

# APIN *Network News*



A publication for professionals who participate in the Adolescent Parent Interagency Network

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## *Who Are We?*

*The Adolescent Parent Interagency Network (APIN) is a network of Manitoba professionals who meet monthly with the goal of ensuring high quality service to pregnant and parenting adolescents. The Network helps facilitate the sharing of information related to existing services and resources.*

## *You're invited to the spring line-up of APIN meetings:*

### **May 14, 2002 Meeting**

*Presentation:* **POSTPARTUM ISSUES / TEEN COUNSELLING**  
*Date & Time:* Tuesday, May 14th, 11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
*Place:* Women's Health Clinic  
419 Graham Ave  
*Speakers:* Jody Thomson, Mother's Program Coordinator, WHC  
Lisa Naylor, Teen Counsellor, WHC

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### **June 11, 2002 Meeting**

*Presentation:* **TEENS AND BIRTH CONTROL**  
*Date & Time:* Tuesday, June 11th, 11:45 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
*Place:* WRHA office - 490 Hargrave St.  
(free parking available on side streets)  
*Speaker:* Roselle Paulsen, Sexuality Resource Education Centre

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### **Sept. 10, 2002 Meeting**

*Open discussion:* **"SOCIAL CAPITAL: HOW TO HELP ADOLESCENT PARENTS BUILD INFORMAL SUPPORT NETWORKS"**  
*Date & Time:* Tuesday, Sept. 10th, 11:45 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
*Place:* Adolescent Parent Centre  
136 Cecil St.

**LUNCH PROVIDED! RSVP by Sept. 6th to 339-0247.**

*Please bring your own lunch to May & June meetings, coffee and tea will be supplied. See you there!*

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# COME LEARN ABOUT...

**May 14, 2002 Presentation:**

**POSTPARTUM ISSUES / TEEN COUNSELLING (WHC)**

Jody Thomson, Mother's Program Coordinator at Women's Health Clinic (WHC), will introduce the "Coping with Change" program that looks at what emotional adjustments mothers face after giving birth.

Lisa Naylor, Teen Counsellor, will talk about the addition of counselling at WHC's Teen Clinic.

**June 11, 2002 Presentation:**

**TEENS AND BIRTH CONTROL (SERC)**

Sexuality Resource Education Centre (SERC) is a pro-choice, non-profit organization committed to providing universal access to comprehensive, reliable information and services on sexuality and related health issues by fostering awareness, understanding and support through education. SERC's program areas include Professional Training and Consultation, the Facts of Life program, the Immigrant/Refugee Health program, and Community Education.

This mini-workshop will assist service providers in addressing some of the barriers to teen birth control use when facilitating workshops with teens or discussing birth control one-on-one. Print materials will be provided.

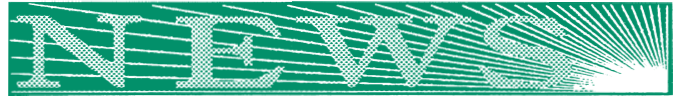
**September 10, 2002 Open Discussion:**

**"SOCIAL CAPITAL" : HOW TO HELP ADOLESCENT PARENTS BUILD INFORMAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS**

The September meeting will follow up on Dr. Lynn McDonald's presentation at the APIN 2002 Conference around building "social capital." How do we help adolescent parents build social support systems? How do we help them to strengthen the bond between parent and child and reconnect to a larger, life-long support network including aunts, grandmothers, friends, parents, partner, neighbours? Whereas service providers go home at 5:00 p.m., these other personal supports will be there for the young parent all the time, some for life.

This **two hour** meeting will include a brief introduction to the concept of building "social capital" followed by small group discussions on the questions above and report backs.

**\*\*NOTE\*\* LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED: Please RSVP to 339-0247 by Friday, September 6th.**



**Report on the Winter Meetings**

**Operation Go Home  
(January, 2002)**

Operation Go Home Prevention Coordinator Tamara Lynn Robert explained that the program was started in 1971 in Ottawa by Reverend Norman Johnson, a police chaplain. He met many runaway kids who wanted to go home, but who had problems getting there because it sometimes required travel across the country. Reverend Johnson began mediating with families and arranged travel home with truck drivers. The program, noted Robert, has changed substantially since then.

