

You
vaccinate.
Test hearing.
Monitor temps.
Screen eyesight.
You do a lot to give
your child a healthy
start. But when
you only concentrate
on physical health,
you're missing
half the picture.



www.HalfAChild.com

Children's Mental Health Initiative

Fall 2009

Inside this issue:

Preventing Back to School Stress 2

The Nurtured Heart Approach 2

Building Resilience 3

What is Play Therapy? 3

Calendar of Events 4

Federation of Families for CMH 4

Local Advisory Council for CMH 4

Children's Mental Health Initiative Expansion

The Children's Mental Health Initiative has received a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in Princeton, NJ and matching dollars from Dakota Medical Foundation in Fargo, ND to support new projects of the Children's Mental Health Initiative.

The four-year grants will provide mental health, screening, assessment, consultation, education and early intervention services to improve the lives of children ages 0-5 and their families.

The project provides a social - emotional screening component at Innovis Health Pediatrics and an opportunity for parents to consult with a mental health professional about their child's social emotional development.

Innovis Health's Pediatric Department will serve as the Initiative's initial pilot site for screening and consultation services, with community expansion to follow in years two, three and four.

Parents generally bring their children to see the pediatrician for physical and developmental concerns or check-ups. However, recent

brain research indicates that even infants and toddlers can experience social-emotional and mental health difficulties. If we are only paying attention to our children's physical health we are missing half the picture. Early screening, assessment and intervention can significantly improve the likelihood for happy and healthy children and families.

Caregivers bringing child (ren), ages 0-5, to Innovis Health Pediatrics will have the opportunity to use a simple, hand-held electronic device to answer questions about their child's social-emotional development. The electronic screening tool provides immediate results for the pediatrician's review. If the results indicate concerns, the doctor and caregiver will discuss and decide whether or not to make a referral to the early childhood mental health professional for further assessment and consultation.

The new grant activities are anticipated to launch in October 2009. "This exciting partnership with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation advances DMF's mission to provide access to healthcare for children. The

new, innovative outreach program addresses an identified need for early social/emotional screening, assessment and intervention for children in our community." Pat Traynor, President, Dakota Medical Foundation.

The grants fund expansion of the Children's Mental Health Initiative which began in 2007 as a pilot of Dakota Medical Foundation. The original initiative activities and the expanded projects have been identified by Cass/Clay children's mental health providers and stakeholders and address needs and gaps in our community's children's mental health system. Other Initiative goals include provision of community children's mental health resources/education, increasing collaboration between providers, identifying needs and gaps and improving access to mental health services for children ages 0-8.

Phone and e-mail early childhood mental health consultation will also be provided through select referral agencies, with FirstLink serving as the initial referral site.

Can you recall some of



“If you think you can, you are right. If you think you can’t you are right.”

Eleanor Roosevelt



Preventing Back to School Stress

1. Get into routine by getting your child to bed and up at the same time each day. Prepare them for bed with regular activities, such as brushing teeth, getting a drink and reading a book. It is also helpful to keep the same schedule on the weekend.

2. Get organized by visiting the school and meeting your child’s teacher. Here you can discuss what supplies are needed, how assignments will be organized and establish a relationship and communication with your child’s teacher. Don’t forget to get the teacher’s contact information.

3. Practice bus stop routes and safety measures.

Introduce yourself and your child to the bus driver and if your child is younger, instruct them to sit in the seats closer to the front. Make sure they know bus rules.

4. Listen to your child about any fears they have about school and reassure them it is normal to be nervous. Take them to meet their teacher in advance and let see their desk and classroom. This can help relieve their stress.

5. Review the student/school handbook with your child so they know what the rules are and consequences if they break them.

6. Give them a visual reminder of you. If your child is younger, they may feel comforted by having a picture of their family or a special object inside their backpack or cubby to look at if they feel nervous or sad during the day.

7. Set homework schedules. Having a regular routine for homework decreases struggles, nagging and complaining,

making home a more peaceful place for everyone. A child who is accustomed to doing homework at the same time every day will help establish good self discipline and responsibility. For days with no homework, reading or crafts could be done instead or a family game.

8. Talk about their day. Find out how their day was, what they learned, what was fun or interesting. Get them talking and expressing their feelings.

9. Stay involved in their education. Statistics show that parents who are actively involved with their child’s schools have children who have higher achievement, less drop out rates and are better adjusted.

The Nurtured Heart Approach, Howard Glasser, MA

The Nurtured Heart Approach teaches adults how to energize a child’s experiences of success while not accidentally energizing his or her experiences of failure.

The Nurtured Heart Approach is more than just parenting or behavior management strategy. This approach is a way of thinking and a set of strategies that are particularly useful for difficult, intense children, but can also be tremendously valuable for all children ages 2-18. The approach lays the foundation for a healthy relationship between you and the child.

Cass/Clay providers and schools are partnering to

inundate our community with information and education regarding this well-received and effective approach. Nurtured Heart trainings were provided by Tina Feigal this past July, with more to come in the next year.

