

# Public Meeting Notice

Please note this meeting is open to the public and is being recorded  
Anything said during this meeting may be part of the public record



# Building the Bench for Early Childhood Interventions

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**COLORADO**  
Department of Health Care  
Policy & Financing



**COLORADO**  
Behavioral Health  
Administration



# Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to:

1. Identify key principles of early childhood mental health.
2. Describe the impact of early childhood mental health principles on case conceptualization for young children.
3. Identify key considerations in determining treatment approaches for young children and become familiar with the primary distinguishing characteristics of evidence-based intervention approaches with young children.

# What is early childhood mental health?

*The capacity of the young child to form close and secure relationships; to experience, manage, and express a full range of emotions; and explore the environment and learn—all in the context of family, community, and culture.*



# Key Principles

Early Childhood Mental Health

# Working with Young Children

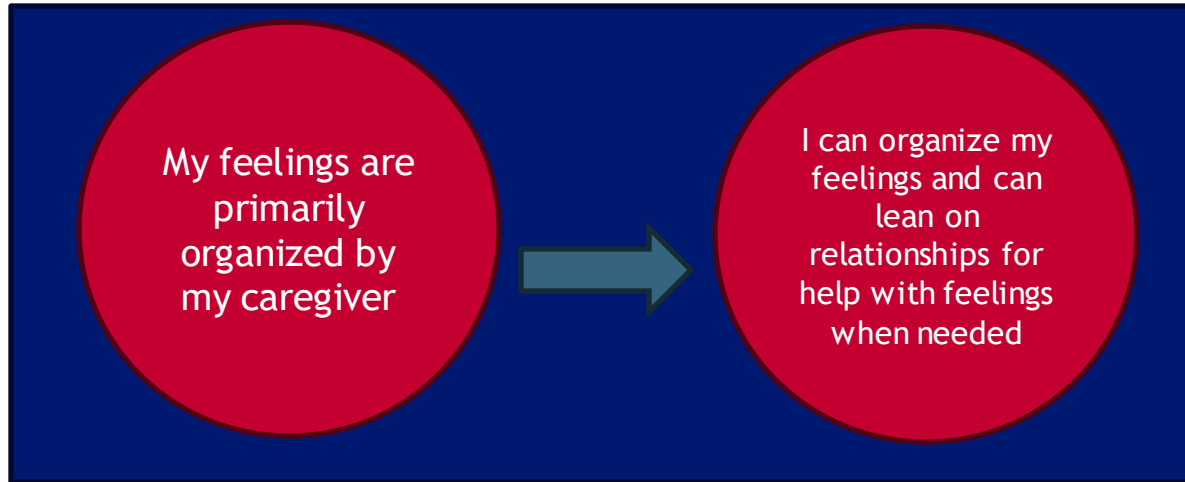
- Young children develop in the context of relationships- and this is where the work happens
- The prenatal and postpartum periods represent a time of significant change, opportunity, and vulnerability... and **early experiences matter**
- Parents/caregivers want what is best for their children
- Caregiver mental health is the foundation of early childhood mental health
- Culture is paramount
- Reflective practice is an essential tool

