

Volume 6  
Winter 2008



# Partners for Healthy Families

## Jeffco F.I.T. Coalition

A Coalition for Families with Infants & Toddlers



**Become a  
Member!**

Please call  
Cynthia Farkas,  
303-239-7074

### UPCOMING EVENT:

The next F.I.T.  
Coalition  
meeting:  
Tues. March 11,  
2008 2:30-4:30  
pm  
Buffalo Bill Room,  
Jefferson County  
Courts & Admin.  
100 Jefferson  
County Parkway,  
Golden, CO.

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Jefferson County, Colorado

## Nurse Family Partnership Survival Guide

### *A Journey toward Excellence*

by Cindy Kisselman, RN, Partners for Healthy Families Program

Have you ever been a part of a *true* collaborative effort? The journey our group, the Jefferson County Partners for Healthy Families, has just completed is the best example I have experienced.

Newly hired nurses have a lot of questions and concerns that they may not realize have been asked and answered before. That's because while they are new, the program itself has been in existence for over seven years. It has grown from a team of four nurses to eight, and has seen its share of transitions while maintaining its goal of supporting and educating first time moms. The challenges

incoming nurses have are often the same as those who are now considered seasoned.

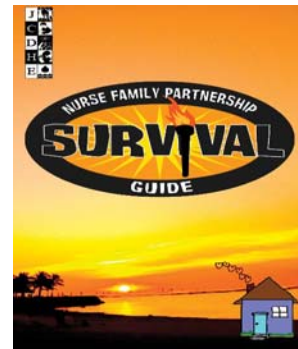
*"There is not enough room in my trunk."*

*"Do I really need to bring the entire manual?"*

*"How in the world do you . . . . ?"*

And, the usual response from those who have been there before, "Oh yeah, I remember feeling that way. It helped me to try \_\_\_\_\_." Soon the expression, "Oh, that should be on the timeline." became the office mantra. And so, the "*Journey to Excellence Timeline*" was born.

The "*Journey to Excellence Timeline*" is a collec-



tion of phases and steps along the path a public health nurse takes with her client from pregnancy to graduation at the child's second birthday. From this timeline, stemmed the Nurse Family Partnership Survival Guide which incorporates experiences and strategies for each step along the way.

A nurse coming in to take over an existing caseload can start anywhere in the process

*cont'd on page 3*



### Domestic Violence - A Different Way of Thinking

by Teri Pichot, LCSW, MAC, LAC

Domestic violence is a very serious subject; one that can not be taken lightly. It is estimated that 960,000 incidents of violence occur each year. Some of these incidents result in significant injury or death. As a therapist, I know this number is painfully underestimated, since the majority of individuals who seek services from me tell stories of some form of domestic violence

that never rose to the level of criminality or legal intervention. Domestic violence is a very broad subject. While the most life threatening and dramatic cases are at times reported by the news media, the more common cases involve various forms of control, acting out, disrespect, and self-centered behaviors that never result in physical assault or

stalking as defined by law. This reminds us that in truth, domestic violence can best be understood on a continuum, the most serious cases making up a small percentage with the remaining cases involving various forms of unproductive and unhealthy behaviors.

Domestic violence touches two distinct professions. The

*Domestic Violence cont'd on page 2*

## Domestic Violence - A Different Way of Thinking cont'd...

first is the legal profession since battery and assault are crimes that must be addressed. There are specific laws on the books that define when a crime has been committed, which lend themselves to clear definitions of “victims” (those who have had crimes committed against them) and “perpetrators” (those who have committed crimes). These labels are invaluable in assisting law enforcement officers and others within the criminal justice system in appropriately identifying who is to blame. This language can also be helpful to those providing court mandated services and those acting to enforce the legal consequences of such actions.

The second profession that is touched by domestic violence is the mental health profession, for helping clients to accurately assess their own behaviors, take accountability, and make necessary changes is what this field is all about. In this realm labels such as “victim” and “perpetrator” can be less helpful, and can at times become stumbling blocks for both clients and therapists since labels tend to categorize people in an overly simplistic fashion and even limit how clients are viewed by themselves and their therapists. When working with clients in a therapy session, it is commonplace to discover that each party involved in the conflict readily engaged in some form of unhelpful behavior (i.e., physical, emotional, verbal). Now please understand, there is *never* an excuse for physical or sexual assault; absolutely never. Furthermore, engaging in a discussion to determine fault, blame, or even understanding of a past incident that is emotionally laden is bound for failure and can even risk rekindling violence. That is precisely why couples counseling is discouraged when working from a problem-focused framework.

When working with clients who are exhibiting some form of domestic violence, therapists soon learn that the black and white framework from which the legal system operates is not as clear cut when working within the therapy setting; the therapy setting contains more shades of gray. “Victims” are notorious for insisting that they stay with the “perpetrators,” insisting that there is a relationship worth saving. In fact, 50% to 70% of women remain with their male partner after an assault, or return soon after a brief separation. In addition, we do know that domestic violence is a behavior that can change. Some couples do beat the odds and overcome unproductive and at times dangerous behaviors. Unfortunately, therapists are not trained in accurately determining who should stay together and which relationships are hopeless. Even if that skill could be perfected, the research is clear that clients ultimately do what they want despite professional recommendations. So, the question becomes, “How can therapists best engage clients to work toward change so they can increase the odds of safety?” This question invites us to expand our present understanding of domestic violence and embrace a different way of thinking. A way of thinking that sets aside labels and assumptions. This is the question that we will explore in detail on March 11, 2008 at the Jeffco FIT Coalition Meeting. Hope you will join us.