Howard Glasser, the originator of the approach is scheduled to present for 3 days in the spring of 2010,

SAVE THE DATE!

FREE PARENT WORKSHOP

Thursday, April 29, 6:30-8:30pm

For Professionals

Friday, April 30, 9:00am-3:00pm

CCR&R Spring Conference

Sat, May 1, 9:00am-3:30pm

*All trainings will be at the Ramada in Fargo, ND

For more information see

www.halfachild.com

Registration Required:

Diane.langer@ndsu.edu or

call 701-241-5700

Tips for Building Resilience

Resilience refers to the ability to bounce back from adversity or disaster. Both children and adults can develop resilience skills. Here are some tips to build resilience:

Connect with others

- Talk about your feelings and share your concerns with someone you trust
- Reach out and offer help to someone else; accept help that is offered to you
- Engage in social activities; spend time with others who share common interests

Foster an optimistic outlook

- View change as a challenge or opportunity; think about how the future might be better
- Review your priorities; abandon unreachable goals and adopt new ones
- Be confident in your abilities; recall how you have successfully faced adversity in the past

Act purposefully

- Develop realistic goals; take small steps toward those goals each day

- Take good care of your body; eat nutritious meals and get adequate rest

Resilience resources:

Call FirstLink 701-235-7335 or call **2-1-1** for Information, Referral or Crisis Management Services.

For more information about building resilience, go to www.apahelpcenter.org and www.liveyourlifewell.org.

Provided by the Emotional and Spiritual Wellbeing Committee of the Red River Valley Recovery Group (Sept. 09)



What is Play Therapy?

Can you recall some of your favorite memories as a child? They may be a special time you shared with a parent or family member, a fun game with the neighbor kids or recess at school. All of these have a common theme which is special time where you could just play.

A growing number of noted mental health professionals have observed that play is as important to human happiness and well being as love and work (Schaefer, 1993). Playing is fun; it can build self worth, alleviate stress and help build skills. In children, play is the language they can use to communicate their feelings, fears, and dreams.

The Association for Play Therapy defines play therapy as "the systematic use of a theoretical model to establish an interpersonal process wherein trained play therapists use the therapeutic powers of play to help clients prevent or resolve psychosocial difficulties and achieve optimal growth and development." Play Therapy can be used with all ages however children ages 3-12 may benefit from it most.

Play Therapy is useful for children that have grief/loss issues, anger management, divorce/family stressors and crisis or trauma situations (APT, 2009).

Once a relationship is established, the therapist will use play to help the child understand their feelings, work through past trauma or difficult experiences and find new ways of telling their story. Research shows play therapy helps children become more responsible in their behaviors, develop respect and acceptance in self and/or others, learn to express emotion and find effective strategies to deal with them (APT, 2009).

There are many different techniques play therapists use. One is directive play therapy where the therapist will come up with an activity for the child to do such as an art project, journaling, puppet play, etc. to help work on expression of feelings and coping methods. Non- directive play therapy is used for the child to work through difficulties at their own pace, in their own way. This type of technique is

beneficial to allow the child to lead the therapist and help them understand what is most difficult for them. Several other techniques can be used such as sand tray therapy, art therapy, experiential play therapy etc.

Parents have a great opportunity to help empower their children through play. They are at the fore front of helping their children change their behaviors and Play Therapy has proven to be an effective tool for this. If parents can allow their child to lead, help them learn new things and respect their style of play, the child will respond feeling more confident and willing to learn and grow.

Kelli Gast, MSW, LICSW, RPT

Kelli is employed by Solutions in Moorhead, MN.

Children's Mental Health Initiative

Children's Mental Health Initiative

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Event Calendar Fall 2009

September

September 30, 1pm-5pm "Laughter Bridges Leader Certification Training" Fargo, ND, for more information, email debifederation@yahoo.com

October

October 1, 1pm-5pm "Laughter Bridges Leader Certification Training" Fargo, ND, for more information, email debifederation@yahoo.com

October 2, 9am-12:30pm "Laughter Bridges Leader Certification Training" Fargo, ND, for more information, email debifederation@yahoo.com

October 3, 7pm-9pm Federation of Families "Ogg Creek String Band" RD Johnson Activity Center, Fargo, ND

October 9, 10 NDAEYC/NDHSA Fall Conference "Pursuing Patterns in Early Childhood," Mandan, ND Register at www.ndaeyc.org or www.ndheadstart.com

November

December

December 4, 11:30am-1:00pm Children's Services Coordinating Committee Annual Meeting, location TBA

Local Advisory Council for Children's Mental Health

The Clay County Local Advisory Council for Children's Mental Health meets on the second Wednesday of each month at 8:30 am at the Family Service Center at 715 11 St. N. , Room 2 in Moorhead. The council is comprised of parents and professionals who advise the Clay County Board of Commissioners on the state of children's mental health services, including gaps in services, needs of the family and child, and the strengths of our current service delivery system. We invite parents of children with mental health needs and other interested parties to attend our monthly meetings.

Children's Mental Health Matters

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