

# Perinatal Mental Health News & Events



Healthy Workforce • Healthy Hospitals • Healthy Partnerships • Healthy Communities • Healthy Resources • Healthy Leadership

## As easy as A-B-C!

When new or expectant parents enjoy positive emotional health, there are numerous benefits - both for them and their baby. But how can you encourage the families you work with to be mentally healthy?

The answer is as simple as A-B-C. Act-Belong-Commit.

**Act** refers to being physically, mentally and socially active. Encourage Mum to have a relaxing bubble bath and read a magazine. Suggest Dad go for a jog after work or do some gardening. Maybe they could get the pram out and go for a walk as a family!

**Belong** refers to becoming a member of a group or organisation to strengthen social and community connections. Local parents' groups and playgroups offer the perfect opportunity to network, socialise and share personal experiences.

**Commit** refers to the level of commitment to the activities engaged in. Mum might decide to co-ordinate regular coffee mornings with her mothers' group friends. Dad might get some fellow fathers together and start a basketball team.

Being active, having a sense of belonging, and having a purpose in life all contribute to happiness and good mental health.

For more information about Act-Belong-Commit, visit  
[www.actbelongcommit.org.au](http://www.actbelongcommit.org.au)



To receive the next issue of *Perinatal Mental Health - News & Events* via email, please contact WAPMHU.

Phone: (08) 9340 1795 or Email: [wapmhu@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:wapmhu@health.wa.gov.au)

You can also sign up to WAPMHU's mailing list online at the health professionals' website:  
[www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au/wapmhu.php](http://www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au/wapmhu.php)

## Issue 3- October 2008

### Inside this issue:

- 1 As easy as A-B-C!
- 2 Supported Playgroup for Ethiopian Women
- 2 Joondalup PND Working Group
- 3 *beyondblue* Anxiety & Depression Awareness (ADA) Month
- 3 Red Cross Practical Support Program Update
- 3 Janette's Research Corner
- 4 Training & Events Calendar
- 4 DVDs Available Online
- 4 Resources

### Perinatal mental health

is the emotional & psychological wellbeing of women, encompassing the influence on infant, partner and family, and commencing from preconception through pregnancy and up to 36 months post partum.

*State Perinatal Reference Group  
2003*

### Contact Details:

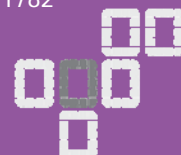
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## Supported Playgroup for Ethiopian Women

Gosnells Women's Health Service has been working hard to establish a supported playgroup for Ethiopian women.

Though the planning stage of this project has been quite challenging, they are now pleased to announce they have employed Ronhhda Potter as Playgroup Leader and found a suitable venue for the playgroup - Brookman House in Langford.

In addition to Ronhhda, Gosnells Women's Health Service is seeking to employ an Amharic/English



bilingual worker. This position has been advertised through migrant services and universities, but recommendations from other sources are also welcome.

Details regarding evaluation requirements for the service will soon be discussed in a meeting with Janette Brooks, WAPMHU Research Officer, and then the project can really get going!

An Open Day will be held in early 2009. Both agencies and families will be invited to come along and meet the staff.

If you have any queries about the project, the Open Day or you know someone who can speak both Amharic and English, please contact  
**Cindy Da Cruz.**  
Phone: 9490 2258

## Joondalup PND Working Group

Postnatal depression (PND) and family relationships were identified as areas of need in the community by Community Nurses in the Joondalup Health Region (Child and Adolescent Community Health).

These need areas were identified during the latter half of 2006 by a working party including community nurses and health promotion staff. The working party meets approximately every 6-8 weeks.

A business plan was subsequently developed and work commenced in January 2007, to continue until June 2008. The business plan is now at evaluation stage, but the working party plans to continue meeting.

The primary goals have been to address mental health and wellbeing by improving:

- Family relationships through the school community
- Early identification and support for clients with PND
- Knowledge for staff by providing support and education.

The value of networking within the group cannot be underestimated.

Time was spent developing relationships with external agencies such as Community Mental Health Nurses (Joondalup), the Mental Health Obstetric Liaison Nurse (JHC), WA Perinatal Mental Health Unit and Women's Healthworks (Joondalup).

As a result of liaison with Women's Healthworks, a walking group has begun in Duncraig and Carine for clients with limited supports and who have the potential of developing PND.

Other developments include a flow chart with referral pathways for Community Nurses and an information sheet listing agencies that may be able to assist clients with PND.

For further information, phone 9400 9500.



## beyondblue Anxiety & Depression Awareness (ADA) Month

Throughout the month of October, *beyondblue* hopes to raise awareness of anxiety and depression, and reduce the associated stigma.

Both anxiety and depression can impact greatly on families during the perinatal period.

