

PIRI

PARENT-INFANT
RESEARCH
INSTITUTE &
INFANT CLINIC



Community HUGS improves mood and parenting stress

Community HUGS (CHUGS), a 10-session **mother-infant therapeutic playgroup**, uses **play, music and movement**, combined with cognitive and experiential components.

We have just completed two trial of CHUGS involving mothers who are experiencing a range of postnatal mental health difficulties, including depression, with infants less than 10 months of age. The results of the feasibility study and pilot RCT showed that our program was **well-received by mums** and produced **benefits for mothers mental health and the mother-infant relationship**.

In our feasibility study, parenting stress scores dropped significantly and were no longer in the high range. **Depression, anxiety, stress and self-efficacy** all showed improvements, as did observer-rated **mother-infant interactions**. In the RCT, depression, anxiety and stress symptoms were significantly reduced for intervention participants compared to waitlist. Mums all rated satisfaction highly!

To refer to CHUGS or sign-up, please call 9496 4496 or email piri@austin.org.au



The Parent-Infant Research Institute (PIRI) is a vigorous & innovative Australian research institute focusing on understanding, developing and applying treatments to improve parent and infant well-being. PIRI believes that early intervention is the key to better outcomes for families.

While PIRI has a strong research focus, it also comprises a clinical unit (Infant Clinic). The Infant Clinic is a Centre of Excellence and provides clinical services to assist with the difficulties experienced by parents & infants in the first years of life.

LATEST RESEARCH

Beating the Blues before Birth follow up

Dr Laura Bleker



For this study, we invited children who were born to mothers who have participated in PIRI's 'Beating the Blues before Birth' program and were treated in pregnancy with our Cognitive Behavioural Treatment to reduce depressive and anxiety symptoms.

We are interested in how the mothers and babies are progressing 5 years later. Also, we are looking at cognitive functioning, brain development, and specific patterns on DNA, so-called 'epigenetics', regulating gene activity in the children.

At this stage, we are almost finished with collecting the data and shortly the data-analysis will start. We would like to thank all of the participating mothers, fathers and their children, who took the time and effort to pay us a visit and cooperate in this study. Your contributions will help us greatly in gaining more knowledge on antenatal depression and help future families.

Laura is a PhD-student from the Netherlands. Her university commenced a collaboration with PIRI one year ago, allowing her to visit Melbourne and stay for 10 months to work on the research project titled:

"Beating the Blues Before Birth - Follow Up".

PIRI expands its training programs

PIRI is involved in cutting edge clinical research and service provision and has increasingly been involved in training other health professionals involved in the care of young families. See our Workshops Calendar and contact us with your organisation's training needs.

Mum^{2B}MoodBooster

Our online treatment has now been adapted for pregnancy

PIRI now has a companion program to its postnatal depression online treatment. Mum2BMoodBooster also provides CBT treatment for antenatal depression.

We have just published the first evidence that treating maternal depression and anxiety in pregnancy can promote better developmental outcomes in children at 9 months.

See our website www.piri.org.au for more information on treating antenatal depression or to refer to our ongoing research trials.

Study Update

Integrated Clinician Decision and e-Screening for Postnatal Depression



PIRI has also developed a Clinical Decision Support System (CDSS^{PIRI}) which guides health professionals in developing a management plan based on screening results. Together with the iCope screen, the CDSS^{PIRI} assists health professionals to deliver best practice care.

The CDSS^{PIRI} is a new addition to the electronic tablet-based screening tool (iCope) co-developed by the Parent-Infant Research Institute (PIRI), in partnership with COPE and PreventionXpress.

Clients use a tablet (eg. iPad) to complete the EPDS and relevant psychosocial risk factors. The e-screening system enables detection of perinatal depression and anxiety symptoms and scores are automatically calculated, interpreted and reported for both health professionals and clients. The CDSS^{PIRI} now helps professionals manage clients easily with one simple prompted management plan that can be used for onward referral.

PIRI is conducting a randomised controlled trial of the system compared with current practice in collaboration with the City of Whittlesea Maternal and Child Health (MCH). This project will assess the success of the new system by its capacity to deliver real-world service improvements. To date, we have six MCH nurses participating in the study in a randomised trial. Fifty-two women have participated in the study so far. Results from this study will be reported in a future newsletter once the study is complete.

For more information about this study, contact :

Dr. Charlene Holt,
PIRI Project Manager
charlene.holt@austin.org.au,
(03) 9496 4496.

Help PIRI Help New Families

Each year over 70,000 Australian women suffer antenatal and/or postnatal depression, and the figures are likely to be just as high for anxiety. Help PIRI to support these mothers, fathers and babies by donating today.

Visit -

<https://www.givenow.com.au/parentinfantresearch>

PIRI WORKSHOPS

at Parent-Infant Research Institute – July to Dec 2017

This year's program sees an extended series of workshops which build expertise in antenatal and postnatal depression. We also offer training that can be tailored to your needs on any area of perinatal mental health. If you're interested in any of our workshops or if you have specific training needs; please contact us on 03 9496 4496 or email piri@austin.org.au

