

# Webinar #1: What Is IECMHC? Questions and Answers

## General Questions

**Q: How do I access the IECMHC Toolbox?**

A: The Toolbox is a Web-based resource that can be found here: <https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/toolbox>

**Q: Do I need to obtain permission to use information from the Toolbox?**

A: The Toolbox is in the public domain, and its resources are free for use—no permission required. However, when using the Toolbox’s material, the suggested citation is:

*“Resource Name,” SAMHSA Center of Excellence for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation. SAMHSA.hhs.gov (date of article). Article URL, date accessed.*

The Center of Excellence would like to hear about your experiences using the Toolbox, so stay in touch! Write to us at: [iecmhc@edc.org](mailto:iecmhc@edc.org). Your feedback will help inform modifications we make to the Toolbox over time.

**Q: Will an attendance certificate be available to attendees following CoE webinar presentations?**

A: Unfortunately, we are unable to provide certificates for CoE webinars at this time.

**Q: Where can I find the timeline of important dates in the history of the IECMHC field that was shared in this webinar?**

A: Find the Major Milestones for IECMHC Timeline here: <https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/resources/>

**Q: What are the next webinars provided through the Center of Excellence?**

A: To register for upcoming events, please go to our Webinar and Podcast page at <https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/podcasts-webinars>

## General IECMHC Conversations

**Q: Who are the government partners involved with the Center of Excellence for IECMHC?**

A: The Center of Excellence for IECMHC is led by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) in partnership with two other agencies within the Department of Health and Human Services: Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and the Administration on Children and Families (ACF).



**Q: How is mental health consultation used in Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Programs?**

A: Mental health consultation is increasingly being included in the array of services offered in individual MIECHV programs. As sister agencies, HRSA and SAMHSA regularly engage in conversations to achieve the Department of Health and Human Services' goals and objectives, including promoting healthy parenting and healthy social and emotional development.

**Q: The words *mental health* are emotionally charged and carry many preconceptions, many of which are inaccurate. Would you consider replacing the words *mental health* with *child wellness, family wellness, or emotional wellness* in your efforts?**

A: Thank you for these thoughts. The Center of Excellence acknowledges that there is bias associated with the term *mental health*. However, by continuing to use this term and by pairing it with its definition (see below), bias can be reduced by helping people understand what is meant by the term *mental health*. In particular, we want to stress that wellness is a key part of mental health.

**Definition**

Infant/early childhood mental health *refers to a young child's developing capacities to:*

- ◆ Experience, regulate, and express emotions in socially acceptable ways
- ◆ Form close and secure adult and peer relationships
- ◆ Explore the environment and learn

*All of this is done in the context of family, community, and culture.*

—Adapted from ZERO TO THREE

**Q: Does IECMHC always have to be offered in center-based settings?**

A: IECMHC is offered in the child's natural setting, which can be a variety of locations, ranging from center-based early childhood education settings to home visiting programs to family care.

**Q: To what extent is IECMHC implemented for children born with and affected by prenatal substance exposure, and their families? Can you discuss any specialized approaches for this population?**

A: The Center of Excellence is aware of a few programs that integrate IECMHC into the care of infants born with and affected by prenatal substance exposure such as the Healthy Infant Court in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and the Infant-Parent Program at the University of San Francisco (<http://psych.ucsf.edu/zsfg/ipp>) which is working with Neonatal Intensive Care Units and with Nurse Midwives and Obstetric providers around substance use. This is an important and growing area of concern to the field and likely will mean additional training for mental health

consultants wishing to respond appropriately and effectively. The Center of Excellence will continue to provide information and examples of work taking place in this important area.

**Q: How can I make parents aware of IECMHC services?**

A: The Toolbox section on Communications (<https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/toolbox/communications>) provides many useful resources on how to share what IECMHC is all about with various stakeholders, including parents.

