

Summer 2010



# M.I. News

## We Did It!

### Strengthening Families Program Growing Strong



School of Public Health

May 20, 2010

“It’s a good program. I hope it will continue. SFP brings stability to kids left behind and families who are dealing with a parent’s incarceration.”

Velma  
SFP Participant

The Strengthening Families” Program (SFP) is a new research project that was facilitated through a collaboration between Motherly Intercession and the University of Michigan –Ann Arbor, School of Public Health.

SFP is a research project that is designed to expand services, tailor programs, and implement an evidence based prevention program for the Children of Incarcerated Parents.

The research data will evaluate the effectiveness of our current programs and services, assist us with designing future program components for this special population (Children, Caregivers, and Parents), and give the Caregivers of these children opportunity to advise Motherly Intercession of the types

of services that would be most helpful to them.

The two-year study is funded through a grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIMH R21MH081921, Alison Miller, PI).

On May 20, 2010 Shirley Cochran, Executive Director of Motherly Intercession, Alison L. Miller, Ph.D. from the U of M School of Public Health, the SFP Team Tamara Brickey, Danielle Lied, Kaylah Foley, Canisha Norris, Ja’Lessa Mayes, Susan Franzen, Lucy Mercier, Ph. D, Mable Jeffries, Olliesteen Hall, and 9 local “incarcerated families” came together at the New Creations Church to celebrate the completion of the first Cohort (16 weeks) of their SFP Program.

Motherly Intercession is currently seeking families to participate in the second Cohort which will start in September, 2010.

Prior to each session the families are served a full dinner meal, transportation and child care are available, and to show our appreciation, SFP participants can earn a total of \$40.00 by answering 3 questionnaire packets, and lots of door prizes and a drawing for \$10.00 gift cards are held at each session.

Participant are assured that everything discussed is kept completely CONFIDENTIAL.

The weekly sessions were run by four Group Leaders who participated in a extensive training workshop in December 2009 on problem solving.

### Double Honors in the Same Day...

On Saturday, May 8, 2010, Mrs. Shirley Cochran who is the founder of Motherly Intercession a nonprofit organization received two awards in one day for her long standing commitment and support of children of incarcerated parents of Genesee County.

At a luncheon at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church on Saginaw Street in Flint, MI. the Department of Women’s Affairs of Bountiful Love Church presented Mrs. Cochran with the “Phenomenal Woman” Award.

Later that evening the Rotary International Clubs of Genesee County also honored her with the “Service Above Self Award” at a dinner held at the Genesys Banquet Center in Grand Blanc, MI.

For 11 years, Motherly Intercession has been there for those she calls, the “hidden victims” of incarceration. Shirley has asked us to ask ourselves, “Who is left behind when a parent goes to jail or prison?” She knows it is



Shirley Cochran  
Exec. Director

### Strengthening Families Program Growing Strong...cont.

The next session will begin sometime in September. It is the hopes of the program to sign up more families than the previous session.

If you know of a willing family that would like to be apart of the important study, please call LaVonda Lee, Program Recruiter / Coordinator at (810) 424-9909.

#### MEETING THE CHALLENGE.....

"It has been challenging, I wish we could help them more." says LaVonda Lee the recruiter and coordinator of the Strengthening Families Program. She put a lot of time and effort in finding new participants,



LaVonda Lee  
SFP Recruiter

helping them to work through issues that might prevent them from taking part in the study and assuring them of their privacy. LaVonda has a degree in Criminal Justice and

Numerous years of experience working with disadvantaged children. She loves her job

responsibilities and enjoys her interaction with the Parents/Caregivers. The most important thing to her is to be a positive influence in the children's lives! Her passion is being able to mentor the children and to know that she was successful in making a difference.

LaVonda feels that the program is very much needed in our community and is an asset to strengthening the bond in the families that have faced these challenges today.

#### FROM THE TOP.....



Alison L. Miller, PhD from the U of M- Ann Arbor, School of Public Health met Motherly Intercession's Exec. Director

Shirley Cochran several years ago. They started their collaborative journey by writing the grant for the Strengthening Families Program. It wasn't until mid-2009 they were told the grant was finally approved.

"It has been such a pleasure working with this team to bring the Strengthening Families Program to Motherly Intercession. It's wonderful to see the staff come together to support the children and families who have participated so far." To the participants we would love to hear your feedback about how we may do better in the future.



Lucy Mercier, PhD from the Social Work Faculty at Saginaw Valley State University, provided clinical supervision to the Strengthening Families

group leaders. "It is such a privilege to work with the dedicated staff and volunteers at Motherly Intercession. Each week I am filled with new energy and hope for the families who are working so hard toward healing and growth."

### Double Honors in the Same Day...cont.

children ranging from infants to 18 years of age. She knows that the interruption to the family's stability causes the children anxiety affecting their mental, social, and academic well being. She also knows that the kids are shuffled from caregiver to caregiver, separated from other siblings, and have no means of visiting their incarcerated parent. In many cases the children began to exhibit behavior problems. Who cares for these children? Ninety percent of the time the challenges fall on the elderly grandparents. Often the grandparents are already struggling with their personal health issues, and are now faced with financial concerns, the child's emotional behavior, disciplinary decisions, and their lack of academic skill sets to assist the children with their homework, reading and math which causes them great stress and can leave them feeling overburdened by the situation.

Motherly Intercession's mission is to break the cycle of intergenerational incarceration. The organization's vision is that the children of incarcerated parent will realize....their parent's destiny does not have to be their destiny.

Mrs. Cochran thanked both organizations for acknowledging her effort in the community on behalf of children of incarcerated parents. She also stated that it take a village to raise a child, and she certainly does not work alone, a lot of people are making a difference at Motherly Intercession.

