

Frequently Asked Questions: Illinois Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (I/ECMHC)

How can an Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant help my program?

Consultants work in partnership with Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) providers to support staff and adults that are caring for and educating young children. Consultants engage in a parallel process to reflect and understand each unique environment along with the relationships between adults and young children. This multi-level collaboration builds on strengths and seeks opportunities to enhance the social-emotional learning of the children, further promoting the well-being of staff at all levels of the organization.

How much do Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation services cost?

Depending on the program funding model, it varies. Please contact the individual consultant to identify a rate structure.

How long does Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation last?

Depending on past pilot evaluations, consultation is suggested for between 10 to 12 hours per month over a period of 12 to 15 months, adding more frequent collaboration opportunities in the beginning as the partnership between the consultant and the program is being developed. As the relationship matures, the consultant and program administrator may agree to decrease the hours at a particular program, depending on the skill development of the ECEC staff during the sustainability phase of the collaboration. Another factor to consider is the size of the program and whether the program had a prior relationship with an Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant trained in the Illinois Model.

What qualifications should an Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant have?

- An advanced Mental Health degree in Social Work, Counseling, Psychology, Marriage & Family Therapy, and/or Psychiatry; degrees in Nursing or Child Development (specifically early childhood) also qualify with additional education in Mental Health.
- A minimum requirement of a Master's Degree—licensure is optional.
- A minimum of five years of experience in areas related to Infant/Early Childhood Development and Mental Health.
- A demonstrated ability to engage in reflective practice and maintain a consultative stance.
- Consultants are not required to have any additional certificates or credentials, but the following are a few examples of specialized credentials consultants may have:
 - Infant Studies Certificate - Erikson Institute
 - Infant Mental Health Certification - Erikson Institute
 - Infant Mental Health Credential - Illinois Association for Infant Mental Health (ILAIMH)

How do I find an Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant in Illinois?

- If you are a Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program (MIECHV), [click here to access a consultant.](#)
- If you are a child care center or a home-based child care provider, you can locate a consultant through [Caregiver Connections](#) or through [Illinois Action for Children](#) if you reside in Cook County.
- All other programs will be able utilize the Gateways database in Spring 2021 to locate a consultant.

Who do I contact for more information about technical assistance for the I/ECMHC database?

[Contact INCCRRA's help desk for any technical assistance with the database.](#)

How can I, as a consultant, be listed in the database?

Please complete [this digitally fillable form](#) to be included as a consultant in the Gateways database. You can also read tips on the Gateways Registry Membership Application [here](#).

Where can I learn more about the Illinois Model for I/ECMHC?

Learn more about the [Illinois Model of Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation](#) here.

How do I find out more about Reflective Learning Groups?

Due to COVID-19 in-person limitations, Reflective Learning Groups are being held virtually. Please email Linda Delimata at lindadelimata@hotmail.com or Delreen Schmidt-Lenz at delreen22@gmail.com to learn more about how to connect with a Reflective Learning Group.

Where can I find more information and register for professional development opportunities relating to Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation?

Click the following for more information:

- [Orientation dates \(coming soon\)](#)
- [Reflective Learning Groups \(coming soon\)](#)
- [State funded Professional Development opportunities with INCCRRA \(coming soon\)](#)
- [Illinois Association for Infant Mental Health](#)
- [Center of Excellence for Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation](#)

This FAQ document was drafted in collaboration with the Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Leadership Team, GOECD, and INCCRRA.