



CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION FOR
Infant Mental Health

Leading the Way

*Building a Workforce
Skilled in Infant
Mental Health*



2014
Annual
Report



CT-AIMH Hires, Heidi Maderia, as its First Executive Director

The Board of Directors for the Connecticut Association for Infant Mental Health (CT-AIMH) was pleased to announce the hiring of Heidi Maderia, MS, IMH-E® who began work as its first Executive Director on September 1, 2014. Heidi is known to many for her work as Parent Educator/Coordinator of the Family Resource Center in Enfield, CT, as Training Coordinator for Building Blocks in Southeastern CT, and as conference coordinator for CT-AIMH in 2011. She also coordinated the infant mental health child care series from April to June 2014 through a grant from Child Health and Development Institute and the Office of Early Childhood.

Heidi was instrumental in developing the early childhood mental health trainings for Building Blocks (now Child First at UCFS). One of these trainings was the Overview of and Train The Trainers for DC:0-3R. She attended the League of States Retreat in 2008 to learn about the Competencies and Endorsement® process prior to CT-AIMH offering the Endorsement®. Heidi recently completed her master's degree in Early Childhood at Eastern CT State University.

"I am so excited and honored to be working for the CT-AIMH. When we care for children, and care about whether or not they will develop to their fullest potential, then we must work together to protect, promote and preserve those powerful first relationships. I can't wait to begin this important work with all of you!"

We are delighted to have Heidi working with us. Her very competent organizational skills and abilities to learn quickly and to assimilate new information and contacts are moving the work of CT-AIMH forward in Connecticut.

“When we care for children, and care about whether or not they will develop to their fullest potential, then we must work together to protect, promote and preserve those powerful first relationships.”

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DCF/HS TRAINING SERIES

With gratitude to Casey Family Programs, CT-AIMH continued its series on infant mental health with staff from DCF and Head Start/Early Head Start and community partners in DCF Region 5 (Danbury, Waterbury and Tolland) and Region 1 (Bridgeport, Norwalk and Stamford).

The "Unresolved Trauma and Its Impact on Early Relationships" 8-day series, included

our well-received out-of-state presenters: Janet Dean, LCSW, clinical director of the Community Infant Program in Boulder, CO; Michele Fallon, LCSW, IMH-E® and Jane Ellison, MS, LAMFT, IMH-E® from MN-AIMH, and Brenda Jones Harden, PhD, from the University of Maryland. Other presenters included Connecticut's own, Grace Whitney, PhD, IMH-E®, Heather Bonitz-Moore, MS, ATR-BC, LPC, IMH-E®, Marianne Barton, PhD, IMH-E®, Melissa Mendez, LCSW, IMH-E®, and Anne Giordano, MA, IMH-E®.

CT-AIMH provided Region 5 and Region 1 from the Connecticut Department of Children and Families with 8 intensive training days focused on "Unresolved Trauma and Its Impact on Early Relationships." These sessions for state social workers, supervisors, managers, and their affiliated agencies provide training that meets many of the Competencies in Culturally Sensitive, Relationship Focused Practice Promoting Infant Mental Health®.

The keynote presenter for this series on unresolved trauma and infant mental health for the CT child welfare staff and their community partners is Janet Dean.

Janet Dean, LCSW is the clinical director of the Community Infant Program, a preventive-intervention service for infants and their parents



in Boulder, Colorado, where Infant mental health psychotherapists and maternal child health nurses provide the home-based services. She has over 30 years of experience working in child welfare with an infant mental health framework.

BUILDING COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS FOR BABIES

The State of CT Head Start Collaboration Office sponsored meetings with Early Head Start providers and their community partners led by Anne Giordano, MA, IMH-E® in four regional communities: Danbury, Hartford, Norwich and Torrington. These infant mental health community partnerships were designed to promote the Competencies and Endorsement® for the infant mental health workforce.

REFLECTIVE SUPERVISION/CONSULTATION

Five groups totaling twenty-five people from the CT Department of Children and Family, Birth to Three, Early Head Start and Family Based Recovery, reaching cross-sector groups that include Connecticut providers working directly with families of infants and toddlers, participated in reflective supervision/consultation.

