

January
2015

Happy New
Year!

Attachment
*is an emotional
bond between
two people in
which there is an
expectation of
care and
protection.*
– Dr. Susan
Goldberg



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Who are CAN?

The Canadian Attachment Network (CAN) represents a team of stakeholders from research, decision-making and health professional communities across Canada who are working together to develop and test an innovative triadic attachment model. Many CAN members have historical partnerships on completed studies examining parenting support needs of families affected by postpartum depression, family violence, and addictions.

The ATTACH intervention:

The **Action Team on Triadic Attachment and Child Health (ATTACH)** is a triadic parenting psychoeducational program that fosters a process of maternal **Reflective Function**. It uses community-based participatory approaches to develop an effective, sustainable, accessible, and acceptable Reflective Function program suitable for *adding on* and *filling a gap* in existing parent-training programs. The intervention is **innovative** in that it:

- ✓ focuses on **Reflective Function - the uniquely human capacity to make sense of each other.**
- ✓ includes fathers (or co-parenting support) as well as mothers in the intervention.
- ✓ focuses on the effectiveness of intervention on mother-infant interaction and mothers' reflective function.
- ✓ has direct implications for health services, programs, practice and policies.

Who is who?

Dr. Nicole Letourneau is our Team Lead and principle investigator for the project. Her CHILD research program (www.childstudies.ca) seeks both to improve health and developmental outcomes for at-risk children via support interventions and to understand how psychosocial interventions function to improve children's outcomes. Her recent book "Scientific Parenting: What Science Reveals About Parental Influence", published by Dundurn in 2013 describes much of this research.

Dr. Martha Hart is a University of Calgary Eyes High Post-Doc "attached" to the ATTACH project. She will oversee all project operations and conduct the interventions and assessments. She completed her PhD at the University of Cambridge in Social & Developmental Psychology. She is certified reliable on the CARE-Index for infants, as well as the Adult Attachment Interview, and is trained to administer the Parent Development Interview. She has also received training in the Strange Situation Procedure, Nursing Child Assessment Satellite Training and many other parent-child relationship measures.

Dr. Lubna Anis will assist Dr. Hart and also conduct the ATTACH intervention with CUPS families. She is a foreign medical graduate and brings the background of clinical medicine and project management to her work. She has been involved in projects focusing on maternal and child health at the University of Calgary. She is well-trained on administering the measures assessing the parent-child relationship including CARE-Index and Nursing Child Assessment Satellite Training. She is currently getting trained on how to administer the Parent Development Interview.

What's new?

- ✓ We have received funding for the ATTACH project from the University of Calgary Faculty of Nursing, Alberta Center for Child, Family and Community Research (ACCFRC), Accelerating Innovation, UofC Eyes High Postdoctoral Program, totaling \$170,000.
- ✓ We have received ethics approval from the University of Calgary Conjoint Health Research Ethics Board.
- ✓ Based on community and expert consultation, we have drafted the intervention manual and will pilot the intervention with **Calgary Urban Project Society (CUPS)** Nurturing Parenting program in January.
- ✓ We have submitted a Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR) grant for the **HEART project** to test the effectiveness of a program focused on promoting social-emotional adjustment and secure attachment between high risk infants and their caregivers. Thank you to those who contributed and provided letters of support!



*It is the **parent's** capacity to reflect upon the child's internal experience that is so crucial to the development of a secure attachment **and** to a range of developmental outcomes.*

- Arietta Slade, 2005, p. 270

We have been busy learning!



- ✓ Dr. Nancy Suchman and Cindy Decoste from the Yale University came to Calgary for 3 days of training on Reflective Function which has informed our intervention. **25 people attended!**
- ✓ Dr. Martha Hart attended follow-up training with them at the Yale University.
- ✓ We also met with Dr. Diane A. Philipp & Christie Hayosof Toronto's Hincks-Dellcrest Centre to learn about their Reflective Family Play model.
- ✓ After the training we started a weekly reading group to further our understanding of the concepts.
- ✓ The ATTACH team also completed the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST).



WE NEED YOU!



- ✓ *If interested in participating in an interview to provide feedback on the intervention manual and protocol for the research study on the ATTACH Intervention please email mhart@ucalgary.ca or call 403-681-3592.*
- ✓ *We would like to include our network member bios on our future webpage, so please send yours along. We would also love to hear back from you about any relevant work that we can include in future newsletters.*

If you have any questions, suggestions or comments please send them in. We appreciate any and all feedback!

**Follow Principal Investigator
Nicole Letourneau
on Twitter @NicoleLynLetour
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website for details on this and other
research. Feel free to share with
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Did you know?

In Canada, 80% of fathers reside full-time with their children, 11% part-time and only 5% not at all.

- Beaupré et al. 2010