

# Building Healthier Learning Environments: Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Using PCIT

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# Overview

- \* What is Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation?
- \* History of Mental Health Consultation and Research
- \* Engagement in working with the School System
- \* Various ways of Promoting PCIT Sustainability

# Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

- \* ECMHC seeks to achieve positive outcomes for infants and young children in early childhood settings by using an indirect approach to fostering their social and emotional well-being.

## Major Milestones for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

**1970:**

### Theory and Practice of Mental Health Consultation

Gerald Kaplan publishes *The Theory and Practice of Mental Health Consultation*. Underlying concept: More children need help and there aren't enough mental health professionals available in the field. Need to establish an indirect approach building capacity of adults and caregivers.

**1970**

**2000**

### 2000: First ECMHC Monograph Published

Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC), *Promotion of Mental Health and Prevention of Mental and Behavioral Disorders* published; provided description of ECMHC for early childhood; funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

**2005:**

### ECMHC Training Guide

Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development (GUOCHD) publishes revised edition of *A Training Guide for the Early Childhood Services Community*, a Training Guide for early childhood programs.

**2005**

### 2005: Preschool Expulsion Study

Walter Gilliam of Yale University publishes study on Pre-K expulsion rates which gave impetus to further expand ECMHC services.

**2007:**

### ECMHC Evaluation Toolkit

GUOCHD publishes *Evaluation Toolkit* to increase the capacity for high-quality ECMHC in community based settings.

**2007**

### Research Synthesis Addressing Staff and Program Outcomes

Review of 26 studies; evidence found that ECMHC helped increase staff self-efficacy/confidence and competence, improved overall quality of settings, and was linked to reduction of staff turn over.

**2008:**

### Project LAUNCH

SAMHSA funds Project LAUNCH (Linking Actions for Unmet Needs in Children's Health) which includes ECMHC as one of five required programs or strands; led to Home Visiting ECMHC. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and Administration for Children and Families (ACF) launched the Maternal Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting at the federal level.

**2008:**

### Center for ECMHC Funded

CECMHC funded as an innovation and improvement project by the Office of Head Start.

**2008**

**2008:**

### What Works Study

First nation-wide study of quality ECMHC; data-driven guidance around development and implementation of effective ECMHC; later cited in ACF Policy on Pre-K expulsion (2015).

**2009**

**2010**

### 2010: Research Synthesis Addressing Child-Level Outcomes

Synthesis reviewed 14 studies on child-level outcomes. ECMHC services were consistently associated with improvement of prosocial behaviors and reductions externalizing behaviors.

**2014:**

### ECMHC Policy Paper Released

Expert Convening on Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation sponsored by SAMHSA leads to policy paper and the addition of "Infant" to ECMHC.

**2014**

### 2014: Joint Policy Statement on Preventing Expulsion and Suspension in Early Childhood Settings

Joint statement created by the US Departments of Health and Human Services and Education to support families, early childhood programs, and States prevent severely limiting expulsion and suspension practices.

**2015:**

### Center of Excellence

SAMHSA establishes Center of Excellence for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation led by EDC partnering with Georgetown with support from ACF and HRSA.

**2015**



THE CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR  
Infant and Early Childhood  
Mental Health Consultation

# Research

- \* Teacher sensitivity and enhancement classroom management skills, reported lower levels of job stress after receiving mental health consultation services.
- \* Children had fewer aggressive and disruptive behaviors less frequent after mental health consultation.
- \* Positive Social Skill Development
- \* Rate of expulsion of children with difficult or challenging behaviors decreases.

# Engagement with Mental Health Consultants

# Long Beach Unified School District

- \* Headstart Meetings

Collaboration with mental health agencies, mental health consultants and parent partners.

- \* School Based Meetings

Collaboration with the mental health agencies and the Student Support Services

# Ideas for Engagement

- \* Provide information to the mental health consultants about your agency in fun way as nice folder may include:

Brochures

What is PCIT hand out

PRIDE Skills

Process of Referrals

Offering Presentations on Topics for Teachers and Parents

Providing PCIT on Site in the classroom or  
through an RV (PCIT on Wheels)

Giving Pens or Treats to the Mental Health Consultants



# PCIT Sustainability

# Referrals

- \* Mental Health Consultants can provide referrals to your PCIT program.
- \* Providing a referral form or if they have their own to be able to discuss with them about symptoms/behaviors to provide PCIT treatment.
- \* Referral is submitted to your agency with the release of information a therapist should call/engage with the mental health consultant.

