



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT
of HEALTH SERVICES

Installing Infant Mental Health Into a State EHDI System

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BRAIN ARCHITECTURE



We have a shared stake **to make sure babies develop sturdy brain architecture**, because this foundation supports a lifetime of learning and productive participation in society. A reliable caregiver who is responsive to a baby's needs is the base for secure attachment, which allows an infant to explore and learn.



BODY & HEALTH



Toxic stress from broken caregiver-infant relationships can push a baby's stress hormones into overdrive. When constantly present, these hormones disrupt brain and physical development. And babies can't learn if their brains and bodies are working against them. **The antidote to toxic stress?** Affection and protection by a nurturing caregiver.



BEHAVIOR & RELATIONSHIPS



Secure attachment is a fundamental building block of social function. Children need relationships with sensitive caregivers to self-regulate, get along with others, solve problems, and be productive -- the basis for civic and economic prosperity.



INFANT MENTAL HEALTH

is the optimal social, emotional, and cognitive well-being of children ages 0 to 3, developed by secure and stable relationships with nurturing caregivers.

“Attention to the child’s primary relationships for communication has always been a focus of quality services for families we worked with. Yet by approaching the entire Early Intervention process through the lens of Infant Mental Health, I think will set a stronger foundation for the parent to truly be attuned to their baby from the beginning, lays such an important foundation that I expect will make the development of language and communication that much easier.”

- Chris Kometer, WSB Early Intervention Coordinator

Why is Infant Mental Health Important in the Context of the EHDI System?

- Early relationships matter
- It is imperative in the context of Trauma Informed Care
- It is supportive to babies, their families, the EHDI staff, and ultimately the EHDI system
- For a much more in-depth explanation, watch:
3/03/2021 | 1:20 PM - 2:05 PM | Intro to Infant, Early Childhood, and Family Mental Health: Applications for EHDI Systems | Jess Dallman, LPC NCC

Learn about Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health!

Training Programs

Alliance for the Advancement of Infant Mental Health

<https://www.allianceaimh.org/>

State Infant Mental Health Associations

- Training Opportunities
- Endorsement
- Consultation / Reflective Practice

National Resources

<https://www.zerotothree.org/>

“Infant Mental Health and EHDI systems are a perfect match in my perspective. IMH gives us accessible, operationalized practices, tools, and assessments that demystify "mental health" and help us support healthy attachment and bonding. IMH interrupts patterns of implicit bias, facilitates parental attunement, and breaks down emotional and historical barriers that would otherwise prevent the child from getting their needs met in the context of their family relationships.”

- Jessica Dallman, Social Emotional Development Specialist

Fundamental Program Design

- Increase knowledge, understanding and integration of the importance of early relationship development
- Actively center attachment and primary relationship development
- Live the parallel process
- Integrate reflective practice at all levels

“In the relationship-based nature of our work with coaching families, it is so important to have space to learn alongside fellow coaches in reflecting on our practice together. Regular meetings led by a supportive facilitator allow for debriefing as well as deeper conversations and growth around both the challenges and successes of the important work we do.”

- Lauren Burke, Primary Provider/SLP with Birth to 3

Questions?

