.

Is it possible that there could be gifts and opportunities in a pandemic? No and Yes. A negative mindset will not find any. A positive mindset will explore possibility, find gifts and opportunities and take decisive, laser-focused action.

It takes only 3 things to build one's mental muscles. Mental fitness invokes empathy, innovation, curiosity, end of life perspective and positive actions. It causes transformation at root level. The potential to inspire boys and men to take on care work and ease mothers' burdens; and advocate for systemic change becomes a possibility.

"We are doing life differently!" a happy mother who is a covid survivor has found peace and calm within the storm, enjoys healthy relationships, prioritises self care, and is parenting with more ease. Another mother gained courage and left a toxic union. Some children and fathers have become mentally fit by association. Given that pandemics are inevitable and impact mothers disproportionately, and that mental fitness builds family resilience, all mothers should be mentally fit.

## C3 Dreams and Daily Work

*Helen Sargeant, UK Artist*

8:30 AM-

9:00 AM

(PDT)

I am interested in the fragility and vulnerability of the female body. Current drawing and painting explores how to use arts practice to process trauma. I will present a survey of art work produced during the COVID-19 pandemic and how this has led to the work that I am now making. I will discuss creative resilience, slow methodologies and drawing every day to help negotiate the anxiety of living in a post-pandemic world. I will make reference to the work of Alina Szapocznikow, Louise Bourgeois and Maria Lassnig.

# DAY 2

## May 6, 2022

# Block C

### C3: Mothers and Paid Labour; Session Three

Chair, Natasha Vattikonda

### C3

9:00 AM-  
9:30 AM  
(PDT)

## **Government-Assisted Refugee Mothers, Participants of the Reviving Hope and Home Program Before, During, and After COVID-19**

*Akiko Ohta, Ph.D. Student at the Faculty of Education of Simon Fraser University, Hena, Participant in the Reviving Hope and Home (RHH) pilot project*

*Susan, Participant in the RHH pilot project*

*Masahiro Minami, Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Education of Simon Fraser University*

The program to support Government-Assisted Refugee mothers of preschoolers was externally evaluated for two years including the time impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This presentation will shed light on the stories of the program participants before, during, and after COVID-19 in relation to the program they took.

Virtual home visits replaced in-person home visits. Program participants were required to improve their digital literacy to be able to continue with the program. Learning new things and being creative were key for both participants and program providers. As part of the program evaluation, some participants completed photovoice activities to reflect on their program experience. The follow-up conversations with two former program participants allow us to see the long-term impacts of the program on the participants as well as their post-COVID-19 plans.

The results of the program evaluation and the follow-up conversation with the former program participants will be examined and shared in the presentation. How the society may support their growth will also be discussed at the end of the presentation.

# DAY 2

May 6, 2022

# Plenary

Chair, Dr. Andrea O'Reilly

## Post-Pandemic Recovery and Healing: The Intersectionality of Gender, Race, and Family Status

**10:30 AM- 12:30 PM**

This panel brings together three academics to discuss their papers on mothering during the COVID-19 pandemic and navigating post-pandemic recovery.

**Renée E. Mazinegiizhigo-kwe Bédard**, Western University

*Smudging My Home and Family: An Anishinaabeg Mother's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic*

In this presentation I will explore the focus on the maternal knowledge of Anishinaabeg mothers in regards to the use of smudging as a way of protect, educate, and nurture our families overall wellbeing. Further, I will discuss the use smudging to calm nerves, to cleanse the air, and foster a nurturing atmosphere for children. I will use a discussion centered on the ceremony of smudging in order to illustrate an Indigenous maternal approach to dealing with the isolation, impacts, and experiences of living through the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Zaje Harrell**, Ph.D., Principal and Conscious Endeavor, LLC

*After the rain: A Black Mothering Lens on Recovery, Justice and Healing Post Pandemic*

The COVID-19 pandemic further reinforced social disparities; The African American community bore a disproportionate impact of the disease and its social correlates. As the pandemic ravaged communities, the foregrounding of racialized violence in the public consciousness was an additional tax on community resources. Using Black mothering literature and feminist theory as a point of departure, I explore the recovery from the pandemic and the demands to move toward a more just society. The desire to heal and build will be juxtaposed with the expansive scope of a public health crisis and racial reckoning. Feminist literature explores the the role of nurturing and calls to political action for Black mothers. These are critical to understanding how the rebuilding process from the COVID-19 era is unfolding.

