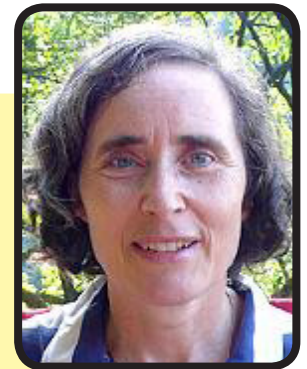


# Panel 2

## Child Care and Child Development

### Dr. Mary SCHOOLING



Dr. Mary SCHOOLING is an Associate Professor, and Cluster Leader (Non-communicable Diseases in Global Health) in the School of Public Health at the University of Hong Kong, she is also a Professor at CUNY School of Public Health in New York.

Her research program concerns the long-term impact of early life experiences, informed by the evolutionary biology trade-off of growth and reproduction against longevity. She had been instrumental in developing Hong Kong's "Children of 1997" birth cohort. She has (co-) authored >200 peer reviewed publications in the last 10 years, and is an Associate Editor of several journals.

#### Title

*Informal Child Care and Development: Evidence from Hong Kong's "Children of 1997" Birth Cohort*

#### Abstract

In Western settings informal child care, provided in the home by untrained family members, relatives or employees, is often associated with poorer mental and physical child health, however it is unclear whether these developmental outcomes are the result of the type of child care or the attributes of families who use informal child care. In Hong Kong informal child care is relatively common and used by a wide range of families making the long-term effects of informal child care very important to child development. Hong Kong's "Children of 1997" birth cohort is ideally placed to provide answers to such questions. "Children of 1997" is a large (n=8327) population-representative study where information on type of child care throughout childhood and a wide range of subsequent health outcomes has been collected. This presentation will report on links between different types of informal child care and various aspects of mental and physical health in Hong Kong children, including child behavior, self-esteem and depressive symptoms, as well as markers of physical health, such as adiposity. As such, this talk will help clarify the long-term effects of informal child care on development in Hong Kong, with corresponding implications for other settings where informal child care is commonly used.