

Infant Massage 2026 Virtual Conference

 INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INFANT MASSAGE

This gathering is more than a virtual conference — it is a shared global experience, intentionally created to connect, inspire, and support one another across borders. Every presentation, every discussion, and every moment of connection reflects our collective commitment to nurturing families and strengthening those who serve them.

We are honoured to bring together a diverse international community united by a shared belief in the power of nurturing touch and a desire to bring these principles into everyday practice around the world. As the International Association of Infant Massage (IAIM), our mission is to promote nurturing touch through education, training, and research. Beyond this, we strive to foster a world where all parents, caregivers, and children feel loved, valued, and respected.

Each year, IAIM supports the training of thousands of new Certified Instructors of Infant Massage (CIMIs), who carry this mission into their local communities. This virtual conference is both a celebration of that work and an opportunity to envision what comes next. Here, we learn together. We share across cultures. We grow as a global community.

Thank you for joining us in this shared experience. Your presence strengthens our community, and together we continue to shape a more compassionate world for families everywhere.

With warmth and gratitude,

The IAIM International Board

Conference Schedule

Two days of inspiring presentations, meaningful connection, and professional development — all delivered virtually so our global community can gather, wherever you are in the world. All times listed in **GMT**.

Day One — Sunday, 19th April 2026

1:00 PM – 1:30 PM GMT

Opening Ceremony

1:30 PM – 3:00 PM GMT

Keynote Speaker — **Dr. Kevin Nugent**

"Touch and AMOR-Informed Care: Using the NBO"

3:00 PM – 4:00 PM GMT

Speaker — **Stephanie Ward**

"Establishing Connecting Communication with Nurturing Touch"

4:00 PM – 4:15 PM GMT

Break & Networking

4:15 PM – 5:15 PM GMT

Stroke Review for Certified Instructors and Student Instructors

4:15 PM – 5:15 PM GMT

Ask a Trainer (Public Only)

5:15 PM – 5:30 PM GMT

Closing

Day Two — Monday, 20th April 2026

1:00 PM – 1:15 PM GMT

Opening Ceremony

1:15 PM – 2:45 PM GMT

Keynote Speaker — **Dr. Sue Carter**

"From Molecules to Meaning: Oxytocin's Role in Nurturing the Next Generation"

2:45 PM – 3:45 PM GMT

Speaker — **Jan Tedder**

"Sharing Baby's Behavior: Promoting Parent Confidence, Parent-Child Interactions, and Breastfeeding Duration"

3:45 PM – 4:00 PM GMT

Break & Networking

4:00 PM – 5:00 PM GMT

Speaker — **Sylvie Héту**

"Why the IAIM Programme Is Essential for Third Millennium Babies."

5:00 PM – 5:30 PM GMT

Closing

  This is a fully virtual event. All registered participants will receive joining instructions and links ahead of each session. We encourage you to join the networking breaks to connect with fellow practitioners from around the world.

Dr. Kevin Nugent



Kevin Nugent, Ph.D. is a renowned developmental psychologist and world-leading expert in newborn behaviour and early parent-infant relationships. He is the Founder and Director Emeritus of the Brazelton Institute at Boston Children's Hospital, where he has led decades of pioneering research, clinical programmes, and professional training in infant development.

Dr. Nugent is also an Emeritus Professor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and has served as a Lecturer at Harvard Medical School, contributing to graduate education and mentorship in developmental psychology.

Session Highlights

- Understanding newborn behavioral individuality
- Strengthening early relational health
- Translating infant observation into clinical practice
- Supporting secure early attachment

Publications

- The Neonatal Behavioral Assessment Scale (NBAS) – con T. Berry Brazelton
- The Newborn Behavioral Observations (NBO) System Manual
- Nugent, K. et al. (2007). “The Newborn Behavioral Observations System: A Relationship-Based Approach.” *Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics*
- Brazelton, T.B. & Nugent, J.K. (1995). *Neonatal Behavioral Assessment Scale* (3rd ed.)

Brazelton Institute

Founder & Director Emeritus, Boston Children's Hospital

NBAS Co-Author

Neonatal Behavioral Assessment Scale with Dr. T. Berry Brazelton

NBO System

Developer of the Newborn Behavioral Observations clinical approach

Harvard & UMass

Lecturer at Harvard Medical School; Emeritus Professor, UMass Amherst

Dr. Sue Carter



Dr. Sue Carter is a Professor of Psychology at the University of Virginia and a Distinguished University Scientist at Indiana University, Bloomington. She is widely celebrated as the scientist who first identified the role of oxytocin in social bonding — illuminating the biological foundations of pair bonding, parental behaviour, and the formation of loving, lasting connections across the human lifespan.

