

On August 8, 2023, a series of wildfires, referred to as the Hawaii Firestorm, broke out in the state of Hawaii, predominantly on the island of Maui. The wind-driven fires prompted evacuations and caused widespread damage, killing at least 97 people and leaving at least 31 others missing in the town of Lahaina, Hawaii. The following is a journal entry by Felicitas B Livaudais, MD, FAAP, Member At Large with the Hawaii Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, describing the visit of David Schonfeld, MD, FAAP, director of the National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement at Children's Hospital Los Angeles.

Reflections From Maui

by **Felicitas B Livaudais, MD, FAAP**

Dr. Ken Hayashida (Lahaina boy) and Dr. Casandra Simonson (Peds Chief at Malama E ke Ola (FQHC) connected me and my husband, Dr. Gerard (Jerry) Livaudais, with Dr. David Schonfeld. We called David last Wednesday over dinner. Jerry was recently deputized out of retirement to help at the DOH for the Lahaina Fire response. After meeting him over the phone, Jerry asked him to come to Maui. We could use his expertise. David asked "When?" and Jerry said "Tomorrow". So, he arrived last Thursday night and started at the EOC (Emergency Operation Center) with Jerry on Friday at 7 AM. I think that is a more civilized time in California since you all are 2 hours ahead. Since then, David has spent most of his time with DOH and Jerry. We have 4000+ evacuees now at the resort hotels at Kaanapali and some at the Ritz at Kapalua. We have several medical clinics within the hotels (Hyatt, Westin, Outrigger Kaanapali, Royal Lahaina), some mobile sites and 2 standing clinics that did not burn in the fire - Minit Medical and now the DOH Clinic by the Lahaina Civic Center. The Kaiser Clinic and Maui Medical Group Clinic are gone, perhaps other sites as well. We also have doctors and nurses on the field (Mauna Medics) in Honokowai Park, Napili Park, Kahana Boat Ramp, and some house calls at the Hawaiian Homes. The Acute Phase is done - 40 people medivac to Oahu for severe burn wounds and others treated at our only hospital, Maui Medical or Maui Memorial (old name). We took care of a lot of burn wounds, especially feet and hands, and these are mostly healing. The Honeymoon Phase is probably done now... we are alive and the world cares about Maui. It's wonderful to have so much love expressed, and I thank you for that and for sending David. We are entering our Grieving phase as a community, so it is good to have a Beatrice, or in this case, a David. Today, he asked what is to be done with the ashes. There are over 1000- people missing, and most names of our dead have not yet been released due to lack of DNA samples. We know there are children in the missing population since school got out early that day due to the high winds from Hurricane Dora. Ceremony heals... I expect that will happen in Maui. David has visited the Westside already. It's pretty devastating to drive through, and much of it is fenced off. Then you see a random cowboy on the side by his red truck holding a sign with a big red heart for Maui - cowboy protective factor. Hanging out with David helps me check my knee jerk

response to what happened and makes me more thoughtful on how to respond to trauma. He had lunch with Paul Tonnessen today (ED- Friends of the Children's Justice) and Paul plans to introduce him to a close friend at the DOE. Tomorrow, he will go to the EOC with Jerry, then is invited for dinner at Kate's house. Kate is a teacher at Princess Nahienaena in Lahaina. Her house burnt down, she saved her 86 year old neighbor, the cat and 3 other people. She and her family stayed with the cat until recently. (That is another letter, perhaps) She will introduce David to her Lahaina teacher friends - all of them displaced. He has a peppering of engagements - the most important once this week is going to Oahu to meet with our HI-AAP pediatricians at their Disaster Preparedness gathering. On Thursday, he meets with IMUA (early childhood center with lots of therapists and preschool teachers) and in the evening, with the pediatricians for a Trauma Informed "talk story". So, you see, we are keeping him busy and he is adding much value to our response. Mahalo Nui Loa for sharing David with us - he is appreciated, and we continue to learn from his experiences.

Aloha and Please continue to pray for Maui

Related Article: Maui Rotary Clubs hosts Kokua Lahaina Rising | Hawai'i Rotary District 5000
[Click to view](#)



Fely B Livaudais, MD, FAAP is a pediatrician in Wailuku, HI. and Member at Large with the AAP Hawaii Chapter.

Jeffrey Okamoto, MD, FAAP is President of the Hawaii Chapter.
Gaile Yano is the executive Director of the Hawaii Chapter.

David J Schonfeld, MD, FAAP established and directs the National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement (www.schoolcrisiscenter.org), located at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. He is Professor of Clinical Pediatrics at Keck School of Medicine. Prior faculty positions have been in the Department of Pediatrics at Yale University School of Medicine; Head of the Section of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center; and Pediatrician-in-Chief at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children and Chair of Pediatrics at Drexel University School of Medicine.

For over 30 years, he has provided consultation and training to schools on supporting students and staff at times of crisis and loss in the aftermath of numerous school crisis events and disasters within the United States and abroad, including the COVID-19 pandemic (2020); terrorist attacks of the World Trade Center (2001); school and community shootings and stabbings in Santa Clarita, CA (2019); Parkland, FL (2018); Newtown, CT (2012); Benton, KY (2018); Las Vegas, NV (2017); Thousand Oaks, CA (2018); Floresville, TX (Sutherland Springs church) (2017); Marysville, WA (2014); Osaka, Japan (2001); Corning, CA (2017); Aurora, CO (2012); Platte Canyon, CO (2006); Chardon, OH (2012); and Townville, South Carolina (2016); flooding from hurricanes Maria in San Juan (2017), Sandy in NY and NJ (2012), Katrina in New Orleans (2005), and Ike in Galveston, Texas (2008); tornadoes in Joplin, MO (2011) and AL (2011); wildfires in Butte County, CA (2018); Sonoma County, CA (2017) and in the Great Smoky Mountains in Sevierville, TN (2016); and the 8.0-magnitude earthquake in Sichuan, China (2008).

*Dr. Schonfeld frequently speaks on the topics of crisis and loss and has authored more than 150 scholarly articles, book chapters, and books (including the *Grieving Student: A Guide for Schools* (2nd edition)). He has conducted school-based research (funded by NICHD, NIMH, NIDA, the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, William T Grant Foundation, and other foundations) involving children's understanding of and adjustment to serious illness and death and school-based interventions to promote adjustment and risk prevention. Dr. Schonfeld is Chair of the National Advisory Committee on Children and Disasters and a member of the Executive Committee of the American Academy of Pediatrics Council on Children and Disasters. He served as a Commissioner for both the National Commission on Children and Disasters and the Sandy Hook Advisory Commission in CT and was a member of the National Biodefense Science Board. Dr. Schonfeld served as President of the Society for Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics from 2006-7.*