

# ADOLESCENT PARENT INTERAGENCY NETWORK (APIN)

## STEERING COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Mandate:

The Adolescent Parent Interagency Network (APIN) is a group of agencies and professionals in Manitoba who collaborate with the goal of ensuring high-quality service to teens who are pregnant or parenting, whether or not they are primary caregivers. Members of APIN have linked together because of their shared commitment to the challenges and opportunities facing these youth.

### Objectives:

1. To be a leader in advocating for adolescents, both individually and collectively, with regard to identifying gaps in service, shaping policy, promoting education and program development.
2. To facilitate the sharing of information related to existing services and resources.
3. To provide educational and networking opportunities for professionals.
4. To provide opportunities for adolescents to access education and community resources and to share their experiences.

### Guiding Principles

APIN is committed to promoting the health and wellness of young people who are pregnant or parenting by subscribing to the following principles:

1. **Prevention** – APIN believes that young people have the right to access information, education and resources on sexual-health issues, including prevention and unintended pregnancy options.
2. **Options**- APIN believes that young people have the right to non-judgemental information and counselling regarding abortion, adoption and parenting in order to make informed choices for themselves.
3. **Decision-making** – APIN believes in empowering and supporting young people in their decision-making regarding pregnancies and parenting.
4. **Supports** – APIN recognizes that young parents face many complex issues. APIN believes that by connecting service providers through networking and educational opportunities, services to young parents will be enhanced.
5. **Belief** – APIN believes that young people have the potential to be good parents.

### Structure:

There are three levels of participation in APIN: Executive, Steering Committee and Members at Large

- **APIN Executive** – This group consists of the Steering Committee Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and a representative of the Healthy Child Manitoba Office (APIN Funder). The Executive responds to operational and funding issues related to the Steering Committee.
- **Steering Committee** - APIN activities are coordinated by a volunteer steering committee of 8 to 14 members. Participation is open to individuals or representatives of agencies or groups who agree with APIN's guiding principles. Steering Committee members are expected to attend regularly scheduled meetings, support APIN events and bring forward relevant advocacy issues to the committee for discussion. A minimum two-year commitment to the steering committee is encouraged.

The 2010 APIN Steering Committee consists of representatives from the following organizations:

- Aboriginal Head Start Program - Little Red Spirit
- Healthy Child Manitoba Office
- Healthy Start for Mom & Me
- Isobel's Place
- Manitoba Labour & Immigration/Status of Women
- Marymount - Independent Option/Young Parents Program
- Mount Carmel Clinic (Chair)
- St. Boniface General Hospital
- The Family Centre of Winnipeg
- Villa Rosa (Treasurer)
- Winnipeg Child & Family Services
- Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (Vice-chair)

### Membership Terms

Steering Committee – two years

Chair – two years

Vice Chair – two years (not an automatic move-up position)

Treasurer – indefinite (Currently Villa Rosa is APIN's "Banker")

*All terms are reviewed and confirmed annually.*

- **Members at large** – these individuals or organizations receive information from APIN through a newsletter or email. This distribution list is not made public. These individuals or organizations' representatives may or may not attend APIN events.
- **Coordinator** - APIN contracts a Coordinator to produce and distribute a newsletter, organize educational sessions, annual conferences and other APIN events. The Coordinator reports to the Executive for direction and feedback. The current APIN Coordinator is Planners Plus.

### Communication

**The APIN Executive** communicates with other Executive members and the Coordinator on a regular basis through email, telephone and direct mail. The Executive provides direction and feedback to the Coordinator when necessary.

**The Steering Committee** receives information from the APIN Coordinator related to monthly meetings, educational events and/or information intended for all committee members via email, telephone and direct mail.

**Members at large** receive information from the APIN Coordinator about APIN events. Communication can be via email, direct mail, phone or fax.

### Decision-Making Process

Day-to-day APIN operational and financial decisions are made by the Coordinator and/or the APIN Executive. Strategic planning, conference and advocacy decisions are made by consensus by the entire Steering Committee.

## Typical Activities:

1. Conferences – Usually two per year. One targeted to service providers and the other to adolescent parents and their children.
2. Lunch and Learns and Brown Bags – Usually four per year targeted at professionals working with pregnant and/or parenting adolescents.
3. Newsletter – Approximately three per year targeted at the Membership at large, plus e-updates.
4. Website – ongoing updates
5. Advocacy - ongoing

## Network History:

APIN has operated since 1982, with a two-year gap in the early 1990s. APIN developed in 1982 in response to a report by the Community Task Force on Maternal and Child Health. It recognized the need for more and better services for pregnant and parenting adolescents and the value in better communication among service providers.

In 1986 the Network drew up a constitution. By the early 1990s, APIN had 850 members province-wide. With government cutbacks in 1992, the province withdrew its financial and administrative support forcing the cancellation of the newsletter. Membership declined.

In 1994, a partnership composed of New Directions (formerly the Children's Home of Winnipeg), Winnipeg Public Health, Winnipeg City Social Services, The Family Centre of Winnipeg, Villa Rosa, and Marymount developed a proposal to secure funding from Brighter Futures. The goals were to resurrect the Network and expand membership to include all relevant individuals and organizations working with pregnant and parenting adolescents. A grant was received and APIN was re-established.

In 1999, APIN received continued funding from Program 8, Innovative and Preventive Child and Family Services, of the tri-partite Winnipeg Development Agreement. APIN continued with funding from the Winnipeg Development Agreement until 2002 when funding was received from Healthy Child Manitoba. Healthy Child Manitoba continues to fund APIN.

In 2003/2004 APIN was part of a project with Healthy Child Manitoba creating a pregnancy options video for teens and the professionals working with them. The video and corresponding print materials titled "Your Choice for Your Reasons" was launched and distributed free of charge throughout the Province.

APIN continues to publish a regular newsletter, evolving from publishing six times a year to four. APIN has moved to a larger distribution of the newsletter by email as more members have access to email and to provide a better alternative for the environment.

Until 2005, APIN provided an annual spring conference which involved both adolescents and the professionals working with them. APIN decided that having two separate conferences would better meet the needs of the adolescents and professionals. The spring conference is now only for professionals working with adolescents and the fall conference is for pregnant and parenting adolescents.

In May 2009, APIN held its first Western Regional Conference inviting participants from Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. The keynote speaker was Dr. Harvey Karp. By all accounts the conference was a great success.

## Contact:

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