PIRI’S End of Year Message

It’s that time of year when there are endless TV shows, radio shows and newspaper articles looking back at the year that was. Often the focus is on world issues, disasters and disappointments. But for PIRI’s end of year reflection, we would like to think about the many mothers, fathers, babies and families we have worked with this year and the great gains they have made. For many of our clients, 2016 has been a year full of the joys and challenges of new parenthood which they have experienced alongside their struggles with perinatal depression or anxiety. Our hope and the purpose of our work here at PIRI, supported by a network of wonderful professionals, is that these new families increasingly find ways to enjoy and delight in their babies.

For many families it will be their first Christmas with a new baby. It is our hope for those of you reading this newsletter too … that you are able to enjoy spending time with those that you love over the Christmas break.

Best wishes for the Holiday Season from all of us here at PIRI.

Please note PIRI will not be open from 26 December 2016 to 2 January 2017.
We look forward to hearing from many of you in 2017!

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 (Parent-Infant Clinic). The Parent-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.

T: 9496 4496       F: 9496 4148       E: piri@austin.org.au       www.piri.org.au
PIRI conducted a study in collaboration with Maternal and Child Health Services in the Cities of Banyule, Whittlesea and Moonee Valley, to examine whether a brief Motivational Interviewing (MI) intervention delivered by Maternal and Child Health Nurses (MCHNs) during routine postnatal visits improves help-seeking following childbirth. Studies consistently report concerningly low levels of treatment uptake by women showing symptoms of emotional distress during the postnatal period. At most, only 50% of women who are distressed postnatally seek treatment.

RESULTS: In this study, 20 MCHNs were trained in Motivational Interviewing and another 20 MCHNs continued to provide women with Routine Care. In total, 541 women were recruited to the study. Of these, 27.4% experienced emotional distress over the 12 months post-birth. When women experienced emotional distress in the 12 months post-birth, the odds of seeking help were 4 times higher for those who received Motivational Interviewing than for those who received routine care. Of the women who sought help from a psychologist, 47.6% in the MI condition attended 6+ sessions, compared with only 20.0% in the Routine Care condition, suggesting better adherence to treatment in the MI condition.

There was a non-significant trend of lower depression, anxiety and stress in the MI condition. A common barrier to seeking help was thinking that one should be able to manage without help (endorsed by 11.1% of the sample). Feedback from the MCHNs in the study was that the MI intervention was useful to their practice and they felt confident delivering it. In both the MI and Routine Care conditions, women found the discussions they had with their MCHN about their emotional well-being to be helpful.

CONCLUSIONS: These results suggest that treatment uptake for postnatal distress can be increased with a brief MI intervention delivered by MCHNs. Results showed that training MCHNs in MI was feasible and valued.

We would like to thank the MCHNs in the Cities of Banyule, Whittlesea and Moonee Valley who participated in this study. A paper reporting the results of this study in full has been submitted for publication.

For training in Motivational Interviewing, please contact (03) 9496 4496.

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LATEST RESEARCH FINDINGS
Motivational Interviewing Improves Help-seeking For Postnatal Depression and Anxiety

STUDY UPDATE
Integrated e-Screening for Postnatal Depression and Anxiety

In partnership, PIRI, COPE and PreventionXpress have co-developed an electronic tablet-based (eg. iPad) screening tool (iCope) to detect perinatal depression and anxiety symptoms and relevant psychosocial risk factors. We have also developed a Clinical Decision Support System (CDSSPIRI) to guide health professionals to develop a management plan.

This system aims to operationalise the Australian Clinical Practice Guidelines and assist health professionals to deliver best practice care.

PIRI is conducting a pilot study in collaboration with the City of Whittlesea Maternal and Child Health Service to establish the feasibility of e-screening for identification of perinatal depression compared with current practice in terms of:

- Acceptability of screening to users (satisfaction)
- Resource implications, staff time usage
- Error rates, uptake, referral rates/types
- Measures of short-term clinical efficacy
- Ease of implementation and integration into existing clinical systems

To date, we have four MCHNs participating in the study: two using the e-screening system and two providing routine care to women. Thirty-one women have participated in the study so far. Results will be summarised in a future newsletter once the study has been completed.

