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# Bridging Tactics: Parental Support Systems: A Proposal for a Psycho-Educational Parent Group

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# Bridging Tactics: Parental Support Systems

## A Proposal for a Psycho-Educational Parent Group



Emily F. Thompson

Acknowledgements:

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Field Instructor: Tom McNeely, MSW, LICSW

### Purpose

The purpose of this Capstone project is to design and present a new intervention program for increasing supportive services to the parents of clients being served through the infant/early childhood mental health program at CSSM. The goal of this project is to provide CSSM with a culturally-responsive, theoretically grounded, evidence-based proposal for the development of a psycho-educational group that includes a clear rationale for why this intervention is needed and how it will help the agency achieve the outcomes of infant/early childhood mental health program.

### Statement of the Problem

Counseling Services of Southern Minnesota (CSSM) recently introduced the infant/early childhood mental health assessment and therapy program. Although this program utilizes family based interventions focusing on developmental stage acquisition and parent/child relational development, parents may still feel a lack of support and connection with other parents that share their circumstance. Since infants and children with mental health issues have unique needs, and parents of these children have increased need for emotional, behavioral, and social support, the presenting problem is the lack of resources available in rural St. Peter and surrounding communities, to meet the educational and community supports needs of this population.

### Methodology

- ❖ **Step One:** Reviewed literature pertaining to group formation, with an emphasis on psycho-educational groups and developed an outline with key criteria for group development.
- ❖ **Step Two:** Reviewed demographic characteristic of Nicollet County using KIDScout, U. S. Census Bureau, and City data.
- ❖ **Step Three:** Reviewed literature pertaining to infant/early childhood mental health, including aspects of diversity, rural, theories, barriers, outcomes, and tools using:
  - Journals using Academic Premier, PsychINFO, SAGE premier, and Ebsco search engines
  - Handbooks of training practice related to infant/early childhood mental health
  - Federal and state government agencies
  - Educational institutes
- ❖ **Step Four:** Examination of all preceding areas to develop a logic model

### Logic Model for Psycho-Educational Group

Inputs	Processes	Outputs	Short-term Outcomes	Long-term Goals	Impacts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff- 2 Mental Health Professionals-trained in the DC:0-3 assessments</li> <li>• Materials- Curriculum, assessment books, articles, 3 ring binders, paper</li> <li>• Space- Conference room at CSSM</li> <li>• Technology- Computers, printers, televisions</li> <li>• Parents of children in the infant/early childhood program.</li> <li>• Funders</li> <li>• Transportation- vouchers for gas, transit services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff will obtain or develop curriculum for group, pre-post assessment</li> <li>• Assign &amp; train CSSM staff to facilitate groups</li> <li>• CSSM will provide location to hold group</li> <li>• CSSM will provide materials for group</li> <li>• Develop list of potential clients for group</li> <li>• Make referrals to parents of children in the infant/early childhood program</li> <li>• Have parents sign releases and informed consent.</li> <li>• Notify parents of group times and location</li> <li>• Arrange accessible transportation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two staff assigned to facilitate support group</li> <li>• 8 Referrals made for the quarter</li> <li>• Group sessions held 1 day per week, 2 hours per session, total of # weeks.</li> <li>• Pre-post assessment, Likert questionnaire, attendance sheet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents will increase their knowledge of child development and emotional/behavioral well-being</li> <li>• More parents will utilize parental support groups</li> <li>• Transportation services will be easily accessible</li> <li>• Increased number of support systems for parents of children with mental health needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents will follow strategies of infant/early childhood intervention models</li> <li>• Positive parenting skills will be displayed</li> <li>• Improved parenting techniques with children with mental health diagnoses</li> <li>• Parents will utilize and demonstrate skills during psychotherapy group</li> <li>• Parents will have increased self-esteem due to improve</li> <li>• Parents will develop self-efficacy</li> <li>• Parents will have stronger work engagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infant-parent relationships will improve</li> <li>• Reduction in child abuse cases in Nicollet County</li> <li>• Increased positive parenting skills to meet the needs of children with mental health diagnoses</li> <li>• Reduction of services needed for children in the future re: in schools, mental health</li> <li>• Increased accessibility of mental health resources</li> <li>• Reduction in risky behaviors by children</li> <li>• Increased self esteem and overall parenting ability</li> <li>• Parents will be successful in their work</li> </ul>

### Literature Review: Key Findings

- ❖ Attachment theory is the most commonly utilized to guide infant/early childhood mental health practice (Stevens, Larrieu, & Zeanah, 2012; Weatherston, Kaplan-Estrin, & Goldberg, 2009)
- ❖ Parents often lack support when it comes to parenting and meeting the needs of their children (Jivanjee, & Krizich, 2011).
- ❖ Currently there is a lack of supportive services in Nicollet County for this population of people (Nicollet County, 2012).
- ❖ Psycho-educational groups provide people with increased support systems (Crabtree, & Haslam, 2010; Davis, Gavazzi, Scheer, & Uppal, 2010).
- ❖ Parents are likely to gain more insight from their peers (M. Advant, Personal Communication, 2012).

### Demographic Characteristics: Nicolet County

Population	Probable Lower Risk Within Nicollet County	Probable Higher Risk need of Services Within Nicollet County
Nicollet County: 32,727 • 6.5% under 5 years • Approximately 15,000 Children between the ages of 0-5 in Region 9 Area.	<b>Marital Status out of 12,150</b> • 6,530 Married couple families in Nicollet County • 2, 668 Married couple children in Nicollet county with children under 18 <b>Educational Attainment-Ages 25 and older out of 19,696</b> • High school graduate-5,232 • Some college, no degree-4,350 • Associates degree-1,940 • Bachelor degree-4,488 • Graduate or professional degree-2,139 <b>School enrollment out of 9,862</b> • Nursery/preschool-558 <b>Place of Birth out of 32,727</b> • Born in the U.S.-31,330 <b>Language</b> • English as a first language-28,413 <b>Race</b> • Caucasian-93.7% of population <b>Socio-economic Status</b> • Median Household income: \$57,540	<b>Marital Status</b> • Male Household with children under 18-276 • Female households with children under 18-701 <b>Educational Attainment-Ages 25 and older out of 19, 696</b> • Less than 9 <sup>th</sup> grade-588 • 9 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> grade, no diploma-959 <b>Place of Birth</b> • Foreign born-941 <b>U.S. Citizenship Status</b> • Not a U.S. Citizen-435 <b>Language</b> • Spanish speaking-952 • Asian and Pacific Islander languages: 583 • Other Indo-European languages-583 <b>Race out of 32,727</b> • Black -2.0% • Asian -1.3% • Two or more races-1.4% • Latino or Hispanic-3.7% <b>Socio-economic Status</b> • 11.6% below poverty level • Persons w/out Insurance-11% • Homeless-7%

### Recommendations for Next Steps

- ❖ Recruit facilitators to run and develop group curriculum.
- ❖ Obtain funding from the agency or by grant.
- ❖ Procured or developed curriculum which will be grounded in attachment theory.
- ❖ Develop and implement a recruitment protocol, create a referral list for the group, contact potential clients.
- ❖ Develop assessment protocol, including assessment measures.

References are available from the author upon request.