The Winnipeg operation was started by Margaret Church four years ago. She found that our homeless kids were typically not from other provinces—they were from Winnipeg. As a result, the mandate of Operation Go Home in our city focuses on finding out why these kids do not live at home or finding them alternate living arrangements.

*(cont'd on page 3)*

**APIN Network News**

is published three times per year for the network of Manitoba professionals working to ensure high quality service to pregnant and parenting adolescents.

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*This issue of APIN Network News was made possible by funding from Healthy Child Manitoba.*

**APIN STEERING COMMITTEE**

- Andrea Barkman, Healthy Start ..... 949-5356
- Liz Brass, RAP, New Directions ..... 786-7051, x. 224
- Cathy Byard, WRHA ..... 940-2003
- Enrica Herfurth, Villa Rosa ..... 786-5741, x. 236
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- Diane Roussin, Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata ..... 925-0346
- Ruth McCleary, Adolescent Parent Centre ..... 775-5440
- Donna Paul, EIA ..... 948-4129
- Holly Puckall, Family Centre of Wpg ..... 947-1401

Robert explained that homeless kids start by living "couch to couch" at friends' places until the welcome wears out. The couch surfing stage is when Operation Go Home workers sometimes meet them.

The first step is to find out why and where the teen is running from. She noted that the youth can run from CFS placements as well as family.

While some leave because of neglect, most typical is the youth thrown out or kicked out of the house. Sometimes the parent thinks the teen will come home in a couple of days but then he or she chooses to stay on the street.

The outreach worker explores whether the runaway wants to work it out with their parents or if it is a locked door. If it is the latter, they will work with Sandi Reid at Child and Family Services who liaises with Employment and Income Assistance regarding minors on welfare.

"We usually try to educate them as to what can happen if they stay on the street, such as their life is at risk or they might get drawn into crime," said Robert.

Among homeless kids, Winnipeg has a reputation as the toughest, most violent place to live on the streets.

Robert noted that they occasionally come across kids living on the street who are happy there and want to stay.

"It's tough to work with them because they don't want to change their lives. We spend a long time building relationships with them so they have a connection if things turn bad."

Kids travelling across the country often get stranded in Winnipeg. The perimeter around Winnipeg is reportedly the hardest place for hitchhikers to get a ride. To help, Operation Go Home has connected with bus lines across Canada.

The outreach program is suspended during winter as there are fewer kids on the street. When the spring weather improves, said Robert, kids act on an impulse to leave, perhaps because of a bad situation or for an adventure. The outreach workers approach kids on the street to talk to them and offer free juice.

"It has to be youth initiated as you can't force them," said Robert. "We are honest with them, try to build a relationship and eventually say we want you to get off the street because we're scared for you."

But if the worker becomes overhelpful or too anxious, or tries to move too fast, it can result in the youth running again and avoiding any further contact with adults or agencies.

If a parent calls, the worker completes a missing person's report and will approach the youth with a message if they come across him or her.

"We'll say something like your dad has called three times and is worried about you, but we can't force it or the kid will run, thinking we're turning him in."

If the runaway is not ready to talk to their parents, the worker may ask permission to tell the parent when they call that the youth is okay.

Some youth walk into the Operation Go Home office at 195 Young St. (corner of Broadway and Young) on their own. One reason they come is the Youth Food Bank operated in conjunction with Winnipeg Harvest. This was one of the first services set up, based on a study that found kids would go hungry rather than go to an adult food bank.

As part of the prevention program, Robert puts on a "Life on the Streets" workshop in which she and Kristin Coy, a former street youth, go into schools to talk to Grade 5-12 students about real life experiences and to paint a picture of the risks of life on the street.

Operation Go Home also offers conflict resolution and anger management services as this is often a factor in kids ending up on the street. They help youth learn other ways to deal with their frustration and anger, and help them to see it from their parents' perspective (i.e. their conflict style).

Christina Elliot is the Youth Housing Coordinator, a new service offered by Operation Go Home. She works with minors who are on welfare and are living on their own.

She educates them on their rights and responsibilities with apartment living, such as not playing the stereo full blast at 3 a.m. She also conducts a "roommate quiz" to help the youth recognize who may or may not be a suitable housemate.

Elliot maintains a housing registry of places available for \$271-\$300, typically in the inner city, but also looks in other areas such as Transcona or St. Vital if there is a youth who might be able to pay more.

