



Healthier Moms & Babies
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Healthier Moms & Babies



Quarterly Newsletter

Fall 2008

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"Better babies
one baby at a time"

Open House—Wednesday, October 22 3-6PM

Healthier Moms and Babies is ready to receive visitors at an Open House on Wednesday, October 22 from 3-6 pm. Catering will be donated by Joseph Decuis, thanks to Advisory Board Member Alice Eshelman. Our office is located in the Medical Office Building at St. Joseph Hospital in Suite 316. Parking is available in the parking garage, and tickets will be validated in the office.

Although the staff moved on January 20, 2008, providing services to our families have been our top priority. We've worked on our space as time and funding have allowed, and we've been fortunate to have had help along the way.

St. Joseph Hospital and the Lutheran Health Network provide the space as an in-kind donation. Their staff moved our furniture and hung brochure racks, bulletin boards and pictures.

Norine Martin, an interior decorator and Junior League volunteer, has helped us with our plans. Through her connection with One Eleven Design, Charlene Lommatzsch has helped us order chairs.

Our fiscal agent, Fort Wayne Medical Education Program has generously donated tables from their classroom to Healthier Moms and Babies for use in our meeting room.

We invite everyone to visit us during the Open House to learn more about our services and to see our new office space. To reduce costs, this newsletter will serve as your invitation, and email announcements will also be sent. Please call office at 260 425 3348 or email bgeiger@fwmep.edu if you'd like a flyer to circulate around your medical practice, social service agency or office.

Healthier Moms and Babies Open House

Medical Office Building
at St. Joseph Hospital
Suite 316

Wednesday, October 22, 2008
3-6 pm

Catering by Joseph Decuis

Parking in St. Joseph Hospital
Parking Garage
Validated by Healthier Moms and Babies



Our new entrance at Suite 316 !!

HMB Staff Receives Certification Training

Through the generosity of the United Way, Healthier Moms and Babies staff are participating in Family Development Specialist Training during August and September. Nurses Louise Magoon and Deb O'Bryan and social worker Aisha Hicks attended four days of training in August; the last four days are September 22-25. Upon completing assignments and passing a test, they will acquire Family Development Specialist Certification.

This training was developed at the National Resource Center at the University of Iowa. It addresses a wide range of issues, including family systems theory, relationship building,

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Health Corner - continued from page 2

the second trimester is a great time to do this. At this point numerous dental procedures are safe. Be sure to tell the dentist about the pregnancy, so Xrays and other contra-indicated procedures can be avoided. And finally, remember that sugary snacks leave a residue on the teeth. Food high in antioxidants such as leafy greens, nuts, citrus fruits and broccoli help repair damaged tissue.

And furthermore...

Researchers are studying whether it's the infection or the body's immune response to it that may trigger preterm labor. Periodontal disease has also been linked to stroke and heart disease. Diabetes and periodontal disease can each exacerbate the other.

Once again, we see that easy health habits can prevent serious health problems.

Sources—www.webmd.com/oral-health/guide/gingivitis-periodontal-disease, and *What To Expect When You're Expecting*, 3rd edition.

Staff Training - continued from page 1

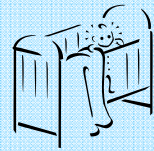
interviewing, family assessment skills, conflict resolution, self esteem building and problem solving skills. Family violence, chemical dependency and depression are also covered.

Because our nurses' education in dealing with case management issues has mainly been developed on the job, this training will be especially helpful. Deb stated "It's given me a vision through social workers' eyes, and made me aware of strength-based practices." Louise added that the training focuses on "the complexity of families and the magnitude of what we're dealing with."

We appreciate the United Way's generous underwriting of this training, and the opportunity to attend free of charge.



HEALTH CORNER



PERIODONTAL DISEASE AND PRETERM LABOR

Years ago, conventional wisdom said women lost a tooth for each child they had. With advances in dental care, that's no longer true. Although there are multiple reasons that pregnant women experienced dental difficulties, recent studies have shown that women with periodontal disease are **seven times** more likely to deliver prematurely.

What is periodontal disease?

Most of us have heard of gingivitis, a condition where plaque builds up in the gums causing inflammation and sometimes bleeding during teeth brushing. In some cases without treatment this condition develops into infections that weaken the bones and connective tissue that anchor the teeth in place.

How does pregnancy affect this process?

Unfortunately, pregnancy hormones increase swelling and inflammation in the gums and seem to cause plaque and bacteria to flourish. Morning sickness can also contribute to plaque and bacteria. Some women brush their teeth less often in early pregnancy when the strong smells and flavors of toothpaste bother them. Women who smoke are at extra risk for periodontal disease.

What are the symptoms of periodontal disease?

