



Unlocking the potential of people in Central Minnesota to build and sustain healthy communities.

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Infant and Toddler Emotional Concerns Drive New Initiative in St. Cloud

Leaders want to strengthen mental health network for young kids

Ever since his father was deployed to Iraq, a preschooler has shown signs of depression.

An infant returns home after a lengthy hospital stay. She is agitated and unable to calm down even though she is physically well.

A toddler has a difficult time managing his feelings. When frustrated, he throws violent tantrums that unnerve his childcare provider and other children.

Children under age five in St. Cloud have experienced these emotional and mental health problems, but most go untreated. Parents and caregivers are often unsure where to turn. Inconsistent relationships, violence, divorce and substance abuse can be contributing factors.

The Initiative Foundation and area leaders are hoping to strengthen early childhood mental health services in greater St. Cloud. With \$1.5 million from the Bush Foundation, the Initiative Foundation selected the St. Cloud area as one of six pilot sites to participate in the statewide Early Childhood Mental Health Initiative, the first of its kind in Minnesota.

The goals of the program are to raise awareness of children’s mental health needs between the ages of birth and five, determine existing services and gaps, and train parents and caregivers how to recognize the signs and get help.

“Although there are many excellent services for children in the community, there is a lack of mental health professionals trained to work with very young children and their families,” said Jane Ellison, Sauk Rapids-Rice School District Early Childhood and Family Education parent educator and project manager for the new Greater St. Cloud Early Childhood Mental Health Coalition. “I get calls for parents and other professionals in the community looking for someone with that expertise, and they find very few resources.

According to the U. S. Office of the Surgeon General, one in ten children suffer from a mental illness, yet only one in five receive needed treatment or services. Left untreated, childhood mental illness often leads to difficulty in school and inability to develop friendships and social skills.

“It is vital for the future of our educational systems and our society as a whole to do all we can to invest in the physical, intellectual, emotional and mental health of all our children at an early age,” said Roy Saigo, St. Cloud State University president and St. Cloud early childhood coalition member. “Children who come to school ready to learn will be better equipped to take advantage of educational opportunities throughout their growth and development.”

The Initiative Foundation is among six Minnesota Initiative Foundations working to address early childhood issues throughout the state. It has helped to form 64 coalitions to improve early care and education opportunities for young children. These include groups in Sartell, Melrose, Kimball and Little Falls as well as St. Cloud’s Success By Six coalition.

“We selected the Greater St. Cloud area for this special initiative because it has a strong base of local opportunities and many people ready to make a difference,” said Linda Kaufmann, senior program manager for children, youth and families at the Initiative Foundation. “We are confident that this pilot site will serve as a model for other central Minnesota communities.”

The first priority of the Greater St. Cloud Early Childhood Mental Health Coalition will be to conduct a community profile survey and identify current services and opportunities for families. A spring and summer series of community forums and strategic planning sessions will lay the basis for an action plan to address the issues faced by parents, childcare providers, healthcare providers, educators and other professionals.

For more information or to participate in coalition activities, contact project manager Jane Ellison at 320-258-1103, Glen Palm at St. Cloud State University at 320-308-2129 (Ext 5635) or Linda Kaufmann with the Initiative Foundation at 320-632-9255. ☺

Prevent Child Abuse Minnesota’s 2007 Walk/Run

For Children To End Child Abuse will be held on Saturday September 8th at the Saint Paul Saints Stadium in Saint Paul. Join us for a mini baseball clinic, children’s activities, refreshments, a music concert, and some special prizes. The fun begins at 8:00 a.m. Visit www.pcamn.org today to register individually or as a team.

Please call Rolanda DelaMartinez at (651) 523-0099 ext. 19 or toll free at (800) 621-6322 to become a Walk/Run team captain, corporate sponsor, or to volunteer at the event.

All proceeds benefit Prevent Child Abuse Minnesota’s programs serving children and families in Minnesota.

Protective Factors for Promoting Healthy Families

Protective factors are conditions in families and communities that, when present, increase the health and well-being of children and families. They are attributes that serve as buffers, helping parents who might otherwise be at risk of abusing their children to find resources, supports, or coping strategies that allow them to parent effectively, even under stress.

