



## New Mothers' Support Group

A Support Group for Women with Perinatal Depression

Perinatal (antepartum and postpartum) depression is a common psychiatric disorder that occurs in 10-15 percent of all child bearing women. This prevalence rate crosses all races and cultures. Women who live in poverty, have multiple stressors, or suffer from a mental illness have a prevalence rate ranging up to 30 percent or more. The staggering statistic is that over 50 percent of women who are diagnosed with perinatal depression will not receive treatment due to multiple barriers to care.

Signs and symptoms of perinatal depression include:

- Depressed mood
- Loss of interest or pleasure in usual activities
- Significant weight loss/gain
- Decrease/increase in appetite
- Insomnia or hypersomnia
- Agitation
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Feelings of worthlessness
- Excessive or inappropriate guilt
- Poor concentration or indecisiveness
- Suicidal ideation.

According to the State of California Historical and Projected Birth Rates, Riverside County birth rates are estimated to reach at 32,758 in 2011. Applying the prevalence rate of perinatal depression to the Riverside County birth rates, approximately 4,913 will experience perinatal depression in 2011. Despite this staggering statistic there are minimal services available in our county to support women suffering from this disorder.

A pilot support group was developed by the Inland Empire Perinatal Mental Health Collaborative through the Wylie Center and Riverside County Public Health Nursing. It has been running since February 2010 at the Riverside County Don Schroeder Family Care Center, in the WIC office. Due to its success, this free support group is now being expanded throughout Riverside County in English and Spanish with childcare available. The locations of the support groups will be in the following areas: Riverside, Moreno Valley/Perris, Lake Elsinore, Hemet, Palm Springs, and Indio.

The support group offers:

1. Education regarding many different topics such as: mental health, support systems, parenting, and relationships.
2. Safe environment for mothers to discuss with professionals and other mothers about what they are feeling and experiencing.
3. Free childcare.

If you are interested in joining the Inland Empire Perinatal Mental Health Collaborative monthly meeting, please call The Wylie Center at 951-683-5193.

If you are interested in referring a client to the New Mothers' Support group, please call 951-358-5438.