

Re Birth and Being Congress, Melbourne, May 1979:

I attended this Congress with the specific aim of exchanging ideas and information on post natal groups such as the one I had recently co-led in Wellington. I have returned with much more.

Specifically I have learned a considerable amount about the following:

- a) Parent education - both ante and post natal.
- b) Birth interventions and the likely results.
- c) Birth Centres - out-of-hospital and in-hospital.
- d) Birth trauma and how it may be relieved.
- e) An important learning underlying all of the above is that the life long relationship between parents and a baby - and a woman's self esteem and self confidence - are closely linked with where a woman gives birth, the course of her labour, the normality of the birth, and the time and manner in which a mother, father and baby spend their first hours together.

Accordingly, since my return in May, I have been working in several areas appropriate to this learning as well as my normal work of skills training.

They are:

1. I convened an initial meeting of interested people (and have arranged for another one on September 20) with a view to
 - a) having a firm financial and administrative base from which post natal groups may be available and known to all new mothers in Wellington.
 - b) having a substantial number of mothers with suitable group work skills to co-lead these groups.
 - c) to collate material from these groups for ongoing learning.
 - d) to coordinate new groups and their co-leaders.
2. I am gathering together a comprehensive collection of material, research and books concerning birth intervention, the likely results and the alternatives.
3. I have publicly stated my concern about some of the above and survived!
4. I am working with Pae Skelton, midwife, to establish an out-of-hospital Birth Centre in Wellington next year.
5. I have lectured to social workers, nurses and trainee nurses, midwives, psychologists and Plunket nurses about post natal groups.
6. I have continued my occasional work with birth re-enactment and have been encouraged to write an article about this work (copy enclosed) which will be printed in the Parents Centre Bulletin next month,

Future Plans:

I will work more hours next year in skills training where I will teach mainly group work skills and human effectiveness training to a wide variety of people. A highly trained person from the United States is coming to join me in this work for one year. I have applied for our salaries from a Government source.

I will also continue to commit time and energy to support the planned Birth Centre and hope to involve myself in some of the parent education programmes and also as a volunteer to support the mothers.

Ros. Capper