For more information about this study, contact Dr Charlene Holt, PIRI Project Manager charlene.holt@austin.org.au (03) 9496 4496.
We are really pleased to announce that our NHMRC trial of MumMoodBooster program, an online treatment for women experiencing postnatal depression, has now reached 100 participants! This is a fantastic achievement and we thank all those who have been involved and helped us reach this many women. Our program recently featured on the Today Show Extra, which you can watch by clicking [here](#) or visiting our Facebook (see Nov 16 post). Also a big thank you to the MumMoodBooster team, who have done a great job in managing the workload. We are still actively recruiting to finish our trial in the new year, so if you know of any women who may benefit from this treatment program, please direct them to [www.mummoodbooster.com](http://www.mummoodbooster.com) to register.

Benefits include:

- A comprehensive telephone assessment of depression
- Six online interactive cognitive behavioural therapy sessions with weekly telephone coach calls, face-to-face treatment with a psychologist or networking with general practitioners (randomised schedule)
- Monitoring of emotional health throughout the program.

If you would like some more information about the program, please contact Dr Christopher Holt: [Christopher.holt@austin.org.au](mailto:Christopher.holt@austin.org.au) or (03) 9496 4496.
In September this year, colleagues from all around the world came to Melbourne for the International Marcé Society Biennial Scientific Conference 2016! PIRI’s Director, Professor Jeannette Milgrom, was the Conference Chair and from all feedback it was an exciting and successful event. The PIRI team and a team of student Ambassadors worked closely with Nikki Abercrombie (Conference Organiser) to ensure all went smoothly. The conference theme, “Frontiers in Perinatal Mental Health” was addressed and made inroads to developing a future agenda to improve the emotional well-being of mothers, fathers and babies. Some highlights included:

• The opening ceremony with Carolyn Briggs, a respected elder from the Boon Wurrung Foundation, was a moving start with a smoking ceremony and some insights into personal experiences.

• Our Ministers (the Hon Sussan Ley and Hon Martin Foley) not only gave a snapshot of the Australian Perinatal Mental Health scene, but shared with us their passion and commitment to this area.

• Plenary sessions and invited speakers – too many to name but the feedback from delegates was that the learnings were plentiful and much appreciated. Key topics were ‘How the Environment Before and After Birth Affects Infant Development’ (Prof Mark Hanson, UK), ‘Domestic Violence’ (Prof Louise Howard, UK), ‘Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma (Dr Rachel Yehuda, USA), ‘Indigenous Perinatal Mental Health’ (Prof Rhonda Marriott, Aust) and ‘Collaborating With Consumer Organisations (Terri Smith, Aust).

• The historical launch of the Global Alliance for Maternal Mental Health (GAMMH), Dr Alain Gregoire inspired us and the first inaugural meeting was held. Nearly half the delegates were international!

• We were able to celebrate the achievements of Vivette Glover and Nine Glangeaud when Professor Milgrom awarded the John Cox and Marcé medals respectively.

• Conference workshops were fabulous, and included the joint APS (PIPIG), AAIMH & Marcé workshop on Mindful and Reflective Approach to Mother-Infant Intervention and the invited workshops by PIRI’s Jennifer Ericksen and Elizabeth Loughlin on Enhancing the Parent-Infant Relationship (PIRI Community HUGS Program) and Creating a Play Space for the Vulnerable Mother and Infant.


Looking forward to our next International Conference in Bangalore in 2018!

The PIRI Booth was great success!

Jane Fisher, the new Marcé president introduced below after a fun ceremony of ‘passing the baton’ to Olympic style music!

Our Japanese delegation meets Professor Jeannette Milgrom
This year’s program sees a series of expert workshops which build expertise in antenatal and postnatal depression. New additions include our ‘Introduction to Perinatal Mental Health’ covering identification, psychosocial and risk assessment, an introduction to treatment, best practice guidelines and when and where to refer on. Also, our new ‘Masterclass’ offers advanced training in case work. We open on 8 February with a well-received workshop for professionals dealing with families making the transition from home to childcare.