### Nurse Recognition: National Office Initiates Service Award Program

Throughout the country each and every day, Nurse-Family Partnership’s Nurse Home Visitors and Nurse Supervisors are making a profound difference in the lives of the nation’s most vulnerable individuals—they truly are the heart and soul of this life-changing intervention.

To commemorate and acknowledge this commitment the National Service Office is proud to honor each of its nurses and supervisors in the field. Awards are based on years of service. Beginning at three years of service each individual will be given a hand-crafted, sterling silver pin that is a unique representation of the Nurse-Family Partnership brand icon—with one of three brilliant stones (sapphire, tourmaline, & peridot) signifying the unique bond between mother, baby and nurse.



## Colorado NFP Staff Gather for Statewide Training Conference



Colorado Nurse-Family Partnership (NFP) home visitors, supervisors and administrative support staff gathered in Lakewood, November 14 – 16 for networking, continuing education and celebration. Over 125 staff, representing every NFP site, participated in workshops on diverse and timely topics such as:

What's New in Infant and Toddler Health, Early Intervention with Emotionally Vulnerable Families, Addressing the Co-Occurrence of Domestic Violence and Child Maltreatment and Identifying and Intervening with Post-Partum Depression. A high point of the meeting was a presentation by three NFP sites: Jefferson, El Paso and Tri-County, on innovative practices and projects implemented in their NFP programs. This particular session was put together and orchestrated by IIK Nurse Consultant Michelle Neal and members of the highly successful and cutting edge Colorado NFP Nurse Practice Council.



## Coalition Updates

**JCDHE NFP- Partners for Healthy Families (PFHF)** received an expansion grant in October 2007 for one additional nurse visitor, which completes the team of nurses to eight. Nilda Vanderzyden joined the team on December 31, 2007. Nilda brings a wealth of Labor and Delivery and nursery experience to the position. She has also worked with pregnant teens in a Community Crisis Center in California. Welcome, Nilda!

PFHF team presented “**NFP Survival Guide: A Journey to Nursing Excellence**” at the Colorado Nurse Family Partnership Conference November 14. Each nurse visitor presented strategies to deal with challenges in managing a caseload and

successfully guiding their clients from enrollment to graduation. A “NFP Survival Guide” was published and shared with nurse visitors in all Colorado NFP sites.

**SAC NFP-Nurse visitor, Cari Berget,** delivered a baby girl, Clara, on 12/14. Mother and baby are doing well.

**Broomfield Health Department - All PHN positions are filled.** Faith Eggleston, RN will be starting a home visitation service for high risk families (from TANF referrals) and doing outreach. Steffie Goodman, CNM, PHD will work in the Women’s Health Clinic. Helene Lanzer, RN, and Julie Leeper, MA will work in all programs.

## A Journey toward Excellence cont'd...

and benefit from the experience of others. Working together as a team provided an unexpected benefit which, encouraged new “outside the box” thinking while improving upon many processes.

We are sure every nurse in the Nurse Family Partnership program will be able to identify in some way to the Journey. The peer support and encouragement from each other throughout this collective effort has added much humor and camaraderie along the way.

A lot of time and effort was put into these combined experiences with the hope of helping future and existing nurses in the Partners for Health Families program. Many have contributed along the way and had a direct impact on our team. And, as with our timeline, we realize this is just the beginning of many more shared collaborations and positive adventures.



Partners for Healthy Families

Jefferson County Colorado

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Nurse-Family Partnership is an evidence-based, nurse home visitation program that improves the health, well-being and self-sufficiency of low-income, first-time parents and their children.

This Nurse-Family Partnership Implementing Agency is part of a growing national initiative supported by the Nurse-Family Partnership National Service Office, located in Denver, Colorado. Currently the program is serving clients in 23 states across the nation.

For more information, please go to [www.nursefamilypartnership.org](http://www.nursefamilypartnership.org) or

Call 1-866-864-5226

**F.I.T. Newsletter is a biannual electronic newsletter produced by JCDHE! Editions will be emailed to you. Please call or send us your email address and website url so that we can include a link on the web page: 303-239-7074 or Email: [cfarkas@jeffco.us](mailto:cfarkas@jeffco.us)**



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## About Jeffco F.I.T.

**Jeffco F.I.T.** (Families with Infants & Toddlers) **Coalition** meets twice a year and publishes this newsletter biannually. Thank you for your interest and support of organizations and agencies providing services to Jefferson County's children ages 0-3 years. If interested in becoming a member of Jeffco F.I.T. coalition, please contact Cynthia Farkas, chairperson at 303-239-7074.

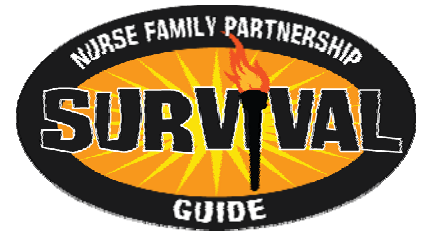
#### Mission:

To enhance and promote supportive services to Jefferson County families with children, prenatal to age three years. Jeffco F.I.T. achieves its mission through information sharing, coordination of services, and identification of gaps in services.

#### Goals and Objectives:

- ◆ To promote information sharing among service providers
- ◆ To increase awareness of available services
- ◆ To improve coordination and collaboration of services to families
- ◆ To promote the enhancement of continuum of services

For more information about the coalition please visit: <http://health.jeffco.us>.



# Journey to Excellence Timeline