**Perlita R. Dicochea** Ph.D., Communications/Events Associate & Program Coordinator Center for Comparative Studies in Race & Ethnicity Stanford University

*Chicana Single-Mothering on the Verge of a Nervous Breakthrough: Living Under COVID-19 and Other Orders in Silicon Valley*

The onset of COVID-19 stay-at-home orders in mid-March 2020 heightened the already strained daily routines of single-mothering in a multi-generational household in the Heart of Silicon Valley. In this presentation I reflect on my own personal trials working from home and overseeing the at-home education of two little ones, one of whom transitioned from preschool to kindergarten on-line in the initial stages of the SF Bay Area-wide shut down. While these new circumstances for families became visible in the public discourse, there are a dearth of stories and acknowledgement regarding the impacts of COVID on a) single mothers and b) those living in multigenerational homes. This led me to question what kind of support do single-parent Latinx families, both parents and children, need? The reasons for and results of such marginalization beg further exploration. Further research on this subject is critical to assess the social services available or needed to support working single-Latinx mothers.

# DAY 2

## May 6, 2022

# Block D

### D2: Mothering and Paid Labour; Session Four

Chair, Maria Collier de de Mendonça

## D2

### The Challenges of Being a Mother and an Academic Researcher during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Brazil

12:45 PM-  
1:15 PM  
(PDT)

*Dr. Maria Collier de de Mendonça, Professor at the Communication Department, Federal University of Pernambuco, Brazil, and Dr. Milena Freire de Oliveira-Cruz, Professor at the Communication Department, Federal University of Santa Maria, Brazil*

Mothers all over the world are feeling overwhelmed and exhausted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Academic mothers, particularly, have been struggling with deadlines and productivity demands. In fact, mothers are experiencing the most challenging time in the recent history of Brazil, while working and mothering the children from home. In this presentation, we argue Brazilian academic mothers' challenges, which were already pervasive and inherent in the Brazilian society before COVID-19, have become even more taxing due the current right-wing government's policies that have exacerbated existing inequalities. Based on a literature review and quantitative and qualitative data, we present key findings of the research project—Brazilian Mothers, Media, and COVID-19—to illustrate the difficulties the pandemic has caused for Brazilian mothers. We note how patriarchal motherhood still shapes the ways many of Brazilian women mother their children, as they remain isolated, deal with maternal roles individually, and have little social or governmental support. Finally, we highlight the need for Brazilian mothers to learn how to mother their children with media literacy; and conclude by encouraging further collaboration among academic mothers in Brazil.

## D2

### Reframing Single Academic Mothering in the Post-Pandemic University

1:15 PM-  
1:45 PM  
(PDT)

*Nathalie Ségeral, Lecturer in French studies at the University of Sydney (Australia) and Associate Professor of French at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa (USA)*

Mothering during the pandemic has mostly crystallized the preexisting gender gap in academia. Many articles have been published on this topic by academic mothers struggling with having to juggle childcare, homeschooling, and academic duties from home during the various lockdowns, which has opened up the debate around this generally silenced aspect of the academic career and its gender inequity. However, these data and publications tend to focus on partnered academic mothers, further exacerbating single mothers' invisibility. Using my experience as a single mother who left an American university for an Australian one during the pandemic, this paper will highlight the ways in which some of the challenges faced by single academic mothers have been alleviated by the pandemic while others have worsened. As we are entering a post-pandemic world, it will also suggest avenues for solutions to mitigate the single motherhood double penalty in academia by drawing lessons from lockdown policies and practices.

# DAY 2

## May 6, 2022

# Block D

### D2: Mothering and Paid Labour; Session Four

Chair, Maria Collier de de Mendonça

## D2 In this Together

1:45 PM- *Weronika Zielińska-Klein, Artist-mother (MAR, University of Amsterdam; BA, Willem de Kooning Academy /WdKA/ in Rotterdam), researcher and educator; Leader of Autonomous Practices, interdisciplinary graduation program at WdKA*  
2:15 PM  
(PDT)

Traditionally, the artistic practice was being seen and understood as yet another job that couldn't - or even shouldn't - be pursued from home, where messy and out-of-focus family life is happening around.

Back in 2017 (pre-pandemic) when professor Robert Kelly was being interviewed live on BBC News about the political situation in South Korea and his family stormed to the same room; the whole situation seemed merely a coincidence, perhaps even a singular event.

