

# Perinatal program cited nationally

By Shirlee Ross Iden  
staff writer

People take wallpaper hanging classes, drawing and exercise classes to sharpen their skills. Ann Sokolaki of Southfield asks, "Why not enhance parenting skills?"

Sokolaki has been helping first time parents in Oakland County become more skillful parents through the perinatal coaching program of Family and Children Services of Oakland.

"There was a newspaper write-up when this program started and I saw it in the Eccentric," she said. "So I called to

inquire and became the first perinatal coach."

Volunteer coaches in the program are trained to work with couples becoming parents for the first time in a sustained support relationship. The purpose of the service is to support families and relieve pressures for parenting and family growth, leading to happier childhoods.

For Sokolaki, helping couples evolve into effective, assured parents was natural since she has raised six youngsters of her own.

"As the world changes for use we each meet things we've never experi-

enced before — it is so helpful to have someone to turn to for suggestions. This program is about things we give one another, a touch of tenderness so that each of us can grow and manifest what is in us to become what we are — the unfolding hope of the world."

"So many people don't have experience with young babies. Programs like this can be pretty important to people."

RECENTLY, this was affirmed when the Parent/Infant Growth (perinatal care) program was recognized as the best in the nation.

At the recent biennial conference of Family Service Associations, the program won the 1983 award and was commended for developing and consolidating an exciting volunteerism project, using unpaid staff at all levels of agency activities; networking with other community agencies and resources; and recruiting volunteers who represent a cross-section of the population.

Also cited was the fact the program uses volunteers like Sokolaki to publish a newsletter and publicize the service to enable it to have greater community impact.

"Volunteers have been the strength of this program," affirmed Beatrice Rowe of Southfield, supervisor. "This is

because the volunteers want it to work."

Rowe says the agency is looking toward establishing labor support groups for people who are alone and need this kind of attention.

"Now any parents can be in a group to help them with parenting," she said.

Parenting groups are now forming to support and encourage one another.

Anyone interested in having a coach during the birth and infancy of their first child or in working in the program should call Family and Children's Services at 544-4004.

# Madonna's winter term registration still open

There is still time to register for winter term at Madonna College, Livonia, for more than 50 career-oriented programs.

Registration will continue through Jan. 9 from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday. Classes begin Jan. 9. College offices will be closed Dec. 23 through Jan. 2.

Madonna is the largest, independent, liberal arts college for men and women in Southeastern Michigan.

The college offers a wide variety of academic choices including nursing, accounting, computer systems applica-

tions, legal assistant and medical technology.

Madonna also offers a master of science in administration degree with specialties in business or nursing.

Tuition for most undergraduate classes is \$65 per credit hour; \$90 per credit hour for nursing courses and \$100 per credit hour for the master of science degree.

New students must be admitted through the admissions office.

Madonna College is at I-96 and Levan, Livonia. For information, call the registrar's office, 591-5038.

# Congressional Record salutes Weight Watchers

The 20th anniversary of the founding of Weight Watchers International was recently recognized as a "hallmark for those concerned with public health, nutrition and weight control" by the Congressional Record, the official record of the 98th Congress. The tribute to the world's most successful weight control organization, which was founded in New York in 1963, was introduced by Sen. Alfonse D'Amato, R-N.Y.

"By helping to create a greater public awareness of the importance of sound nutrition and the maintenance of healthful weight levels, Weight Watch-

ers has established itself as an unquestioned leader in the fields of weight control and nutrition as they relate to good health. By bringing its message to every part of the globe during the past 20 years, Weight Watchers has demonstrated its unwavering commitment to our common goal of a healthier, happier world," the message stated.

In response, Florine Mark, president of The Weight Watchers Group Inc., noted that the success of Weight Watchers is due to its unique and scientifically designed program which teaches members the skills needed to make proper and nutritious eating a matter of habit for a lifetime.

Sen. D'Amato added that since Americans began to demonstrate the increasing concern with overweight problems in the 1960s, weight reduction programs, fad diets, and miracle weight loss plans have flooded the market, creating a situation that made it increasingly more difficult for consumers to make rational choices concerning sensible eating patterns.

"BUT WHILE thousands of new panaceas have come and gone in the last two decades, the Weight Watchers Program has withstood the test of time. Weight Watchers stands pre-eminent as the largest and most successful weight control organization in the world," said D'Amato.

For information about the Weight Watchers program and Weight Watchers meetings in your area, call 557-5454.

# Expectant parents class is offered

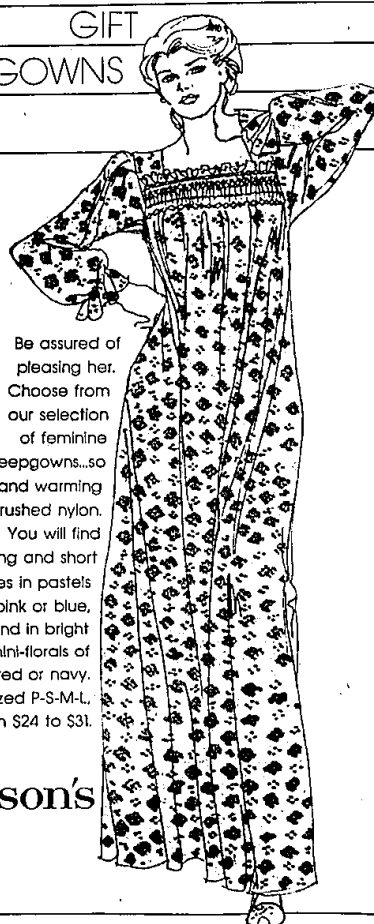
The Oakland County Health Division will offer a series of eight Expectant Parent classes beginning Tuesday, Jan. 17, in the Southfield office of the health division, 27725 Greenfield Road, Southfield.

Classes will be given from 7:30-9:30 p.m. and will be taught by public health nurses. There is no charge for attending the series of classes, but participants are asked to preregister. Enrollment is limited.

Topics will include maternal physical changes, good nutrition, growth and development of the fetus and the baby, labor and delivery, infant care and parenting.

To enroll, call 858-1394 or toll-free 645-1150, Ext. 8-1394.

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