



WE'VE MOVED KIND OF....BUT NOT REALLY

On July 1, 2021, PARI: The Prevention of Adolescent Risk Initiative became a

standalone research unit at the University of Maryland School of Social Work. We are thankful to the Institute for Innovation and Implementation for our time with them.

Here's a message from Michelle Zabel, Director of The Institute, about the PARI transition:

I want to publicly thank Dr. Nadine Finigan-Carr for her leadership and commitment to her research and scholarship goals through the Prevention of Adolescent Risk Initiative (PARI). Additionally, I want to thank her for her leadership and voice during the merger process for the Ruth Young Center and The Institute for Innovation and Implementation. Over this past 18 months she has participated as a member of The Institute's Leadership Team as the Deputy Director of the Ruth Young Center for Maryland. In this role, she has been a core team member in our work regarding the merger, website redesign, social marketing structures, as well as policy and procedure reviews all throughout a global pandemic.

I, personally, have found her input invaluable and appreciated her contributions. Dr. Finigan-Carr has decided to fully focus on her research and scholarship goals. Therefore, she has decided to step away from The Institute at this time. Effective July 1st, she will be reconstituting PARI as a standalone initiative of the School of Social Work. The members of the PARI team that will be joining Dr. Finigan-Carr at the reconstituted PARI are Rochon Steward and Neil Mallon. As an FYI, Sharon Henry will be leaving the University effective June 30th to pursue

other interests.

Thank you, Nadine, Rochon, Sharon, and Neil for your tireless work promoting healthy practices during adolescence and the emphasis you have placed on improving outcomes for vulnerable populations. We look forward to seeing the good work that will come from your focused efforts and opportunities for partnership as we all move forward. Please join me in wishing the PARI team well in their new configuration.

What we did on our first day as a standalone initiative...

PARI's Director **Dr. Nadine Finigan-Carr** and the SAFE Center's Director Ambassador Susan Esserman met with **First Lady Yumi Hogan** to discuss Maryland's efforts to combat human trafficking



Unfortunately Shari Henry left PARI also on 7/1/21. As Research Specialist, Shari has been instrumental in conducting the work of the Maryland Human Trafficking Initiative and helping us to meet the goals of that project. She will be missed for her insight and dedication to this work.

We wish Shari well in her future endeavors!



Back to School- Helping Keep Our Kids Safe Online

As school districts across the state prepare for a return to in person learning, parents and adults must continue to help

our youth learn about internet safety practices and the risks of online grooming and exploitation. Last year, the shift to virtual learning and reduced in person social interaction caused unprecedented access and dependence on digital technology for communication and learning purposes.

The risk for cyber exploitation and online enticement is much greater given the increasing amount of time that youth are spending on the internet. According to the ***National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC)***, online enticement “involves an individual communicating with someone believed to be a child via the internet with the intent to commit a sexual offense or abduction. This is a broad category of online exploitation and includes sextortion, in which a child is being groomed to take sexually explicit images and/or ultimately meet face-to-face with someone for sexual purposes, or to engage in a sexual conversation online or, in some instances, to sell/trade the child’s sexual images.”

In 2020, NCMEC’s **CyberTipline** saw a **97.5% increase in reports of online enticement** ([link to stats](#)). There are several resources designed to educate parents and youth about internet and social media safety. NCMEC has developed an online safety education program called [NetSmartz](#). The site includes age specific videos and activities to help young people become more aware of the potential safety risks, recognize the signs of predatory grooming practices, and tips for how to keep their personal information private and secure.

Shared Hope International has also developed several internet safety resources, including a new website designed for teens to learn about how online sex traffickers work, how to protect themselves, and how to take action against online predators ([Social Media Safety 101](#)). Shared Hope has also developed an Internet Safety Guide and Toolkit for parents, teachers, and all those working with youth with information on Popular Apps, Video Games and eSports, Monitoring Online Activity, Sexting, and How to Talk to Kids about Online Interactions ([Safety Guide and Toolkit](#)).



expanded 48 team tournament from the traditional 32 team format.