Two years after the first lockdown, I am skeptical about this shift in realization, which seems to me rather a temporary trend; something that is forced exactly because "we are all in this together". A phrase that was intended to inspire solidarity, mutual support, and kindness, at the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. But in fact, became a truism abused by politicians, institutions, the marketing industry, and the media worldwide. With this contribution, I wish to make a collective reminder about how not to exclude and belittle artist-mothers in their ways of practicing and making art (public) for the years to come. "In this Together" is a performative manifesto; a collaborative response to the institutions - normally care-less and negligent - towards artistic (aesthetic) choices coming forth, taking place along and co-existing with mothering.

## D2 Tackling Work-Life Balance: an Approach to the Technological Consumption of Single-Parent Families During COVID-19

2:15 PM-

2:45 PM

### Lockdown in Spain

(PDT) *Iris Simón-Astudillo, PhD Candidate in Communication at the University of Valladolid*

Women have always been negatively affected by socio-economic factors to a disproportionate extent, but COVID-19 has only worsened the situation. This study is rooted in the premise that society is based on the sexual division of labour as, despite the fact that women have long since entered the labour market, it is women who continue to carry most of the responsibility in the household.

The purpose of this study is to reflect on the role played by technology in the work-life balance of single-parent families, the majority of which are led by a woman. In order to do so, a series of interviews were carried out with Spanish single mothers with children of different ages. The results showed that, although some mothers were able to hire external help, they had to rely on technology more than they would have liked to entertain their children. Due to the lack of support from the state, some women who defined themselves as "anti-tablet, anti-telephone, anti-everything", had to be "pro-everything" because it was impossible for them to telework and pay attention to their children.

Despite initial reluctance, the mothers recognised the relief that technology brought them, not only to distract their children, but also in their own venting, as resources such as WhatsApp were the only way for them to connect with their support networks. Even so, they admit that this excessive use has had disadvantages, as mothers of younger children are finding it difficult to reduce their consumption after lockdown.

# DAY 2

## May 6, 2022

# Block D

**D3: Advocacy and Activism; Session Four**  
Chair, Linn Baran

**D3**

## **Writing a Republic of Motherhood: A Maternal Feminist Analysis of an Empowered Genre of Possibility in Impossible Pandemic Times**

12:45 PM-  
1:15 PM  
(PDT)

*Linn Baran, Independent Researcher*

The title of my paper pays homage to the brilliant and award winning 2018 poem "The Republic of Motherhood" by British poet Liz Berry. Propelled by the tensions located between motherhood as social norm or expectation and the personal/social grain of a more darker experience of maternal experience, Berry's poem introduces her readers into a paradoxical terrain that is both disempowering and potentially empowering; "a wild queendom".

My own paper fully engages with this new maternal republic; a great democracy of women producing and publishing similar creative works across genres and various intersections during the pandemic years from 2019-2022 that quantify a unique and particular genre growth itself of acknowledging diverse maternal narratives that are now impossible to silence.

In my presentation, I will situate many of these recent literary maternal narratives alongside their socio-political relevance for an empowered exchange of discourse that can continue to challenge how we view motherhood as an institution vs the possibilities for a more hopeful maternal feminist activism.

**D3**

## **Viennese Coffee House**

1:15 PM-  
1:45 PM  
(PDT)

*Barbara Philipp, Artist*

A conversation in a Kaffeehaus travels. My Kaffeehaus is an idea, an abstract of a viennese coffee house. A Viennese coffee house welcomes you, guarantees you emotional comfort and a cosy atmosphere. It's a place for encounters: to meet up, to talk or to contemplate thinking about life.

The project gave mother artists around the globe a platform to talk about the difficult time to mother and to maintain an art practice during the pandemic. We discussed the challenges and possible outcomes, hopes and dreams. My aim was and is to give the this community a public visibility, a voice and a way of exchange. Like in a real coffee house I had the chance to meet persons whom I would love to get to know better and friends who shared their precious world with me.

The meetings took place on Zoom and were recorded. These colleagues and friends from Israel, France, the Netherlands and the US could make the experience of a Coffee House while sitting at home. The possibilities for a mother artist to find an audience in this period of crisis became incredibly small. We have tried to get through it, often overwhelmed with caring and schooling kids while doing their jobs.

