



Mental Health Newsletter

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Early Childhood Mental Health

From its inception, Head Start has demonstrated a strong commitment to promoting the mental health (social and emotional well-being) of young children and their families. Head Start recognizes that children who are ready for school are children with strong social and emotional skills. Children's caregivers at home and in the program benefit from resources that support their own mental health and in turn help to support the health and well-being of children in their care.

What's Relevant on the ECLKC

Head Start Bulletin #80: Mental Health

Promoting mental health is a vital component of the work done every day to enrich the lives of Head Start children and families. Head Start staff may benefit from the strategies and approaches discussed in this bulletin.

Infant and Toddler Temperament Tool (It 3) Supporting A "Goodness Of Fit"

The compatibility between adult and child temperaments can affect the quality of relationships. This compatibility is often called "goodness of fit." Goodness of fit happens when an adult's expectations and methods of caregiving match the child's personal style and abilities. This tool

examines nine temperament traits and provides positive support strategies for infants and toddlers. The Infant Toddler Temperament Tool (IT3) was developed for the Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation, an Innovation and Improvement Project funded by the Office of Head Start.

Mental Health: Tips for Health Managers

Social and emotional development sets the foundation for all other areas of development and learning for young children. This tip sheet designed for managers and staff explores the importance of early childhood mental health and provides relevant resources.

News You Can Use: Foundations of School Readiness: Social Emotional Development

For infants and toddlers, social and emotional development is "the developing capacity to experience and regulate emotions, form secure relationships, and explore and learn—all in the context of the child's family, community, and cultural background." This issue of News You Can Use is meant to be used along with the sample goals in the document [School Readiness Goals for Infants and Toddlers in Head Start and Early Head Start Programs](#).



For Families

Mental Health: Tips for Families

Families play a crucial role in supporting the social emotional development of their young children. This family-friendly tip sheet provides an overview of early childhood mental health for children from birth to five and explains how families can nurture their child's development.

How Emotional Development Unfolds Starting at Birth

In this podcast for families, Dr. Ross Thompson describes how early emotional development unfolds and what families can do to nurture their child's social and emotional skills starting at birth.

Other Resources

Establishing a Level Foundation for Life: Mental Health Begins in Early Childhood

Sound mental health is the foundation that supports all other aspects of human development—from the formation of friendships to the achievement of success in school. This working paper from the National Scientific Council on the Developing Child explains how early childhood experiences can strengthen or disrupt a child's emotional well-being.

InBrief: Early Childhood Mental Health

The science of child development shows that the foundation for sound mental health is built early in life, as early experiences—which include children's relationships with parents, caregivers, relatives, teachers, and peers—shape the architecture of the developing brain. This video



and brief explores the many facets of early childhood mental health and how adults can support healthy development.

Make Sure to Watch this Webinar Focused on Early Childhood Mental Health

The Mind, the Brain and Relationships: Supporting Children's Social-Emotional Development, Dr. Dan Siegel, 2007 Birth To Three Institute: Opening Plenary

Dr. Dan Siegel, of the UCLA School of Medicine, talks about the influence of responsive caregiver relations on a healthy brain. Program staff, education coordinators, trainers, and parents will find this information useful in their daily work with young children. Dr. Siegel also shares the latest research about brain development during this Birth to Three plenary.



NATIONAL CENTER ON

Early Childhood Health and Wellness

The National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness welcomes your feedback on this newsletter issue as well as your suggestions for topics for future issues. Please forward your comments to health@ecetta.info or call (888) 227-5125.

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School readiness begins with health!