

Missouri Association for Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health



MOAIMH-EC

Missouri Association for
INFANT & EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH





Vision

We envision that one day all Missouri children will have equitable services, supports, and tools needed to thrive. All who encounter Missouri children will have a comprehensive understanding of what is needed for social, emotional, and cognitive well-being across a child's lifespan.

Mission

The mission of MOAIMH-EC is to optimize well-being in the early years by promoting first relationships and advancing effective Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health practice.

Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health 101



What is Infant Mental Health?

It is developing the capacity of children birth to 5 years old both socially and emotionally through:

- Secure and close relationships with adult caregivers and peers
- Not only to experience and express a full range of emotions, but also have the opportunity to learn and understand how to manage these strong feelings
- Exploring and learning in an environment that is safe and secure

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

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/2674-how-to-talk-about-infant-and-early-childhood-mental-health>

Infant Mental Health, Generational Trauma & Equitable Futures

- Intergenerational trauma can be passed down to infants through the initial attachment process. (cite study)
- Caregivers who have experienced significant trauma relay that trauma to their children (cite study)
- Children are more likely to experience PTSD with dysregulated caregivers (cite study)
- Negative parenting habits (extreme reactions/neglectful/not present) (cite study)
- When caregivers are supported they'll have better outcomes and their children will have better outcomes.
- <https://psychcentral.com/lib/how-intergenerational-trauma-impacts-families#next-steps>

IECMH 101

Why is IMH important?

“Newborns come into the world with a highly impressionable neurological system. They are vulnerable and unable to regulate their physical and emotional states independently. They learn how through interactions with their caregivers.”

- IMH highlights the importance of secure attachments and connections for children. Every person’s capacity for relationships begins here.
- It is the foundation for resilience - protecting against mental illness and fostering lifelong, healthy social emotional development
- It lays the foundation and organization for all other learning including motor, communication, and cognitive development.

<https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/infants-have-mental-health-needs-too>



IECMH Practices

“The mental health needs of infants and young children can no longer be overlooked. The emotional health of young children suffers when they have a parent who is struggling with depression or when the home life is complicated by poverty, domestic violence, or substance abuse. Unaddressed, these challenges can continue to interfere with development and manifest over time.”

<https://www.zerotothree.org/resource/infant-and-early-childhood-mental-health-consultation-a-briefing-paper/>

Indirect services that support and advocate for both children, families, and professionals:

- Establishing a family-provider partnership responsive to caregiver’s needs, priorities, and concerns through collaboration and respect for the family’s values, culture, and community.
- Recognize the family is the major influencer on their child’s social emotional development.
- Find the family’s strengths and praise caregivers for every success, little or big.
- Incorporate reflective practices, including reflective supervision. This increases caregiver’s competence and capacity to think through situations, consider different approaches, reflect on what is working and what is not, and build self-awareness with supportive relationships.

Join A Movement!



Become a member: <https://www.moaimh-ec.org/membership>
Join a committee: <https://www.moaimh-ec.org/committees>
Join our gatherings: <https://www.moaimh-ec.org/gatherings>

These are held monthly on the 2nd Friday every month at 11am.
Please visit the website under EVENTS for more information and to
sign up for upcoming gatherings.



*For more information or to join,
scan here!*



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