# DAY 2

May 6, 2022

# Block D

**D3: Advocacy and Activism; Session Four**  
Chair, Linn Baran

## **D3 inVISIBLE WORLDS - inVISIBLE WOMAN**

1:45 PM- *Dr. Cali Prince, Institute for Culture and Society (ICS) Western Sydney University*

2:15 PM  
(PDT)

Experimenting with arts based methods intersecting autoethnography, ethnographically based poetry, and performance (auto)ethnography, "inVISIBLE WORLDS – inVISIBLE WOMAN" explores themes of motherhood and invisible labour. Viewed through the lens of my embodied experiences, as an artist, a para-academic, a woman and a mother, I identify with invisible disability and chronic illness. I reflect on living through home-schooling and additional caring loads through-out the COVID19 lockdown in Western Sydney, Australia. Across the globe mothers have often silently and invisibly juggled a triple or even quadruple load, most often not in purpose built offices or studies, yet shouldering an escalating demand of caring responsibilities. Women who are mothers with a disability have had an increase in care demands and yet simultaneously experienced a loss of vital support. I turned to my pen and the page as way to bear witness to, and make more visible, the realities of mothers carrying a pandemic load. Explored through new and old poems, culminating in (auto) ethnographic performance works (in development) I seek to give voice to these experiences. This includes how phenomenal and creative women are – such as, are mothers and children in lockdown creating new worlds together? And are mothers the under-acknowledged - "triple headed one hundred handed goddesses" (Prince, 2021) during the pandemic?

## END OF DAY 2

# DAY 3

May 7, 2022

# Plenary

Chair, Natasha Vattikonda

## Women and Pandemics: on the Frontlines at Home and in the Field

**7:15 AM- 8:00 AM**

**Dr. Erin Sorrell**

Member of the Center for Global Health Science and Security, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at Georgetown University, and the Director of the Elizabeth R. Griffin Program at the Center for Global Health Science & Security

Pandemics emerge due to a number of risk factors that include environmental, geopolitical, and socioeconomic factors. While pandemics preparedness and response are traditionally topics discussed within the health sector, COVID-19 showed the world what many in the public health community have been advocating for years: that pandemics pose some of the greatest risks to the contemporary global economy and security. This pandemic has underscored that treating health as a niche issue for a small number of stakeholders will fail. It takes a global community to prepare and respond.

Women are at the forefront of this community of response and many past responses to pandemics. We serve as front-line responders, health care professionals, educators, policy makers, government leaders, researchers, business leaders, security professionals and many others. Many of these individuals also serve as caregivers, at home and across their communities. These same women are at increased risk of infection, loss of livelihood due to demands of caring for children and elderly family; and are greatly impacted by decreased access to sexual and reproductive health and rise in domestic violence. This session will begin to introduce and outline social determinants of health that fall on women and especially vulnerable populations.

# DAY 3

## May 7, 2022

# Block E

### E1: Motherwork; Session Five

Chair, Andrea O'Reilly

## E1 Strategies to Support Newcomer Families Post Pandemic

8:00 AM-  
8:30 AM  
(PDT)

*Reem Abdulkader, Mosaic Newcomer Family Resource Network, Winnipeg*  
*Maisa'a Haj Ahmad, Mosaic Newcomer Family Resource Network, Winnipeg*

The Covid 19 pandemic has disrupted families and challenged communities across Canada, so it is not surprising that we are witnessing many difficult situations within the families attending Mosaic Programs. As we move towards post pandemic programming, families are expressing their need for our assistance and support. The pandemic has impacted them in multiple ways including increased isolation, concern for safety, increased use of screens, family and community conflict, sadness and depression, domestic abuse, and financial worries. During this session we will share strategies, developed at Mosaic, to enhance and promote mental health and wellbeing through group and one to one home visit programs in first language, as well as strategies to address financial stress through pre-employment training for lower literacy newcomer women. This workshop will demonstrate ideas that have been implemented, which support parents in enhancing their own mental health while also nurturing the mental health of their children.

## E1 Mothering Children with Disabilities After the Covid 19 Pandemic

8:30 AM-  
9:00 AM  
(PDT)

*Genevieve Currie, PhD Candidate, Associate Professor, Family Researcher, Mount Royal University, Calgary, and Kinga Pozniak, Postdoctoral Researcher CanChild Centre for Childhood Disability Research, McMaster University*

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a disproportionate toll on the lives of mothers; in particular, mothers of children with disabilities have faced unique challenge and struggles. Mothers of children with complex needs require multiple health and social support services for their children, but the majority of these services were cancelled or reduced because of COVID-related measures. For these mothers, COVID highlighted and exacerbated many of the existing cracks in the social support system. Some unexpected benefits also came to light such as new mechanisms for access and connection. Reflecting on these experiences, we, as both mothers of children with disabilities and researchers, identify strategies needed to address these gaps in services and systems, support the essential role that mothers and carework play in social organization, and provide suggestions to transform our social support systems to better meet the needs of families.