For years, researchers have been studying both the risk factors common among families experiencing abuse and neglect and those factors that protect families who are under stress.

Research has shown that the following protective factors are linked to a lower incidence of child abuse and neglect: **Nurturing and Attachment; Knowledge of Parenting and Child and Youth Development; Parental Resilience; Social Connections; and Concrete Support for Parents.** For more information, please visit www.preventchildabuse.org.

“Ready – Set – Go”

The Brainerd Lakes Area Early Childhood Coalition had a goal to help kids transition into kindergarten. The result of their goal is *Ready – Set – Go*, a planned series of three events to bring early care providers, kindergarten teachers and parents/grandparents together to discuss how children entering kindergarten can do so in a more prepared and stress free way.

Ready – Set – Go's mission is to foster collaboration between early care and elementary school professionals in order to build professional relationships and communicate kindergarten expectations as they relate to early care settings, transition activities and the success



of early learners, so children enter kindergarten better prepared to learn and thrive.

Through a variety of discussion and events early care providers, kindergarten teachers, parents, and community members will begin, increase and continue to communicate to come up with ways that children can start school having been given the best information and opportunities for them to be successful.

The Initiative Foundation has offered grants for other Early Childhood Coalitions to implement this Regional program. For more information on *Ready – Set – Go* or what will be happening in your area, contact Karin Ihnen at 877-632-9255. ☺

Sartell Tackles Early Childhood Obesity and Healthy Choices

During the Sartell-St. Stephen Early Childhood Coalition's visioning process, early childhood obesity was a concern. What do you do to engage young kids to eat healthy and be active? You have to have fun, and you have to educate people about what's healthy. And that's just what they did by implementing Moovin' & Groovin' and Cookin' Up Some Fun, a six part project sponsored by the Sartell-St. Stephen Early Childhood Coalition, Sartell-St. Stephen ECFE, and numerous area businesses. Each week parents and their young children have an opportunity to visit the ECFE Café, participate in a Sports Sampler, and then attend breakout

sessions where parents form a discussion group and children perform a variety of activities.

Meals are made by parents and their children and the menu includes a different meal each week, such as pizza, breakfast items, Italian, Mexican and Asian food nights, and even a sandwich night. Each meal has been sponsored by local businesses.

Parent discussion topics include: Dental health, healthy meal/snack ideas and preventing early childhood obesity, hurried child syndrome, sleep deprivation/bedtime routines, physical therapy, and ECFE programs. ☺

What is a "Healthy Diet"?

The Dietary Guidelines describe a **healthy diet** as one that

- Emphasizes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products;
- Includes lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts; and
- Is low in saturated fats, *trans* fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars.

For more info, visit www.mypyramid.gov



YAR UPDATE

The YAR (Youth as Resources) programs funded by the Initiative Foundation have had a successful year. Currently there are twelve programs with a total of 109 youth actively serving on their boards and forty-two adults serving as board members and mentors for the youth. Two of the twelve programs have just started and are in the process of training their youth and developing their guidelines. These two programs have not reached the point of awarding grant money for youth lead projects in their communities.

Since July 1, 2006, the YAR programs awarded forty-eight grants in the amount of \$23,269 for the youth led projects in their local communities. The guidelines for awarding grants include the stipulation that the grant projects must be youth initiated, youth led, and the program must benefit the community. The YAR boards are strict about following those guidelines and have denied funding grant applications when all three criteria are not met.

In addition to the grant dollars that were awarded to each YAR program from the Initiative Foundation, local YAR sponsor dollars contributed \$44,121 in cash and in-kind support to their respective programs.

Highlights of some of the grant projects that were funded by local YAR boards include:

- An FFA group in developing learning stations where children who attend their local county fair can learn about agriculture and where their food comes from.
- A college class spent a day with children who are on a waiting list for a Kinship Partners (similar to Big Brothers/Big Sisters). They planned a full day of activities and will continue acting as mentors for these children throughout the school year.
- Youth developed a three-day, late afternoon/evening project where phones in the high school were staffed by youth volunteers who read stories to young children who called in to have a story read to them. They then sent that book to the child who called.
- A Girl Scout troop developed a project where they worked with nursing home residents and together they made fleece baby blankets that were donated to their local crisis nursery.
- A second grade classroom received a grant to purchase garden seeds that they planted and nurtured into plants that they ultimately sold to the public, donated to the needy or planted on school grounds. The money they raised from the plants they sold will be used to continue the project in future years.
- A youth group made “Welcome Baskets” for new mothers at New Beginnings – a home for unwed mothers.
- A middle school group of students received a grant to help them purchase and install a handicapped accessible swing for the playground at their school.
- An elementary class designed and made “Distraction Bags” for children who were patients at the short stay unit in the hospital.