# Mental Health Consultant Engagement

- \* Discuss about the reason for the referral.
- \* Inquire about how the parents received the recommendation of the referral.
- \* Ask about if they have observed the child in the classroom and in the playground.

# Parent Engagement

- \* The Big Picture- Parental View of their child's behavior.
- \* Parental view: "The parent thinks, I am bad parent."  
"I feel embarrassed by my child's behavior. "
- \* Utilize PRIDE skills to the parent and empathize with them about the referral and thank them for coming to the session.
- \* Utilize the form What is PCIT?
- \* Inquiring about past child's history. (Trauma, Behaviors etc.)
- \* Exploring behaviors in school.
- \* Communicate to parents about the benefits of consulting with the mental health consultant and teacher and working as a team.
- \* Parent to feel safe to communicate.

# Teacher Engagement

- \* Release from the parent to talk to the teacher and visit the school.
- \* Phone call to the teacher to introduce yourself and why are you calling.
- \* Inquire when it is a good day and time to come to do a school observation.
- \* Utilize the SESBI form and take it with you for teacher to fill out.

# Teacher Engagement

- \* Praise the Teacher and thanking them for letting you observe.
- \* Teacher view on the parent and child relationship.
- \* Discuss the behaviors in the classroom that are disruptive.

# Classroom and Playground Observations

## Teacher:

- \* Interaction the teacher has with the children in the playground and classroom.
- \* How the teacher responds to the children.
- \* How the teacher is effectively managing the behaviors in the classroom.
- \* Opportunity to introduce Teacher Child Interaction Therapy.

## Children:

- \* Interaction with Teacher and other children.
- \* Development milestones language, cognitive, Gross and Fine Motor skills.
- \* How they manage behaviors and emotions during unstructured and structured times of the day.
- \* How do they respond to the teacher.

# Bridging the learning environments

- \* Inquire with the parent/caregiver if they would like to invite the mental health consultant or teacher for the treatment plan meeting to assist you on setting goals.
- \* Creates a collaborative approach among the different aspects of the child's environment.
- \* Utilize the Parenting and Environmental Factors forms to assist you with goal setting in the session with the team.
- \* Share the results of the outcome measures.
- \* Offer to do PCIT in home, in a class room setting or in the mobile.
- \* Inquire about the discipline policy for the pre-school. Think outside of the box.



# Outreach

PCIT Topics that can be utilize for Mental Health Consultants, Teachers and Parents meetings or trainings:

- \* What is PCIT?
- \* Ways to Praise handout
- \* Skills to Manage Behaviors
- \* How to manage negative and aggressive behaviors
- \* Child Reactions to Trauma Handout

# Outreach

- \* Provide office hours on site for mental health consultants, and teachers.
- \* Attend community events especially if they have ones specifically with early childhood.
  - \* Headstart has Kindergarten readiness school fairs.

# Classroom Accommodations and IEP (Individual Education Plans)

- \* Parents must request by letter to have their child evaluated.
- \* Plan 504B specific learning and attention issues for children who do not qualify for IEP.
- \* IEP is for children who qualify for special education (speech therapy, occupational, learning disability).
- \* The benefits when parents invite you to the IEP meetings.
- \* Present about the PCIT Treatment to the team which increases more people to know about the PCIT Treatment.

# Questions

- \* How is ECMHC viewed in your agency?
- \* What more could we be doing?
- \* What are you going to implement in your PCIT program for sustainability?

# References

- \* Duran, F.B, Hepburn, K.S., Kaufmann, R.K., Le, L.T., Allen, M.D., Brennan, E.M., Green, B.L. The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (2010) *Research Synthesis Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation* Vanderbilt University [www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel](http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel)

Websites for further information:

- \* [https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs\\_campaigns/ECMHC/about-infant-and-early-childhood-mental-health-consultation.pdf](https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs_campaigns/ECMHC/about-infant-and-early-childhood-mental-health-consultation.pdf)
- \* <file:///C:/Users/Owner/Documents/PCIT/PCIT%20Conference%202018/crosswalk-early-childhood-mental-health-services.pdf>



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