

Train educators, cause a ripple effect.



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# NCIT Capacity-Building Hub State Implementation Grantees Meeting





# Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (I/ECMH)

Allison Lowe-Fotos
Policy Manager, Illinois Policy Team
The Ounce of Prevention Fund



It's amazing what they absorb before they're five.



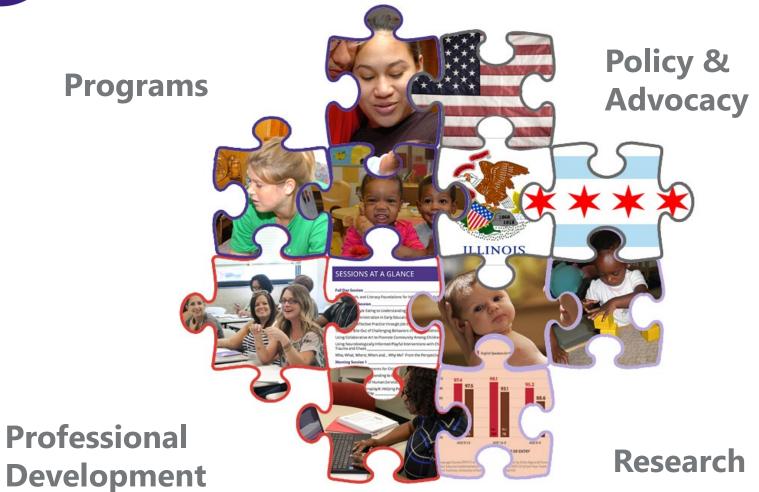


#### The Ounce of Prevention Fund

The Ounce gives children in poverty the best chance for success in school and in life by advocating for and providing the highest-quality care and education from birth to age five.



#### **What We Do**





# What is I/ECMH?



"Lahwaah, buwha buwhaah, gullygah abawaa mey ayeeyaah. Is that normal?"

Not this!

# The developing capacity of the infant and toddler to:

- Form close and secure adult and peer relationships
- Experience, manage, and express a full range of emotions
- Explore the environment and learn

...all in the context of family, community, and culture.







#### I/ECMH is not

- Focused on mental illness in young children
- A philosophy that infants and toddlers necessarily need MH intervention to develop healthy personalities
- Only focused on young children already identified as having problems or being at risk
- Focused solely on the child
- Synonymous only with social-emotional development and/or self-regulation



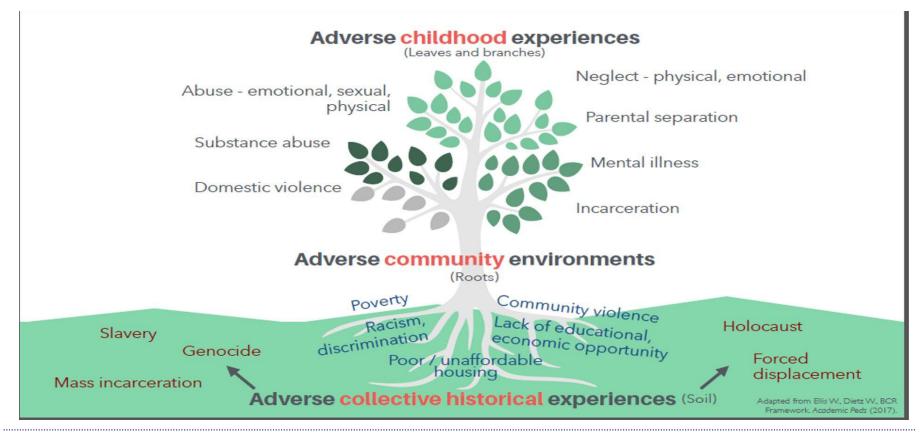
#### **Our Guiding Principles**

- 1.) Strengths-based perspective: health, not illness
- 2.) The importance of culture and equity
- 3.) An infant's development begins and continues within the context of an emotional relationship
- 4.) The importance of brain science
- 5.) Social-emotional skills provide a foundation for all other domains of development
- 6.) Children aren't born with these skills, but with the potential to develop them
- 7.) Relationships matter, but so do environments



#### **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)**

The ACES study is the largest of its kind that looks at the health and social effects of ACES over a lifespan.







#### **Childhood Trauma**

- "The three Es": The <u>experience</u> of an <u>event</u> by a child that is emotionally painful or distressful, which often results in lasting mental and physical <u>effects</u>
- 3 levels of Stress Response:
  - Positive
  - -Tolerable
  - -Toxic
- Historical trauma/intergenerational trauma: passed down by generations





#### **Hard Things & Stressors:**

- Not able to pay bills
- Not enough food to eat
- Violence
- Health problems
- Housing that does not feel safe

#### Things about You:

- Genetics and DNA
- Resiliency/ACE score
- Life story
- Personality

#### Good Things & Resources:

- People that you can count on
- · Dependable transportation
- Safe housing
- A doctor you trust
- Having enough money

Resiliency is when the scale tips toward the good even when there are stressors and hard things.



