



The Early Years: From Research to Policy to Practice Seminar



Including Fathers

I am pleased to be able to invite you to this upcoming seminar, the sixth seminar of 2009 presented by the Centre for Community Child Health with funding from The R.E. Ross Trust.

Societal changes and the subsequent changing role of fathers challenges early childhood services to closely consider what needs to be changed to become accessible and relevant to men who are parenting babies and young children. Efforts to include fathers in the lives of young children have characterised the problem as one of adding fathers into an existing system of care for children. Whether it is in a home environment or an early childhood centre, the father-involvement task is seen as how to get more fathers to join in with the care currently being offered. However, if we are to take advantage of what we have recently discovered about the importance of early childhood, the importance of brain development, the role of play in learning and how family and non-family adults may best co-operate to raise our children, we will move fathers from the periphery to the centre of children's lives. Fathers have more to offer than simply money, time and energy; they have fathering to offer.

This seminar will consider the rationale for changing the way we deliver our services in order to ensure men are properly supported in their role as parents of babies and young children including:

- Why focus on men as parents?
- Why change?
- What do we know about men as parents?
- What to change?

The keynote speakers will be **Dr. Richard Fletcher**, Leader of the Fathers and Families Research Program at the University of Newcastle, **Paul Prichard**, Senior Project Officer at the Centre for Community Child Health, The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne and **Darren Varley**, Lecturer, Children's Services, Box Hill TAFE.

As a lecturer in Health Studies in the Discipline of Paediatrics, University of Newcastle and Team Leader of The Engaging fathers Project, Family Action Centre, **Dr. Richard Fletcher** has designed and delivered courses and seminars on Health Research, Boys' development and Father involvement to teachers, nurses, occupational therapists, and medical students. His PhD thesis focused on fathers' attachment to infants and children.

Paul Prichard recently joined the Centre for Community Child Health. Paul's previous role was National Programs and Development Manager of *Good Beginnings* Australia which provides a variety of preventative and early intervention parenting programs across Australia. Initially trained in primary teaching, Paul's work has focused on implementing innovative programs in universal services for parents of babies and young children and with children who are victims of severe abuse and neglect. Paul has a special interest in promoting the important role fathers play in the lives of Australian children and has been instrumental in developing innovative service strategies to support new and expectant dads.

Darren Varley is a lecturer in Children's Services at Box Hill TAFE. His experience includes running the FUN 4 KIDS (Fathers Utilizing Networks for Kids) program for Relationships Australia, working with parents and their children with sleep/settling and behaviour problems and Dads' parenting sessions at the O'Connell Family Centre in Melbourne. He has designed and facilitated a 2 year pilot program of ante-natal classes for fathers at the Mercy for Women Heidelberg. A father of 2 young children, Darren also is a private consultant on sleep and settling for parents and their children in their homes and is a Registered Marriage Celebrant.

I hope you will be able to join us for this important and informative seminar, on **Wednesday 21st October, 2009** at **Etihad Stadium, Docklands.**

See the attached agenda and registration form.

Professor Frank Oberklaid OAM
Centre for Community Child Health
The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne

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Date: *Wednesday 21st October, 2009*
Venue: *Laureate Room
Etihad Stadium (Formally Telstra Dome),
Melbourne*

Seminar Agenda

- 9.00 – 9.30am **Registration**
- 9.30 – 9.40am **Welcome and Introductory Comments**
- Dr. Estelle Irving**
Senior Project Officer, Centre for Community Child Health,
Murdoch Childrens Research Institute, The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne
- 9.40 – 10.40am **Keynote Address: What Research tells us about men as fathers. What the Research challenges Early Childhood Services to do.**
- Dr. Richard Fletcher, Leader, Fathers and Families Research Program
University of Newcastle
- 10.40 – 10.50am **Questions**
- 10.50 – 11.10am **MORNING TEA**
- 11.20 – 12.05pm **Keynote Address: What could be done differently - stories from the field**
- Mr. Paul Prichard**, Senior Project Officer, Centre for Community Child Health,
Murdoch Childrens Research Institute, The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne
- 12.05 – 12.15pm **Questions**
- 12.15 – 12.45pm **Experiences from the field**
- Mr. Darren Varley**, Lecturer, Children's Services, Box Hill TAFE
- 12.45 – 1.45pm **LUNCH**
- 1.45 – 2.30pm **Panel Discussion:**
- Dr. Richard Fletcher**, Leader, Fathers and Families Research Program, University of Newcastle
- Mr. Paul Prichard**, Senior Project Officer, Centre for Community Child Health, , Murdoch Childrens Research Institute, The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne
- Mr. Warren Cann**, Director, Parenting Research Centre, Melbourne
- Mr. Darren Varley**, Lecturer, Children's Services, Box Hill TAFE
- 2.30 – 2.45pm **Reflections & Summary**
- 2.45pm **Close**

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Seminar Registration Form

Registration closes: Wednesday 14th October, 2009

Name: _____
Organisation: _____
Position Held: _____
Address: _____
Suburb: _____ State: _____ Postcode: _____
Phone: () _____ Fax: () _____
Email: _____

Cost: \$155.00 incl. GST

(Cancellation Policy: Full fee payable if less than 24 hours notice given)

Payment Details (please tick):

- Prepay with cheque made payable to **Murdoch Childrens Research Institute**
 Credit card (please ensure all details are completed fully)

Card type: Mastercard Visa

Amount: \$ _____

Card number

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Name on card

Expiry date

____/____

Signature

Mail to:

Cathy Archer
Centre for Community Child Health
The Royal Children's Hospital
Flemington Road
PARKVILLE VIC 3052

Fax to:

(03) 9345 5892

Email to:

catherine.archer@rch.org.au

For enquires please phone (03) 9345 6337

This registration form becomes a tax invoice upon receipt of payment

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