

Making BBH a Household Name

The Bringing Baby Home Program would like to welcome Drew Warren, of “Right Place, Right Time, Right Mindset”, and Stephanie Lo, from the University of Washington, to the BBH Family! Drew and Stephanie have come on board to help brand and market BBH so that we can make Bringing Baby Home a household name and start initiatives that will help grow and sustain the organization. As many of you know, there is an urgent need to get the BBH Program back on track if we are going to meet our goal of making BBH available as part of the standard birth preparation program offered to expectant couples in hospitals throughout the nation and around the world. We are excited to have the marketing expertise of Drew and Stephanie as we begin to create a strategic plan of action to make this happen.

As part of this new initiative, we would like to begin by getting feedback from you—our BBH CGEs! That’s right! It’s time for you to let us know about your experience with the BBH Program, including how and why you became a CGE in the first place, what you’ve done with your CGE title, and ideas for how we can build a stronger program and foundation of trained CGEs. In order learn about your experience and ideas, we will be inviting all current CGEs to share this information with us via a web survey. **Please be on the look out for an email invitation to participate in this survey within the coming months.**

Obama’s Fatherhood, Marriage, and Families Initiative

As the Director of Research at the Relationship Research Institute, I am always trying to keep an eye and ear out to learn about new funding opportunities geared toward research on family relationships. I was particularly excited when I recently learned about President Obama’s new “Fatherhood, Marriage, and Families Initiative”. I had the pleasure of participating in a “webinar” sponsored by the National Fatherhood Leaders Group (NFLG) on April 1, 2010, which described the Initiative and its goals. The NFLG (www.nflgonline.org) is an emerging organization that is comprised of men and women who have been involved in responsible fatherhood policy, research, advocacy and practice. NFLG was created to build and sustain the fatherhood field and to raise the awareness of the importance of fathers in the lives of all children and families. As such, the NFLG—like myself—were also very excited about Obama’s new Initiative and the potential impact it can have on fathers, children, and families. Thus, they sponsored this webinar as a way of getting the word out about this new Initiative in hopes of sharing details on how organizations can get involved and benefit from this new Innovation Fund.

This past February, Obama introduced the Fatherhood, Marriage, and Families Initiative and announced that the federal government will provide \$500 million to support fatherhood and healthy relationships starting in 2011! One goal of this Initiative is to provide funding for marriage and couples educators so that we can begin to build a comprehensive network of services and service providers tailored to meet the needs of

families and encourage fathers to be involved with families. This need to create a collaborative network of service providers is based on the realization that the best way to reach dads and families is by housing programs and services that provide support for them in agencies that are already working with them. Wouldn't it be wonderful if a family in-need could go to one place—a place that they are already comfortable and familiar with—to receive assistance with a variety of issues, including housing, employment, financial assistance, parenting, and relationships?

Under this new Initiative, state-run agencies can apply for funding for three-year periods that will help them to collaborate with service providers and other organizations in hopes of offering more comprehensive service to families. Although the Bringing Baby Home Program is not able to apply for these funds directly, we are excited about the potential opportunity to collaborate with local Washington State-based organizations that can access these funds.

As you all know, the BBH Program was originally designed to help increase father involvement with the child-rearing process. According to research conducted by the Relationship Research Institute, fathers who participated in the BBH workshop (compared to those who did not) were more likely to report feeling satisfied with their new role as parents, were better at co-parenting with their partners, and had infants that were more easily soothed by their efforts! We think that the BBH Program is an optimal option for Washington-based service agencies to consider as they evaluate potential programs geared toward providing help and support for fathers, parents, and couples to collaborate with. Remember, the BBH Program is one of the only research-based and research-tested programs available to new parents in the country! Thus, we welcome ideas and suggestions from our loyal group of CGEs on establishing such partnerships with other organizations in the state of Washington.