
Resources and Connections:

Enhancing the Quality of Early Learning and
Early Intervention for Infants, Toddlers, & Their Families

June - August, 2002 • Volume 1, Number 5



A monthly compilation of useful resources to help keep you up-to-date on the latest information and opportunities supporting quality practices in early learning and early intervention. Read the details at the end of this issue to request a **FREE** monthly subscription. An online version of can be viewed at: www.cde.state.co.us/earlychildhoodconnections/Technical.htm

Special Issue: Infant Mental Health!

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Infant Mental Health

This issue of *Resources and Connections* focuses on infant mental health.

Infant Mental Health: an interdisciplinary field that is devoted to strengthening nurturing relationships between infants and their caregivers; based on the core belief that the caregiver-infant relationship is central to the healthy development of children and that these relationships are influenced by the caregiver's actions and experiences, the infant's characteristics and responses, and the surrounding environment.

Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health

Children's social and emotional states form the foundation for development and growth. A key to supporting development and growth is building quality relationships with children and their families and caregivers. Infants are, first and foremost, social beings. Infants and toddlers develop in the context of relationships. The healthy development of an infant is

dependent upon family relationships, and the relationships of the family and the larger community. As infant/toddler service providers and members of the child's community, we can nurture children and their parents by providing them with the supports they need to grow and thrive. The physical, cognitive, and social/emotional development of an infant or toddler depends not only on that child's unique characteristics, but also on the physical and emotional environment provided by caring and concerned primary caregivers and other adults in the child's life. Healthy infant development and wellbeing is important to all of us.

"Human development is shaped by a dynamic and continuous interaction between biology and experience. Culture influences every aspect of human development and is reflected in child rearing beliefs and practices designed to promote healthy adaptation. The development of young children unfolds along individual development pathways whose trajectories are characterized by continuities and discontinuities, as well as by a series of significant transitions. The development of young children is shaped by the ongoing interplay among sources of vulnerability and sources of resilience...The course of development can be altered in early childhood by effective interventions that change the balance between risk and protection, thereby shifting the odds in favor of more adaptive outcomes".

From: Shonkoff J. Phillips D. (eds.) (2000) *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*. Washington, DC: National Research Council

Research Brief

Graham, M., White, B., Clarke, C. Adams, S. Infusing Infant Mental Health into Front-Line Caregiving (2001). *InfYoungChildren*; 14(1):14-25. Aspen Publishers, Inc.

The core principle of infant mental health is creating a healthy emotional attachment with a primary caregiver. Since many young children spend time with caregivers other than their parents, these other caregivers need to support children's emotional development and be able to recognize early signs of unmet emotional needs. Principles of infant mental health that apply to all caregivers and programs include strengthening the caregiver-child relationship by focusing on the importance of human touch and proximity to caregiver, responsive care-giving, continuity of care, emotional nurturing, and comfort. Strategies for infusing these principles into everyday practice focuses on four areas: childcare, home visiting programs, early intervention, and the judicial system. Some specific infant and toddler behaviors that may be signs of unmet emotional needs include: lacking emotional display, such as cooing, babbling, or whimpering; having a sad affect; resisting being held or touched; being difficult to sooth or console; appearing fearful; rarely making eye contact; clinging to caregiver; inability to comfort or console self. Of particular interest to early interventionists are observations that a child is reluctant to explore their environment and develop motor skills associated with free movement in space. Strategies for infusing effective mental health practices into programs include: ensuring a good ratio of caregivers to children by arranging small groups with a consistent caregiver over time; training caregivers to recognize signs of emotional problems, make referrals as needed, and/or use an infant mental health therapist as a consultant; and using a well-founded curriculum to provide the foundation for a healthy emotional climate. Infusing infant mental health into early intervention includes such strategies as including social/emotional screening as a part of assessment and providing mental health intervention for the infant or family, as needed, in the Individualized Family Service Plan. A focus on relationship-based interventions and the inclusion of mental health therapists on the early intervention team are also recommended strategies.