One block from Operation Go Home's office is their transition house for young women (16 and 17 year olds) who are not ready to live independently but who are now on welfare. Mentors, mainly university students, also live in the house. They show what it is like to go to school or have a part-time job. A "house leader" is there during the day. Operation Go Home hopes to open a similar house for young men.

Over the past couple of years, Operation Go Home in Winnipeg has dealt with over 450 youth. At present, they have 2 full-time and one part-time frontline youth worker, a housing coordinator, house leader, 2 half-time prevention workers, and two new positions—executive director and program director.

*For more information, call 783-5617.*

## Klinik's Teen Talk Program (February, 2002)

Teen Talk, an established youth health education service with Klinik Community Health Centre, provides services from a youth perspective to at-risk youth, youth in and out of school, and to service providers.



Natalie Gierman, Teen Talk Workshops for Youth Coordinator, presented highlights from their program. They provide workshops for youth aged 14 to 19 throughout Manitoba, through schools and community organizations.

She noted that Teen Talk operates from a harm-reduction, abstinence-plus perspective, because "we believe that by providing youth with accurate, non-judgmental information, they can make healthier decisions and choices for themselves."

Youth are encouraged to delay their first intercourse and use a condom if they choose to be sexually active.

The program currently includes 6 youth health educators and Gierman. They average 8 to 10 workshops a day. To date they have offered 14 different types of workshops.

"Workshops constantly evolve as we discover new and relevant research, and as we adapt to reach a diverse population of youth including special needs, at-risk, rural and isolated communities, urban, inner-city and francophone youth."

While all of the topics are popular, Gierman noted that the most requested workshop is on birth control.

The workshops are delivered by youth-oriented health educators who make the content accessible to and comfortable for students through their use of language, humour and an interactive approach. A resource and referral sheet filled with community resources that are "youth friendly" is provided at each workshop.

Workshops for Youth has become part of the health and family life curriculum at Sisler, Westwood, Kelvin, Dakota, Tec Voc and Garden City schools.

From September 2001 to this presentation in February 2002, Workshops for Youth educators have seen 6,700 youth at over 40 different sites. They have travelled or will be travelling to Moose Lake, Cranberry Portage, The Pas, Selkirk, Lockport, Wanipigow, Falcon Beach, Lynn Lake, Brochet and South Indian Lake.

Jennifer MacDonald, one of the two Teen Talk Peer Support Coordinators along with Kristine Barr, noted that the peer support program came about as a result of the workshops and many students' desire to get involved.

To become a peer supporter, the students take approximately 35 hours of training that covers the same topics as the workshops but in more detail.

Seven training sessions are held per year and approximately 300 youth peer supporters have been trained to date.

The trained volunteers go into junior high schools twice per month to perform skits. The two skit topics include one on violence and another on sexual decision-making. Performances are available on Fridays from January until the end of April. (Other days or dates may be available by special request.)

Students also put together info tables, educational campaigns and sometimes facilitate workshops for their peers.

Another school-based activity includes "Betty & Johnny" bathroom notes on which students can write questions in

private. These are collected by the volunteer supporters who prepare the answers with help from the Peer Support Coordinators and school administrators before they are posted for students to read.

*For information, call the Teen Talk office at 784-4010 or e-mail teentalk@klinik.mb.ca.*

## Resources for Adolescent Parents – New Directions (March, 2002)



New Directions for Children, Youth, Adults and Families provides a number of services and programs, both on- and off-site, including Resources for Adolescent Parents (RAP).

RAP offers young women in Winnipeg, who are under 18 years old and pregnant or parenting, an opportunity to continue their schooling and engage in group discussion with other young parents about the challenges facing adolescent single moms.

Linda Godin-Sorin, program manager for both RAP and Resources for Women, explained that RAP is an alternative to the formal school system but is actually provided in conjunction with the school system.

The academic programming, called J.U.S.T. Learning School, is provided through the Gordon Bell off-campus site located at New Directions. The name J.U.S.T. Learning, says Godin-Sorin, was chosen by students and staff to reflect "justice, unity, sharing and trust for all."

Participants are not penalized for absences and can return to a class at any point to complete the required hours.

Intake to RAP is continuous. To be eligible, the teen must be parenting and or pregnant and less than 18 years of age.

As of age 18, the young woman must transition into adult services. RAP will help them connect with education, training, employment and other financial resources as needed.