# Development in the context of relationships

*“There is no such thing as a baby”*

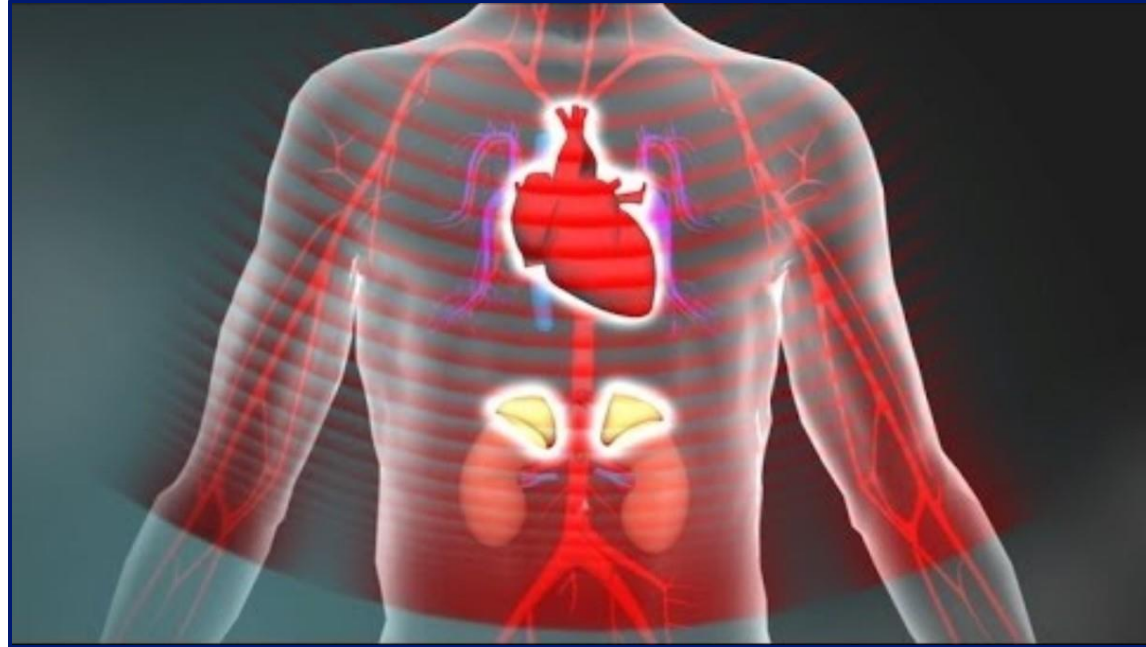
D. Winnicott

- The development of emotion regulation is guided by brain development and happens entirely in relationship with the important adults in a young child’s life.



# Early experiences matter

- Experience, positive and negative, builds the brain.
  - This is true throughout the lifespan but is exponentially so in the first five years of life.
- The biology of brain development is universal, the context is not.





# Caregiver Mental Health

- A 2021 study found that 1 in 14 children has a caregiver with significant mental health challenges.
- In Colorado, nearly 1 in 9 people who give birth will experience symptoms of depression.
- Poor mental health in parents is related to mental and physical health challenges in children.





## Reflective Practice

- Attends to parallel process
- Recognizing how our own experience as providers can show up in our work
- Slows responses and moves away from problem solving
- An opportunity to examine situations through various lenses, including the impact of culture, family, community, and society

# Annotate: Linking Principles to Daily Work

What I currently use

What I would like to use



# Case Conceptualization & Diagnosis

How early childhood principles  
apply



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## Case Scenario: Tyler

- 2.5-year-old boy
- Living with both parents
- Mom lived in a home with domestic violence as a child
- Active and curious
- Enjoys exploring surroundings
  
- **Emotional Regulation**
  - Tantrums
  - Difficulty sleeping
- **Language Development**
  - Delayed communication skills

## Chatter Fall #1

- Please take a minute to type your response in the Zoom Chat, but **don't** click enter.

**What would you include in your initial assessment with Tyler?  
What are you curious about with respect to his experience?**

- When instructed, please **click enter**.



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# Assessment & Treatment Plan

- **Assessment**
  - Attachment
  - Emotional Regulation
  - Developmental Progress
  - Parent Well-Being
  - Parent-Child Interaction
- **Treatment Plan**
  - Parent Support
  - Dyadic or Family Therapy
  - Referrals



# Prevention and Treatment Approaches



# Promotion & Prevention Models

- **Screening and Support in Early Childhood Environments**
  - Pediatrics (e.g., HealthySteps®)
  - Child Care and Preschool (e.g., routine screening, Second Step)
- **Evidence-Based Home Visiting**
  - Nurse-Family Partnership
  - Parents as Teachers (PAT)



# HealthySteps Transforms the Lives of Families



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Behavioral Health  
Administration

**HMA**  
HEALTH MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATES

# Developmental Disabilities & Support

- Early Intervention (EI)
  - Evaluation
  - Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)



Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)

Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA)

Speech and Language Therapy

Occupational Therapy (OT)

Physical Therapy (PT)

Social Skills Training



# Considerations for Treatment Models

- Most evidence-based treatment models for young children are dyadic and/or focus on the relationship between young child and caregiver as the “client”
- Understanding typical child development is a key factor in responding to challenges
- Distinction between models that prescribe a set of approaches versus those that engage caregiver around their culture and values



## Promoting First Relationships

- Evidence-based program that promotes social/emotional competence through responsive relationships
- One example of video feedback intervention
- Tailored to the family's values around parenting
- Demonstrated effectiveness with families with a wide variety of experiences, including child welfare involvement





## Child-Parent Psychotherapy

- Dyadic therapy for young children and their parents, with a focus on healing after trauma
- Based on the premise that, when young children experience trauma, they need help from caregivers to:
  - Make sense of what their family went through
  - Know what they can expect in the future
  - Learn to cope with challenging negative emotion



## Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

- Based on knowledge that most of the mental health support receive is outside of the therapist's office.
- Prevention-based approach that pairs a mental health consultant with adults who work with infants and young children in the different settings
  - Childcare, preschool, home visiting, pediatric practices.
- Equips professionals and caregivers to promote mental health by facilitating children's healthy social and emotional development.



