Editorial

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2008 was the inaugural year of the Child Indicators Research (CIR) journal. CIR has grown and developed considerably in its first year. The paper flow is impressive with almost 50 papers submitted to CIR to-date. The papers diversity is even more impressive. Papers were submitted to CIR from a variety of professions and domains including demography, education, law, pediatrics, psychology, public policy, public health, social policy; social work, sociology, statistics and more. Papers were submitted to CIR from virtually all continents and from more than 25 different countries. And papers were submitted by researchers, academicians and practitioners.

Indeed, in recent years, child indicators have become a major tool for monitoring the well-being of children for national governments, states and provinces, local governments, and youth programs. We are proud that CIR is slowly but surely becoming the academic and professional publishing outlet for the field. We further hope that it will contribute even more to the effort led by the International Society for Child Indicators (ISCI) to develop standards, foster collaborative research, enhance dissemination, and encourage publication.

We at CIR are working on exciting plans for 2009, including a special volume on “Child Indicators at the Local Level” guest edited by Claudia Coulton, Jill Korbin and Jim McDonell, due to be published as the second issue of 2009. We further plan to launch in the fall of 2009 a special book series—“Children Well-Being: Research and Indicators”. The first title being a special volume in honor of Alfred J. Kahn, titled “From child welfare to child well being: an international perspective on knowledge in the service of making policy”, with some 27 chapters by leading researchers from all over the world.

CIR is the official journal of ISCI, which is also growing. ISCI is strongly committed to involving members from across the globe, to encouraging rigorous methods of research, to enhancing both basic and methodological research, and to foster dissemination and application of indicators to policy and practice. ISCI's

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second international conference is due to take place in Sydney Australia on Nov. 4–5, 2009. Please consider joining ISCI and by doing so getting your free subscription to CIR. (For more information see <http://www.childindicators.org>).

This first issue of our second volume further pursues our efforts to strengthen the study of child indicators and children's well-being. It is the mission of CIR to break the "isolation" of academicians, researchers, and practitioners in the field of child indicators and to use CIR as a platform for sharing knowledge and experiences. The volume and quality of the papers submitted to and accepted by CIR are not only outstanding but the best proof that we are on the right track.

The papers included in this issue encompass a wide array of efforts to conceptualize indicators of children's well-being. They clearly represent the changing field and its developments. In the first paper, Kristin Anderson Moore and her colleagues at Child Trends explore possibilities to conceptualizes, develop, and assess a potential longitudinal indicator of children's contexts. By using three sets of activities they suggest and examine a cumulative, longitudinal measure of turbulence that aggregates children's experiences with different types of change. They have done so by using retrospective data collected in Round 1 of the American National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, 1997 cohort. Beyond the potential of turbulence as an important and measurable construct their paper further emphasize the need for better data and it illustrates a general approach for conceptualizing, developing, and examining longitudinal, cumulative indicators.

In the second paper, Sinéad Hanafin and Anne-Marie Brooks highlight challenges arising in the compilation of Ireland's first *State of the Nation's Children* report. This Irish Report is based on the National Set of Child Well-Being Indicators developed in 2005 using a consensus approach involving multiple stakeholders, including children. Some of the challenges that arose in reporting on these indicators and are described in the paper include (1) issues relating to the availability of data; (2) variability in the quality of data available; (3) absence of demographic variables in respect of some data; and (4) issues arising in how the report should be compiled and presented.

In the third paper (from Australia), Toby Fattore, Jan Mason and Elizabeth Watson try to answer the question what happens when children are asked about their own well being? This paper reports on a study that explored children's views of what constitutes well-being, what meaning children and young people ascribe to the concept and whether distinct dimensions or characteristics of well-being can be identified. Some of the major findings from this research, include, the overarching importance of relationships with, the importance of safety and security and the way these factors contribute to sense of self. The paper further discusses the significance of the findings for policy development and the particular challenge of developing indicators.

The two last papers are dealing with indicators of children's well being in the education system. First Randolph, Kangas and Ruokamo present a preliminary effort to develop the Children's Overall Satisfaction with Schooling Scale (COSSS). In their study they developed a six-item scale meant to measure elementary-school-aged students' overall satisfaction with schooling. The suggested scale was driven from an items pool developed by the Finnish National Board of Education. They further present Finnish, Dutch, and English versions of the scale along with guidelines for the scale's administration, scoring, and interpretation.

In the last paper, Zullig, Koopman and Huebner aims at looking Beyond GPA. They propose that we need to search for more comprehensive assessments of students' school experiences. They argue that monitoring quality of life (QOL) issues among youth can contribute to the same youth preparation to life. While using a study in Ohio as their case study the authors argue that student reports of satisfaction with their school experience, coupled with measures of school climate, are salient indicators of student well-being associated with behavior and academic performance in school.

We are confident that this issue will enhance the development of the field of child well-being indicators. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the reviewers and the editorial board members for the contribution to the first volume (2008) as well as for this first issue of the second volume. We further would like to thank our colleagues at the Springer publishing house, who are constant sources of support. Finally, we would like to thank the readership of the journal and express our hope that it will continue to grow and develop.