Participants receive a bus pass and a training allowance incentive.

A maximum of 15 participants are enrolled in the program. Case manager Liz Brass noted that most referrals come

### GET ON THE APIN MAILING LIST...

Fill out and fax this form to (204) 338-4727 or mail to: 441 Scotia Street, Winnipeg, MB, R2V 1X3.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Prov: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone / Fax: \_\_\_\_\_



from the Perinatal Unit, but can come from other organizations or self-referral.

In addition to academic programming, RAP includes a family studies component. Participants must be committed to both.

Classroom facilitator Hazel Robson explained that students attend classes daily. Areas of focus include:

- (1) Self: communication, values, beliefs, self esteem, etc.
- (2) Family: decision-making, conflict, sexuality, stress, relationships, parenting skills, etc.
- (3) Community: identity, culture, involvement (for example, outings to places the participants would not normally visit).
- (4) Leisure: time management, budgeting, creativity, etc.
- (5) Job: academics, interests, career exploration, resume, cover letters, job search, job development.

Integral to the RAP program is the cultural component. Two cultural advisors/facilitators lead activities such as singing, drumming, turtle teachings, and talking circles. In addition, participants are guided in various Aboriginal spiritual ceremonies.

Other program supports include an on-site breakfast, a hot lunch program on Tuesdays, a sewing program in which participants sews items for themselves or to sell in the community (for example, star blankets and pillows) and health information on perinatal and postnatal care, self-health and more.

As part of the health education support, Red River College nursing students come in 2 to 3 times per month.

There is a 12 week maternity leave after the birth of the baby to allow the young mom time to bond and prepare to return to RAP.

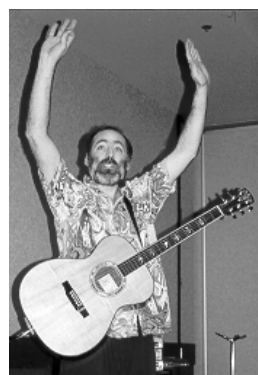
*For general information on RAP, call (204) 786-7051, ext. 241. For referrals to RAP, call Liz Brass at ext. 224.*

## APIN Conference — "Baby & You: 2002"

Close to 200 people registered for the APIN conference, including approximately 70 adolescent parents. Held April 12th at Canad Inn Polo Park, the conference centred on hands-on programs in the morning and presented the concept of building social support networks or "social capital" in the afternoon with keynote speaker Dr. Lynn MacDonald.

### *Singing with Jake Chénier*

Family entertainer Jake Chénier kicked off the day with energetic songs and ideas on how parents can incorporate music



in their child's life. He had everyone singing along with his catchy tunes and making hand motions to go with the lyrics. Some were even dancing in the aisles.

### *Rock'n'Read*

Terrie Moar of Bookmates kept people on their feet for more interactive songs before settling them down to make a "hot dog" book as part of the Rock'n'Read presentation. The "books" were made with a single piece of paper decorated with fun stickers and handwritten notes.

## Missing Books!!

At the April 12th conference, a facilitator's guide titled "Getting To Know You...My Baby" (blue in colour) and a participant's workbook with the same title (red in colour) were inadvertently removed from the Pregnancy Distress Family Support Services table. The author would greatly appreciate the return of these two manuals. Please contact Rosemary Craig-Shariff at 772-9091.

Moar explained there are 3 parts to the Rock'n'Read program: (1) rhythm and songs, (2) helping parents with reading tips (how to choose a book and how to read aloud to a child) and (3) parent and child creating a book together.



*Celena Moore's daughter Callie enjoys the singing*

The book created in the program is more substantial than the hot dog book and can become a real keepsake for the parent and child.

She noted that lullabies are one of the most powerful tools in a parent's toolbox to help children calm down or come down after the excitement of games and songs.

Some of the books she recommends to parents include *Animal Kisses* by Bonnie Saltzberg, *White on Black* by Tana Hoban, *Once upon a Potty* by Alona Frankel, *Let's Look at Shapes* by Lorenz Books and *Baby Animals* by Fisher-Price Discovery Books.

*For more information, call Terrie Moar at (204) 582-1804.*

### *Infant Massage*

Massage therapist Kim Nagam talked about infant massage as a way for parents to spend quality time with their baby: a time to be physically close, to look into their eyes and as an opportunity to teach positive touch.

