

## The Bi-Monthly Broadcast



Greetings! Summer is here and with it brings vacations, camping trips, Pow-wows, and other fun activities and summer traditions. It's a good time to remember to take care of yourself with all of the hard work you are doing, work which can often stay with us after we leave the office. With that in mind, I've included some information on self-care to help you think about ways to keep yourself healthy as you serve others. Many of you are also working on efforts to promote breastfeeding, along with increasing the initiation rates and duration of breastfeeding. Below, you will find some information to help you talk with teens about breastfeeding. Other tidbits include information on where to find safety tips and product recalls, along with our contractor's corner, which highlights some work of the Flathead City-County Health Department. As always, thank you for your work serving young families in Montana. Be sure to make some time for yourself to enjoy the summer and relax.

-Kelly Hart, Healthy Montana Teen Parent Coordinator



### Tips and Information on Breastfeeding For Teen Moms



#### Inside this issue:

Contractor's Corner: Flathead City-County Health Department	2
US Consumer Product Safety Commission Website Provides Safety Tips and Product Recalls	2
Time Out! Taking and Making Time for Yourself	3
Upcoming Training Opportunities	4

Increasing the initiation and duration of breastfeeding in teen moms is one of the performance measures of the Healthy Montana Teen Parent Program. According to the La Leche League International (LLLI), an international organization providing support, information, education, promotion, and encouragement of breastfeeding, less than 18% of pregnant teens report planning to breastfeed, and even fewer actually do.

#### Special Concerns of Teen Mothers

LLLI has identified a number of special concerns teen moms may have about breastfeeding. Concerns include how breastfeeding will affect their bodies, their relationships, and other activities they engage in, along with how it will affect them physically (e.g., can they take birth control while breastfeeding? Smoke?). LLLI suggests offering information about the benefits of breastfeeding, avoiding judgmental language, and recognizing the support or influence (or lack thereof) of others in the teen's life such as their own mother or the father of their child. For more from LLLI, visit <http://www.llli.org/llleaderweb/lv/lvmarapr90p19.html>

#### Special Needs of Teen Mothers

Teen mothers who breastfeed need more nutrients than older moms because their own bodies are still developing, reports Kaiser Permanente. For other nutritional tips for breastfeeding teen moms, check out their fact sheet, *Breast-feeding Diet for Teen Mothers and Mothers of Twins or More: After Your Visit* at [http://mydoctor.kaiserpermanente.org/ncal/Images/Breastfeeding%20Diet-Mothers%20of%20Twins-English\\_tcm28-12749.pdf](http://mydoctor.kaiserpermanente.org/ncal/Images/Breastfeeding%20Diet-Mothers%20of%20Twins-English_tcm28-12749.pdf)

Here are some other resources to help you talk about breastfeeding with your teen moms:

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office on Women's Health, *An Easy Guide to Breastfeeding for American Indian and Alaska Native Families*  
<http://womenshealth.gov/publications/our-publications/breastfeeding-guide/BreastfeedingGuide-NativeAmerican-English.pdf>
- Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, *Strategies to Promote Breastfeeding Among Adolescent Mothers* (Free article)  
<http://archpedi.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=189875>

## Contractor's Corner: Flathead City County Health Department By Craig Dowelgrim, Fatherhood Support Specialist

In January of this year I began working with the Flathead County Health Dept. providing parenting services for teen fathers. This is the first time such a program has been offered by the county. The idea was to develop a similar program to what is already being provided for teen mothers, only tailored to young dads. I met with my first clients in January, some of my clients already with child/children and some expecting. I realized quickly that these teenage fathers not only needed suggestions but were eager to be involved. I was a bit surprised by the response I got from each client. Prior to working with these fathers, I was of the opinion that teenage boys are incapable of such adult responsibilities and given the chance would walk away. The image most see when talking about teen pregnancy is that of the teenage girl. The image for me has changed within the first few meetings. These young dads want to be involved and be an active parent in their child's life. They just need help knowing what this looks like.