Date	Workshops to date: More to come!
Thursday 31 st August	<p>Mindful Parenting - this one day workshop is for MCH nurses, psychologists, midwives, counsellors and the like who want to develop skills in teaching mindfulness to their clients. The focus will be on how mindfulness skills can be beneficial for mothers, fathers and the parent-infant relationship.</p> <p>Presented by Rachel Watts (Clinical Psychologist) and Bronwyn Leigh (Clinical and Health Psychologist)</p>
Thursday 24 th September	<p>Motivational Interviewing - this one day workshop explores how Motivational Interviewing can be used in the perinatal field in assisting clients increase their motivation when depressed or anxious or struggling with early parenthood.</p> <p>Presented by Jennie Ericksen (Clinical Psychologist) and Rachel Watts (Clinical Psychologist)</p>
Wednesday 18 th October	<p>Travelling the Yellow Brick Road - this half day workshop is for anyone helping parents and children prepare for the transition from home to childcare or kindergarten or school. Suitable for teachers, childcare workers, social workers, psychologists and the like.</p> <p>Presented by Dr Carmel Feretti (Clinical Psychologist)</p>
November (date to be confirmed)	<p>Promoting Pleasurable Play – this one day workshop is focused on promoting enjoyable interactions between mothers/fathers and babies. It is designed for anyone working with parents of babies and toddlers.</p> <p>Presented by Elizabeth Loughlin (Dance Therapist)</p>

Conferences



Australasian Marcé Society
for Perinatal Mental Health
2017 Conference

Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre
26 to 28 October 2017

We are now offering partner training at the Parent-Infant Research Institute!



Supporting parents and babies to share moments like this

is one of the most important things you will ever do.

training for health & community workers

This four-day, **nationally accredited** course for health and community workers offers a unique insight and set of evidence-informed practical skills for supporting responsive and cue-based interactions between parents and babies. Graduates receive a nationally recognised Statement of Attainment in **Cue-Based Infant Massage and Parent-Infant Relationship Education**.

the first touch program

On completion of the course & assessment, you will be qualified to deliver the **First Touch Program** to support parents in recognising and responding to their baby's cues. Program activities include cue-based infant massage, healthy touch, voice and singing, eye-gaze and movement. The First Touch Program has been recognised in child abuse prevention and violence prevention awards.



places are strictly limited and already filling
enrol online now and pay later to avoid disappointment

babyinmind.org.au

(02) 6262 4346

support@babyinmind.org.au

PIRI'S Specialised Group Programs – Referrals open

PIRI continues to offer **The Community HUGS** program to mothers who would like to focus on further enhancing their relationship and interaction with their babies, following a difficult start to motherhood. The Community HUGS Program consists of 10 sessions and is run by Elizabeth Loughlin (Dance Therapist and Social Worker) and Jennie Ericksen (Clinical Psychologist). The Program is partially funded by a Department of Social Services Child and Families grant. There is no cost to families for accessing and taking part in this program.

The Getting Ahead of Postnatal Depression Program will also continue to be run with the next group starting in August. This program consists of 9 CBT-based sessions for mothers and 3 couple sessions focused on strategies to improve depressive symptoms. There is no charge for this service.

For referrals contact our intake team on 9496 4496 or email piri@austin.org.au or complete a referral form on the website www.piri.org.au.

PIRI STAFF UPDATE

There have been lots of 'hellos' and 'goodbyes' over the past 6 months at PIRI.

We were all delighted at the safe arrival of baby Adena who was welcomed by PIRI Clinical Psychologist Sofia Rallis and her partner, George, in January.

We are also pleased to welcome Keerthana Ruthna to our research team. Keerthana joins us from the UK, where she has worked in both research and clinical settings. Keerthana will be picking up some of the research work done by our long-time researcher, Chris Holt. Chris has taken up an exciting research post at Monash University, but he will be missed here at PIRI for his extensive knowledge, happy demeanour and ability to solve any problem, technical or otherwise. We are grateful to Leigh Elliott for stepping in short-term and sharing his IT expertise with us.

Many of you will have spoken to Vera Corbiseri on the phone over the years. Our wonderful receptionist has moved to full time work, closer to home with Baptcare. Farewell Vera!

And many more of you will have worked with Jennie Ericksen. Jennie has worked as a Senior Clinical Psychologist at the Parent Infant Clinic for more than 15 years offering invaluable support to new mothers, fathers and psychology students. Jennie has moved into the next exciting phase of life, retirement. However, she will still be working with PIRI on projects such as CHUGS.

At the end of June, Laura Bleker will be finishing her time with PIRI. She is returning to the Netherlands to continue her medical training after a 10 month stay in Melbourne where she has been working on PIRI's 'Beating the Blues Before Birth – Follow Up' study. You can read an update on Laura's research in this newsletter.

Connect with PIRI!

The Parent-Infant Research Institute is active online and on social media.

See our website www.piri.org.au for our latest research findings, publications, information for parents and an online referral service to refer a client directly to our clinic. All our treatment programs can be found on the website, as well as the background research and evidence that have contributed to their effectiveness. You can also purchase all PIRI's books, magazines and DVDs from the website.

Stay up to date with PIRI by connecting with us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



PIRI: Parent-Infant Research Institute



parentinfantresearchinstitute



@PIRI_Austin

PIRI & Infant Clinic Team

Prof Jeannette Milgrom
Executive Director

Ms Jennie Ericksen
Manager, Psychologist

Dr Carol Newnham
Psychologist, Researcher

Ms Rachel Watts
Psychologist

Dr Sofia Rallis
Psychologist, Researcher
(on maternity leave)

Dr Alan Gemmill
Researcher

Dr Felicity Holmes
Psychologist

Ms Elizabeth Loughlin
Dance Therapist

Dr Charlene Holt
Psychologist, Researcher

Dr Carmel Ferretti
Researcher

Dr Tamsin Kane
Psychologist

Ms Barbara Frazer
Admin Assistant

Ms Eliza Hartley
Researcher

Newsletter edited by Rachel Watts