# DAY 3

## May 7, 2022

# Block E

### E1: Motherwork; Session Five

Chair, Andrea O'Reilly

## E1

## Mothering in the Context of COVID-19: Who Cares About Creating a Care Infrastructure?

9:00 AM-

9:30 AM

(PDT)

*Christine Zolondek, Bachelor of Arts Honours Student*

*Joanne Minaker, Associate Dean and Associate Professor, MacEwan University*

### Part One: Mothering in the Context of COVID-19

A crisis of care soon followed the World Health Organization's declaration of COVID-19 as a global pandemic; and along with it, chaos, uncertainty, and fear. More than two years later, formal and informal care arrangements continued to be upended, and many families are forced to resolve this issue. Women who shoulder the heaviest weight of the child care burden and earn, on average, still less than their male counterparts, have experienced dramatic impacts, such as a step back from careers to assume full-time responsibilities or balancing work and home life during the pandemic. Given barriers mothers faced before the pandemic, how have mothers coped with the added stress and strain associated with child-care, homeschooling, and paid work? To what extent does this health care crisis shed light on the gendered inequalities that persist, namely the cultural expectations for mothers, and gendered norms embedded in care-work? This presentation is based on qualitative interviews with eleven mothers who have navigated the changes and challenges of the pandemic making choices many of which were constrained by the contexts in which they mother.

### Part Two: Who Cares About Creating a Care Infrastructure?

COVID has amplified and burden of care. Are mothers left to carry the burden of care alone? What lessons has the pandemic taught us about maternal practice and relations of care? On November 15, 2021 Alberta became the ninth province (and territory) to make deal with the Federal government for \$10 a day child care for families – 50 years after the Royal Commission on the Status of Women called for urgent creation of a national system of early learning and childcare. On March 28, Ontario struck a deal with the Federal Government. Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland stated "Early learning and childcare has long been a feminist issue... COVID-19 reminded us all that it is also an urgent economic policy." On accessible, affordable early learning and childcare, Freeland argued "Childcare is critically important to our economy. It is as much a critical piece of infrastructure as a road, a grain elevator, or a railway." This presentation explores emergent findings from a qualitative study interviewing mothers about their experiences mothering in the context of the pandemic with an eye to personal transformation and social change. Looking beyond the individual struggles and obstacles participants identified we can examine what cultural and systemic changes across various sectors are necessary to create a sustainable care infrastructure.

# DAY 3

May 7, 2022

# Block E

**E1: Motherwork; Session Five**

Chair, Andrea O'Reilly

**E1**

## **Obstetric Care During a Pandemic in Brazil**

9:30 AM-  
10:00 AM  
(PDT)

*Dr. Margareth Santos Zanchetta, Associate Professor, Ryerson University*

Brazil's Humanization of Prenatal and Childbirth Program strives to improve access to high quality care. Abrupt changes to infection control due to COVID-19 are jeopardizing appropriate implementation of the program. Humanization of obstetric care during a pandemic proved to be a double-edge priority: respond to women's destabilizing feelings about their own body and to their needs of personal safety in relation to maternal health and their growing fear surrounding the uncertainties arising from a global pandemic. A rapid, face-to-face appraisal with registered nurses, doulas, community health agents, and a lawyer, all working within a public health organization, revealed how women are reconstructing meanings of pregnancy and motherhood. Professionals reported their perception that women's common feelings are loneliness, fear, apprehension, anxiety, frustration, anger, and vulnerability. Major concerns include their loss of autonomy in the labour process, puerperium at maternity ward-home, need of hospitalization bringing risk of nosocomial infection, unnecessary C-section, limitation to breastfeeding and having their newborns infected. Women are mostly uncomfortable with the social distancing measures, and they struggle with new rules about admission, accompanying significant-one and labour, as well as compulsory ways to deal with restrictions to control COVID-19 infections and home preventative care. Common behaviours include denial of COVID-19 symptoms and complications, self-medication for some infection symptoms, difficulty in wearing a non-surgical mask, and intensive, preventative self-care to family and newborns. The informing professionals uncovered the seriousness of their own limitations in ensuring that the human rights of women as citizens have full access to humanized obstetric care.