I started seeing "Tony" who is 19 years old and has 3 young children. Tony lives with the mother of his youngest

child. He has no contact with the other two children who are from 2 different young mothers. Tony is in school but said he would quit if he could find a job. He said that the only reason he was in school was because the mother of his baby wanted him to graduate with her. It was clear that Tony didn't want to be in school, even his teachers said he was rarely at school and when he was he put in very little effort, if any at all. Tony and I started with two goals; to get a job and to graduate from high school.

For the first few months, Tony seemed to be very standoffish and withdrawn. However, he did make all of our weekly meetings. When talking with Tony he often refers to not having a dad himself and that was the reason he was going to be a good dad. He struggles to identify with any positive male role models in his life. He is just "winging it". Like most teenagers Tony believes he knows what he is doing. "I just need a job", he says often. It quickly becomes clear that Tony needs more than a job and not just from me but he comes to that realization also. His



relationship with the mother of his child is often strained and stressful. Tony frequently leaves and stays away for a day or two, sometimes up to a week. Tony says his lack of work is putting stress on their relationship. Most of what we worked on those first months was relationship building and for Tony that meant not leaving when things got hard. We openly talk about the difficulties in being in a relationship and raising a child with someone. We still continue to work on his role as a father and partner to his family.

By the middle of March, Tony was doing the bare minimum at school and still struggling at home.

*(Continued on page 3)*

## US Consumer Product Safety Commission Website Offers Safety Tips and Product Recalls



It's hard to stay on top of the news, and even more so when it comes to safety and product recalls for infant and children's clothing, gear, and toys.

That's why the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission put together an online clearinghouse of information related to over 5,000 product recalls and safety news. This website provides information related to recent and past recalls. Additionally, press releases from years past on

safety tips can also be found on the website. Topics range from things like baby slings/wraps to holiday safety to toy safety. In time for the summer season, some summer safety tips include:

- Wear a helmet and other safety gear when biking, or skating, and when riding a scooter, ATV or horse.
- If you bring a portable heater when camping, use one that is equipped with an oxygen depletion sensor to avoid deadly levels of carbon mon-

oxide.

- Install window guards to prevent children from falling out of open windows.

To learn more about these, and other safety tips, and product recalls, go to:

<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/prerel.html>

### ***(Contractor's corner continued)***

The job issue was still a huge problem for him and he said he wanted to leave and go over to North Dakota. At this point he was grasping at straws, the pressure was so overwhelming for him at times and he disappears for long periods. However, he only missed one of our scheduled appointments and showed up even when things seemed to be spiraling out of control.

In the early part of April, something has changed in Tony. He no longer leaves when things get tough. He uses the tools we work on in our meetings at home. He is now intent on graduating and he will be graduating this school year. He still is looking for work but now states he doesn't want to leave his family for long periods of time. He is much more motivated than when we first met. He seems more hopeful and engaged. His teachers say he has made the biggest turnaround in the entire school. He and his partner con-

tinue to work on communication in their relationship.

Tony still has a long way to go, but his change has been very significant. He now brings the baby to our meetings and I am amazed by Tony's attentiveness as a father. He is very unsure of himself when it comes to being a dad, but he is trying hard to do the right thing. He still needs a lot of support as do all of our teenage dads, but he now has the tools and desire to ask for help and advice. Tony's success is due to the great support he is getting at school and from the community at large. Like most teenage boys he struggles with his role as a man and trying to find his place in life, but unlike most he is a teenage father.

As we learn more and more regarding the importance of fathers in their children's lives, we need to focus on the

community involvement and support for the young dads. We have to change our perception of teenage fathers, moving away from seeing this issue as a consequence for negative behavior. Instead we need to help these young people through these difficult challenges they face. After all, they are children raising children. If we really want to address the teen pregnancy issue we need to have strong support systems in place to help teens that are already parents or are expecting. In the much larger picture, we as a community need to provide a comprehensive sex education plan to prevent teen pregnancy in the first place. Working with these young men has changed my view on this subject. Seeing the difficulties they face first hand has brought clarity to our mission. I look forward to the development of this program and to the future of the young people that we serve.

