



Summary of 2nd of three evaluated pilots
NEWCASTLE 18th/19th June 2007 of the

Spirit of Childhood Program

the use of arts and crafts techniques to

- strengthen early parent-child bonds,
- build parenting skills



- support the transition through the early childhood developmental stages

Inspir=Ed Spirit of Childhood Parenting Kits FOR PARENTS Pregnancy to Year 7

Purpose of the Study:

1. Assess health care professionals' understanding, use of and satisfaction with the pilot training and age-specific kits.
2. Examine the impact of the pilot training and kits on capacity of health care professionals to engage with parents and positively effect parenting education.
3. Assess the relative effectiveness of training and kits in various settings

To address the first two issues, we surveyed participants pre-training and post training. We will conduct interviews approximately six - eight weeks after the training to ascertain what parts of the training and kits they use and what they strategies and skills they have employed differently as a result of using the training and the impact and outcomes for families. Additionally, we will compare professionals' knowledge, skills and strategies regarding the use of arts and crafts techniques to increase engagement with more reluctant parents

- pre training
- post training
- approximately six to eight weeks following training

Training and



Nancy Croaker, midwife, and Carolyn Ripper, community midwife making fleece angels



Nancy Croaker experiences the delight of attachment and bonding with her doll





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RESULTS

- All participants
 1. Understood the content of the training and the kits
 2. Found the training and the kits useful
 3. Were satisfied with the training
- All participants improved their capacity to engage with parents and to positively affect parenting knowledge and behaviour.
- All participants improved their skills to integrate art and craft techniques in their early explorations with parents, including
 - a. Increased capacity to encourage attachment and bonding while crafting,
 - b. Improved skills in encouraging improved child-focused parenting, and
 - c. Greater confidence in guiding parents for better support in imaginative play.



Thanh Cherry, co-facilitator, helps Ebony Eulo, ante-natal support, to make the angel pouch doll

Other improvements were a more comprehensive understanding of art, craft, song, storytelling, finger and hand game strategies to engage with parents to support child development, and their ability to strengthen their relationships with parents to address overall parenting beliefs and behaviours.

- There were significant increases in the participant's skills and confidence in the use of art and craft techniques to support parents learning the transition through the early childhood developmental stages.



Thanh leading the group in innovative finger and hand games helping develop tactile literacy skills

Skills developed included the importance of

- (1) art and soft craft techniques to support attachment and bonding, parent/child relationships
- (2) appropriate use of lullabies to calm and nurture both parent and child
- (3) storytelling to support transitions of childhood
- (4) finger and hand games to develop tactile literacy
- (5) imaginative play to build self-esteem, resilience and self-confidence in parents and children

- Participants reported that the training and the kits would enhance their work.



Siobhan Loosmoor, parent educator, prepares to make fleece balls





Conclusions:

- The training and kits were extremely well received
- Participants will be able to engage at a broader level with parents
- There were significant changes to participants engagement and support strategies
- All participants indicated that they thought the training and the kits should be made available to health care professionals engaged in early intervention work.

Modifications and Additions to the Training and Kits:

Participant’s suggestions included the addition of parenting guides covering ages and stages for the 1-3, 3-5, and 5-7 kits, a local resource directory for basic services including health care and child care and a DVD demonstrating craft activities.

Summary

Participants indicated that the training addressed potential outcomes for families including strategies for

- a. promoting attachment and bonding,
- b. improving parenting beliefs and behaviours,
- c. supporting imaginative and free play
- d. supporting transition through the early childhood developmental stages



Siobhan Loosmoor, Lowana Fox, Sharon Taylor, Judy Parker, Nancy Croaker, Ebony Eulo and Thanh Cherry, Co-Facilitator with their fleece angels.

SUMMARY

The second pilot answered all three main questions:

1. Participants found the training and the kits extremely useful. They learnt new skills to engage with parents and positively effect parenting knowledge and behavior.

“I will use the training to promote mother and baby bonding antenatal, which will lead onto attachment and bonding post natal. Making the Angel Pouch Dolls and other activities would be great for first time mothers and very good for high-risk mothers. ”

Ebony Eulo, Indigenous Community Support Worker

“I liked the intimacy – creating an intimate environment through the process of crafting. I would like to see the kits available to school children – 11-12 year old kids.