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<th>Date</th>
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<td><strong>February</strong></td>
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| Wednesday, 8th, 9.00am-12.30pm (½ day workshop) | TRAVELLING THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD – Coping with Change: How to Support Young Children in the Transition From Home to Childcare to Kindergarten  
Presented by Carmel Ferretti |
| Wednesday, 22nd | **Level 1:**  
Introduction to Perinatal Mental Health -  
Identification, Risk Management  
Presented by J. Ericksen, R. Watts, J. Milgrom |
| **March** |                                                                                                                                 |
| Wed & Thurs 15th & 16th | **Level 2:**  
Treatment  
Day 1 & 2:  
Treating PND: Getting Ahead of Postnatal Depression (Including Fathers) by J. Ericksen, R. Watts & A. Gemmill  
Day 3:  
- Understanding Mother-Infant Interactions  
- Introduction to HUGS  
Presented by J. Milgrom & E. Loughlin |
| Friday 17th | (3 day workshop – day 3 optional) |
| **April** |                                                                                                                                 |
| | **Level 1:**  
Towards Parenthood –  
Preparation for Parenthood Guided Workbook |
| **May / June** |                                                                                                                                 |
| Wednesday, 31st | **Level 3:**  
MasterClass on Perinatal Group Work - Presented by R. Watts |
| **July** |                                                                                                                                 |
| | **Level 2:**  
Beating the Blues Before Birth – Treating Antenatal Depression  
Promoting Pleasurable Play  
Presented by E. Loughlin |
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 on Thursday the 14th July. 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.
Long Service Awards from Austin Health

>25 years
Jeannette Milgrom and PIRI Staff & Board Members celebrate!

10 years
Charlene Schembri

15 years
Jennie Ericksen

Thank You!
Referrals open again from January 4th, 2017

The team here at PIRI would like to thank our referrers for your ongoing support and the number of referrals we have been receiving for our research and treatment programs.

What happens when we receive referrals?
All individuals referred to our service receive an initial intake call and, if our services are suitable, will be offered a comprehensive psychological assessment. There are a range of different treatment options available including, group programs and individual therapy. If our services are not a good fit for the client’s needs we will refer onto other services. Importantly, we will keep you up to date on how your referral is progressing. To make a referral or receive more information about our programs, please feel free to contact us on (03) 9496 4496 or at piri@austin.org.au.
Hello! My name is Laura and I am a PhD student from the Netherlands. My university started a collaboration with PIRI one year ago, allowing me to visit Melbourne and stay for 10 months to work on a research project titled: “Beating the Blues Before Birth - Follow Up”. We are inviting children aged approximately 5 years, born to mothers with antenatal depression and anxiety, who were randomized to receive either a cognitive behavioural therapy or usual care during their pregnancy. We will compare both groups in terms of current maternal mood, offspring’s cognition and behaviour. In addition, we will conduct brain MRI’s of the children to a look at certain brain area’s and obtain buccal cell samples to look at gene regulation in certain genes involved in neurodevelopment. The first group of mothers and children will visit us in January and we look forward seeing them again and making this project a great success!

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

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.


We would also like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family best wishes for the holidays and for health and happiness throughout the coming year.

We thank you for your support during 2016 and we look forward to a continued relationship in 2016. Happy Holidays from the team at Parent-Infant Research Institute!

PIRI & Infant Clinic Team

Prof Jeannette Milgrom
Executive Director

Dr Sofia Rallis
Psychologist, Researcher

Dr Charlene Holt
Psychologist, Researcher

Dr Jessica Ross
Psychologist, Researcher (on maternity leave)

Ms Jennie Ericksen
Manager, Psychologist

Dr Alan Gemmill
Researcher

Dr Carmel Ferretti
Researcher

Ms Eliza Hartley
Researcher

Dr Carol Newnham
Psychologist, Researcher

Dr Christopher Holt
Researcher

Dr Felicity Holmes
Psychologist

Dr Tamsin Kane
Psychologist

Ms Rachel Watts
Psychologist

Ms Elizabeth Loughlin
Dance Therapist

Ms Barbara Frazer
Admin Assistant

Ms Vera Corbisieri
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