



Isis Rising

A Prison Doula Project



Spring 2013 Newsletter
By: Aly Scriginoli & Rebecca Schlafer



Research & Evaluation Update

We've been quite busy these last few months, working hard to analyze the data we collected about the program over the last year and a half. Here's what we've found so far:

At the 12-week follow-up, women who participated in the New Mom's Group reported:

- fewer depressive symptoms
- more confidence as parents
- more support from other women at Shakopee
- more support from prison staff

We are thrilled with some of these initial findings and are looking forward to discovering some of the other ways Isis Rising impacts the physical and mental health of our participants.

What did you learn from group:
"How to relieve stress, discipline my children, get support, ask for help, care for my children emotionally and physically."

In March, Rebecca spoke at the Society for Research in Child Development conference in Seattle, WA. She summarized findings from the doulas' stories about mothers' birth experiences in Isis Rising.

And at the end of April, Erica and Rebecca spoke at the Minnesota Association of Children's Mental Health annual conference in Duluth, MN. They presented an overview of the Isis Rising program, including some of the topics covered in group and individual sessions and examples of some of the activities we do during the New Moms Group.



What is Isis Rising?

Isis Rising is a pregnancy and parenting support program for mothers incarcerated at the Shakopee Women's Prison.

*"An aware parent loves all children he or she interacts with - for you are a caretaker for those moments in time."
-Doc Childre*



Meet an Isis Doula! *Hope Lien*

Hope has been working as a certified doula through DONA International since 2010, and has experience serving families and their children for over 10 years. She has a rich history of serving women from many different backgrounds, that have birthed in various ways – including natural, VBAC, vaginal twin birth, and cesarean birth; and in many different locations, including at home and in birth centers.

In addition to her work with incarcerated mothers through Isis Rising, Hope works with under-privileged and at-risk women at Everyday Miracles, a birth center in NE Minneapolis.

In Hope's spare time, she loves to host dinner parties, try her hand at gardening, drink coffee, and try new foods from far away places.

049: Zero Alcohol for Nine Months

You wouldn't give a 3-year-old a drink, so why would you give one to your unborn child? But that is what happens when a pregnant woman drinks alcohol; her unborn baby drinks, too. Alcohol in the mother's blood passes through the placenta to the developing baby. The U.S. Surgeon General urges all women who are pregnant or may become pregnant to abstain from alcohol.

What is FASD?

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) is a term describing the range of negative effects that can occur in an individual whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy. These may include physical, mental, behavioral, and/or learning disabilities with possible lifelong implications.

FASD is a lifetime disorder that affects each child differently. Some children with an FASD have specific facial features and tend to be smaller in height and weight. They often have brain injury that never goes away. This means both the child's thought process and his behavior may be very different than a child who was not exposed to alcohol before birth. To help your child reach their full potential, it is very important they get help as soon as possible. To get more information about resources or a diagnostic evaluation, contact:

Minnesota Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

2233 University Avenue West, Suite 395
St. Paul, Minnesota 55114
Toll-Free: 1-866-90-MOFAS (66327)
Phone: 651-917-2370
Fax: 651-917-2405