However, there is often a reluctance to talk about these issues. People may fear being labelled a 'bad parent' or simply not recognise the symptoms they are feeling. As a result, many cases of anxiety and depression, both antenatally

and postnatally, still go undiagnosed and untreated.

Finding out about depression and anxiety and sharing this information helps to reduce the stigma which prevents people from accessing the help they need.

For more information about ADA Month, visit:

[www.beyondblue.org.au/adamonth](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/adamonth)

## Red Cross Practical Support Program Update

- **Metropolitan catchment area:**

Now includes the LGA of Canning (in addition to the LGAs of Belmont and Victoria Park).

- **Regional catchment area:**

Now includes all postcodes of Bunbury (in addition to the townships of Australind and Eaton).

For more information contact the Practical Support Coordinators:

Perth - Carmel Bower, phone: 9225 8808

Bunbury - Sharyn Steel, phone: 9726 6709



Photograph courtesy of Red Cross and Tim Lofthouse.

## Janette's Research Corner

The WAPMHU aims to provide high quality information and services to high priority populations. In order for informed decisions to be made about future funding allocation, each initiative of WAPMHU is guided by existing research and thorough evaluative processes are built in.



This is where I come in - my name is Janette Brooks and I have been the WAPMHU Research Officer since 2006.

After completing my Master of Psychology (Clinical) and managing the WA arm

of the *beyondblue* National Postnatal Depression Program, I came to the realisation that my passion for perinatal mental health lay in the realm of research rather than clinical work (I subsequently became the proud recipient of the *beyondblue* Sherryl Pope Memorial PhD Scholarship).

There are numerous exciting research/evaluation projects that I am currently working on as part of my role with the WAPMHU that I would love to share with you all via this newsletter. So if you have an interest in research, watch this space in the next issue for another WAPMHU research update!

Email: [Janette.Brooks@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:Janette.Brooks@health.wa.gov.au)

## Training & Events Calendar

### October

- 5<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> - Mental Health Week
- 7<sup>th</sup> - Official launch of "Write from the Heart (edition 2)"
- 10<sup>th</sup> - World Mental Health Day
- 16<sup>th</sup> - Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS): Use & Misuse (Bentley). Ph: 9340 1795
- 27<sup>th</sup> - Mental Health Promotion Action Link Symposium. Email: [mhpalwa@yahoo.com.au](mailto:mhpalwa@yahoo.com.au)

## DVDs Available Online

Available at:

[www.yourzone.com.au/perinatalhealth](http://www.yourzone.com.au/perinatalhealth)

- *Boodjarri Business - Yarning about feelings after baby*
- *You Are Not Alone - Emotional Health for Mothers*

Available at:

[www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au/wapmhu.php](http://www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au/wapmhu.php)

- *Boodjarri Business - Working with Aboriginal Mums, Babies and Families*

## Resources

### WAPMHU Resources

To order:

- You Are Not Alone: Emotional Health for Mothers (DVDs for Ethiopian, Sudanese and Iraqi communities)
- Boodjarri Business: Yarning about Feelings After Baby (consumer DVD)
- Boodjarri Business: Working with Aboriginal Mums, Babies & Families (health professionals' DVD)
- Using the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) Translated into languages other than English
- The Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) (A4 2-sided sheet)

Phone: (08) 9340 1795

Email: [wapmhu@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:wapmhu@health.wa.gov.au)

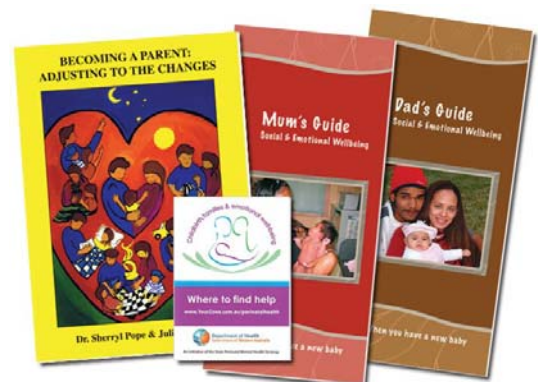
To order:

- Becoming A Parent: Adjusting to the Changes
- Where to Find Help
- Mum's Guide/Dad's Guide (Indigenous pamphlets)
- Postnatal Anxiety Stress & Depression (pamphlet)

Phone: 1300 135 030

Website: [www.health.wa.gov.au/ordering](http://www.health.wa.gov.au/ordering)

Search under Category Name: Women's Health - Emotional Wellbeing.



### Have we missed something?

Do you have any perinatal mental health news or information to share? Is there an event that doesn't appear on our Training & Events Calendar?

Let us know!

Email [wapmhu@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:wapmhu@health.wa.gov.au) by Friday 21 November to be included in Issue 4.