

# Early Childhood and Violence Prevention



*View from the Field*

*Montreal 2002*

# Aisling Discoveries Child and Family Centre



- ∞ **Children's mental health centre**
- ∞ **Toronto, Ontario**
- ∞ **Birth to 12 years of age**
- ∞ **Large suburban community**
- ∞ **Highly diverse**
- ∞ **Single parents, poverty, homelessness**

# Research and Practice



***“The early years are probably the best window of opportunity to help children at risk of chronic physical aggression to regulate these behaviours.” –Richard Tremblay***

- ∩ **New funding**
- ∩ **Federal early child development funds**
- ∩ **Mental health services for birth to 6 years**

# Research and Practice



***“The absence of maternal responsiveness to a demanding infant was predicative of disruptive behavioural problems at age 3.” – Kate Keenan***

- o ***Right from the Start program***
- o **Attachment based**
- o **Infants under 2 years**
- o **Hamilton Health Science Centre and McMaster University**

# Research and Practice



***“For children who ...  
experience ... (birth-  
related)  
complications,  
amelioration of co-  
existing psychosocial  
stressors may still  
reduce the risk of  
aggression.” –Adrian  
Raine***

- ∞ **Babies Best Start**
- ∞ **Social support for parents**
- ∞ **Healthy child development**
- ∞ **Birth Companion Program**

# Research and Practice



***“The efficacy of prevention programming in the prenatal through infancy age period is less well-established, although programs like home-visitation interventions bear some promise.” – John Lochman***

- ❧ **Lay home visiting as a cultural and linguistic bridge**
- ❧ **Identification and referral to professional services**

# Research and Practice



***“Boys with mothers who started childbearing before 20 years of age, and who did not finish high school, were shown to be at highest risk of chronic physical aggression”  
–Richard Tremblay***

- o **Young Parent Resource Centres**
- o **Serves teen moms**
- o **High school on site**
- o ***Right from the Start* parenting program**

# Research and Practice



***“...by working with parents, teachers, and these children themselves, early onset aggression can be reduced significantly with sustainable results.”— Carolyn Webster-Stratton***

∞ **Incredible Years Parenting program**

# Research and Practice



***“The strongest results have been found with multi-component programs that target multiple domains, changing systems and environments as well as individual and family units.” –Celene Domitrovich & Mark Greenberg***

- ∩ **Caring Community**
- ∩ **Pro-social school environment**
- ∩ **Students**
- ∩ **Teachers**
- ∩ **Parents**

# Caring Community



- ∩ ***Bully Watch* Program**
- ∩ ***Classwide Social Skills* Program**
- ∩ ***Ready, Set, Go* School Readiness Program**
- ∩ **Contests, Awards, Newsletters**
- ∩ **Parent Education Sessions**
- ∩ **Anger Management Workshops**

# Research and Practice



***“Children who witness violence suffer from emotional or psychological abuse which can damage their social, emotional and behavioural development.” – Peter Jaffe & Marlies Sudermann***

- ∞ **Here to Help**
- ∞ **Groups for children**
- ∞ **Support for parents**

# Challenges



- ⌚ **Adequate training**
- ⌚ **Cost of program resources**
- ⌚ **Modification of programs**

# Last Thoughts



- ❧ **Adequate funding for evidence-based practice**
- ❧ **Partnerships between academic centres and service providers**