Nagam, owner of Awakenings Massage Therapy, designed an infant massage program that she delivers at Villa Rosa.

She noted that in addition to soothing an upset or fearful baby, as little as 15 minutes of massage a day can help stimulate circulation, boost the immune system and aid in digestion among other health benefits.

*(cont'd on page 6)*

Nagam said the essential ingredients are to trust yourself ("as long as you are gentle and coming from a place of the love, the massage won't hurt the baby"); respect ("if the baby doesn't want the massage, do not force it"); and to have fun with it ("laugh and be close with one another—it's not a time to struggle").

She recommends that moms use Pure Grape Seed Oil on their hands during the massage as it is hypoallergenic, won't stain clothing and is a light, non-sticky oil. It should be kept in the fridge and taken out in small amounts in advance to warm. Grape seed oil can be found in the cooking oil section of some of the larger Safeway stores or in specialty food stores.

*For more information on infant massage, contact Kim Nagam at 774-8226.*

### Parent-Child Mother Goose

Jackie Gagnon, social worker with the Child Guidance Clinic placed at the Adolescent Parent Centre, presented on the Parent/Child Mother Goose program at APC.

This group program is based on several ideas, among them the idea that playful, imaginative language (rhyme and storytelling) should be an important part of a child's life from infancy on, and that the "traditional" activity of playing with children using rhymes and songs is not known to all parents. Also, in addition to being fun, the use of rhymes, songs and stories can help in difficult times.

The group sits in a circle on the floor with parent and child close together. There are two variations of the program: one is for infants and parents while the other is for toddlers (2-4 years old) and parents. All learning is done by listening and participating.

Children and babies benefit from hearing the cadence and sounds of language. During a stressful time, breaking into song will reassure and calm any anxiety the child is experiencing. It will also gradually increase their love of stories and language competency and offer an alternative to watching TV.

Gagnon noted that research done in the area categorically proves children in an enriched environment with reading, songs and nursery rhymes will more likely be early readers.

Rachel Collins, a student at APC since December 2000, spoke about her experience with the Mother Goose program. She found she really gained confidence in singing and has actually used songs and storytelling in times of frustration, when she was bored or just for fun. Rachel also noted that her daughter grew to recognize the songs and joined in after hearing them several times.

## Building "Social Capital" : Baby FAST

Keynote speaker Dr. Lynn McDonald presented on the Baby FAST (Families and Schools Together) program and the concept of service providers helping adolescent parents build "social capital" or personal support networks. Without support, a new mother cannot set aside her own needs to focus on the rhythm of parenting. Social capital leads to optimal parenting.

Baby FAST enhances home visitation programs through parent participation in multi-family groups, builds informal social support networks for new mothers, and uses experiential learning to teach effective ways to maximize the brain development of babies. The goals are to increase healthy child development, healthy parent-child relationship and social networks, and to reduce the risk of child abuse and neglect.



*Danielle Matthes & son Dylan dance to the tunes*

"We need to ask if our new moms have lots of supportive relationships they can turn to. How many levels? How can we build relationships for her so she won't be isolated?"

She noted that high family stress (such as having a baby) plus high social isolation (which adds to depression) equals the strongest predictor of child abuse and neglect.

"If a mom can't get the baby to stop crying, she needs someone to say, let me hold the baby for a few minutes. She doesn't need a lecture or a pamphlet or a pill. She needs someone right next door," she said.

"Becoming over-reliant on professionals is not good for a new mother. She needs long-term supportive relationships with someone who loves her baby. Professionals shouldn't take the place of relationships the new mom really needs. It's a false substitute. Professionals go home at 5 p.m. to their 'real' family or change jobs."

Dr. McDonald believes the role of professionals should be to provide the gathering of potential relationships and to help make them work.

"It's easy for the professional to come in and resolve issues, but it isolates the young mom from the connections and help she really needs, rebuilding relationships with peers, partner, parents and others. She needs *multiple* layers of positive relationships."



*Conference attendees check out some of the many displays on services and programs*

Once the social relationships are built or rebuilt, the professional can then provide activities that build brain development, such as infant massage, shared reading, and special play.

Dr. McDonald noted that the use of experiential learning—active participation rather than lectures—is key to retaining people in the program. After all, teens will vote with their feet.

*(For a copy of Dr. McDonald's handout on Baby FAST, call 339-0247.)*