**Q: What tribal issues did you take into consideration when creating the Toolbox?**

A: In the Toolbox section on Tribal Considerations (<https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/about/working-tribal-communities>), you will find the history of how we explored the gaps in the field, convened experts, and conceptualized what resources within IECMHC would be most useful to those in tribal communities that are beginning to implement or already implementing IECMHC. If there are other tribal issues you think should be addressed, please share your feedback with us as the Toolbox will continue to evolve over time: [iecmhc@edc.org](mailto:iecmhc@edc.org)

## **Training and Credentialing of the IECMHC Workforce**

**Q: Do you have to be a certified or licensed mental health provider in order to become an IECMH consultant? Or, is it sufficient to have training and experience in this area?**

A: The Toolbox sections on Competencies (<https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/toolbox/competencies>) and Workforce Development (<https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/toolbox/workforce-development>) will help answer questions related to qualifications and experience of the consultant workforce. At present there are no national standards or a specific license for mental health consultants, although the Center of Excellence hopes to help the field move in this direction. The Center of Excellence suggests that best practice is for IECMH consultants to hold a master's degree in mental health. This is laid out in the Competencies section of the Toolbox. Specific states and tribes, or agencies and programs that hire IECMH consultants may have their own unique training, support, supervision, and qualification requirements.

**Q: The majority of our consultants are community and public nurses who have had various training, have been in the field for upward of 20 years, but may not meet the requirements laid forth for an IECMH consultant. What do you suggest?**

A: The Toolbox sections on Competencies (<https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/toolbox/competencies>) and Workforce Development (<https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/toolbox/workforce-development>) provide insight around credentialing of the field and how folks who have been in the field for a long time can apply the information they've amassed. The latitude provided in the documents found within the Workforce section of the Toolbox entitled *Qualifications of an IECMH Consultant* include the need for someone not meeting the requirements to work within a comprehensive service delivery model or a program that is evidence-based. The



rationale is that the individual will have access to increased infrastructure support and oversight.

**Q: What programs exist to help me get training, certification, and licensure to become an IECMH consultant? Do colleges or universities offer this type of credentialing?**

A: The Toolbox sections on Competencies and Workforce Development provide more guidance on this topic, as well as links to resources, training, and credentialing. The vision of the Center of Excellence is to support a credentialing program in the near future. The resources in the Toolbox can also be useful in gaining additional knowledge related to IECMHC. Currently, there are some states, agencies, and/or communities that employ IECMH consultants and offer their own training and supervision for IECMH consultants.

**Q: How will information be shared on endorsements, such as the Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health (<http://www.allianceaimh.org>), which has developed a workforce development process and endorsement for those working with infants through age 5 and their families?**

A: The Center of Excellence will continually look for ways to link states, tribes and communities to infant mental health workforce development efforts (including endorsement systems) happening in their area. Many states have professional Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health organizations that provide community training and in some cases a track to attain infant mental health endorsement. Some states, such as California, have developed their own competency-based endorsement system, while other states have adopted Michigan's Infant Mental Health Endorsement system. The links below provide additional information on infant mental health associations and the Alliance for the Advancement of the Infant Mental Health.

Provision of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health consultation requires a set of skills, competencies and experiences necessary to address the complex mental health needs of children, their families and caregivers as well as the environments where they live and grow (<https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/toolbox/competencies>). It can often be challenging to find consultants that meet all of the requirements. A grounding in infant mental health principles, theory and practice is essential to supporting a relationship-based approach to this important work. Ideally, an IECMH consultant would receive training in mental health consultation in addition to having an endorsement in infant mental health. The CoE's set of competencies complements infant mental health constructs and adds unique elements about infant and early childhood mental health consultation, including prevention-based child and family and programmatic focused work.

To access the CoE's IECMHC competencies go to <https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/toolbox/competencies>

To find an Infant Mental Health Association go to: [www.waimh.org](http://www.waimh.org)

To learn more about the Alliance for the Advancement of Infant Mental Health go to: <http://mi-aimh.org/alliance/>

## Implementation and Sustainability Conversations

**Q: We struggle with funding support. What ideas can you share?**

A: The Toolbox section on Financing (<https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/toolbox/financing>) provides useful guidance on securing and maintaining funding for IECMHC.

**Q: Is insurance required to receive IECMHC?**

A: No, generally (in most models), insurance is not required to receive IECMHC services. IECMHC is a promotion- and prevention-based service, not a treatment-based service. Typically, billing insurance requires a diagnosis and a medically necessary treatment code. Most insurances do not pay for promotion and preventive services.

**Q: What tools are used in the research and evaluation of IECMHC?**

A: The Toolbox section on Research and Evaluation (<https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/toolbox/research-evaluation>) includes a wealth of resources and tools used in a variety of IECMHC initiatives and studies.

**Q: Does the Toolbox address frequency of IECMHC visits to programs?**

A: The Toolbox section on Models (<https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/toolbox/models>) shares guidance and best practice on designing your model, including frequency of visits (i.e., dosage). The document entitled *Considerations for Capacity and Dosage* will be useful in answering this question.

