

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 Fall 2004 line-up of APIN meetings:

Sept. 21, 2004 Meeting

Presentation: **VIOLENCE PREVENTION & INTERVENTION**
Date & Time: Tuesday, Sept. 21st, **Noon - 2:00** p.m. (2 hour meeting)
Place: Adolescent Parent Centre (136 Cecil St.)
Speaker(s): Open discussion & report back

**COMPLIMENTARY LUNCH WILL BE PROVIDED.
PLEASE RSVP TO 339-0247 BY SEPT. 10th**

Oct. 12, 2004 Meeting

Presentation: **WAHBUNG ABINOONJIAG
"CHILDREN OF TOMORROW"**
Date & Time: Tuesday, Oct. 12th, Noon - 1:00 p.m.
Place: Turtle Island Community Centre
270 Flora Ave
Speaker(s): Carolyn McKay, Outreach Worker

Nov. 9, 2004 Meeting

Presentation: **HERITAGE PARK CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS**
Date & Time: Tuesday, Nov. 9th, Noon - 1:00 p.m.
Place: Jameswood School (116-1 Braintree Crescent)
Multipurpose room, 2nd floor
Speaker(s): Diane Harvey (Acting Executive Director), Linda Neuls (Family Resource Coordinator), Jackie Martens (Outreach Worker), Dana Cyrenne (Early Start Home Visitor), and Traci Wright (Healthy Baby Facilitator)

Note: Meetings will start promptly at noon. Please bring your own lunch to the October and November meetings. Coffee and tea will be provided.

COME LEARN ABOUT...

September 21, 2004, Presentation:

VIOLENCE PREVENTION & INTERVENTION

Building on the theme of the APIN 2004 Spring Conference, the September meeting will consist of a complimentary lunch and small group discussion/report back on the following questions: What violence prevention and intervention programs or services are available in the community? What are the strengths? Where are the gaps? Where are improvements needed? **Please note that lunch will be served at this special two-hour meeting.**

**** RSVP to Beth at 339-0247 by Friday, Sept. 10th ****

October 12, 2004, Presentation:

WAHBUNG ABINOONJIIAG

This program is designed to deliver a community-based, culturally appropriate continuum of services to young Aboriginal children (0-6) and youth (7-17) and to their mothers, who have experienced multiple forms of victimization. Wahbung Abinoonjiiag ("Children of Tomorrow") was established to create an environment of safety and healing for children who have witnessed family violence. The program is committed to assisting children and their families break the cycle of violence. They achieve this goal through delivering services that promote healing, wellness and growth and by nurturing healthy family relationships.

Come out to hear more at the October 12 presentation being held at the Turtle Island Community Centre.

November 9, 2004, Presentation:

HERITAGE PARK CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS INC.

Heritage Park Children's Program's Family Resource Centre has two sites located in Heritage and Jameswood schools. The centres provide programming, outreach, referral, and home visiting services to families in the St. James community. The presentation will provide a quick history of Heritage Park Children's Programs, outline the referral process, and provide information regarding programs at the sites and connected community agencies. A tour of the new infant child care centre will be provided for those who are interested.

NĒĀH KEE PAPA ("I Am Your Father")

A Parenting Enhancement Program for Fathers. Fall session begins Sept. 14th at Metis Child, Family and Community Services (1261 Main St). For information or to register, call **Elizabeth Denny at (204) 586-8474, ext. 326.**



Report on the Spring 2004 Meetings

Teenage Parents Program (TAPP) Nelson McIntyre Collegiate (May 2004)

Carmen Paterson-Payne, Child Development Lab Director at Nelson McIntyre Collegiate described their Teenage Parents Program (TAPP) to a handful of intrepid APIN members who struggled through a May blizzard to reach the school. Those who made it were rewarded with terrific nachos, which we enjoyed while learning about TAPP.

