



# What is Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation?

Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (I/ECMHC) is a prevention-based approach that pairs [an infant/early childhood] mental health consultant with adults who work with infants and young children in the different settings where they learn and grow, such as child care, preschool, home visiting, [Early/Head Start,] and early intervention... Mental health consultation is not about behavior modification. Nor is it therapy. Mental health consultation equips caregivers to facilitate children's healthy social and emotional development.

— Center of Excellence for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation at Georgetown University

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[bit.ly/IL-IECMHC](https://bit.ly/IL-IECMHC)

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## What I/ECMHC is?

### PROMOTION/ PREVENTION FOCUSED

Accessing to support  
before a crisis



### INDIRECT

Primarily working with  
program staff



### RELATIONSHIP-BASED

Working in collaboration  
with program staff



### CAPACITY BUILDING

Helping staff and leaders to  
build self-efficacy



### BIG PICTURE

Exploring common themes  
across the program



## What I/ECMHC is NOT?

### THERAPY

Providing clinical  
treatment



### “FIXING THE CHILD”

Creating a behavioral  
modification plan



### COACHING

Supporting the goals of  
the learner



### SUPERVISION

Monitoring and managing  
staff performance



### A SOCIAL WORKER

Managing family cases  
and refer to resources



## How can I/ECMHC support my program?

I/ECMH Consultants provide an opportunity for reflection with administrators, supervisors, and staff. This interaction allows staff to think through their work with a mental health-oriented person, go deeper into a situation, explore options, and come up with the strategies needed to take next steps. I/ECMHC is NOT an expert giving advice to the members on your team. It is a collaboration, with all involved sharing their thoughts and working together towards solutions.

## What are the benefits of I/ECMHC?

### ...for Infants and Young Children



Improved social skills



Improved emotional functioning



Reduced challenging behaviors



Reduced suspensions and expulsions

### ...for Families, Educators, and Home Visitors



Improved child-adult relationships



Reduced provider stress



Reduced provider burnout



Reduced provider turnover

## What are the qualifications for I/ECMH Consultants?

- An advanced degree in Mental Health, such as Social Work, Counseling, Psychology, Marriage and Family Therapy, or Psychiatry; an advanced degree in Nursing or Child Development (specifically early childhood) with additional education in Mental Health.
- A minimum of a Master's Degree. License optional.
- A minimum of 2-5 years of experience in areas related to infant and early childhood development and mental health.
- A demonstrated ability to engage in reflective practice and maintain a consultative stance.

## Where do I find an Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant?

Please visit the [Gateways to Opportunity Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant Search](#) to locate a consultant working in your community. The database is a central place to locate a consultant in your community. Consultants are located across the state of Illinois, support is available in multiple languages, and the number of consultants continues to grow.