# DAY 3

May 7, 2022

# Closing Discussion

Chair, Natasha Vattikonda

## Beyond a Vaccine: Where Do We Go From Here?

**10:30 AM- 11:30 AM**

**Debbie Bell**

CEO/President of the Mothers Matter Centre

**Dr. Andrea O'Reilly**

Professor of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies, and Founder of the Journal of The Motherhood Initiative, Publisher of Demeter Press

**Dr. Erin Sorrell**

Member of the Center for Global Health Science and Security, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at Georgetown University, and the Director of the Elizabeth R. Griffin Program at the Center for Global Health Science & Security

This closing panel will welcome three experts to reflect on the emerging themes of the conference and discuss what is needed for holistic and inclusive post-pandemic recovery for mothers and families

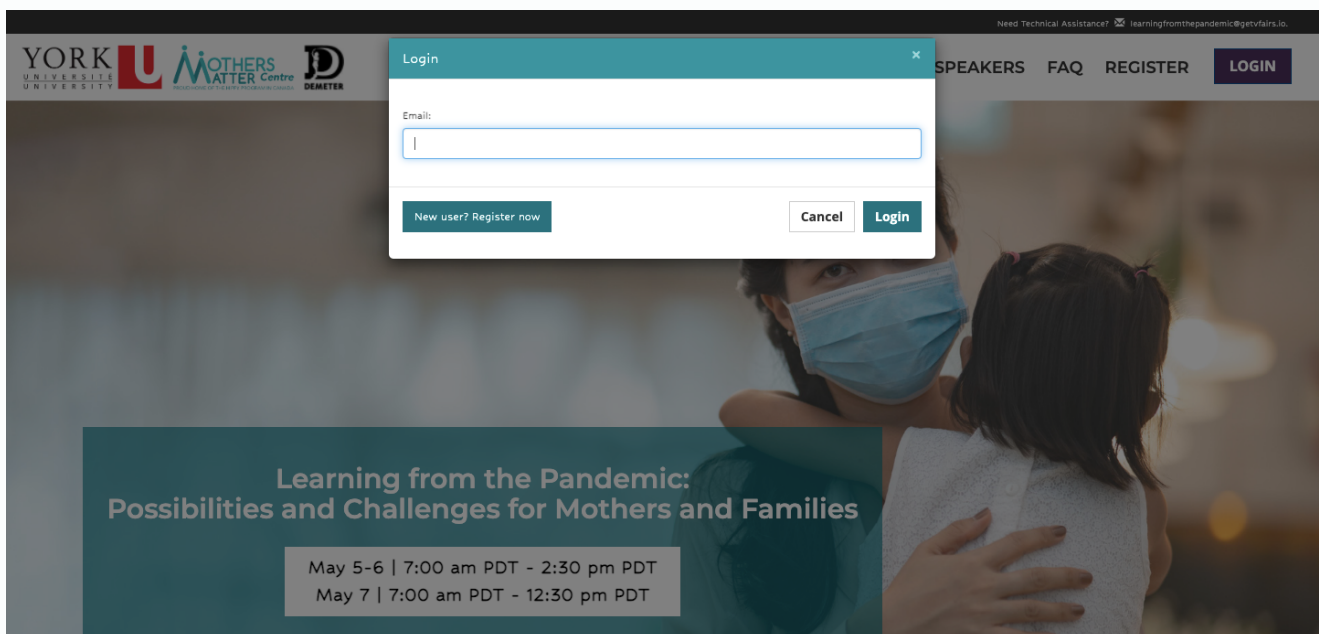
## CONFERENCE CONCLUDES

vFairs is an all-in-one hybrid, in-person and virtual events platform that helps you host amazing events that delight audiences.

## LOGIN

The event URL can be accessed by browsing [learningfromthepandemic@vfairs.com](mailto:learningfromthepandemic@vfairs.com). Depending upon the security restrictions:

- You might be required to enter one time password (OTP) in addition to your email id & password to log into the event. Or,
- You might enter the event by using your email id alone.



## MENU BAR

When you enter the event, the main menu bar is going to be your best friend for friendly navigation across different features available.



## LOBBY



The lobby contains the doors to other spaces of the event such as Exhibit Hall, Auditorium, and Information Desk which you can access by simply clicking on the titles/banners. It also consists of a welcome video which you can play once you log into the event.

## AUDITORIUMS AND WEBINARS



The auditorium takes you to the hall where you can access all the scheduled webinars/meetings/on-demand videos that you can easily participate in. The sessions could be live or pre-recorded.

To see/access the webinar listing/agenda, you need to click on the screen of the auditorium.

## LOUNGE

The lounge is where attendees are able to gather and share valuable perspectives about various topics from their selected choices. Attendees can click on a lamp to select from the three topics to chat about.

Attendees can also find the networking lounge chatroom, where they can network with other guests at the conference and foster meaningful connections.



