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Centre of Perinatal Excellence

Applied Skills in Perinatal Mental Health Assessment and Care



LESSON NOTEBOOK

Module 2 | Lesson 3

Family Systems and
Perinatal Mental Health



Module 2: Lesson 3
Family Systems and
Perinatal Mental Health



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Treatment Approaches

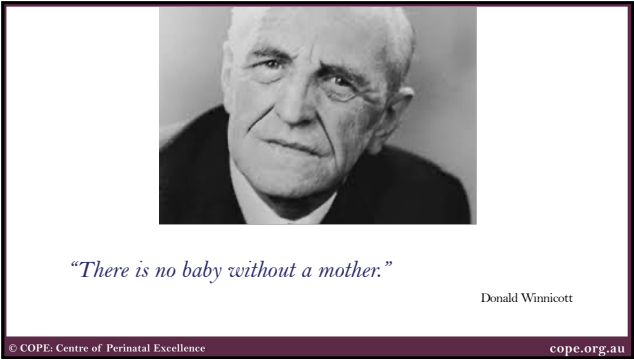
- Family-centered approach recommended
- Literature to date focused on:
 - Mother-infant dyad
 - Limited to mothers only

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Lesson 3 Overview

1. Infant mental health
2. Bonding and attachment
3. Fathers/Partners
4. Couple (effects on relationship)
5. Current family system
6. Families of origin
7. LGBTQI+
8. Transition to parenthood

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“The developing capacity of the infant and young child (from pregnancy to 3 years old) to experience, express and regulate emotions; form close and secure relationships; and explore the environment and learn.”

Osofsky & Thomas

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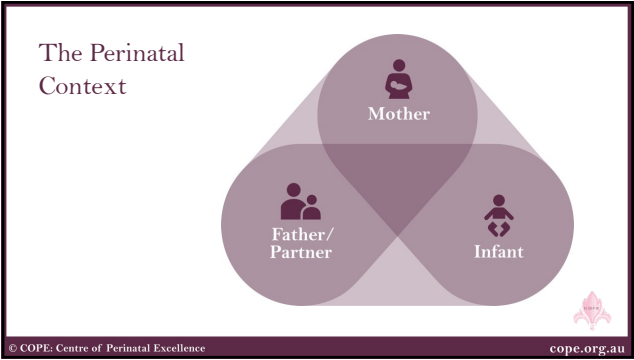
Tenets of Infant Mental Health

- Infant behaviour viewed within the context of relationships
- Caregiver relationships most salient
- Infant mental health within social and cultural contexts

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- Infant Observation / Reflective Practice
- Supports infant-parent dyad by:
 - Supporting parent self-knowledge
 - Supporting recovery and growth
 - Improves parenting confidence and skills

Family Systems Approach

- Infant mental health
- Bonding and attachment


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Family Systems Approach


- Infant mental health
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Fathers and Partners

- Increased risk of stress and distress
- Difficulties often undetected and unmanaged



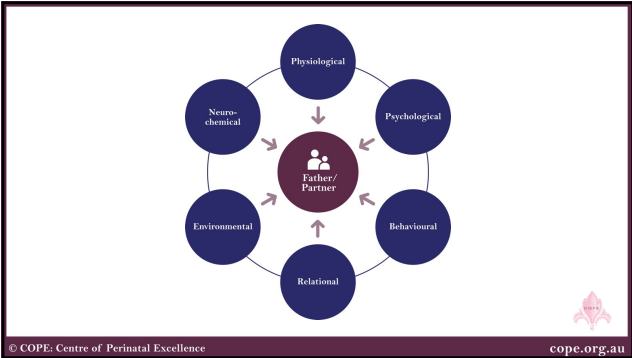
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Couple Functioning

Supporting Factors:

- Individual - how each individual adapts
- Relational - the way partners interact with one another
- Situational - manage transitions in parenthood

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Interview with Elly Taylor



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Extended Family Interactions

- Communication
- Expectations
- Exploration of roles
- Exploration of boundaries
- In-laws

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‘Ghosts in the Nursery’

- Relationship between past negative experiences of being parented and their own parenting style

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Lesson Recap – Family Systems

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