This has given me an opportunity to get in touch with my creative side.

Lowana Fox, Indigenous Community Support Worker





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“The activities will help attachment and bonding. The training has incorporated practical skills that have inspired me to use these skills in parent education. I can really use lots of these skills with young mothers.”

Nancy Croaker, Midwife, Parent Educator

It has been a wonderful two days – the training has reinforced the importance of role modeling. The sharing of these art and craft activities is a great way of supporting high-risk mothers.

I would like to see the training and kits combined with antenatal education sessions. We would welcome the opportunity to participate in an ongoing evaluation of this much needed program into the community.”

Carolyn Ripper, Community Midwife

“The training has been empowering, creating a sense of trust, parenting is exactly the same.

I look forward using the training to develop collaborative partnerships and incorporate the training into existing parent education sessions.

I would like to see the training and the kits available at all health and community centres.

Sharon Taylor, Indigenous Parent Educator

- 2. Participants learnt new skills in the use arts and crafts techniques to build parenting skills including child-parent bonds, promote practical intelligence and support the transition through the early childhood developmental stages.**

The process of creating the dolls and other craft activities can enable a group to feel safe and nurtured. It was fantastic to complete something and see the children play with it. These will be great skills and resource to be able to work with in the community.”

Judy Parker, Child and Family Health Nurse

“It is a great therapeutic activity - to come back to natural fibres and methods of play, touch, talk and song. Working with the fleece will be extremely beneficial for my high risk mothers.”

Carolyn Ripper, Community Midwife





3. Participants' work settings range from urban, rural, and regional to remote areas.

The training and resources are applicable to participants from a range of settings. All participants indicated that they would incorporate the skills, strategies and resources in their work practices.

"I unwrapped the dark skinned baby ... this dolly represents a person in our community, we can see the skin, but what we can't see are the layers underneath that make this person. People look at the outside and have their preconceived ideas but haven't got an idea what's underneath. This dolly then has many layers on the outside, layers like an onion that influences this person. These factors are peer pressure, self esteem, sense of self, self-confidence, financial, etc that this dolly needs support. ... I thought to myself the training worked!!

Sharon Taylor, Indigenous Family Support and Parent Educator.

Background

- The training was conducted to a group of health care workers including antenatal workers, midwives, community midwives, child and family nurses, and parent educators, totalling (N:7).
- Participants work areas: Urban (N:1) Regional (N:5) Rural (N:4) Remote (N:1)
- Six of the participants work with Indigenous parents and children.
- All participants work with parents and children from marginalised or under privileged backgrounds.
- Three participants work with parents and children from multi-cultural and ethnic backgrounds.
- Three participants were of Indigenous and Torres Strait Island descent.
- The training was conducted over two days. Training covered the basic activities to run a 9 week Spirit of Childhood Program. Participants indicated that they felt the need to be supported when introducing the activities into parent education settings. The DVD of the craft activities will be extremely beneficial to reinforcing the activities learnt and provide support to ongoing teaching of the art and craft for the participants.
- The Birra-li Aboriginal Birthing Service has acquired the four training kits (Pregnancy to Year One, Year One to Three, Year Three to Five, Year Five to Seven) plus individual craft items.
- Participants indicated they would like to see other service providers in the region attend training to create community collaboration and networks. Training has been requested from the Communities for Children Raymond Terrace and Karuah and the Brighter Futures Hunter, The Benevolent Society. The next training will be held on the 10th/11th September, 2007, Newcastle.

Follow up

The implementation of the training and the resources will be followed up with participants from the Birra-li Aboriginal Birthing Unit and the Port Stephens Parenting Program at approx. 6 – 8 weeks. The project will be tracked within the particular settings. The John Hunter Hospital has agreed to engage a part-time consultant artist to implement the program in the Obstetrics and Gynaecology Ward.

Jane Hanckel

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Inspir=Ed info@inspirededucation.com.au



02) 6684 6073