## EXHIBIT HALL

The Exhibit Hall contains virtual booths where you can interact with various departments/divisions regarding their services. Once an attendee enters into an exhibit hall, they can visit a specific booth to explore its features.



## BOOTH

To visit a booth, you need to click on any booth in the exhibit hall. On the booth site, you will find many clickable tabs such as:

- Description
- Videos
- Documents
- Chat
- Q&A (live discussion forum page)
- Other redirecting links/tabs



Note: Don't forget to click on the booth banners. The booth banners contain redirection links for you to explore more about the exhibitor!

While visiting a specific booth, you might also find the following features:

- Reserve a chat slot: for scheduling a chat timing with a booth rep in advance.
- Order Products: if it's a virtual Expo or an online tradeshow.

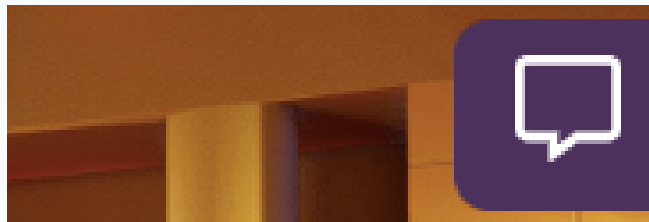
## NOTIFICATIONS

On the live event day, you might get various notifications at different times. These notifications remind you to view/explore/attend important sessions and features of the conference.

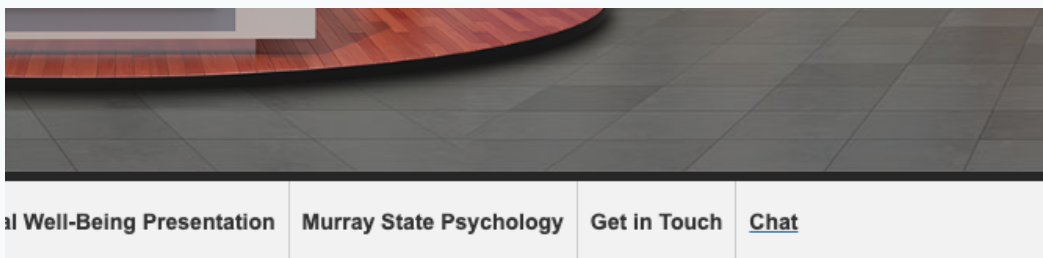
## CHAT

You can find the Chat tab either on the home screen as soon as you log into the event, or by visiting a booth as explained above.

Chat tab on home screen



Chat tab on booth display



By clicking on the 'Chat' tab, you can interact and chat with different Booth Reps/exhibitors as well as other attendees who are online in the event.

Using a chat tab, you can do the following:

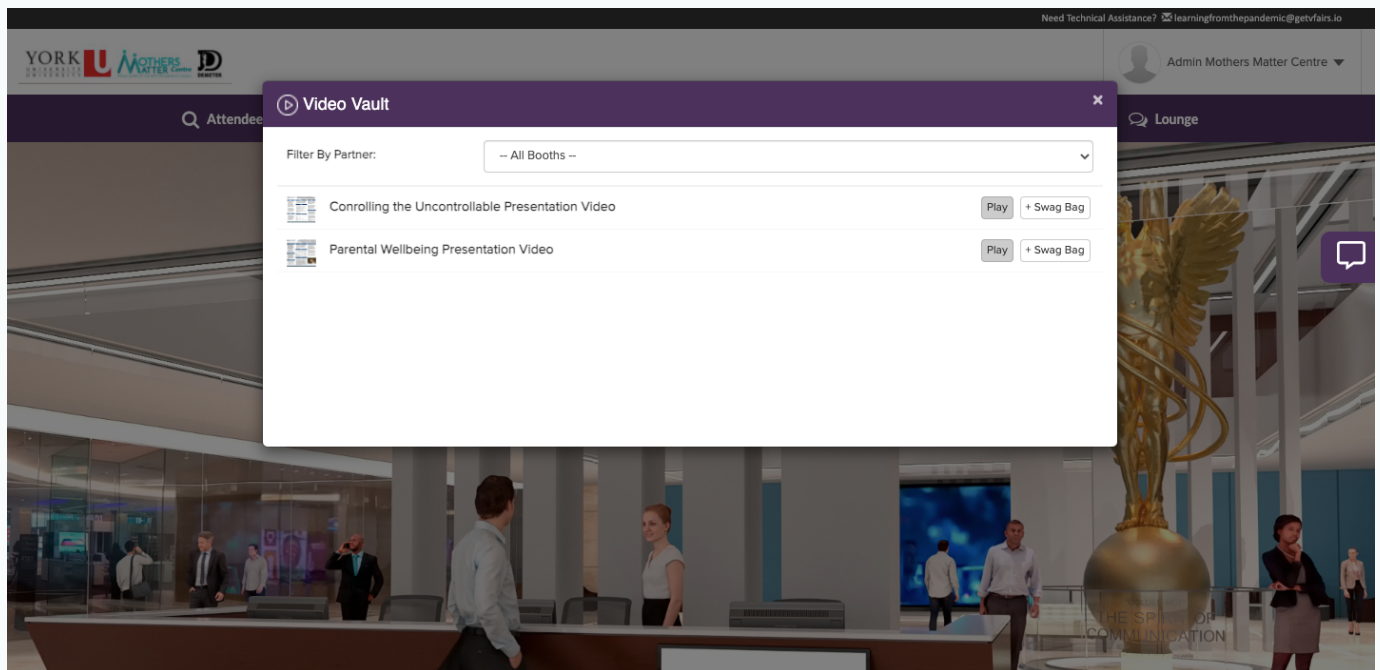
- Join different chatrooms
- Initiate private chat with a booth rep/exhibitor (if allowed by the event organizer)
- Initiate private chat with other attendees (if allowed by the event organizer)
- Start an audio/video call with a booth rep/exhibitor (if allowed by the event organizer)
- Start an audio/video call with other attendees (if allowed by the event organizer)
- Send a file attachment

