

# Children, Youth & Family Consortium

## CYFC Monthly

### CYFC Monthly – January 2014

#### Look Who's Talking About Parental Incarceration

On November 14th, Extension Children, Youth & Family Consortium held its Lessons From the Field conference focused on parental incarceration. With nearly 375 participants from Minnesota and beyond, the participants represented a very diverse range of disciplines: health care workers, public health nurses, social workers, corrections professionals, child welfare professionals, educators, clergy, community professionals and volunteers. Many participants reported having never thought about this issue or knowing very little about the impact of parental incarceration on children and families prior to attending the event. A Duluth psychologist reported, “This was one of the most valuable, interesting, and relevant workshops I’ve ever attended. This is a topic our society needs to understand better in order to make positive changes that will benefit all of us.” The feedback from participants underscored the need for more public attention directed to this topic.

As it turns out, the topic of parental incarceration and its impact on children is receiving increasing national attention. Here’s a brief list of events within the past six months:

- June 2013 — Sesame Workshop unveiled the new educational series [“Little Children, Big Challenges: Incarceration”](#)
- June 2013 — Children, Youth, & Family Consortium (CYFC) published the eReview issue [“Children with Incarcerated Parents — Considering Children’s Outcomes in the Context of Complex Family Experiences”](#)
- August 20, 2013 — The White House hosted a conference jointly sponsored by the American Bar Association and the National Science Foundation, “Parental Incarceration in the United States: Bringing Together Research and Policy to Reduce Collateral Costs to Children”
- October 25, 2013 — Racine, WI conference focused on children and families in Racine County impacted by having a parent in jail or prison; speaker Julie Poehlman, Professor and Chair of Human Development and Family Studies at UW-Madison shared the preliminary results from a 16-month study at the Racine County Jail funded by the National Institutes of Health
- November 14, 2013 — CYFC hosted an all-day conference, “Unbarred: Strengthening Families Affected by Parental Incarceration”
- November 26, 2013 — The New York Times published a story in the Science Times section by Natalie Angier, “Bonding From Behind Bars”

All of these initiatives highlight similar research findings; parental incarceration significantly impacts children and families and building and maintaining relationships during and after incarceration can mitigate negative consequences.

The Lessons From the Field evaluation summary yielded four major themes: expansion of knowledge, recognition of research, personal connections and empathy, and relevance to work. Participants said they learned new information. A Native American liaison from Olivia shared, “I guess I’ve always known that these things existed but never heard it laid out the way your group did. Excellent — this should be very helpful in my work.” And a nurse from the Twin Cities said, “the entire conference was informative — offered new perspectives, new resources, and new opportunities to network.”

Attendees reflected on ways the conference will impact their work with children and families in the future, allowing them to work more sensitively with their clients, colleagues and community members. Some plan to share resources with their clients. Others noted that they learned the value of talking honestly with children who have an incarcerated parent. Numerous clinicians wrote that the conference confirmed the value of maintaining parent/child relationships during incarceration. A child welfare worker explained that often children in the child protection system do not visit incarcerated parents, “this conference changed my outlook – courts often discourage visits but this should be considered by what is best for the child.”

In the months since the conference, a number of exciting opportunities have surfaced, including the topic of parental incarceration as a primary focus of the “Research to Practice” series at the upcoming Minnesota Association for Children’s Mental Health (MACMH) conference in Duluth, April 27-29, 2014. Also, if you are interested in participating in the monthly meetings of the Strengthening Families Affected by Parental Incarceration Coalition, please contact [Bonnie Nelson](#).

Judy Myers, MS, RN  
Children's Mental Health Coordinator

## Consortium News

### **Minnesota Social Worker Input Needed**

Are you a social worker in Minnesota? We are interested in learning more from school and county social workers about what barriers might exist for serving children who have interacted with the child welfare system in Minnesota. Please take five minutes to fill out this brief survey [no longer active] and tell us what barriers exist in your work.

## University and Community Announcements

### **The Neighborhood Partnership Initiative (NPI) & Artist Neighborhood Partnership Initiative (ANPI) Request for Proposals**

[The Neighborhood Initiative \(NPI\)](#) and [Artist Neighborhood Partnership Initiative \(ANPI\)](#) are awarding small grants up to \$10,000 to community-based, neighborhood or other place-based organizations located in communities of color and low-income communities in Minneapolis, St. Paul and surrounding suburbs. Contact [Jeff Corn](#), [Neeraj Mehta](#) or [Ned Moore](#) with questions.

### **National Online Training of Trainer Courses**

Center for Inclusive Child Care, Concordia University

Training workshops developed from the Train the Trainer courses are appropriate for child care, Head Start, special education, learning readiness, and school age providers and educators. Several courses are available and include Children and Challenging Behavior: Making Inclusion Work, Sensory Processing Disorder, and The Six Keys: Strategies for Promoting Children's Mental Health in Early Childhood Programs. Visit [The Center for Inclusive Child Care](#) for dates and more information.

## **Raising A Child With Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder**

The Minnesota Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

Date: January 16, 2014

Time: 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm

Cost: \$10

The Minnesota Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, in collaboration with Children's Home Society of Minnesota/Lutheran Social Services, is sponsoring the webinar, [Raising a child with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder](#) presented by Kari Fletcher. Hear about the struggles and rewards of raising a child with an FASD, as well as some practical parenting interventions. The target audience is caregivers and professionals. Certificates of attendance will be provided and the webinar has been approved for CEU's by the Minnesota Board of Social work.

## **Therapeutic Language: Relating to Dysregulated Children and Setting Goals in Treatment**

[Minnesota Association For Children's Mental Health \(MACMH\)](#)

Date: January 29, 2014

Time: 12:30 pm - 3:20 pm

Cost: \$79

Location: Bunker Activity Center - Maple Room

550 Bunker Lake Blvd NW

Andover, MN 55304

Learn strategies to engage children and their families to provide the building blocks for future positive attachment experiences. Therapeutic language will be presented as a tool caregivers can use to create appropriate goals for change. [Attend this MACMH](#) event to hear definitions and examples of toxic stress and disorganized attachment as well as the difference between "joining" and "therapeutic language."

## **Notice of Vacancy with the Maternal and Child Health Advisory Task Force**

The Minnesota Secretary of State

Applications are due January 28, 2014 and include an open appointments application form, letter of interest and a resume or biography. {no longer active}

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## Job Opportunities

- [Mental Health Center Administrative Manager — Hennepin County](#)
- Research Assistant — University of Minnesota
- [Executive Director — Community-Campus Partners for Health](#)
- [Extension Educator, Financial Empowerment — University of Minnesota](#)
- SNAP-Ed Regional Coordinator Rochester — University of Minnesota
- SNAP-Ed Regional Coordinator Ramsey — University of Minnesota
- Extension Educator, Health and Nutrition — University of Minnesota

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