## **Time Out! Making and Taking Time for Yourself**

Our jobs require that we make time for others— to support them, to guide them, and to care for them. While our jobs are fulfilling, those we work with can frustrate us, make us sad, and even (re)traumatize us through their experiences or reminders of our own past experiences. But do we ever remember to take care of ourselves?

Because of this emotional investment in our work, it's important to remember to stop and take time for ourselves, to refill our energy stores. This is important for our own health, resilience, and job satisfaction. Our jobs can be stressful, taking a toll on our health. Signs of stress include weight changes, problems sleeping, frequent bouts of anger, depression, and feeling "burned out".

Here are some tips and reminders for ways to take a time out for yourself.

- Talk to someone. Friends, loved ones, and colleagues can lend a supportive shoulder when you need to vent or process.
- Remember that it's okay to say "no". It can be hard when you feel responsible for things, but saying no will help you set realistic goals, and save you time and energy.
- Understand and accept that you can't do everything and there is no such thing as a perfect caregiver.
- Regular exercise can lift your mood and provide a distraction from what troubles you. Take a walk during a break at work to help clear your mind.
- Meditation is a great way to feel restored and refocused. Close your

eyes and slowly take deep breaths. Bring your focus to the tip of your nose and count to 10 with each inhalation. Let your thoughts float by, acknowledging their presence, but not giving in to them.

- Take time each week to do something that you enjoy— read, hike, walk, shop, bake, visit a close friend or cherished family member, or lay in your yard and just watch the clouds go by.
- Stuck at a traffic light? Let the red light remind you to pause and take a deep breath.



## UPCOMING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

### AUGUST

#### **White Earth Child Care Program-**

*Communities Collaborative Conference- 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference*

August 7 – 9, 2012 • Mahnomon, MN

<http://www.whiteearthchildcare.com/conference.html>



#### **Native Wellness Institute–**

*Healthy Relationships Training of Trainers*

August 14–16, 2012 • Billings, MT

<http://www.nativewellness.com/events/pdf/agenda/HRTOTAugust2012WebBrochure.pdf>

### SEPTEMBER

#### **National Indian Child Welfare Association Training Institutes–**

*Promoting Youth and Family Involvement*

September 5–7, 2012 • Portland, OR

<http://www.nicwa.org/training/institutes/training2/>

#### **Missoula City-County Health Department and Community Medical Center–**

*Certified Lactation Counselor Training*

September 10–14, 2012 • Missoula, MT

Contact Mary Pittaway with the Missoula WIC program for more information- call (406) 258-4837 or email [mpittaway@co.missoula.mt.us](mailto:mpittaway@co.missoula.mt.us)

### OCTOBER

#### **Healthy Teen Network–**

*The Power of Youth: Joining Forces to Achieve Positive Outcomes!*

October 16–19, 2012 • Minneapolis, MN

<http://www.healthyteennetwork.org>

\*Have training opportunities to share? Send them to [Khart2@mt.gov](mailto:Khart2@mt.gov) \*

## **A Quick Word About the Office of Adolescent Health Annual Training and The Healthy Teen Network Conference**



**Healthy Teen Network**

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES  
OF TEENS AND YOUNG FAMILIES

It has previously been mentioned that the Office of Adolescent Health Annual Training would be held the day before the start of the Healthy Teen Network Conference in Minneapolis this October.

Recent information from the Office of Adolescent Health is that the Annual Training will be held early next year. This means that we will not be assisting with funds for folks to travel to Minneapolis during that time. If you hope to attend the Healthy Teen Network conference, please plan it as part of your budget for the next grant year.

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