Her discovery gave scientific language to what many in this field have long understood intuitively: that connection — safe, attuned, and loving — is not only emotional. It is biological

Session Highlights

- Neurobiology of attachment and bonding
- The role of oxytocin in social and emotional development
- Hormonal foundations of caregiving
- Implications for infant mental health and early relational health

Publications

- Carter, C.S. (1998). "Neuroendocrine Perspectives on Social Attachment and Love." *Psychoneuroendocrinology*
- Carter, C.S. (2014). "Oxytocin Pathways and the Evolution of Human Behavior." *Annual Review of Psychology*
- Carter, C.S. (2017). *Attachment and Bonding: A New Synthesis* (MIT Press, editor)
- Carter, C.S., Ahnert, L. et al. (2005). *Attachment and Bonding: A New Synthesis* (Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences)

Former Executive
Director Kinsey
Institute

Rudy Professor
Emerita of
Biology

University of
Virginia,
Department of
Psychology

Indiana
University,
Department of
Biology

Stephanie Ward



Stephanie Ward is a Certified Educator of Infant Massage (CEIM) and Certified Parent Educator with a Bachelor of Social Work and a minor in Psychology.

Stephanie brings a rare combination of social work training, certified infant massage education, and deep practical experience working alongside families in both community and professional settings.

She has partnered with the Department of Children and Family Services to educate professionals on the importance of infant massage, demonstrating her commitment to reaching the families who need these tools most.

Session Highlights

- Connecting communication through infant massage
- How language shapes a child's self-perception
- Strengthening parent-child bonds
- Practical tools for professionals

Publications

- Creator of *The Healing Power of Nurturing Touch for Foster Parents and Premature Babies* (documentary)
- Guest on the Infant Massage USA podcast

Certified
Educator of
Infant Massage
(CEIM)

Certified Parent
Educator

Joint projects
with Department
of Children and
Family Services

Bachelor of
Social Work
Minor in
Psychology

Jan Tedder



Jan Tedder, BSN, FNP, IBCLC, is a family nurse practitioner and international speaker who founded HUG Your Baby, an evidence-based education program. Her work centers on fostering parent confidence, improving parent–infant interactions, and supporting breastfeeding success globally.

With decades of clinical experience, Jan provides practitioners with practical, research-based strategies for compassionate, family-centred infant care.

Session Highlights

- Reading infant behavioral cues
- Strengthening parental confidence
- Supporting breastfeeding success
- Translating research into daily practice

Publications

- Tedder, J. – HUG Your Baby: A Program to Help Parents Understand Their Baby's Behavior
- Peer-reviewed articles on infant behavior and feeding
- Widely used digital educational resources for parents

Founder, HUG
Your Baby

International
Board Certified
Lactation
Consultant
(IBCLC)

Family Nurse
Practitioner
(FNP)

Bachelor of
Science in
Nursing

Sylvie Héту



Sylvie Héту holds a bachelor's degree in Education from the Université de Montréal and completed master's-level studies in Waldorf Education. A pivotal figure in the global infant massage movement since 1983, she is a longtime IAIM Trainer, founder of the Massage in Schools Programme, and author of seven books.

Having served on the IAIM International Board for 18 years—including 12 years as President—she remains a dedicated leader and advocate for the rights of families and children worldwide.

Session Highlights

- Why the IAIM Programme remains essential today
- Infant massage in the third millennium
- Leadership in global nurturing education
- Advocacy for relational health

Publications

- Massage in Schools Programme
- Touch at the Heart of Learning (an educational text on the role of touch in relational and school development)

IAIM President
(12 Years)

IAIM Trainer
since 1989

Founder, Massage
in Schools
Programme

Bachelor's in
Education
Master's-level
studies in
Waldorf
Education

Benedetta Costa & Patricia Klaus



Benedetta Costa is a pediatric physical therapist with over 20 years of experience working in the NICU. She lives in Genoa, Italy.

She trained as a Certified Educator of Infant Massage (CEIM) with Vimala McClure in 1983 and has served as an IAIM Trainer since 1989. Benedetta was President of the International Association of Infant Massage (IAIM) from 2006 to 2012 and served as a member of the Candidates Trainer Committee (CTC).

In 1989, she founded the Italian Association of Infant Massage (A.I.M.I.), where she worked tirelessly to grow the organization to its current membership of more than 10,000 members. Today, she serves as the Honorary President of A.I.M.I.



Patricia Klaus has been an IAIM Certified Infant Massage Instructor since 2010 and an IAIM International Trainer since 2020. Based in Berlin, Germany, she has been working with families from pregnancy through early childhood since 2005.

As a health practitioner, she is passionate about the power of touch, supporting bonding processes, and fostering respectful communication. Patricia is actively involved in the global work of the International Association of Infant Massage. She has served as the Chapter Representative for IAIM Germany from 2017 to 2026 and has contributed for many years to both the IAIM Newsletter and the Ethics Committee.

The Core Values of IAIM & Contact Information

The purpose of the International Association of Infant Massage is to promote nurturing touch and communication through training, education and research so that parents, caregivers and children are loved, valued and respected throughout the world community.



Nurturing Touch

We prioritize loving, respectful touch to foster deep bonding and healthy infant development.



Respect

We honor the baby as an individual, respecting their unique needs, cues, and preferences.



Communication

We cultivate foundational understanding through responsive verbal and non-verbal interactions.



Acceptance

We provide a supportive, non-judgmental environment that celebrates every family's unique journey.



Empowerment

We equip parents with the confidence and knowledge to effectively understand their baby's needs.

Connect with IAIM

Please reach out to learn more about our global training programmes and community resources.

- Official Website: iaim.net
- General Enquiries: info@iaim.net
- Registration link: <https://iaim.net/iaim-virtual-conference-2026/>