Paterson-Payne, an Early Childhood Educator, was hired by the St. Boniface School Division in 1990 to run the program. She explained that TAPP was initiated at Pierre Radisson Collegiate in September 1990, and moved to Nelson McIntyre Collegiate, Louis Riel School Division, in 1999 when the former was closed as a regular high school.

It is referred to as a Child Development Lab because funding for TAPP originally came from the Department of Education

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to be used as a third Home Ec lab. (The program operates within the Family Studies Department in Home Economics.)

Paterson-Payne notes they have three key areas of responsibility: (1) to maintain a quality infant and toddler program; (2) provide parenting support for teens; and (3) provide vocational training and experiences for regular high school students.

Related to the third point above, the Child Development Lab (CDLab) provides training for Nelson McIntyre Collegiate students enrolled in Early Childhood Education courses. Resource students acquire some life skills training by helping with snack preparation and other activities at the CDLab. It also serves as an observation lab for Home Ec and Family Studies students.

Staff at TAPP includes: an RN (Monica Auringer) who is the primary caregiver for the infants, Carmen Paterson-Payne as the Child Development Lab Director and an ECE III, as well as an ECE I/trained Baby First Home Visitor (Anita Brown) for two days per week.

TAPP objectives

The program objectives for the teen parents are to: continue their academic education; develop and encourage prenatal care and parenting skills; develop skills for independent living; and provide peer support and awareness of available community resources.

Program objectives for the children are to: provide a safe and enriched environment during the school day; provide an opportunity for frequent contact with the parent during the school day; and to provide play and interaction with other children.

Teen parents are encouraged to join TAPP during their pregnancy and to return to school as soon as possible after delivery. The program is able to care for infants and toddlers to approximately age two. Local day cares are then available close to the school that are more suited to children older than this age.

During the time spent in TAPP, each parent is required to enroll in Child

Development and Family Studies courses offered at the school. In addition to these credit courses, a number of special programs are provided for teen parents and their children. These include visits from special resource people, such as public health nurses.

The Child Development Lab (CDLab) is *not* a day care. The program is designed to care for the children of teen parents only when they are in class or involved in school sponsored activities. Participants are expected to spend spare classes and the lunch hour at the CDLab.

"This allows for peer networking, breastfeeding and an opportunity to be with their child," notes Paterson-Payne.

The parents take ownership of the Child Development Lab by keeping the area clean, which also helps them to learn good hygiene and safety procedures. All parents are expected to help with room chores on a rotating basis.

Lab fees are \$20 per month and provide for things such as laundry detergent, craft supplies, emergency needs, snacks, facial tissues, etc. This is \$5 per month more than last year to cover the cost of the new Early Childhood Development and Parenting credit now available to students. In this course, students have the opportunity to participate in programs such as Rock 'n Read and Nobody's Perfect along with community outings.

Admission procedure

To apply, students must complete a TAPP application form and provide proof of residency, a transcript of their latest credits and a reference letter from their previous school.

Positions in TAPP are offered and renewed on a semester by semester basis. New applicants must be no older than 21 years of age.

Students not residing in the Louis Riel School Division need prior approval from their School Division before applying to TAPP. In effect, this requires

the other School Division to pay Nelson McIntyre Collegiate for the student's spot in TAPP.

Pregnant students would typically go through the guidance counsellor at their current school to pursue a position in TAPP. If they are not in school, the contact could come through a worker who they are connected with.

Cathy Szarko, School Counsellor for Nelson McIntyre, is also the Intake Counsellor for TAPP. She interviews the students to gauge their level of commitment, how much thought they have put into their schooling, to find out whether the father is involved, the existence of any restraining orders, etc.

Program success

Of the twelve participants in TAPP last year, all but one made the Honour Roll. The teen parents frequently form a tightknit group and socialize together after school. Many stay connected with each other and with TAPP after they finish school.

"It's a very successful program," notes Paterson-Payne. "We're very proud of it."