## SFP Group Leaders embrace the new program...



Danielle Lied is a senior at The University of Michigan-Flint. She is majoring in Social Work. Her goals upon graduating from U of M-Flint are to receive

her masters degree and hopes to become a School Social Worker. She says that, "leading the child group has helped strengthen my leadership skills and our discussions with the children have helped me grow as a person."



Tamara Brickey received her master's degree in Health Education from the University of Michigan-Flint in

May, 2010. Tamara hopes to focus on children's health and wellness. She has enjoyed working as a child group leader with SFP and has learned a lot from watching the program go from the planning stages to actual implementation. More than anything, she has enjoyed watching the children build friendships. Tamara says, "There is nothing better than getting a big hug from one of the kids in the program."



Kaylah Foley is a senior at Saginaw Valley State University. She is majoring in Social Work

and began as an intern through Mott Community College at M.I. about two years ago. Her goal is to get her Master's Degree and work with children and their parents.

She is now a Parent Group Leader with the SFP project. She says that "leading this group has helped me grow as a person and student in communicating with people in a group session."



Ganisha Norris graduated from University of Michigan-Flint with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Health Edu-

cation May 2, 2010. After graduation she plans to focus on health disparities within the minority population. Working as a group leader with SFP, Ganisha says, "It has truly given me an experience of a lifetime that I greatly appreciate and will carry with me throughout my career."

## M. I. Summer Camp Ready to Start...



Joy Schroeder  
Chair - FSPA Piano Dept.

With the school year about to end, Motherly Intercession has its plans in place for it's Annual Summer Camp 2010. It is set to begin July 7th, and end on August 12th, 2010. Camp runs from 10:00am to 3:00pm, 4 days a week. In keeping with the M.I. standards of academic excellence the students will complete reading and math assignments in the morning. After lunch, the students will take part in many fun filled activities.

We will continue our long-term partnership with the Flint Institute of Music who has provided many of our students lessons in music, dance, and singing.

The visit will provide the students an opportunity to try out different musical instruments, test their singing abilities, and new moves in the dance studio.

Many of the students are invited back in August to take lessons as a part of their Super Saturday program.

### A new partner this year.

Planned Parenthood will come to Motherly Intercession's summer camp to teach its "Safer Choices" program for kids age 9 and up. The students will also have opportunity to play

board games, flag football, jump rope do arts and crafts, and watch a movie or spend time in the computer lab.

The highlight of camp is the is the family picnic in August when the students will spend the day at a local water park and their parent/caregiver will be invited to join in the fun.



## Motherly Intercession Student Accepted into the Flint City Mayor's Cabinet

On April 28th, 2010, Ms. "J" attended the first Mayor's Student Cabinet meeting. She is a 11th grader at Flint's Southwestern Academy. She is a honor roll student and has been apart of Motherly Intercession since 2007. As a focused and responsible young lady, "J" has shown leadership qualities. She is a part-time employee with the organization and an assistant in the Reading and Counting to Success (RACS ) after school tutoring program.

The City of Flint Student Cabinet creates a viable avenue for Flint youth and students to voice their concerns as well as provide solutions to community issues.

When she learned of her acceptance she said, "I am very excited about this opportunity and I was really pleased on how the first meeting went. Everyone was very friendly. I really feel the Mayor's Cabinet has great potential and I see myself working very closely with everyone that was present."

### OUR MISSION

Our Mission is to break the cycle of inter-generational incarceration. Our target population is children who have a parent who is currently or was previously incarcerated. We provide a system of support which includes: Academic Tutoring, Social and Life Skills Training, Arts and Culture Education, and Family Preservation.

### OUR VISION

Our vision is that the children of incarcerated parents will realize their parent's destiny.....Does not have to be their destiny!

### DISCLAIMER

It is not the intent of neither, the Board of Directors, Advisory Board, Volunteers, nor the Supporters of Motherly Intercession to diminish the impact that the crimes committed by the incarcerated parent has made on our Community.

We do not condone any action that does not fall within the guidelines of the law.

## TO DONATE

Please help us to give a child a chance to have a better life and to improve the quality of life in our Community by making a tax deductible donation to support our Mission.

Please make your check payable and mail it to Motherly Intercession, P.O. Box 311109 – Flint, MI 48531 or visit the donations page on our new website:

**Motherly-intercession.org**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_@

## Last, but most Important .....

### Our New Website Has Launched

After some time our website has been re-designed and is ready for visitors. Learn more about Motherly Intercession and ways to support the INNOCENT children of incarcerated parents through the website at

[www.motherly-intercession.org](http://www.motherly-intercession.org)

Some new features are child and volunteer enrollment forms, also available is the opportunity to donate to M.I. online. You can also find updated facts and information on the impact of incarceration on children and their caregivers.

Reading and Counting to Success Program (RACS) needs more Volunteers for the upcoming school year!

Motherly Intercession is in search of adult volunteers who are willing to spend as little as two and a half hours per week to provide academic tutoring (K-12) and to help a child build a solid academic foundation.

Program sessions will resume early September 2010. If you are interested in volunteering please call Pat at (810) 424 9909 today or visit our new website:

**Motherly-Intercession.org** to register.

### Calendar of Events 2010

- On June 14th, 2010 - Twenty three students took part in the RACSS Student Graduation Ceremony at the New Creations Church.
- Summer Day Camp Starts July 7, 2010–August 12, 2010
- Our RACSS Year end Family Picnic will take place 10:00–3:00 Monday, August 16, 2010

### PLEASE SAVE THE DATE!!

**Motherly Intercession's Annual "Interceding for Children" Fundraising Dinner will take place on Saturday, November 13, 2010.**

For more information please call the office at (810) 424-9909