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Centre of Perinatal Excellence

Applied Skills in Perinatal Mental Health Assessment and Care

LESSON NOTEBOOK

Module 1 | Lesson 1

Why Perinatal Mental Health
is Uniquely Important



Module 1: Lesson1


Why Perinatal Mental Health is Uniquely Important



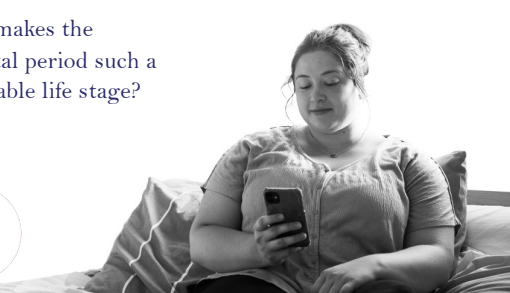
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What makes the perinatal period such a vulnerable life stage?



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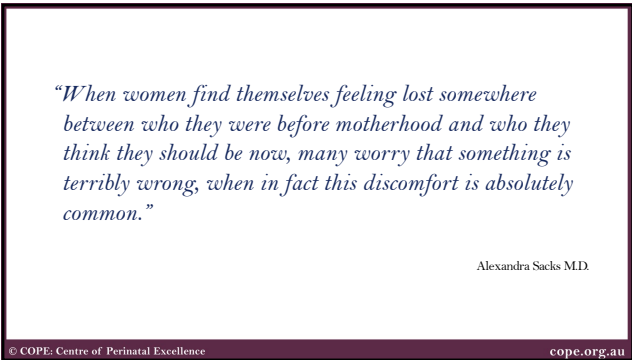


Importance of Perinatal Mental Health

- Detrimental impact on whole family unit
- Higher vulnerability to mental illness
- Maternal suicide a leading cause of death
- Immediate and long-term impacts on infant
- Different risk/benefit ratio of medication
- Assessment, diagnosis and treatment requirement

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Defining 'Perinatal'

"The perinatal period commences at 22 completed weeks (154 days) of gestation and ends seven completed days after birth."

World Health Organisation

"Relating to the time, usually a number of weeks, immediately before and after birth."

Oxford English Dictionary

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Defining 'Perinatal'

"The period from conception to the end of the first postnatal year."

National Guidelines, COPE 2017

"Refers to a number of time frames and circumstances, including pregnancy, the postpartum period, family planning, fertility treatment and adjustment to perinatal loss."

Wenzel 2016.

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The Broader Context

Psychiatric history
Past experiences
Attachment history

Preconception

Pregnancy

Birth

Immediate Postpartum

Postpartum

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Defining 'Perinatal'

- Parent
- Infant
- Family
- Broader Social Context

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Defining 'Perinatal'


- Maternal Mental Health
- Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders
- Perinatal Mental Health
- Perinatal Infant Mental Health (PIMH)

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Course Focus


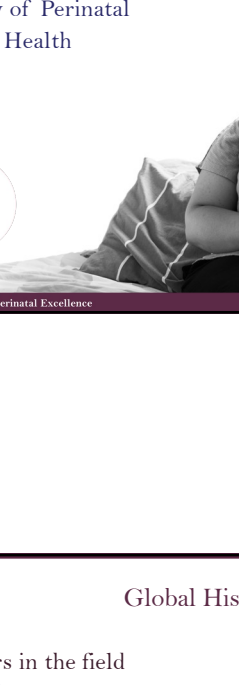
- Maternal mental health
- Inextricable connection between parent and infant
- Interconnectedness of the individuals within the context



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History of Perinatal
Mental Health



