https://prism.ucalgary.ca

Conferences

Students' Union Undergraduate Research Symposium

2016-12-01

Welcome to Parenthood - Alberta: Preliminary insight into mentorship of first-time mothers during transition from pregnancy to early parenthood

Wilson, J

University of Calgary

Wilson, J., Jensen, K., Loewen, M., & Benzies, K. "Welcome to Parenthood - Alberta: Preliminary insight into mentorship of first-time mothers during transition from pregnancy to early parenthood". 11th Annual Students' Union Undergraduate Research Symposium, December 1, 2016. University of Calgary, Calgary, AB.

http://hdl.handle.net/1880/51755

Downloaded from PRISM Repository, University of Calgary



Welcome to Parenthood – Alberta: Preliminary insight into mentorship of first-time mothers during transition from pregnancy to early parenthood

UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY FACULTY OF NURSING



Wilson, J., Jensen, K., Loewen, M., and Benzies, K. Faculty of Nursing, University of Calgary

BACKGROUND

Responsive parent-child relationships build a strong foundation in the early development of an infant's brain, increasing the chance of positive outcomes later in life ^{1,2}.

Mentorship may provide valuable support to families during the transition from pregnancy to early parenthood.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this project was to explore the experiences of mentors of first-time mothers in the Welcome to Parenthood-Alberta (W2P-AB) study.

METHODS

This project is part of the larger W2P-AB study, implemented in 11 Parent Link Centres across Alberta as a three-component strategy, including: (a) parenting education; (b) a baby-kit; and (c) a mentor from the family's own social network.

- W2P-AB includes first-time mothers between 30 and 34 weeks' gestation, and their mentors who will support and learn with the mother.
- Mentorship begins at recruitment and continues until the baby is 6 months old, with the mentor writing observations and experiences in a Mentor Journal after each of approximately 20 contacts with the mother.
- Qualitative data from 13 available Mentor Journals underwent preliminary thematic analysis.



RESULTS

Support Provided by Mentors

Emotional Support

Advice

"I let her know about the mother rooms and breastfeeding rooms that the mall has."

Reassuring and Encouraging

"Mom said he "talks" all the time now. Encouraged "serve and return" and reading to baby."

"Checkingin" on Mother

"I asked her how it was going with her mom not being there to help her. She said she and [Baby] were starting to get into a routine but that it was still hard."

Assistance with Day-to-Day Tasks

"I made sure to send them home with tons of leftovers. I plan on heading over to their place next weekend to see if I can do anything for them."

Taking Mother and Baby on Outings

Tangible Support

"There was a trade show in [Name of City], so I invited Great Granny and [Mother] and [Baby] to go for lunch and a tour of the booths. We had a great few hours there and showed [Baby] off."

Babysitting to Offer Mother a Break

"I asked if they
"really" wanted
to take a 2 day
old baby to
Walmart to do a
big shopping
trip. We offered
to babysit for
the 1st time.
They took us up
on the offer."

FUTURE IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH

Preliminary analysis suggests mentorship may play a role in providing emotional and tangible support to first-time mothers.

Next steps in determining the feasibility and sustainability of the intervention include further investigating: (1) mentors' motivation for providing mentorship; (2) mothers' feelings towards having a mentor; (3) significance of mentors belonging to mothers' own social network; and (4) the cost-effectiveness of W2P-AB.

CONCLUSION

Provision of parenting education and connection with mentors may provide emotional and tangible support, potentially increasing family capacity to promote early childhood development.

W2P-AB, and the mentorship component that it includes, has the potential to inform public health policy and practice to support the healthy development of future Albertans.

References:

L. Shonkoff, J.P., Leveraging the biology of adversity to address the roots of disparities in health and development. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 2012, 109(Supplement 2): p. 17202, 17207

^{2.} Kolb, B., Brain and behavioural plasticity in the developing brain: Neuroscience and public policy. Paediatrics & Child Health, 2009. 14 (10): p. 651.