## CHAT INVITATION

Chat invitation is a chat request sent by a booth representative/exhibitor who might want to draw your attention to their services.

## VIDEO VAULT

The video vault contains a directory of videos which are available on the event for you to watch. You can also save a video for later by adding them to "Swag Bag". You can always access the saved videos by clicking on the Swag Bag tab on the main menu bar. If you want to email the video links to yourself, you can do that too so you can access the videos even after the event is over. Using the dropdown filter, you can also filter the videos according to your desired booth.



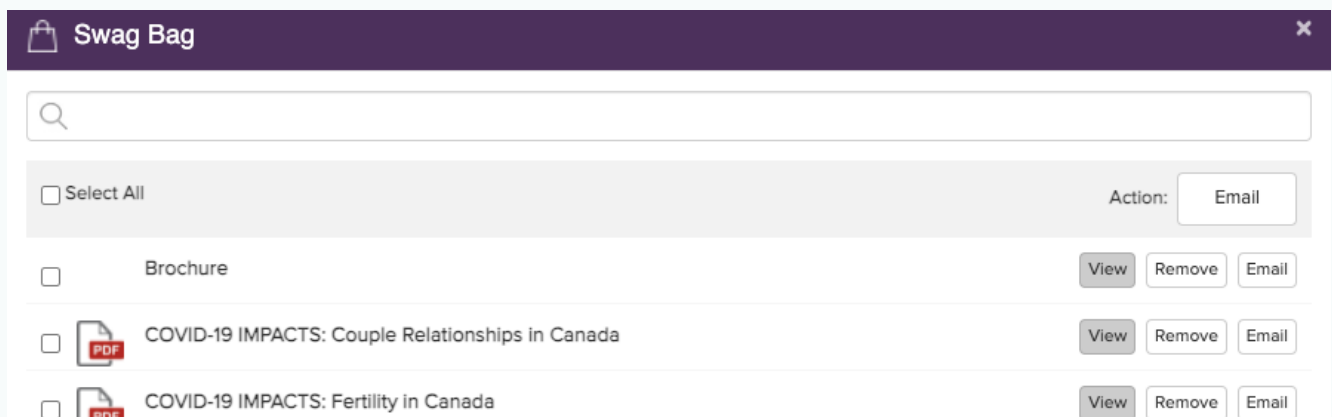
## RESOURCES

It contains all the documents which are showcased on different booths for you to read them by clicking on the 'View' button.

Just like videos, you can also add documents to your Swag Bag and email them to yourself or your friends to access when desired.

## SWAG BAG

When you click on the Swag Bag tab, you can find all the resources (documents and videos) which you have saved for yourself. As explained above, you can always email the Swag Bag items to yourself and your friends/colleagues



## INFO DESK

If you face any technical issue during the event, then you can get assistance from vFairs technical support staff by submitting your query in the Technical Support chat room which can be accessed at:

- Help or Info Desk tab in the Menu bar
- Technical Support chatroom in the CHAT tab

