



Connections

Fall Newsletter 2010

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A Letter from the Director:

Dear BBH Certified Gottman Educators,

Welcome to the Fall 2010 Edition of our Bringing Baby Home Connections Newsletter! I hope you are all enjoying the changing of the seasons. We've got several exciting updates to share with you in this newsletter. Just as the leaves are starting to change color and we're going through the transition to cooler weather, the BBH team is going through a transition of our own...

Upcoming Events:

Spring 2011 Seattle Certificate Training TBA Soon!



Family Transitions:

Congratulations go out to our BBH Program Coordinator, Emily Nackley and her husband, CGE Lloyd Nackley, who have officially made the transition to parenthood! Welcome to the world, Louis Lloyd Nackley, who made his official arrival at Swedish Hospital in Ballard on Sunday September 26, 2010. Emily reports that mom, dad, and baby are doing well. Emily is looking forward to having time to focus on being a mom and spending time with Baby Louis over the next several months. We hope to get to meet Baby Louis once he is ready for a visit to the lab! While Emily is enjoying her maternity leave, we have a new member of the BBH team to welcome...

Welcome to Allison White, BBH Assistant Program Coordinator!

Allison White has been working as a volunteer at the Relationship Research Institute for the last year and a half and finally became a CGE herself this past February. Allison has a varied history working with families and young children, especially in the realm of aquatics: promoting safety knowledge to the parents, teaching swimming to all age and skill levels, giving parents teaching tips, and providing creative ways to learn the swimming skills in the context of games and play. She has also worked as an elementary

school tutor and most recently she works as an in-home autism therapist assistant. Allison graduated with honors and received a BA in Psychology with a minor in Music from Seattle University, and plans on applying for a doctorate in Clinical Psychology focusing on trauma and PTSD. We are very excited that Allison has agreed to officially become part of the BBH staff as our new Assistant Program Coordinator. Emily did a fabulous job of training Allison on the ins and outs of BBH over the last couple months; now that Emily is on leave, Allison is ready to start flying solo! Allison will be taking over Emily's role and will be helping you fill product orders, responding to the main BBH email and phone lines, and assisting with training-related tasks. We appreciate your patience as Allison continues to learn the tricks of the BBH trade in the upcoming months. Please be in touch with Allison to introduce yourself and let her know how she can support you: allisonw@rrinstitute.com.

Certification Training News!

We are very excited to welcome a new group of 38 Certified Gottman Educators who joined the BBH family this past September! The fall Certification Training was a large success; I was very pleased to see such thoughtful and positive comments from those who attended via the post-CT evaluation forms. We truly value the opportunity to provide educators with a top-notch training that is both educational and enjoyable and we always appreciate receiving feedback on how we can continue to do so and strengthen our program along the way. We've recently found that a large portion of our CGEs end up attending the training since they've heard about our program from colleagues, friends, and family members who have participated in the training previously. Thank you all for sharing information about BBH workshops and CGE training opportunities with those you know. Please continue to spread the word about our trainings and the valuable service that CGEs are able to provide to expectant couples and new parents in their communities and beyond. We are planning our next Seattle-Based Certification Training for Spring 2011 and will send out details once the dates are finalized. As always, folks who are not able to visit Seattle for the training have the opportunity to request an on-site training, where BBH Training Specialists come to your location. Please see the website www.bbhonline.org or check in with Allison for more details about upcoming Seattle-based and on-site training opportunities.

Product and Service Updates!