**Q: How are various states implementing IECMHC?**

A: In the Toolbox section on Models (<https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/toolbox/models>), you can explore some examples of how states are implementing IECMHC in various ways. The Systems (<https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/toolbox/systems-policy>) section of the Toolbox then lays the foundation for some of the important work that states are doing in this area.

**Q: Are there any efforts to infuse IECMHC into Part C programs?**

A: While the Center of Excellence is unaware of federally-initiated efforts to infuse IECMHC into Part C programs, it is aware of a few examples of IECMHC being infused in Part C at the state or local level. For example, Connecticut's Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (<http://www.eccpct.com/>) in child level service is available for special and universal populations with individual tailoring built in; it is also being successfully implemented in Louisiana (<http://www.tbears.org/home>). Other states are beginning to explore its incorporation.

## Targeted and Universal Technical Assistance Questions

**Q: Which states and territories are pilot sites? How do I connect with the right people if I am a pilot site state or territory?**

A: The 14 Center of Excellence pilot sites are listed below. Please visit the *About the Center of Excellence* page for details on our pilot sites, including lead agencies for each pilot site <https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/center-excellence>.

- ◆ Illinois Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development
- ◆ Colorado Office of Early Childhood and Department of Human Services
- ◆ Iowa Department of Public Health
- ◆ Coeur d'Alene Tribe Early Childhood Learning Center
- ◆ Maryland State Department of Education, Division of Early Childhood Development
- ◆ Minnesota Department of Human Services, Mental Health Division
- ◆ Montana Department of Health and Human Services, Human and Community Services Division, Early Childhood Services Bureau
- ◆ North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education
- ◆ Qualla Boundary Head Start and Early Head Start
- ◆ New York State Council on Children and Families
- ◆ Pennsylvania Project Launch and Office of Child Development and Early Learning
- ◆ Utah Administration for Youth and Families and Division of Substance Abuse and Mental Health
- ◆ Wisconsin Office of Children's Mental Health
- ◆ West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Children and Families, Division of Early Care and Education



**Q: Will there be more opportunities to add future pilot sites?**

A: As of this writing, the Center of Excellence will continue to work with just 14 pilot sites; however, we hope that there may be an opportunity for additional sites in the future. If you are interested in being added to our mailing list you will be notified of new Center of Excellence developments.

Email: [iechmc@edc.org](mailto:iechmc@edc.org)

**Q: Can you share examples of indirect and direct services if providing home-based services?**

A: You can find information on types of services in the Toolbox section on Models. (<https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/toolbox/models>). The document entitled *Types of Consultation Services* provides an overview of child focused, group focused and programmatic consultation in both early care and education and home-visiting settings. In addition, the Center of Excellence has a webinar on IECMHC for home visiting programs and practitioners. For more information on this webinar, please go to (<https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/podcasts-webinars>).

**Q: Where can I find more on expulsion in preschool?**

A: A lot of research and attention has been given to preschool expulsion, including work done by Dr. Walter Gilliam. You can find IECMHC research and best practices in the Toolbox section on Research and Evaluation (<https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/toolbox/research-evaluation>).

**Q: There has been much emphasis in Early Childhood Care and Education on the development of Early Childhood Coaches. How do you see the similarities and differences in these roles? What collaboration exists between IECMH consultants and Early Childhood Coaches?**

A: In the Introduction section of the Toolbox (<https://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/toolbox>), you will find a crosswalk of various services for children around supporting their mental health, including Coaching.

**Q: Is there a section in the Toolbox on teaching staff how to work with children with behavioral concerns?**

A: This is at the heart of what IECMH consultants do—help adults in a child’s life promote healthy social and emotional skills at a very early age, and in essence, help prevent behavioral concerns.

While this is not the focus of this Toolbox—which is to support those in states, tribes, and communities who are beginning to plan or are already implementing IECMHC—the Center of Excellence can suggest other resources to support teachers and parents in this work with children. In addition, mental health consultants in the local community can serve as excellent resources to programs struggling with behavioral concerns.

Select resources:

- ◆ The Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention (<http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu>)
- ◆ Center on the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (<http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/>)
- ◆ Challenging Behaviors and the Role of Preschool Education (<http://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/16.pdf>)
- ◆ Teacher Time: Webinars for Preschool Teachers (<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/development/teacher-time-archive.html>)