Editorial Comment: This article is relevant for all service providers and family members. Although there is always considerable discussion about holistic approaches to assessment and intervention with infants and families, attention to both the physical and emotional aspects of a child's development and functioning as part of assessment and intervention is difficult to achieve. The article provides specific, achievable strategies for individuals and programs to consider as they work to support all aspects of the "whole" child into the planning and implementation of excellent programs.

Excellent Resource on Infant Mental Health: ZERO TO THREE, The National Center for Infants, Toddlers, & Families

ZERO TO THREE (<http://www.zerotothree.org>) is always a great source of information on many topics related to infants, toddlers, and their families. Here are a couple of their resources related to infant mental health:

- Aug/Sept 2001 issue of the ZERO TO THREE Bulletin: *Infant Mental Health and Early Head Start: Lessons for early childhood programs*. Includes research-based information about the mental health of very young children and families; guidelines for practice; and strategies for building the organizational capacity to do this difficult work. Applicable to all programs.
- *Learning through Supervision and Mentorship to Support the Development of Infants, Toddlers and Their Families: A Sourcebook*. Emily Fenichel, Editor. This widely used work shows supervisors how mentoring and supervision can be the basis of relationships that provide regular opportunities for joint reflection upon work with infants, toddlers, and their families. It identifies the three elements central to successful supervision in infant/family programs -- reflection, collaboration, and regularity.



Resources on Infant Mental Health

On the Web

World Association for Infant Mental Health

<http://www.msu.edu/user/waimh/main.htm>

WAIMH encourages the realization that infancy is a crucial period in the psychosocial development of individuals. WAIMH is an interdisciplinary and international association that promotes education, research, and study of the effects of mental, emotional, and social development during infancy on later normal and psychopathological development and promotes the development of scientifically based programs of care, intervention, and prevention of mental impairment in infancy. This site has valuable information on publications, training events, and links.

Infant Toddler Development Module

<http://www.ume.maine.edu/~ITHCRA/Exchange/wwwPUSH31802/dev/intro.htm>

This site provides a great learning module on Infant Toddler Development, including physical, cognitive, and socioemotional domains. It includes case studies, reflective exercises, links to other resources, and self-assessment activities. The site is sponsored by Partners for Underutilized Systems of Health (PUSH), an [academic-community partnership](#) which promotes mental and physical health for infants and their families in the Bangor, Maine area.

Mental Health Links

<http://www.umchs.org/services/mental%20health/mhlinks.html>

This page provides annotated links to sites with information on children's mental health and wellness, substance abuse prevention, and violence prevention. Presented by the Umatilla Morrow County Head Start, Inc. (UMCHS) is a non-profit organization which provides services for children and families in seven Eastern Oregon counties.

In Print

Building Services and Systems to Support the Healthy Emotional Development of Young Children – An Action Guide for Policymakers by Jane Knitzer

<http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/dept/nccp/main10.html>

This guide describes systemic ways to promote healthy emotional development in young children for policymakers who want to develop new policies and practices. Provides basic information about what kind of help is needed, the systems challenges, and how to develop needed services and infrastructure at the community and state levels. The report can be purchased for \$5.00 and the summary can be downloaded for free at this site of The National Center for Children in Poverty, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University.

Bright Futures in Practice: Mental Health

<http://www.brightfutures.org/publications/index.html>

This two-volume set focuses on the mental health of children in a developmental context, presenting information on early recognition and intervention for specific mental health problems and mental disorders, and providing a tool kit with hands-on tools for health professionals and families for use in screening, care management, and health education. Led by Michael Jellinek, M.D., a multidisciplinary panel of experts worked toward these consensus guidelines for mental health promotion. Published by the National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health at Georgetown University.

A Good Start in Life: Understanding Your Child's Brain and Behavior by Norbert Herschkowitz, M.D. and Elinore Chapman Herschkowitz

<http://www.nap.edu/catalog/10245.html>

This Swiss pediatrician/neuroscientist, and American educator team wrote this warm, friendly book to guide parents through the formative years of their child's life. With a specific focus on the brain, we follow the path of early childhood development from gestation to birth to six years old.

