

— IPHER —

# Interprofessional Health Education and Research

## The Case of Rebecca Robinson

Merrymount Children's Centre offers family support and crisis care for parents and children from birth to age 12. It operates seven days a week, 24 hours per day and offers a safe and nurturing environment for children whose families are experiencing crisis or complex stressors. There are both individualized and group programs. Some of the group programs include parenting skills, Teen Talk for teenage mothers, self-esteem and anger management programs for children. Additionally there is a health clinic staffed by a nurse practitioner.

Rebecca Robinson is a 27 year old woman. She is 5'7" and 190 lbs, and she smokes a ½ pack of cigarettes per day. She completed college, but is currently staying at home with her children. Her exercise routine is limited, and she has limited information regarding her family medical history.

She is currently separated from her husband, David, who is 25 years old. He is 6' tall and 210 lbs. He uses drugs on occasion and drinks alcohol regularly, while also smoking ½ pack per day of cigarettes. He is currently unemployed and wishes to pursue a career in music. He has had jobs in the past as a security guard, but was fired for poor attitude and high absenteeism. He lives in an apartment, and receives no financial assistance. He does not provide child support for his children.

Rebecca and her two children currently reside in subsidized housing and receive Ontario Works (welfare) assistance. Her eldest son, Lewis, is 6 years old. He does well in school, but has had some behavioural issues such as challenging authority. He was previously hospitalized with a varicella infection and secondary skin infections (chickenpox). He has since fully recovered. The second child is a 3 year old boy, Conor. He is an extremely active child, and is not enrolled in daycare or school at this time, partly because he is not toilet trained yet.

Rebecca is struggling with the failure of her marriage, and her past history of being in foster care as a child. She often comes to the centre for parenting assistance and support for past abusive relationships. Today she arrives at the health clinic in tears, Conor in tow. She feels she is nearing the end of her rope. She had a call from the school principal who told her that Lewis will be suspended the next time he is verbally aggressive toward his teacher. Plus Lewis arrived home with a note about a class fieldtrip that is going to cost \$50 which she can't afford. Meanwhile, Conor is getting into everything at home, writing on walls and purposely taking his diaper off to defecate and urinate over the heat register or behind the furniture. She has no idea why he is doing this and secluding him in his bedroom as punishment has not been successful. During the telling of her story, Conor becomes restless and Rebecca pulls a sippy cup filled with what looks like Coke and a baggy containing bright orange cheezys out of the stroller and shoves them at Conor, who happily takes them and quiets down.