



# 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

Caregiver Connections  
Intake Coordinator  
217.592.0389

[caregiverconnections.org](https://caregiverconnections.org)

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

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## What I/ECMHC is?

### PROMOTION/ PREVENTION FOCUSED

Accessing support  
before a crisis



### INDIRECT

Primarily working with  
program staff



### RELATIONSHIP-BASED

Working in collaboration  
with program staff



### CAPACITY BUILDING

Helping staff and administrators  
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



### SOCIAL WORK

Managing family cases  
and referrals to resources

## How can I/ECMHC support my program?

I/ECMH Consultants provide an opportunity for reflection with administrators, supervisors, and early childhood professionals. This interaction allows all staff to think through their work with a mental health-oriented person, go deeper into a situation, explore options, validate your experience, 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

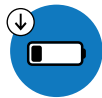
### ...for Families, Educators, and Home Visitors



Improved child-adult relationships



Reduced provider stress



Reduced provider burnout



Reduced provider turnover

**“Nearly 40% of ECEC programs that have excluded at least one child from their early learning program has never heard of mental health consultation.”**

—Kate Zinsser, PhD, University of Illinois at Chicago

“Prior to contacting Action for Children, I did not have the resources to refer parents who needed additional support outside of my daycare setting. The consultant shared with me and the parents, organizations which could offer further support, such as family counseling. Having a Mental Health Consultant was also beneficial because after she conducted her own child observation, I was able to share my experience with her, and learn more about how I could support the child when he became aggressive. Having the MHC meet with me and the child’s mother and father was extremely helpful because I felt much more confident about what I was talking about, and because I knew she would be able to answer some of the questions the parents had, which perhaps I might of not been able to answer, had she not been there.”

— Early Childhood Professional

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

As a child care professional you can access FREE Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation in your community! To request training, technical assistance or Mental Health Consultation please visit the Caregiver Connections website at [caregiverconnections.org](http://caregiverconnections.org) or call 217.592.0389 to connect with a consultant in your community.