Funding Opportunities

Mini-Grants Promote Tolerance – [Southern Poverty Law Center: Mix It Up Grants Program](#) The Mix It Up Grants Program, administered by Southern Poverty Law Center, provides \$500 grants for youth-directed activist projects that focus on identifying, crossing, and challenging social boundaries in schools and communities throughout the United States. Projects must promote collaboration by encouraging different youth groups, clubs or community groups to work together. **Ideally, the project should be created and implemented by youth, and youth must serve as decision-makers in the project. Applications are accepted at any time.**

ETA YouthBuild Grants – For a list of Frequently Asked Questions or for more information visit www.doleta.gov/youth_services. **Deadline for receipt of applications is July 3, 2007.**

Communication Tips

Good communication is very likely the most important aspect of building healthy family relationships. Reading, writing, speaking and listening and using body language are ways of communicating we use every day. Virginia Satir, a family therapist said, “The greatest gift I can receive from anyone is to be seen by them, to be heard by them, to be understood by them and to be listened to”. Each of us should be open with others about their ideas, wants, needs, joys and hurts. Families and other should listen to the other with their hearts as well as their ears.

Communication skills are life skills that we need and use to share information and ideas with other people. In fact, in seven out of every ten minutes that we are awake, we are communicating in some way.



To ensure good communication the **sender** needs to:

- Send an honest, direct and clear message.
- Check feedback to see if the message was understood.

The receiver needs to:

- Listen with total concentration.
- Interpret words, feelings and body language.
- Understand (or attempt to understand) the sender’s point of view.

Source: Positive Parenting Curriculum,. K. Ihnen

VISIT www.ifound.org TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE
INITIATIVE FOUNDATION

Helmets for Kids

Being a brain injury survivor and avid bicyclist, Mike Heikes (aka Pedal Monster) knows that a brain injury and its lifelong effects are challenging. He has fitted and given away, free of charge, over 2,000 bicycle helmets since 1999 and feels good knowing that wearing a ‘properly fitted’ bicycle helmet reduces the risk of sustaining a brain injury by 85%. Mike has ridden bicycle over 150,000 miles in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and all of the bordering Canadian providences. Through those rides he has raised over \$60,000 for charities and helmets.



Mike is currently the chair of the Helmet Use Subcommittee of the State Bicycle Advisory Committee in St. Paul. If you know of someone who needs a helmet or a group that would like to hear Mike speak about helmet safety and what bicycle riding cross country looks like through the eyes of a Brian Injury Survivor, please call him at 218-763-6023 (before 7:00 pm) or email at helmetsforkids@yahoo.com.

Mediation Services

The St. Cloud State University-based Institute for Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) has acquired funding to provide ADR services to clients with financial need. Funding comes from the Bremer Foundation, Initiative Foundation and State of Minnesota. Potential clients can be individuals, groups or organizations who meet the income/revenue eligibility requirements. ADR is also interested in helping cities and townships in any type of land dispute. For clients who meet the income/revenue eligibility requirements, SDR services are free of charge; for those who do not, services will be assessed on a sliding fee scale. ADR services include mediation (both interest-based and transformative), peace circles, facilitation, and strategic planning. Translation and transportation services can also be provided for income qualifying clients.

For more information on the Institute for ADR, please visit our website at www.stcloudstate.edu/continuingstudies/instituteADR. If you know of someone, a group, or an organization in need of financial assistance and ADR services, please contact us. Institute for Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) at (320) 308-4962.

