All Hands on Deck: Partnering with Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants to Implement the Pyramid Model

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Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

- IECMCH is an evidence-based approach that pairs mental health professionals with people who work with young children and their families.
Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants help caregivers support healthy growth and development in young children.

It’s not about “fixing” children or providing therapy.

Mental health consultants:

- Promote strong relationships and a supportive environment for caregivers, such as home visitors and child care professionals, along with families and tribal communities
- Partner with parents and caregivers to understand what babies and young children are telling us with their behaviors, and to co-create solutions
- Equip caregivers with the tools and insights to nurture social and emotional development and healthy behaviors in infants and young children
- Help our children feel safe, supported, and valued where they are
What IECMHC Is and Is Not

What IECMHC Is

- Indirect service that benefits young children
- Promotion-based
- Prevention-based
- Provided by a master’s prepared mental health professional
- Builds the capacity of families and professionals
- Supports and sustains healthy social and emotional development of young children
- Delivered in a variety of child-serving systems (ECE, HV, etc.)
- Delivered in a natural or community setting

What IECMHC Is Not

- Direct service and/or therapy
- Focused solely on families
- Always provided in a center-based setting
- Group therapy
- Psychological treatment for staff, families, or children
- Training and Technical Assistance (TTA)
Pyramid Model

A Framework of Evidence-Based Practices

- **Tertiary Intervention**: Few
- **Secondary Prevention**: Some
- **Universal Promotion**: All

- Intensive Intervention
- Targeted Social Emotional Supports
- High Quality Supportive Environments
- Nurturing & Responsive Relationships
- Effective Workforce
Critical Elements of Program-Wide Implementation
Guided by the Leadership Team

- Staff Buy-In
- Family Engagement
- Program-Wide Expectations
- Procedures for Responding to Challenging Behavior
- Continuous Professional Development and Classroom Coaching
- Data Decision-Making Examining Implementation and Outcomes
There are three types of mental health consultation services:

**Child/Family**
- Help adults understand and address the child’s needs by developing an individualized plan with the parents, providers, and home visitors.

**Classroom/Group**
- Work with child care providers, teachers, and home visitors to improve care offered to all children by helping to identify and address attitudes, beliefs, practices, and conditions that may be undermining quality relationships between adults and children.

**Programmatic**
- Support administrators, directors, home visitors, and other program leaders in making changes in their care practices and/or policies to the benefit of all children and adults in their setting.

New strategies and approaches are not necessarily child- and family-focused, but may include changes to policy and practice.
Impact of IEC MHC on Child-Level Outcomes

- Reduce Children’s Behavior Problems
- Prevent Preschool Suspensions/Expulsions
- Improve Dyadic Relationships
- Reduce Missed Work Days for Parents
IECMHC Competencies

Equity and Cultural Sensitivity

Original Research Volume 10-October 31, 2013

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PEER REVIEWED
Prevalence of Health Indicators Among Pennsylvania Head Start Staff Survey Participants (N = 2,122) in 2012

- Severe headache or migraine: 32.2%
- Lower back pain: 36.9%
- Obesity: 37.1%
- Asthma: 18.7%
- High blood pressure: 22.3%
- Diabetes or prediabetes: 11.9%
- ≥3 Physical health conditions: 21.8%
MENTAL HEALTH
Depression
Diagnosed by Health Professional

23.50%  17.60%

Head Start Staff  National Reference

NCPMI
Teachers Need to Be Well to Teach Well
## The Pyramid Model, IEC MHC and Trauma Informed Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Old” Way Approaches to Addressing Challenging Behavior</th>
<th>Pyramid Model</th>
<th>Trauma Informed Pyramid Model</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus on behavior reduction</td>
<td>Focus on understanding function/meaning of behavior and teaching new skills</td>
<td>Focus on understanding the function/meaning of the behavior, teaching new skills and <strong>healing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quick fix</td>
<td>Focus on long term academic and social emotional outcomes</td>
<td>Focus on long term academic, social emotional outcomes and on <strong>mental health outcomes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General intervention for all behavior problems</td>
<td>Intervention matched to the purpose of behavior</td>
<td>Intervention matched to the purpose of behavior and adults recognize that today’s challenging behavior may be <strong>rooted in skills that have previously kept them emotionally and/or physically safe in unhealthy and unsafe situations.</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
IECMH Consultants can Support Family Engagement

IECMH consultants can:

• Explore a center’s family engagement practices (how does the program welcome, engage and build relationships all families)

• Help a director or staff member plan for a conversation with a family

• Meet with staff and a parent

• Assist ECE staff with referring families to community services i.e. mental health treatment, substance use treatment, child welfare, interpersonal violence services
All Hands on Deck are Needed

• Multiple lenses are beneficial
• Often children's behaviors and life circumstances are complicated needing all expertise and perspectives
• Sometimes even coaches get stuck
• The field needs more support than is available – the field needs both IECMHC and the Pyramid Model
The Center of Excellence for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

SAMHSA’s Center of Excellence helps states, tribal nations, and communities ensure the success of the next generation through increasing access to Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation.

- The brand new Toolbox, a first-of-its-kind resource for the field of IECMHC is available to all and can be used by those who are just learning about IECMHC as well as those steeped in the practice and wanting to expand it. Visit the Toolbox at: https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/toolbox

- For more information about the Center of Excellence or the Toolbox, contact us at iecmhc@edc.org

About the Center of Excellence

The Center of Excellence helps states, tribes, and communities use IECMHC as a tool to promote mental health and school readiness.

Learn more about our:
- Goals and Activities
- Expert Work Group
- Federal Partners
- Management
Contact Us

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Pretty please!
Take the email survey.
ChallengingBehavior.org

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and more...
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