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Global History

Pioneers in the field

1. Jean-Étienne-Dominique Esquirol

2. Louis-Victor Marcé

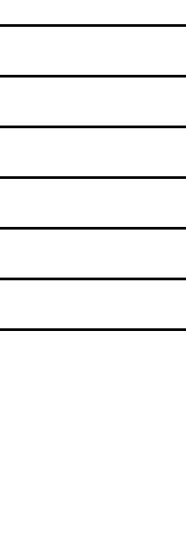
3. Ambroise Tardieu

Instrumental leaders

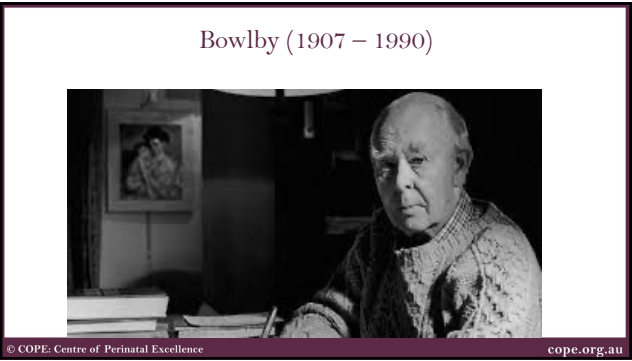
Freud, Klein, Winnicott, Bowlby, Fraiberg, Stern, Erikson, Fonagy, Schore, Siegel and James Hamilton

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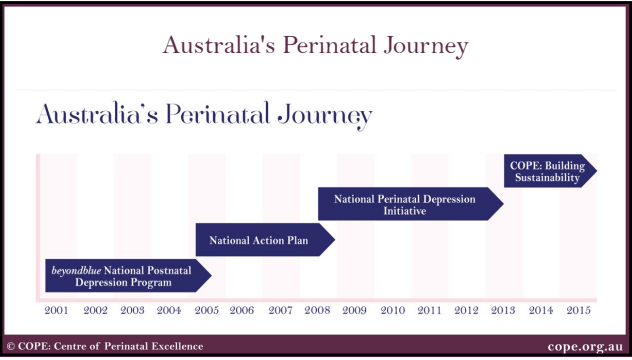
Winnicott (1896 – 1971)



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NPDI Objectives

1. Development of National Guidelines

2. Workforce training and development

3. Routine universal screening

4. Research and data collection

5. Follow-up support via referral pathways

6. Community awareness and destigmatisation

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Australia's Recent Perinatal Journey

Australia's Perinatal Journey

beyondblue National Postnatal Depression Program

National Action Plan

National Perinatal Depression Initiative

COPE: Building Sustainability

2001

2002

2003

2004

2005

2006

2007

2008

2009

2010

2011

2012

2013

2014

2015

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The Perinatal Context

Best Practice

COPE

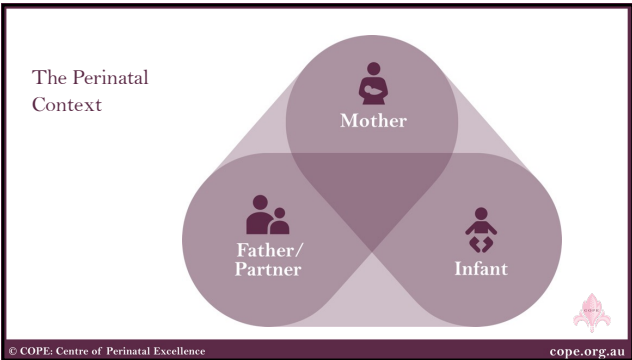
Guideline



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“It will be evident that there is no one variable that can explain perinatal adjustment and mental health problems and that a coordinated, multidisciplinary approach that gives equal attention to psychological, biological and social and environmental factors is essential in minimizing distress associated with the transition to parenthood”

Wenzel, 2016

The need for specialised care



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Interdisciplinary Interactions

Psychology

Paediatrics

Midwifery

Obstetrics

Psychiatry

Lactation

Nursing

Gynaecology

General Practice


Social Work

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Challenges - Pre-conception

- Psychological and physical consequences of infertility
- Psychological and physical consequences of pregnancy loss
- Relationship challenges
- Identity challenges
- Secondary infertility
- Involuntary childlessness