Community Contacts

Youth As Resources

Annandale Youth as Resources

Contact: Chris Runke
Phone: 320-274-3058
Email: crunke@annandale.k12.mn.us

Cambridge Isanti Youth as Resources

Contact: Jen Olson
Phone: 763-689-6225
Email: jen_olson@cambridge.k12.mn.us

Little Falls Youth as Resources

Contact: Mary Kenna
Phone: 320-616-7075
Email: mkenna@charter.net

Onamia Youth As Resources

Contact: Tammy Goodwin
Phone: 320-532-7665 or 320-224-1289
Email: tammy@familypathways.org

Pine City Youth as Resources

Contact: Pam Jambeck or Becky Maki
Phone: 320-492-6803 or 320-629-7331
Email: auroraconsultants02@yahoo.com or bmaki@pinecity.k12.mn.us

Princeton Youth as Resources

Contact: Tom Tschumper
Phone: 763-389-6844
Email: tom.tschumper@princeton.k12.mn.us

Brainerd Area Youth as Resources

Contact: Nancy Cross
Phone: 218-829-5279
Email: caction@infotelcom.net

Delano Youth as Resources

Contact: Nathan Kennedy
Phone: 763-972-3365 ext. 2137
Email: nkennedy@delano.k12.mn.us

North Branch Youth as Resources

Contact: Ann Gauvin
Phone: 651-674-1029
Email: AGauvin@northbranch.k12.mn.us

Pequot Lakes Youth as Resources

Contact: Brenda Myers
Phone: 218-568-9360
Email: blmyers@tds.net

Pine River Backus Youth as Resources

Contact: Kelly Green
Phone: 218-587-4292
Email: abisgood@tds.net

St. Cloud Area Youth as Resources

Contact: Christine Midthun
Phone: 320-252-0227 ext. 29
Email: cmidthun@unitedwayhelps.org

Methamphetamine Coalitions

Benton County

Contact: Cynthia Heltunen
Phone: 320-968-5147
Email: Cynthia.Heltunen@co.benton.mn.us

Chisago County (no coalition)

Contact: Cyndi Carroll
Email: clcarro@co.chisago.mn.us

Kanabec County (no coalition)

Contact: Lori Swanson
Email: lori.swanson@co.kanabec.mn.us

Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe

Contact: Vicki White
Phone: 218-335-8237
Email: vfwhite@mail.llbo.org

Mille Lacs County

Contact: Sally Burg
Phone: 763-389-5080 ext. 102
Email: SBurg@rumriverhs.org

Pine County (no coalition)

Contact: Patt Hass
Email: PKHass@co.pine.mn.us

Stearns County

Contact: Suzie Osaki-Holm
Phone: 320-656-6083
Email: susan.osaki.holm@co.stearns.mn.us

Wadena County

Contact: Heidi Happel
Phone: 218-631-7629
Email: heidi.happel@co.wadena.mn.us

Cass County

Contact: Merilee Payne
Phone: 218-547-1340 ext. 213
Email: Marilee.payne@co.cass.mn.us

Crow Wing County

Contact: Rose Hauge
Phone: 218-824-1102
Email: Rose.Hauge@co.crow-wing.mn.us

Isanti County

Contact: Matt Holida
Phone: 763-689-8265
Email: matt.holida@co.isanti.mn.us

Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

Contact: Tammy Miller
Phone: 320-532-7488 or 320-532-7863
Email: Tammym@millelacsojibwe.nsn.us

Morrison County

Contact: LeeAnn Sampson
Phone: 320-632-0367
Email: leeanns@co.morrison.mn.us

Sherburne County (no coalition)

Contact: Tim Jeanneta
Email: Tim.Jeanetta@co.sherburne.mn.us

Todd County

Contact: Chandra Schmidt
Phone: 320-732-4452
Email: Chandra.schmidt@co.todd.mn.us

Wright County MEADA

Contact: Karla Heeter
Phone: 763-682-7697
Email: karla.heeter@co.wright.mn.us

Early Childhood Coalitions

Brainerd Lakes Area Early Childhood Coalition

Contact: Tammy Filippi
Phone: 218-828-1281
Email: filippi@charter.net

Kimball Early Childhood Coalition

Contact: Cindy Stelten
Phone: 320-398-2203
Email: cstelten@meltel.net

Melrose Early Childhood Coalition

Contact: Dottie Pallansch
Phone: 320-256-3622
Email: dottiep@clearwire.net

Pequot Lakes / Cross Lake/ Breezy Point Early Childhood Coalition

Contact: Patty Durham
Phone: 218-568-9200
Email: pdurham@pequotlakes.k12.mn.us

Princeton Early Childhood Coalition

Contact: Sue Hix
Phone: 763-389-1774
Email: shix@sherbtel.net

Sartell-St. Stephen Area Early Childhood Coalition

Contact: Amy Hammond or Michelle Hansen
Phone: 320-203-1050 or 320-253-1504
Email: akham416@charter.net or
werlygirl@clearwire.net