1. *The BBH Workshop Presentation DVD is now being made available to CGEs in a changeable/revisable format.* We have received your feedback and realize that CGEs would like to be able to revise the PowerPoint presentation that is included with this DVD. Thus, the DVD that includes a PowerPoint presentation that can now be revised to better meet your needs is currently available! Order yours today using the product order form http://www.bbhonline.org/BBH/media/downloads/BBH-Product-Order-Form_September-2010.pdf.
2. *We are now offering Single-Workbook Toolkits for Couples.* We understand that many of our CGEs face challenges with covering the costs of materials to run workshops. Even though we believe that it is ideal to offer workshop attendees two Couples Toolkits so that they can each work from one individually, we have decided to offer a single-workbook Couples Toolkit that can be used when running low-cost workshops. Both the single and original Couples Toolkits come with a set of BBH card decks. The product order form above lists this new option and can be used to order either Toolkit.
3. *The Couples Toolkit is being translated into Spanish.* We have heard your feedback regarding the need to offer BBH workshops to Spanish-speaking couples and are in the process of creating a Spanish-translation of the workbook and card deck sets. CGE Dr. Daniel Kusnir is currently in the process of translating the materials and verifying his translation with a group of Spanish-speaking expectant couples in Northern California. We expect to have the translation finalized by early next year and plan to begin offering this new product at that time. We will keep you posted on this process.
4. *New BBH brochures are available to help CGEs with advertising to couples.* We recognize how challenging it can be for CGEs to market the BBH program to expectant couples in your communities. To help you with your efforts, we have created new brochures that are currently available for you to download for free on our website: <http://www.bbhonline.org/certified-gottman-educator/Marketing-Brochures.aspx>. If you would like hard copies of the brochures to distribute in your area, feel free to download

the brochures and have them printed on your own, or contact BBH and we'd be happy to have some printed and sent to you for the cost of printing and shipping.

Research Update!

Reports from CGE Jamie Christie show that couples from Canberra, Australia going through the transition to parenthood have benefited from their participation in BBH workshops! Preliminary results from their study where couples were randomly assigned to participate in BBH or not show that couples who did attend the workshops did show a decline in relationship satisfaction after having the baby, but satisfaction for both moms and dads was back up to pre-birth levels by the time the infant turned one. Levels of satisfaction at that time were also significantly higher for couples in the BBH group compared to those who did not attend the workshop. Depression for BBH workshop couples was also lower at 12-months after the birth; this difference was especially robust for fathers. Thanks to Jamie and his team for sharing these fascinating results. Good luck with the rest of the research!

The Importance of Fathers!

As all of our BBH CGEs know, fathers are very important parts of our families. Offering the BBH workshop to expectant couples has been shown to be a good way to prepare fathers for fatherhood, since BBH research shows that dads who took BBH were more satisfied with their parental roles and better at soothing their newborns. RRI Research Assistants Juhn Tse and Curt Hine line have reviewed some recent research about the importance of fathers during the transition to fatherhood.

BBH and the 50th Anniversary Mega Conference, hosted by Lamaze and ICEA!

I have just returned from spending a fun weekend in Milwaukee, WI at the 50th Anniversary Mega Conference, hosted by Lamaze International and the International Childbirth Education Association (ICEA)! I was really impressed to meet a group of over 700 birth educators, midwives, doulas, and other health care workers who joined together to share stories and information about the future of birthing practices in our world. The keynote presentation, delivered by Penny Simkin (<http://www.pennysimkin.com/>), was particularly insightful. Penny talked about the significant differences that she's noticed in the world of birth education over the last 50+ years,

including a model that is now more medically-focused and sometimes unsupportive of birth educators/supporters who are not medical doctors or nurses. Despite her obvious frustration with this shift, she remained optimistic that we may be at a turning point and on the verge of a new era—an era that values the role that birth educators and supporters can provide to expectant women and couples. Penny also touched upon an issue that many CGEs may face—how to structure classes and workshops so that they are convenient for couples to attend. She suggested that educators need to consider new models of education in their practices; for example, having brownbag lunchtime class offerings in corporate or organizational settings, so that parents who are still at work can attend on their lunch hour without having to even leave their building. She also highlighted the idea of having a “one stop shop” that would meet all birth preparation needs...This might take the place of a health care service venue that worked collectively to house under one roof physicians, nurses, doulas, midwives, birth prep educators, and other folks who provide services for expectant couples—like our CGEs! Many thanks to the program coordinators for inviting me to attend and speak at the conference, as well as all who attended my talk on how birth educators can help strengthen family relationships during the transition to parenthood.

