

January 6, 2004

Dr. Thomas Insel, Director
National Institute of Mental Health
6001 Executive Blvd. - Room 8235
Bethesda, MD 20892 -9669

Executive Committee

Howard E. Egeth, PhD
President

Thomas S. Wallsten, PhD
Vice-President

Francine Butler, PhD
Secretary-Treasurer

Stephen W. Porges, PhD
Past-President

Members at Large

C. Sue Carter, PhD

Roger E. Millsap, PhD

J. Bruce Overmier, PhD

Lonnie Sherrod, PhD

Gerald E. Sroufe, PhD

Washington Office

Barbara A. Wanchisen, PhD
Executive Director

Jill D. Egeth, PhD
Public Policy Analyst

750 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002-4242
Tel: (202) 336-5920
Fax: (202) 216-7628
federation@fbpcs.org
<http://www.thefederationonline.org>

Dear Dr. Insel:

The undersigned behavioral and social science societies would like to thank you for the willingness you have demonstrated throughout the past few months to share your plans and expectations for the National Institute of Mental Health with us. We have all appreciated the time that you have taken to personally meet with representatives of our societies, your openness to our recommendations for the NIMH working group, and the ongoing discussions you have had with our leadership. We have recently learned that the National Advisory Mental Health Council (NAMHC) workgroup's membership has been finalized and the group will begin working on their assessment of NIMH's priorities on January 13, 2004.

We are aware of the Institute's current plans to keep the NAMHC workgroup's meetings closed to the public. *However, because the workgroup has been charged with reviewing aspects of the NIMH research portfolio that are in the public domain and are also of great interest to our scientist constituents, we request that the meetings be open to the public.*

We understand that advisory subcommittees (such as this workgroup) are not required to abide by the open meeting requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). However, as you know, these groups are not *prohibited* from holding open meetings. It is our hope that, in keeping with its past policies of openness, NIMH will reconsider its plans to close workgroup meetings.

Thank you for considering the concerns of the behavioral and social science community. If you would like to discuss any aspect of our request for open workgroup meetings, please contact Barbara Wanchisen, PhD, Executive Director of the Federation of Behavioral, Psychological, and Cognitive Sciences, at bwanchisen@fbpcs.org or at 202.336.5921.

The list of supporting societies can be found on the following page.

Thank you,

Center for the Advancement of Health
Consortium of Social Science Associations
Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research
National Association of Social Workers
National Council on Family Relations
Society for Research on Child Development
The Federation of Behavioral, Psychological, and Cognitive Sciences
American Educational Research Association
American Psychological Association
Association for Applied Psychophysiology and Biofeedback
Association for Behavior Analysis
Behavior Genetics Association
Cognitive Development Society
Cognitive Science Society
Human Factors and Ergonomics Society
International Behavioral Neuroscience Society
International Society for Developmental Psychobiology
National Academy of Neuropsychology
Psychonomic Society
Society for Behavioral Neuroendocrinology
Society for Computers in Psychology
Society for Judgment and Decision Making
Society for Mathematical Psychology
Society of Multivariate Experimental Psychology
The Linguistic Society of America

Cc: Virginia Cain, PhD, Acting Director of the Office of Behavioral and Social Science Research, NIH
Alan Leshner, PhD, Chief Executive Officer, American Association for the Advancement of Science
Raynard Kington, PhD, Deputy Director of the NIH