THRIVE Early Childhood Mental Health Coalition

Contact: Jane Ellison
Phone: 320-258-1103

Cambridge Early Childhood Coalition

Contact: Sally Nault-Maurer
Phone: 651-674-1188
Email: naultmaur5@aol.com

Little Falls Early Childhood Coalition

Contact: Jenelle Peters
Phone: 320-616-6240
Email: peters8686@charter.net

North Branch Early Childhood Coalition

Contact: Sally Nault-Maurer
Phone: 651-674-1188
Email: naultmaur5@aol.com

Pine City Area Early Childhood Coalition

Contact: Janice Hofschulte
Phone: 320-629-4536
Email: hofschulte@pinetech.edu

St. Cloud Area Early Childhood Coalition

Contact: Betty Schnettler
Phone: 320-252-0227
Email: bschnettler@unitedwayhelps.org



Additional Links & Resources

- National Survey on Drug Use and Health The NSDUH Report (May 3, 2007)
- Demographic Differences in Youth Out-of-School Time Participation: A Research Summary
- Tobacco-Free Sports Posters – Available free to Minnesota residents. For more information contact the Minnesota Prevention Resource Center, 2720 Hwy 10 NE, Mounds View, MN 551124092 or visit <http://www.emprc.org/catalog/index.html> for these and other great resources and materials.
- NOT A DROP brochure from the MN Dept. of Public Safety is available from the MPRC Clearinghouse. Note: Customers are responsible for shipping costs, which vary by amount ordered. Please contact Tou for shipping information or to place your order: 763.427.5310 x167 or 800.782.1878 or mprc-order@miph.org.

Calendar of Events	
June	
15	MN Youth Intervention Programs Association (YIPA) quarterly training “A Successful Menu for Refugee Kids: Serving up the Right Stuff”. 1:00 – 3:30 p.m. Arrowhead Resort, Alexandria, MN. Register online at www.mnyipa.org or call with questions: 1-888-945-YIPA.
18-19	2007 Minnesota Rural Health Conference to be held in Duluth. (More info call 218-727-9390)
22	SAPST Refresher Course. 8:30 – 4:00 p.m. at the Bomier Training Room at Minnesota Institute of Public Health, 2720 Hwy 10 NE, Mounds View. To register, visit http://www.emprc.org/sapstrefresher/sapst_register.html .
27	Women Experiencing Mental Health & Addiction Issues – Emerging & Innovative Treatments and Approaches. Registration: 7:45 a.m. Training Session: 8:15 a.m.– 12:00 p.m. CentraCare Health Plaza / Windfeldt Room. Call United Way of Central MN at 320-252-0227 for more information.
July	
16-18	8 th Annual Joining Voices Conference. Native American Prevention Program Sharing. Held at Shooting Star Casino, Hotel and Event Center in Mahnomon, MN. For more info or to register online, visit http://captus.samhsa.gov/central/joiningvoices.cfm
24-25	Maternal and Child Health (School of Public Health) Summer Institute on Addressing Health Disparities “Connecting Communications and Health” at Humphrey Center, U of M West Bank. www.epi.umn.edu/mch .
30 – 1	11 th Annual U of M Summer Institute in Adolescent Health. “Engaging Youth – Working Together with Parents & Families”. Located at the MN Dept of Education Conference Center, Roseville. More info – http://cpheo.sph.umn.edu/cpheo/institute/adolescenthealth/home.html
October	
10-11	33 rd Annual Program Sharing Conference, Alcohol, Tobacco, Other Drug Abuse and Violence Prevention. St. Cloud Civic Center. Save the Date. Questions – contact Katie Zientara at 763-427-5310 ext. 129.