### Programme's name

The ‘Community-Around-Baby’ project: the ‘Community-Around-Baby’ toolkit & Early years education and support for first-time parents

### Original title

Une communauté autour d’un bébé

### Organisation/Country

- Pas-de-Calais County Council (France)
- **GRAFPER** (leading partner) – Research Group for Training and Action for the Prevention of Childhood at Risk/Groupe de Recherche d’Action et de Formation pour la Prévention de l’Enfance à Risque: this is a not-for-profit organisation which brings together researchers and students in Psychology to carry out research and joint actions on childhood at risk.
- **PSITEC** – Lille 3 University’s Research laboratory “Psychology: Interactions, Time, Feelings, Cognition” on health, education, disability, intergroup relationships or neuropsychology/Laboratoire de recherche rattaché a l'Université Lille 3 “Psychologie : Interactions, Temps, Emotions, Cognition”

### Website

- [PSITEC](#)
- [GRAFPER](#)

### Contact

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  Psychologist, GRAFPER
Summary: Since 2002, the Pas-de-Calais’s Mother-and-Child Protection Services ("Protection Maternelle et Infantile", PMI) have been involved in a participatory action-research process based on a socio-ecological framework for health promotion that led to two projects, ‘Being Mum or Dad for the first-time’ and then ‘Community-Around-Baby’ project. At each step of the research process, one working group gathering health care professionals, social workers and a researcher discussed strategies and methods for intervention towards parents with young children and professionals on child and maternal protection. The working group created an educational toolkit outlining problem-solving attitudes through comic strips based on everyday situations with a child. The working group meets between 5 and 7 times a year to discuss the project implementation and possible new tools and actions. The working group undertakes systematic self-reflection for situation suggestions of new strategies.

The pilot programme ‘Being Mum or Dad for the first-time’ that ran from 2002 to 2009 offered support for first time-parents targeting especially unemployed mothers-to-be from the fourth month of pregnancy until the child’s second birthday. The programme involved home visits or appointments at the PMI centres and two assessments (at the ages of 10 months, 2 years and 4 years).

The ‘Community-Around-Baby’ project between 2010 and 2014 was then designed in order to disseminate the best practices showcased in the programme and to improve the first educational toolkit. The toolkit confirmed its potential to change work practices. Participants were involved in a collaborative and creative reflection process to create the toolkit. Training and support for professionals facilitated the development of new preventive interventions for parents based on the ‘Community-Around-Baby’ toolkit. The reinforcement of partnerships with many actors confirmed that local resources could be better used in order to promote health and social relationships in the communities.

Recent developments: GRAFPER and the Pas-de-Calais County Council have signed a multiannual agreement on objectives and means with an annual grant of EUR 25,000 from January 2014 to December 2017 to carry on with the project's actions and to apply the methodology developed to different target groups receiving social services. The research team is working on new comic strips to talk about the familial, affective and sexual life in the Pas-de-Calais Planning and Education Family Centres.

Issues: The search of Mother-and-Child Protection Services for effective strategies and methods on the delivery and outreach of services.
targeting families with young children continues to be a permanent challenge.
- Professionals who received training found it challenging to carry out interventions using the toolkit in their own work place because of the high workload and difficulties in liaising with colleagues to plan a session. Professionals were at times wary about knowledge sharing through inter-professional debates. For that reason, extra support is offered to professionals and teams who want to implement by themselves new preventive interventions for parents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources:</th>
<th>Total budget for the ‘Community-Around-Baby’ project (2010-2014): EUR 340,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2010-2014 funding from the Pas-de-Calais County Council: EUR 105,000 + full time Psychologist position working on the project;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2011-2014 funding from the National Fund for Child Protection: EUR 60,000</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Human resources – the working group included:**
- 1 researcher in Psychology (PSITEC – Lille university),
- 2 psychologists (one full-time position covered by the Pas-de-Calais County Council and one part-time position paid by covered by GRAFPER through a grant),
- 5 civil servants from the Pas-de-Calais Mother-and-Child Protection Services.

The ‘Community-Around-Baby’ toolkit.

**Additional resources (only in French):**
Every professional who attends the two-half-day training as part of the ‘Community Around-Baby’ project receives the toolkit. The ‘Community Around-Baby’ toolkit involved costs related to the design and editing, research and intellectual property rights.

**Objectives:**
- Developing and testing a support programme for healthy family development after the birth of the first child,
- Disseminating best practices in supporting families featuring new technologies or collaborations,
- Improving the Mother-and-Child Protection services delivery and,
- Improving the outreach and impact of services.

**Outcomes:**
**For families:**
585 group sessions were organized involving 6,221 parents and other care givers in more than 35 different territories across Pas-de-Calais. The most popular topics addressed were:

- educational attitudes,
- children’s sleeping patterns, and
- playful behaviour

Health care professionals noticed positive outcomes for those parents who received training and information: parents seemed more confident and this trust-building process facilitated early interventions when necessary. The follow-up was also easier compared with the control group involved in the programme (Cf.: ‘Evaluation’).

For the professionals:

- 224 professionals received training on the use of the toolkit.
- New initiatives emerged and partnerships were reinforced, especially with perinatal networks. A website was created and an updated toolkit was drafted.

**Evaluation:**

**Impact assessment for the programme ‘Being Mum or Dad for the first-time’**

For the impact assessment, control groups were formed. Participants were split into three groups:

- The recipient group: participants who attended at least one meeting as part of the programme (unemployed mothers during the pregnancy)
- The control group: participants who did not receive any training or information during the pregnancy (unemployed mothers during the pregnancy)
- The informed group: participants who received only information (employed mothers during the pregnancy)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting</th>
<th>Groupe</th>
<th>Number of families contacted</th>
<th>% of attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At 10 months</td>
<td>Recipient</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>74,8 (89)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>44,7 (68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Informed</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>41,7 (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>319</td>
<td>55,5 (177)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At 24 months</td>
<td>Recipient</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>62,1 (77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>26,3 (49)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Informed</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>35,6 (65)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>39,5 (191)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At 4 years old</td>
<td>Recipient</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>85,4 (82)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>90,6 (29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Informed</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>94,1 (80)</td>
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</table>
The format of the sessions allowed parents the opportunity to exchange and discuss problem-solving attitudes featured in the toolkit. Analyses of problems and solutions were undertaken with the professionals. This method strengthened interaction between participants in reflective thinking and contributed to changing the professionals’ attitudes. The participatory action-research made it possible to improve the educational toolkit.

**Impact assessment for the programme ‘Community-Around-Baby’ project (2010-2014)**

An assessment of the first session was carried out with 223 professionals. 93 percent were either very satisfied or fairly satisfied in regards to their expectations.

**Resources:**