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Challenges - Perinatal Loss

- Miscarriage
- Stillbirth
- Infant loss
- Medical terminations




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Challenges - Pregnancy

- Physiological changes of pregnancy
- Neurochemical changes
- Hormonal changes
- Fetus development and complications, including abnormalities and fetus death
- Psychological adjustment to pregnancy
- Childbirth preparation and process, including legal rights



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Challenges - Birth

- Fear of birth
- Birth Trauma
- Physical recovery
- Psychological recovery
- New demands




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Challenges - Postnatal Period

- Physical & emotional aspects of birth and preterm births
- Stillbirth and unexpected abnormalities (including birth of a high-risk infant)
- Infant distress
- Physical & emotional aspects of lactation and feeding
- Impact of sleep deprivation on mood stability



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Challenges on the Journey to Parenthood:

What consumers had to say:

Executive Summary

The journey to parenthood is a complex one, with many challenges along the way. This document explores the challenges faced by consumers and provides a summary of the key findings.

Key findings:

- Challenges on the journey to parenthood include physical and emotional aspects of birth, stillbirth, and unexpected abnormalities.
- Infant distress, physical and emotional aspects of lactation and feeding, and the impact of sleep deprivation on mood stability are also significant challenges.

Stage 1: Pre-conception

The journey to parenthood begins with the decision to have a child. This stage involves physical and emotional challenges, such as fertility issues, miscarriages, and the emotional toll of trying to conceive.

Key findings:

- Physical challenges include fertility issues, miscarriages, and the emotional toll of trying to conceive.
- Emotional challenges include anxiety, depression, and the impact of social pressure.

Stage 2: Perinatal Loss

Perinatal loss is the loss of a fetus or newborn before or shortly after birth. This stage involves physical and emotional challenges, such as grief, loss, and the impact of medical interventions.

Key findings:

- Physical challenges include the loss of a fetus or newborn, and the impact of medical interventions.
- Emotional challenges include grief, loss, and the impact of social pressure.

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Stage 3: Pregnancy

Pregnancy is a time of physical and emotional challenges. This stage involves the physical aspects of pregnancy, such as weight gain, fatigue, and the emotional toll of the journey.

Key findings:

- Physical challenges include weight gain, fatigue, and the emotional toll of the journey.
- Emotional challenges include anxiety, depression, and the impact of social pressure.

Stage 4: Birth

Birth is a time of physical and emotional challenges. This stage involves the physical aspects of birth, such as pain, and the emotional toll of the experience.

Key findings:

- Physical challenges include pain, and the emotional toll of the experience.
- Emotional challenges include anxiety, depression, and the impact of social pressure.

Stage 5: The Postnatal Period

The postnatal period is a time of physical and emotional challenges. This stage involves the physical aspects of the postnatal period, such as lactation and feeding, and the emotional toll of the experience.

Key findings:

- Physical challenges include lactation and feeding, and the emotional toll of the experience.
- Emotional challenges include anxiety, depression, and the impact of social pressure.

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Considerations - Child-rearing

- Social and Government support systems
- Who to refer to and when
- Importance of mother-infant bond
- Woman's attachment history
- Mother-baby work (if appropriate)
- Underpinned by attachment theory and infant mental health research
- How to build a village
- Child development, including infant milestones etc.



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Specific Populations

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families
- Women experiencing intimate partner violence during pregnancy
- Adolescent pregnancies and birth
- Low-income
- Migrant parents
- LGBTI+ families
- Incarcerated parents
- Cross-cultural

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Lesson 1: Recap

- The perinatal period is a complex and highly vulnerable life stage
- This has lead to evolution of PMH as a specialised field
- The perinatal context is complex
- Perinatal mental health requires specialty assessment and treatment

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Applied Skills in Perinatal Mental Health:
Module 1: Lesson 1