In addition to red and swollen gums and bleeding during or after teeth brushing, look for receding gums, pockets between the teeth and gums, loose or shifting teeth. Ongoing bad breath or a bad taste in the mouth may accompany these symptoms.

Avoiding periodontal disease

If pregnant women can't tolerate their regular toothpaste, they should look for a bland brand. At the very least they should rinse their mouth with water after bouts of morning sickness. Brushing and flossing are more important than ever during pregnancy. All pregnant women should see a dentist during their pregnancy, and

Health Corner continued on page 4.

A Message from the Director



Do you suppose there's anyone who hasn't heard television will become totally digital in February of 2009? I've heard this message daily for the last six months—every time I turn on the television. By now I find the repetition a little grating; but I know what I need to continue watching TV once the stations switch to digital. And I'm really envious of the built-in medium television has to get their message out so effectively.

When I dream about the way things could be, I dream that every pregnant woman in Allen County knows the signs of preterm labor, warning signs in pregnancy and SIDS prevention strategies. I dream that her friends and relatives all know this same information and support her in acting upon these simple lists. I dream that there's a mechanism in place for assuring that each woman who becomes pregnant and everyone in her circle has quick and easy access to this same information and is able to assimilate it into their knowledge base. Ah, that's my fantasy of a perfect world!

But then I think—really, it shouldn't be that hard. There's lots of other information we get out to people—stop, drop and roll, keep medicines out of children's reach. How did we get these messages? Was it the media, our families, or health professionals? Was it repetition? Was it all of the above?

It has always been our mission to be sure the families on our caseload absorb this information, and it always will be. But as the rate of preterm deliveries increase in our area, it's more than low-income women who need this knowledge. That's why we've made an extra effort in the last few years to speak to groups about the signs of preterm labor, warning signs in pregnancy and SIDS prevention strategies. That's why we got our website up and running, and have increased the circulation of this newsletter, particularly by cost-effective email.

This is no small task for us, particularly in tough economic times when there are more people who need our services and less funding available to provide them. Due to federal and state cutbacks, we won't receive funding from the Indiana State Department of Health, our largest funder, for the next two years. This means we will have to work even harder to make our mission, our accomplishments and our needs known to those who can help us.

It's up to all of us who share a passion for healthy babies to duplicate the power of television by spreading the word so effectively about Healthier Moms and Babies and what every pregnant woman needs to know that it's indelibly imprinted in people's brains. Thank you for helping us do that.



Sally Edington

sedington@fvmep.edu

Those Darling Photos!

This is our last **Celebrity Kids** picture, which was taken in January before they closed. We thank Jim Cunningham and his staff for the wonderful work they did capturing the innocence and personalities of our babies over the last two and half years, and for donating these wonderful pictures to both the babies' families and to Healthier Moms and Babies.

Fortunately, we've found another photographer to continue the tradition. Janelle Roberts of **Happinest Photos** took pictures of eight of our babies in July. Janelle was infinitely patient with our babies, and took the pictures in our office. Look for these pictures in our December issue and possibly on the walls of our office at the Open House. In the meantime, you can see Janelle's work at her website, www.happinestphoto.com.



Baby Valerie at 8 months

News Briefs

Louise Magoon Featured on Cable Access

Project Nurse Louise Magoon recently participated in a panel discussion on Infant Safety that is airing on Local Cable Access channels. Louise spoke about Safe Sleep Environments to prevent Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. Amy Hesting from the County Health Department, who coordinated the taping, commented that "Louise did a very good job at the taping. She is very well-spoken."

The show will rotate with other County Health Department episodes on "Your Community/Your Health" on Tuesday evenings at 6:30 pm and Wednesday morning at 10:30 am on Comcast channel 55 and Verizon FIOS channel 25 during September and possibly October. Thanks, Louise!

(Continued in next column)

Christmas is Coming!

We have begun working with the Allen County Christmas Bureau so that some of our families will be adopted by community groups during the Holiday season. They've taken all they can, and we still have many families who face a bleak Christmas. If you know of a group or family who would like to provide Christmas for one of our families, or who would like to donate some items that we could distribute among our families, please contact our office at 260 425 3348, or you can e-mail us at: info@healthiermomsandbabies.org.

Sally Edington Featured in Fort Wayne Monthly

Director Sally Edington was featured in the August issue of Fort Wayne Monthly Magazine in the Motivated to Serve column.

HMB Welcomes Aisha's Baby



Congratulations to our social worker Aisha Hicks on the birth of her baby, Amiliya Taylor Evans, born on June 14. Baby Amiliya weighed 6 lbs, 6 oz and has grown considerably since then.

We welcomed Aisha back to work on August 25, just in time for the Family Development training featured on page 1. With her return, there are openings on our caseload for low-income, at-risk pregnant women less than 30 weeks gestations. Referrals can be made by calling our office at 260-425-3348 or at our website, www.healthiermomsandbabies.org.