**11th Annual Early Childhood Institute
Quality Practices in Assessment, Service Delivery, and Assistive Technology**

**October 16-18, 2002
Vail, Colorado**

**For current information and to register visit our website at:
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/earlychildhoodconnections>**

Participants will have opportunities to hear from and interact with nationally recognized professionals in the field of early intervention. Professionals working with children from birth to five years are encouraged to attend. Family members are also encouraged to attend.

Numerous sessions are planned to deliver state-of-the-art information and concrete strategies to implement promising practices in assessment, effective service delivery, and assistive technology to facilitate full participation. Topics include:

- Authentic assessment in early childhood.
- Functional assessment of families' routines.
- Assessing social/emotional development and behavioral difficulties.
- Assessment of newborns and babies.
- Primary service provider models for providing services in everyday routines, activities, and places.
- Community perspectives from local service delivery teams on providing services in everyday routines, activities, and places.
- Embedding assistive technology into early intervention.
- The role of assistive technology in play.
- Creating play environments.

Additional topics include:

- Child growth and development.
- Leadership.
- What parents need to know about their role in planning, decision making, accountability, and working with medical personnel.
- Working with families in Neonatal Intensive Care Units.



IMPORTANT NOTICE FROM MEDICAID: Physical and Occupational Therapists to Bill Medicaid Directly.

Effective July 1, 2002, physical and occupational therapists in private practice shall bill services directly to Medicaid. Therapist employed by a hospital-based clinic, home health agency, physician clinic, or other facility will not be allowed "direct bill". The facility employing the therapist remains responsible for billing the Medicaid program.

When claims processing system changes are completed, physical and occupational therapy services will require prior authorization. Medicaid will send notification via a bulletin prior to the start of the prior authorization period that is tentatively scheduled to begin August 1, 2002.

Current Medicaid enrolled OT and PT providers will be changed from non-billing (rendering) status to billing providers.

Certified Occupational Therapists and Licensed Physical Therapists who do not presently have a Medicaid Provider number may request an application from provider enrollment @ 303 534-0109 ext. 692.

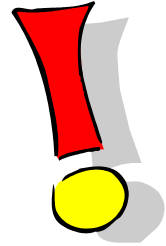
If you have any questions about this notice, please contact Mary Marchioni at 303 866-5927.

Upcoming Events

Learning and Growing Together with Families Training

August 6 or 7, 2002 (choose one) 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. at the Community Room, Red Rocks Community College

LGTF training is to help front line personnel know how to approach, support and provide relationship based intervention. Using the nationally recognized curriculum developed by ZERO TO THREE, the workshop will provide discussion around video case examples of how to support parenting and relationship building with families of infants and toddlers. This event is free, but requires a \$5.00 refundable deposit. For information contact Joy Browne at (303) 861-6546 or Jennifer Burnham at (303) 290-9088, ext. 205



Colorado's 11th Annual Early Childhood Institute: Quality Practices in Assessment, Service Delivery, and Assistive Technology

October 17 & 18, 2002 in Vail, Colorado

New this year: Pre-Institute Workshops on October 16, 2002. For additional information, please visit: www.cde.state.co.us/earlychildhoodconnections

Early Childhood Activities Calendar. Remember to periodically check out this useful source of information on training opportunities and other events:

www.cde.state.co.us/earlychildhoodconnections/calendar/Cal.htm

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You can request a **FREE** monthly subscription to *Resources and Connections* to be sent by e-mail or U.S. mail.

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To Receive Connections by U.S. Mail: Contact Melissa Garner at garner_m@cde.state.co.us with SUBSCRIBE in the subject line and your U.S. Mail address in the body of the message or mail your address to: Melissa Garner, CDE, 201 E. Colfax Ave., Denver, CO 80203

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Contact Us... *Resources and Connections* is published by Early Childhood Connections at the Colorado Department of Education and JFK Partners, University of Colorado Health Sciences Center. We invite you to contact the editors with your questions and suggestions.

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to your colleagues and friends!**