### **Early Mental Health Challenges are Real**

- 9-14% of children 0 5 experience mental health challenges. When they reach 2 5 years, the rate is the same that we would find in adolescence
- Infants, toddlers, and young children can experience significant psychological distress
- However, with appropriate interventions, challenges can be addressed and positive outcomes achieved



### I/ECMH Red Flags

- Changes in feeding, toileting, and sleeping habits
- Excessive externalizing behavior problems, like crying, biting, tantrums, and aggression
- Internalizing behavior problems, like social withdrawal and fearfulness
- Regressions to earlier stages of development



### **Addressing I/ECMH**

- Mental health promotion is important for all children & families
- Need for multi-pronged, multi-level approach
- Need to address disparities
- Programs, staff, and families need to be equipped with the best tools and support



#### Addressing I/ECMH

# Framework for a Coordinated Mental Health System in Illinois for Children and Families

#### Promotion

A coordinated system of supports and services
designed to encourage and support the healthy social and
emotional development of all young children and their families. Healthy
social and emotional development is a critical key to school readiness and life success.

Promotion approaches are universal, designed to support young children and provide
the adults who interact with them the skills to contribute to their healthy social and emotional
development. All adults, including but not limited to parents and family members, caregivers, early care
and education providers and teachers, and health care providers, all play a role in the social and emotional
development of young children. Examples of promotion approaches include universal screening, warm phone line for
parents, high quality early learning programs, and educational opportunities for parents and providers on the importance
of healthy social and emotional development.

#### Prevention/ Intervention

A coordinated system of targeted supports and services designed to minimize or prevent the development of social or emotional delays and early childhood mental health difficulties. These supports and services work to intervene early in order to identify concerns and prevent or minimize more severe challenges later. Prevention and intervention supports and services are targeted to families that are experiencing risk factors such as exposure to trauma, toxic stress, poverty or other adverse circumstances that could increase the likelihood of their young child developing social or emotional delays or mental health concerns. Prevention and intervention approaches focus on the development of nurturing and responsive caregiving relationships and supportive home and early learning environments. Prevention and intervention approaches help build the capacity of the adults in a child's life to understand and respond effectively to the child's social and emotional needs including various behaviors. Examples of prevention and intervention approaches include home visiting; mental health consultation services for providers, children and families; Part C Early Intervention evaluation, assessment, and services; and family support programs.

#### Treatment

A coordinated system of treatment services designed to address emerging challenges for young children exhibiting serious, persistent mental health difficulties and their families. Mental health treatment services are intended to alleviate distress and provide primarily to parents but also other significant adults in a child's life with the tools and strategies to help the child respond to challenges in a functional manner with the ultimate goal of returning to healthy development and behavior. Mental health assessment, diagnosis, and treatment are provided by a range of highly trained professionals in various settings, including the home. Some examples of treatment include dyadic therapies such as Infant-Parent Psychotherapy and Child-Parent Psychotherapy (CPP).





### How the I/ECMH Approach is Different

- A multidisciplinary field
- Promotes and supports the child's healthy development, within the context of relationships, while considering multiple determinants
- Honoring a family's culture with a combination of respect and appreciation.
- Reflection
- Requires a unique set of competencies informing and guiding an I/ECMH approach



### **Optimal times to utilize an I/ECMH approach**

- During pregnancy
- Post-delivery
- Infant/child has special needs, medical issues, or is fussy
- Caregiver/family loss, crisis or trauma
- Caregiver concerns
- Attunement/mismatch
- Child abuse and neglect
- Expulsion and suspension from child care/school



### **Types of I/ECMH Services**

- Consultation
- Emotional support
- Developmental guidance
- Parent-child interaction guidance
- Relationship assessment and support
- Dyadic therapies
- Crisis intervention
- Concrete assistance, linkage, case management
- Advocacy



### **Best Practices: Ways to Address I/ECMH in Programs**

- Comprehensive services provided to children and their families, including mental health
- Champion I/ECMH values from the top down, at all levels
- Focus on social-emotional learning
- Implement a tiered system of supports
- Training, professional development, and supports for staff
- Support developmental screening for all children
- Parental screening and services
- Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation



## **Best Practices: Ways to Address I/ECMH in Programs**

- Qualifications and credentials
- Basic knowledge of I/ECMH ("I/ECMH 101")
- Diversity-Informed Tenets for Work with Infants, Children, and Families
- Trauma and trauma-informed practice
- Access to reflective supervision & reflective practice groups



### **Building a System of Care**

# **Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health The foundation of all future development**

Everyone who touches the life of a child can promote social and emotional well-being

Social and emotional development, or **infant and early childhood mental health**, is the developing capacity of a child from birth to 5 years old to...



...all in the context of family, community, and culture.





#### **IL State Strategies**

- IL Action Plan to Integrate Early Childhood Mental Health into Child- and Family-Serving Systems, Prenatal through Age Five
- Mental Health Consultation Initiative
- Pyramid Model Partnership
- A standardized "What is I/ECMH" training to be utilized by various state agencies
- Incorporating the DC0-5 diagnoses into state agencies
- Parental depression screening
- Provider rate increase for Early Intervention
- Distributing updated Core Competencies for a Trauma-Informed Workforce
- Tying mental health supports into the rule-making for PA100-0105 (early childhood expulsion legislation).
- Making comments on various laws/rules to incorporate more I/ECMH.



# **Discussion**









Visit our Advocacy Action Center at:

www.theOunce.org/advocacy

Allison Lowe-Fotos

alowefotos@ounceofprevention.org

312-453-1837