



What is Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation?

How will it support my program?

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

What does the research say about I/ECMHC?

I/ECMHC increases reflective capacity over time and lowers emotional exhaustion

Chapin Hall authored an 18-month pilot evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the Illinois Model of I/ECMH Consultation. Specifically, the ability of program staff in home visiting, preschool, and center-based child care programs to embed reflective practice into their supervisory role with staff. The evaluation noted the following outcomes:

Early Childhood Educators with higher reflective capacity:



Observe children in their classroom as having more social-emotional strengths



Note fewer behavioral concerns with children



Share there is less educator stress associated with children's behavior

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bit.ly/IL-IECMHC

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Early Childhood Educators who participated in I/ECMHC created a positive environment by:



Managing children's behavior in proactive and positive ways



Attending to children more equitably, providing more individualized supports to children

Home Visitors receiving I/ECMHC:



Facilitated positive parent-child interactions and encouraged parents' leadership during the visit

Parents of home visitors receiving I/ECMHC:



Reported higher satisfaction in their role as parents

Source: Spielberger, J., Burkhardt, T., Winje, C., Pacheco-Applegate, A., Gitlow, E., Carreon, E., Huang, L., Herriott, A., & Kakuyama-Villaber, R. (2021). *Evaluation of the Illinois Model of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Pilot*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

What does an Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant do?

- Provides a place to reflect on your work with administrators, supervisors, and staff individually, in a team setting, or both.
- Reviews and supports observations, screenings, and assessments.
- Provides professional development opportunities in your program on topics that arise during the consultation process.
- Joins with the staff of the program as they facilitate staff groups.
- Works closely with the team as they connect with families of young children.

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 location to locate a consultant in your community, across the state of Illinois. Consultants offer support in multiple languages; and the number of consultants continues to grow.