

IECMHC Cog 2: Knowledge, Attitudes and Beliefs

Knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs influence a group's willingness to adopt new ideas or behaviors. What existing knowledge does your intended audience have about IECMHC, the people you serve, and the issues you wish to address? What are their prevailing attitudes and beliefs about these issues? Answers to these questions can better position you to effectively communicate. Once you've taken the time to reflect on your audience's knowledge base, attitudes, and beliefs, then you will be in a better position to craft a message that is likely to resonate with them.

Here are some questions to consider as you assess your intended audience's knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs about IECMHC:

- ◆ What do they already know about IECMHC?
- ◆ How do they currently address concerns around infant and early childhood mental health?
- ◆ Do they have any negative impressions of IECMHC or your agency? If so, how will you attempt to change these impressions?
 - What might they have to give up?
 - What are they likely to resist?
 - What concerns might they have?
 - Do they feel threatened? Burdened?
 - Is there a lack of understanding? If so, about what?
- ◆ What are the rewards?
 - What will they gain?
 - How will it help them?
 - What is the upside?

There are a variety of ways in which you can gather this information from your intended audience.

Here are some examples:

- ◆ Focus groups
- ◆ Surveys (online or paper copies)
- ◆ Face-to-face conversations

If you understand who your audience is and what knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs motivate them, you're better able to tailor your message(s) to help achieve your intended response. Simply put, your message will have a greater effect if your audience can relate to it—and to you.