



What is Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation?

What Are the Three Types of I/ECMHC Consultation?

Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (I/ECMHC) is conducted in a respectful and reflective manner with understanding of contextual and historical considerations of the community, the program and/or home setting. The Consultant works collaboratively with program leadership, early childhood professionals, and children and families as requested. Consultation is relationship-based and builds upon strengths to effectively support social-emotional learning and well-being in diverse early learning environments.



Programmatic Consultation:

Programmatic consultation reviews systems and program wide issues that affect the overall quality and equity of programs or settings serving infants, young children, and families. The consultant works to enhance programmatic functioning by helping program administrators and staff in considering the program's overall social and emotional climate; solving issues that affect more than one infant or young child, staff member, and/or family. Thereby supporting the development and implementation of policies that create more equitable experiences for infants, young children, and families.

The focus of consultation is on how to best serve families, support staff, and connect with communities.

- Reflects with program administrators and supervisors to address the well-being at the agency. Does it support staff? Are the policies designed and developed to enhance social and emotional development?
- Supports the ongoing professional development of staff related to mental health concerns and social-emotional development of young children.
- Addresses any issues that arise that may impact more than just a single family or child, such as connecting to mental health services in the community, etc.
- Attends team meetings to support a reflective focus and a mental health lens to assist staff in their service to families.

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bit.ly/IL-IECMHC

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Classroom and Home Consultation:

Collaborates with families and program staff to promote equitable, warm, and trusting relationships, consistent routines, and promoting interactions that positively impact program and home environments. This includes home visiting as well as family childcare homes.

The focus of the consultation is on the relationships the early childhood professionals have with the individuals who are influential to the child's development.

- Explores experiences of those who support early learning and children's healthy development.
- Offers capacity building opportunities for early learning professionals which includes teaching staff, early care providers, home visitors, and family support staff.
- Enhances the early childhood professional's working knowledge of child development and their understanding of the critical role of relationships the child has with significant others in their life.
- Reflective approach to enhancing the adult's self-awareness and understanding of their role in supporting the parent-child relationship.
- Facilitates conversations about what has worked in the past and relies on the expertise of early learning professionals to discover solutions together.
- The consultation is not therapy, the Consultant digs deeper, and is curious about the meaning behind the behavior or actions.



Child and Family Consultation:

Supports early learning professionals and collaboration with families to understand and respond positively to an infant's or young child's mental health needs, behavioral difficulties, and/or developmental considerations or to respond to a caregiver's mental health needs. Consultants partner to respectfully support staff working with families to understand the context of each family's experiences to enhance the infant's, young child's or family's well-being.

The focus of the consultation is on the child or family.

- Works closely with the staff and family to understand the influences on the child or family experiences.
- Listens and facilitates questions to understand better what all individuals involved can add to the conversation.
- Helps to understand the child and/or family's story.
- Together the adults in the child's life think through approaches together and help to strategize the best way to move forward.
- Collaborate as a team to design a plan that supports the child and/or family.
- The team reviews the plan or approach regularly and makes modifications as needed.