

Lactation Consultant Helps Makes Breastfeeding Easier and More Enjoyable for Mothers

By Graham Strong

Breastfeeding is one of the most natural things, yet it can be the source of many difficulties for mothers and their babies. There may be problems with latching or milk supply, medical problems like thrush or poor weight gain, and simply a lack of education about breastfeeding for mothers.

There are also cultural issues – for example, mothers are pressured on all sides about bottle feeding vs. breastfeeding, which can make it difficult for them to decide what is best for them and their babies.

Lianna Pretto is the Lactation Consultant at the Maternity Centre, which is part of the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre. Her role is to help mothers with the practical, cultural, and to some

extent medical issues surrounding breastfeeding. Pretto does this through one-on-one counselling and in a group setting.

"I help mothers with any difficulties that they're having," Pretto said. "Sometimes they just need the reassurance that they're doing it right, is the baby feeding how she is supposed to be feeding, is the baby gaining weight, that sort of thing."

They say it takes a village to raise a child, but it also takes a village to teach mothers how to feed their babies. However in this modern age, some of that knowledge isn't passed down as it used to be.

"We used to live in a community where everyone around us was nursing. A lot of women I see haven't had anyone around them

who has ever nursed a baby before," Pretto said. "I feel that I'm sort of that support person to them, supporting them, and being their cheerleader in breastfeeding. That can be a factor as to whether or not a woman continues on with breastfeeding."

Pretto runs a group prenatal breastfeeding class so that mothers can learn the basics before the child is even born. She said it helps because after the rigours of childbirth, it can be difficult for mothers to process new information.

Pretto also keeps the information basic so that mothers are not overwhelmed.

"Breastfeeding is supposed to be simple and basic," she said. "We used to make it more complex with

equipment and pillows and 12 different positions... Simplifying it makes breastfeeding easier and more enjoyable for the mother, and women seem to feel like they can do it anywhere."

Sometimes Pretto is able to identify areas to be addressed by the primary caregiver in terms of identifying potential medical issues. Although she cannot treat or even diagnose medical conditions, if something doesn't look right, she can recommend mothers or their babies to a physician for a proper diagnosis.

Pretto sees about 8-12 clients per day, three days per week, not including her group classes. Besides the monthly prenatal breastfeeding classes, she also facilitates the weekly Bosom Buddies class, an

eight-week course designed to support mothers as they breastfeed, and provide them with other information on nutrition, exercise, and community services.

She stressed that programs like this couldn't exist without the support of the Maternity Centre and the healthcare professionals at the Health Sciences Centre.

"It's a really good system," Pretto said. "It doesn't matter if you're a physician or midwife or secretary – everybody here just seems to support each other."

Mothers can refer themselves to either one-on-one counselling with Lianna Pretto, or to either of the breastfeeding group classes. For more information, please contact the Maternity Centre at: (807) 684-6228.

Walk the Talk Award Winner: Janelle Syring

By Graham Strong

The Walk the Talk Awards recognize staff throughout the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre who are among the best of what they do. In the case of Janelle Syring though, she won for helping in an area that, strictly speaking, is not even in her job description.

Janelle works full-time at the Rehabilitation Department as a "float" physiotherapist. Her job is to help other physiotherapists who need an extra hand or to cover appointments when another physio is off sick.

However the Walk the Talk Award that she won for French Language Services Award for her help interpreting for French-speaking patients – and she gets calls from all areas of the Health Sciences Centre.

"I'm always the girl they call to help translate," Janelle said.

Language can be real barrier, especially for patients from certain communities in the region. Janelle said that patients from places like Hearst or Kapuskasing often speak little or no English. That can be a problem when it comes to understanding exactly what is happening.

"Sometimes if they're on pain medication or if they're a little confused after a procedure, it doesn't help," she said.

Janelle will help interpret for a patient in many different situations, including discussions with doctors, nurses, and other Health Sciences Centre staff.

Originally from St. Boniface,



Janelle Syring, Walk the Talk Award Winner

Janelle is fully bilingual. She did her physiotherapy training in Winnipeg before moving to Thunder Bay four years ago to join the Rehab program at the Health Sciences Centre.

Janelle said that she's not quite sure how her name got out there, though it likely came from her work in the Rehab department itself.

"Often it's our surgery patients who are coming in for hip and knee replacements – I'll do a pre-op class for physiotherapy in French for them," she said. "I also work on several of the units, so

eventually I think that the unit staff just picked up on the fact that I always took the French patients."

Janelle said that although the Health Sciences Centre does offer full French interpretive services, she thinks that it is probably easier sometimes to give her a quick call since she is on-site every weekday.

Besides, she's happy to do it.

"If someone's in distress, or if it helps clarify something for the patient – absolutely I'm happy to do it. I'd want the same thing for my family or for myself. It helps make their stay a little less stressful."



Tony Stapley, General Manager, Intercity Shopping Centre, and Terri Hrkac, Director of Major and Planned Giving, Health Sciences Foundation, announce the winner of the sold-out Intercity Ultimate 50/50 Cash Draw.

Intercity Ultimate 50/50 Cash Draw sells out again

By Maryanne Matthews

Who would turn down a chance to win some serious cash right before Christmas? In the Intercity Shopping Centre Ultimate 50/50 Cash Draw, someone would win up to \$10,000 cash, and what's even better – the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Foundation comes out a winner as well!

The win-win incentive makes it no wonder that this year's Intercity Shopping Centre Ultimate 50/50 Cash Draw sold out once again. The raffle raised \$10,000 for the Health Sciences Foundation and \$10,000 for the lucky winner.

"We're so thrilled that this draw continues to be such a success," says Tony Stapley, General Manager, Intercity Shopping Centre. "Health-

care is such an important issue that affects virtually everyone who comes through Intercity. We're proud to partner with the Foundation and support world-class healthcare for the people of our community."

Tickets for the draw cost only \$2 and were on sale from October 19th until the tickets sold out on December 22nd. This year's winner of the \$10,000 prize was Stan Maxwell.

The funds from this year's draw support the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Foundation's Northern Cardiac Fund. Thanks to the staff and management at Intercity Shopping Centre, and all those who supported the draw, more than \$115,000 has been raised to date by the Intercity Shopping Centre Ultimate 50/50 Cash Draw.

'Hairspray' Supports Healthcare

The St. Ignatius High School production of 'Hairspray – The Broadway Musical' was a tremendous success. Proceeds from the two May performances were generously donated to the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Foundation.

100% of the funds raised will remain right here in Northwestern Ontario. Thanks to donations like this, more people get the care they need, closer to home. From babies in the neonatal intensive care unit, to critical care patients, to kidney patients of all ages, virtually all benefit from generous community groups like St. Ignatius.



Cast and crew of the St. Ignatius High School production of 'Hairspray'

How do we make the grounds smoke free at the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre?

Attend one of two sessions to share your views on the subject.

There will be short presentations and table discussions on the issue. Outcomes of the sessions will be presented to the Senior Management Team of Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre.

Session 1 – TODAY, January 24, 2012 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Session 2 – Saturday, January 28, 2012 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Register by: Visiting the website: www.tbrhsc.net/smoking
Or Calling (807) 864-6010

Auditorium A, 3rd floor, 980 Oliver Road • 80 seats maximum available per session

PARKING PROVIDED

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