TAPP TALKS

TAPP TALKS is a program in which program participants visit other schools or classes within Nelson McIntyre Collegiate to talk candidly about their experiences of pregnancy, labour, birth and parenting.

"The students submit questions prior to our visit so that the girls can address them without someone feeling embarrassed," explains Paterson-Payne.

The hope is to educate students about sexuality and choices, and being responsible with whatever choice is made. "And hopefully, decrease teen pregnancies!"

Spots are still available for a fall start. To apply, contact Carmen Paterson-Payne at (204) 237-0219 or e-mail: carmen.paterson-payne@rielsd.org.



BabyFirst: Growing Healthy Families Together (June 2004)

Darlene Girard, Provincial Coordinator for BabyFirst, provided APIN members with an overview of the BabyFirst program and the integration process of BabyFirst and Early Start at the June meeting. Marion Ross, BabyFirst Coordinator for WRHA, and Margaret Bromley, Home Visitor in the St. James area, also spoke along with Donna, whose family has received assistance through both BabyFirst and Early Start.

BabyFirst and Early Start are home visiting programs funded through Healthy Child Manitoba.

The program goals are:

- to assist families to ensure the physical health and safety of their children;
- to enable parents to enhance their parenting skills and to foster the development of a secure attachment with their children;
- to support parents in their role of nurturing their children and of providing appropriate physical, social and cognitive stimulation; and
- to facilitate the parents' connection with community resources and to assist them in developing a sense of belonging.

The guiding principles of both BabyFirst and Early Start are:

- All parents want to be good parents.
- Everyone has the potential to learn and change.
- Everyone is responsible for their actions and choices.
- Despite life's problems, all people and environments possess strengths that can be used to improve the quality of a person's life.
- Motivation is fostered by a consistent emphasis on strengths.

BabyFirst and Early Start are voluntary programs and include regular home visits for up to three years.

Across Manitoba, BabyFirst (prenatal to age 3) is delivered through the regional health authorities. Early Start was developed as a model for older preschool children (2-5 years) and is based primarily out of licenced child care centres.

Building on the strengths of these two home visiting programs, in 2002, three regions in rural Manitoba (Assiniboine-North, Burntwood and Central) became involved in a pilot project to integrate them. In these regions, Home Visitors provide a continuum of services to families with children, prenatal to school entry. Integration of the two programs is continuing across the province. In Winnipeg, the integration process is just beginning with Access River East.

The BabyFirst and Early Start home visiting programs were initially launched as research projects in 1999. Research results showed significant improvements in parents' ability to provide a nurturing environment, in children's language acquisition (BabyFirst), and in positive parenting. They also found that a

positive parent-home visitor connection was key for success. The programs then expanded provincially.

Margie Bromley, a BabyFirst Home Visitor, has seen families in the program make positive decisions they might not have made before. She visits participating families of newborns weekly in the first 9-12 months and then ongoing thereafter based on family need.

"I feel privileged. I have respect for the individuality of all families," she notes. "Families who against all odds are raising their children."

Bromley encourages problem solving skills and accentuates the positive through compliments and reinforcement. She also focusses on reciprocity between parent and child, emphasizing the influence that parents have on their child and how important the parent is.

Donna, a mom, talked about how important both the BabyFirst and Early Start programs have been to her and her family. She likes the fact that the services are provided in the comfort of her own home where the problems are happening.

Admitting she needed help was the hardest part for Donna, who saw that other mothers seemed to do it all so effortlessly while she struggled. She says she had to deal with the feeling of being a "loser," which her Home Visitor helped her to overcome.

"I found the workers were there to help and assist you, not to tell you what to do, which is what I was worried it might be."

For more information, call your local Public Health Nurse or regional health authority office. Program information is also available from the Healthy Child Manitoba web site at: www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild.

"MANITOBA ANGELS"

A newsletter and e-mail connection for teen moms created by other teen moms. To get a copy of the fall newsletter to distribute to your young moms, contact APIN at 339-0247.

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.

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