# Colorado Resources



## Chatter Fall #2

- Please take a minute to type your response in the Zoom Chat, but **don't** click enter.

**Where do you turn for information about resources for young children and their families?**

- When instructed, please **click enter**.

# Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants

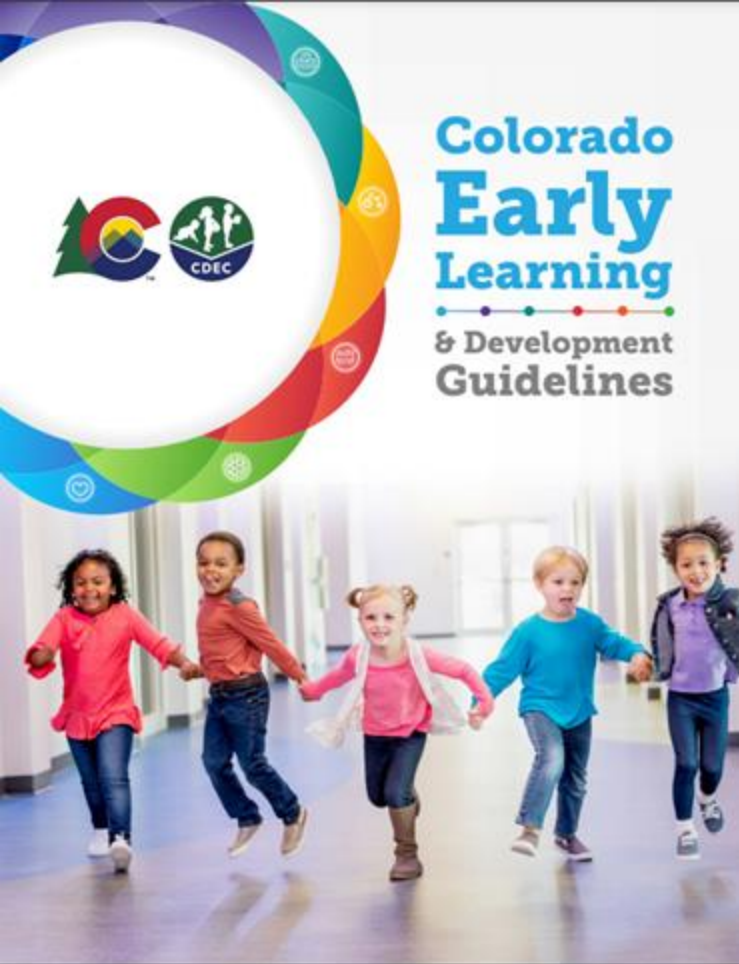
- Supports well-being for caregivers
- Supports well-being for all children
- Addresses challenging behaviors



Working together closely, consultants can help caregivers in these ways:

- Professional development
- Identify needs and work towards goals
- Support for the classroom
- Support for individual children
- Workshops for families or professionals
- Conduct developmental screenings
- Resources and referrals to community services





# Colorado Early Learning & Development Guidelines

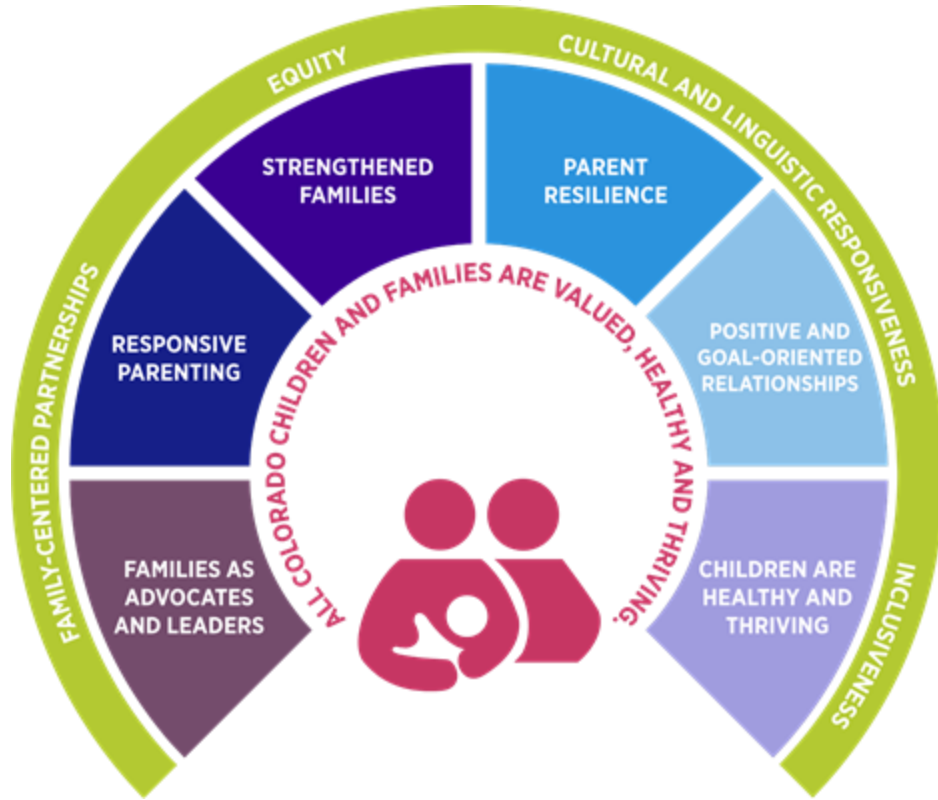
- Transitions
- Birth to Age 3
- Birth to Four Months
- Ages 4-8 Months
- Ages 9-18 Months
- Ages 19-36 Months
- Ages 3-5
- Kindergarten through 3rd Grade