The games will take place in the United States, Canada, and Mexico, but the host cities are still vying to be selected as part of a competitive bidding process.

Our hometown of Baltimore is currently in the running to be one of 10 cities in the US to host games. PARI's Dr. Nadine Finigan-Carr and Neil Mallon, LCSW-C, were invited to join a Human Rights Factor Committee to help develop and implement a strategy to mitigate the potential negative effects of hosting this type of international event. Sporting events such as the World Cup are prime targets for human traffickers because of the large number of people who travel to host cities for these events.

Those spectators who travel alone or without their significant other, may be more likely to solicit commercial sex due to the transient nature and anonymity that traveling provides. Traffickers may use this event as an opportunity to recruit vulnerable youth and young adults to engage in commercial sex and use elements of force, fraud, and coercion to exploit and entrap these individuals for profit.

Baltimore is also home to many vulnerable populations who are susceptible to labor trafficking and abuse of rights in the workplace, including being forced to work long hours, or in unsafe conditions, and having their pay withheld. The World Cup is expected to bring increases in tourism and business to Maryland, which could pose a risk to those workers who are vulnerable to this type of exploitation. As a part of the Human Rights Factor Committee, we are working to preemptively address these risks.

On July 15th, the Baltimore-Maryland 2026 World Cup Host Destination Committee led by Lt. Governor Boyd Rutherford and Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott, held a kickoff event at M&T Bank Stadium. **Pictured below is Dr. Finigan-Carr, Neil Mallon, and Ashley Harper Cottrell, the Chair of the Human Rights Factor Committee.**

During the kickoff event, a promotional video was shared showing that Baltimore is ALL IN. Check it out for a cameo from Dr. Finigan-Carr.

[*Link to Baltimore City's FIFA Promo Video*](#)



HUMAN TRAFFICKING TRAINING SERIES for MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

The Maryland Human Trafficking Task Force, in conjunction with many human trafficking awareness and service advocacy groups, have a training series targeted to Mental Health Professionals. These trainings (101, 201, and 301) are for licensed Clinician (e.g. LMSW, LCSW-C, LGPC, LCPC, etc.) with a minimum of 3 years of experience practicing in a clinical capacity (including internships). If you are a licensed clinician, with less than 3 years of clinical experience (under supervision) and you are working in a Rape Crisis, DV/IPV or AntiTrafficking Organization you may register for this presentation.

You must complete the 101 level before moving to 201, and you must complete 201 before moving on to 301. Below are links to the training flyers, which include registration links, 2021 and 2022 trainings.





THOUGHTS FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Welcome to the August 2021 edition of the PARI Periodical. A lot has changed over the past few months but our dedication to working for the improvement of the lives of adolescents and young adults is unwavering. Over the past 18 months concurrent to dealing with a global pandemic, we have been a part of the Institute for Innovation and Implementation. Our connection with the Institute began in February 2020 only a few weeks before we all entered lockdown. As PARI has grown and changed in our work, we have realized it is time for us to become a standalone research unit. So what does this mean for those of you in the community we engage and work with? Truthfully, not much. Behind the scenes we will work with different University personnel, but for you all there will be virtually no changes. We have not moved physically nor have our means of communication changed.

As you can see from the above news and information, we hit the ground running in the 6 weeks! We are thankful to both First Lady Hogan's office and Maryland Sports for inviting us to be a part of some momentous new work going on in our state. I would be remiss in not mentioning that unfortunately we have moved forward without one of our team members, Shari Henry. Sharon has been a major part of PARI almost since its inception. She was the second person ever officially hired on our team. We will truly miss her and wish her all the best!

Looking ahead to the next few months, we are hoping to engage many more of you in person at training events. However, all of this is subject to the trends in the Covid-19 pandemic. I hope that you are all safe. Remember to wear a mask, sanitize, and get vaccinated if and when you can.