Culture of Appreciation!

- Thanks to Rob Straus and Diana Peterson for coming all the way to Seattle last month to visit with BBH staff and tell us about the work you're doing in Southern California!
- Thanks to Joni Parthemer, BBH Director of Education, for coordinating yet another wonderful Certification Training!
- Thanks to new Certification Training Specialists, Lynee Brown, Beth Goss, Julia Laibson, Jennyfer Raden, and Lisa Tinkersley, for the superb job you've all done with the Fall CT. Kudos and thanks for all of your hard work and talent as educators!
- Thanks to everyone at Swedish Medical Center for providing such a wonderful space for our Certification Trainings on your Cherry Hill campus!
- Thanks to Dr. Daniel Kusnir for the fabulous job you're doing on the Spanish translation of the BBH Couples Toolkit! We're looking forward to being able to share your work with other CGEs early next year!

Teaching Corner!

Do you have tips to offer families and other CGEs? Then send them our way! Please email the BBH Program with your stories and tips for how to effectively teach the BBH Program material to families, as well as suggestions for how families can raise emotionally intelligent children in loving environments.

Please stay in touch with BBH via our website, www.bbhonline.org. Please also be sure to find BBH on FaceBook and Twitter! Thanks very much for your continued support of the Relationship Research Institute's Bringing Baby Home Program.

Best regards,

Renay Bradley and the BBH Team

The Importance of Father Involvement

By: Juhn Tse and Curt Hinline

In recent years, many researchers, practitioners, and politicians have highlighted the importance of father involvement during the transition to parenthood and beyond. Not only have fathers demonstrated that they can be as competent at care-giving as their female counterparts, but having a father who is involved in child-rearing has also been shown to be important to both child development and the quality of couples' relationships.

Throughout children's lives, father involvement is predictive of a variety of positive outcomes for children. For example, children who come from families with involved fathers have been shown to exhibit greater self-control, more social competence, and higher self-esteem.

To maintain a high level of father involvement, the quality of couples' relationships can be an important determinant. Specifically, co-parenting—the quality of coordination among partners in their parenting roles—has been shown to be linked to father involvement in child care. As fathers perceive maternal support for their role in taking care of children and feel as though

mothers believe they are equally important to their children, this perceived family equilibrium can motivate fathers to participate in childrearing, as they may better understand that they, too, can parent their children just as well as mothers can. The quality of father-mother relationships has also been linked with father involvement; they better the two interact—even regarding things not related to childrearing—the more the father may feel like helping with the child. Even during the pre-pregnancy period, relationship satisfaction and expectations of future parental involvement have been shown to be predictive of fatherly involvement during the post-partum period.

Many fathers may feel unprepared for fatherhood prior to the birth of their children and may benefit from help and support (e.g., parenting-oriented classes) to help them as they undergo this transition. Research has also shown that fathers experience the most significant lifestyle change when they have their first child. At this time, fathers usually increase their work hours, as well as increase time spent interacting with the family and service-oriented groups. This shows that young fathers do spend time with their children and take it seriously, which is counter to some stereotypes about father involvement with new babies and children.

Recent psycho-educational programs for couples have begun to incorporate components that encourage father participation in childrearing. Research has shown that including fathers and providing them with education may work to enhance their interaction skills with infants and lead to more family time on weekdays that include dads, which may help improve relationships with their children/infants. More importantly, studies have shown that increasing couples' overall relationship quality can indirectly encourage fathers to be more involved in their role as parents. Thus, programs geared towards helping dads successfully navigate the transition to parenthood—like the Bringing Baby Home Program—may be especially helpful. This demonstrates a vital need for society to shift from the traditional view of seeing mothers as primary caregivers and reconsider the essential role of father in the parenting process.