# Supporting Social-Emotional Development



- Videos: Build Your Knowledge
  - An Important but Sensitive Topic
  - The Foundations of Mental Health
  - Tips for Professionals
  - Communication Toolkit
  - Conversations About Children's Mental Health
  - Key Messages for Parents and Caregivers
- Print Materials
  - 0-8 months, 9-18 months, 19-36 months, 3-5 years, 5-8 years
- Communication Tools: Raise Awareness
- Messages: Increase Understanding
- Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants

# The Colorado Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework



- Family engagement is key
- Four principals
  - Family-centered partnerships
  - Equity
  - Cultural and linguistic Responsiveness
  - Inclusiveness

<https://cdec.colorado.gov/for-partners/colorado-early-childhood-family-engagement-framework>

# Family Support Programs - CO Department of Early Childhood

Child First

Circle of Parents

Colorado  
Community  
Response

Colorado  
Fatherhood  
Program

Family Resource  
Centers

Healthy Steps for  
Young Children

Home Instruction  
for Parents of  
Preschool  
Youngsters

Nurse Family  
Partnership

Nurturing Healthy  
Sexual  
Development

Parents as  
Teachers

SafeCare®  
Colorado

Stewards of  
Children



To better inform our future trainings as well as request topics for office hours, please complete this short survey. Use the QR code or short URL to access it. Your feedback is important. Thank you!



<https://bit.ly/bhprovidertrainingsurvey>

# Appendix A: Additional Resources

## Office Hours

Office Hours are offered on the last Friday of every month (through September 2024) at noon MT! Please visit the [HCPF Safety Net Web Page](#) for details & registration information.

## Listserv

Join the Listserv to receive notifications of trainings, technical assistance, and other stakeholder engagement opportunities: [Register Here](#)

## HCPF Safety Net Provider Website

Visit the website for details on upcoming training topics and announcements, training recordings and presentation decks, FAQs and more: <https://hcpf.colorado.gov/safetynetproviders>

## TTA Request Form and E-Mail

Request TTA support or share your ideas, questions and concerns about this effort using the [TTA Request Form](#) or e-mail questions and comments to: [info@safetynetproviders.com](mailto:info@safetynetproviders.com)





# Appendix B: References

- [YouTube: Toxic Stress Derails Healthy Development](#)
- [ZerotoThree: Buzzwords Explained: Reflective Practice](#)
- [Promoting First Relationships](#)
- [Relationship Between Parental mental Health and Developmental Disorders in Early Childhood](#)
- [Georgetown University: EPSDT Fact Sheet](#)
- [HMA: Early Childhood Mental Health: The Importance of Caregiver Support in Promoting Health Child Development and Clinical Interventions for Children](#)
- [Zero to Three Principles of Infant Early Childhood Mental Health](#)
- [Child Parent Psychotherapy](#)

# Appendix C: Additional Resources

## Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC)

- Family Support Programs
- Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
- Supporting Social-Emotional Development
- Promoting Stable and Responsive Early Care Settings: A Provider Toolkit
- Colorado Early Childhood Family Engagement Framework

## HealthySteps Colorado

YouTube: Toxic Stress Derails Healthy Development

ZerotoThree: Buzzwords Explained: Reflective Practice

Promoting First Relationships

Relationship Between Parental mental Health and Developmental Disorders in Early Childhood

Georgetown University: EPSDT Fact Sheet

HMA: Early Childhood Mental Health: The Importance of Caregiver Support in Promoting Health Child Development and Clinical Interventions for Children

Early Intervention Colorado

- YouTube: Early Intervention Colorado Introduction Video

Colorado's Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Program

Colorado Early Learning & Development Guidelines