

**REPORT TO THE PROVINCIAL STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE INFANT
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
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The Provincial Inservice for the Infant Development Program was held in November at the University of British Columbia (UBC). The first two days were devoted to training in the administration of the Gesell Assessment, the second two days were learning about *Responsive Teaching* by Dr. Gerald Mahoney and Ms. Frida Perales, and the last day was a presentation by Dr. Wendy Hall from the Department of Nursing at UBC on sleep problems in infants. The Regional Advisors taught the Gesell training and since we have reduced the number of Regional Advisors teaching the Gesell at any one time, I would like to thank my colleagues who did an excellent job teaching the Gesell. Dr. Mahoney is an enlightening professor and paired with his wife, this was one of the most useful and interesting two days of learning. Dr. Hall's presentation was practical and beneficial. I had a number of Infant Development Consultants email me after Dr. Mahoney's, Ms. Frida Perales and Dr. Hall's presentations to say they thought this was the most useful inservice that they had experienced to date. They were thankful for having the opportunity to receive such high quality and relevant education.

I want to acknowledge the work of the other Regional Advisors. They are very skilled at teaching and facilitating groups. Their ability to teach the material to a group of diverse students who come to the training from different backgrounds and varying levels of education is challenging and the Regional Advisors met those challenges with skill, expertise and professionalism.

The Ministry for Children and Family Development, Fraser Early Childhood Partners Council held two one-day forums in different areas of the Fraser Region recently in which professionals from various agencies attended. The focus of the forum was to contribute and discuss ideas about the plans for the priorities and key components for service development in different communities in the Fraser Region and in the Region as a whole. The information gathered in these two forums will be used in the revisions to the Fraser Region Early Childhood Framework. I attended one of the forums and look forward to seeing the compilation of ideas from both forums in the revision to the Framework.

BCCH hosted a half-day conference on plagiocephaly which I attended and found interesting and helpful. I was relieved to hear, on the recent conference call with the Regional Physiotherapy advisors and other professionals who address physiotherapy needs and issues in B.C., that there will be further information disseminated about the use of equipment for infants. There was considerable concern arising from a comment made during the plagiocephaly course that there is a possible misunderstanding about the use of infant positioning toys which was

mentioned at the conference. The topic of e-mentoring new therapists in B.C. as well as Infant Development Program staff came up on this phone call and this idea has tremendous potential in B.C. for assisting staff in isolated communities.

The IDP Supervisors in the Lower Mainland have begun meeting again after a lengthy break during the summer. This continues to provide an avenue for support and sharing ideas. We have been discussing having a Regional Inservice in the New Year and will make a decision about the topic and the date at our next meeting later this week.

The Western Canadian Association for Infant Mental Health has met monthly since October after taking a break during the summer. There has been discussion at each meeting this fall about the Science of the Heart conference which took place in Nelson in September on infant and child mental health as well as other subjects related to families.

The Gesell Assessment kit orders are steady and come from all over the Province. Now with professionals from other programs being trained in the use of the Gesell Assessment, there is a higher volume of orders too.

I am involved with a multi-ministerial, longitudinal research project examining the potential factors which may contribute to the psycho-social outcomes in children. This research is a collaborative effort not only amongst a number of Ministries, it also involves Simon Fraser University, the University of British Columbia, and Women's and Children's Hospital of British Columbia. Recruitment and assessment has already begun on this project and so far has been limited to families living in the lower mainland area. The other research project I am working on is looking at the influence of having a child with special needs on the health of the family. This is a study funded by the Disability Health Research Network and is being conducted in partnership between the School of Nursing at the University of British Columbia and the Burnaby Association for Community Inclusion. This project is further along and there are families participating from the lower mainland although any family from throughout British Columbia is welcome to participate.