Reflective Consultation/Supervision is one of the infant mental health competencies and is recommended for all persons working with infants/toddlers and their families. This opportunity to meet regularly in a cooperative setting to explore feelings and emotions that impact one's work is critical to the success of work that is difficult and relationship focused. The outcome is what we call the "parallel" process, that is, the way the supervisor/consultant interacts with the provider is how the provider will be with the caregiver, and thus how the caregiver will treat their infant or toddler.

CT-AIMH facilitators for Reflective Consultation/Supervision were: Anne Giordano, MA, IMH-E®; Kim Shepardson Watson, LCSW,

"This training was very good. I appreciated the video and learning opportunities. That is something that every home visiting program must incorporate into their core training curriculum!"

■ **Training Series Participant**



IMH-E®; Heather Bonitz-Moore, MS, ATR-BC, LPC, IMH-E®; Christiana Mills, LCSW, IMH-E® and Rebecca Parilla, PhD.

NEW THIS YEAR

The Child Health and Development Institute (CHDI) contracted with the Connecticut Association for Infant Mental Health (CT-AIMH) through a grant from the Office of Early Childhood (OEC), to provide professional development training to pediatricians and child care providers to help prevent and identify mental, emotional and behavioral health issues in children by utilizing the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Competencies, with a focus on maternal depression and its impact on child development.

IMH EDUCATING PRACTICES IN THE COMMUNITY (EPIC)

CT-AIMH in collaboration with Child Health and Development Institute designed a new EPIC training module on Infant Mental Health to include the definition of Infant Mental Health, the importance of the parent /caregiver and child relationship, what factors might disrupt the relationship (toxic stress), how caregivers can become buffers to these disruptions, information about maternal depression, social emotional screening, and referral information.

This Infant Mental Health EPIC was piloted in three pediatric settings by a Board member and retired pediatrician, Dr. Gerald Calnen and presented to another four primary care settings.



Fostering Best Services

Promoting the Importance of Early Relationships

Public Act No. 13-178 was passed by the CT legislature and called for the creation of a mental health plan for all children in Connecticut. The CT-AIMH hosted a facilitated forum on March 17, 2014, for those interested in early childhood mental health to offer input to the plan, emphasizing the needs of families of young children around relationship and emotional development. Thirty-five persons participated. Subsequently the Association, through its policy/advocacy committee, offered a written response

to the draft plan calling for a specific section dedicated to Early Childhood work. Key components from the response include:

“It is during the first years of life, when brain growth is so rapid, that trauma can significantly damage the brain, causing both mental health and cognitive disability. Therefore, the focus must be not only on young children who already have behavioral and emotional problems, but also on those who come from families with caregiver depression, domestic violence, substance abuse, homelessness, incarceration, and especially abuse and neglect.

We need to create a continuum of early childhood mental health interventions so that we can match the level of need of the child and family with the level of intensity of the service. This must include promotion of responsive relationships through Circle of Security, consultation services (like ECCP and EHS/HS), skill development (like Triple P) and intensive intervention (like Child-Parent Psychotherapy in an office setting or Child First in the home).”

CT-AIMH Annual Spring Meeting and Fall Conference

CT-AIMH JANE C. BOURNS AWARD

The Connecticut Association for Infant Mental Health created the Jane C. Bourns Award in 2006 to honor a key member of the group that founded the Association. Jane Bourns was a professionally-trained social worker, who devoted most of her career to the development of mental health services for children as Director of Children's Services at Wheeler Clinic for 23 years. Jane was a passionate leader, remarkable in her energy and commitment to improving the lives of children and families. She championed prevention initiatives, including the Healthy Families America Program unique in its recognition of the strengths in children and families. Sadly, Jane passed away before this award, for which she had worked so hard, came into full fruition. CT-AIMH has annually

recognized someone active in the field of infant mental health since 2007.

The CT-AIMH 2014 Bourns Award went to Sylvia Juarez Marazzo, a Licensed



Clinical Social Worker with Child First and a Nationally Accredited Psychoanalyst. Sylvia has published a short illustrated story for children to help scaffold the integration of the Latino-American

immigrant mothers' experiences about their journey into motherhood for both self-discovery and therapeutic action. Her book *Mamá Cuéntame Como Vinist* was published in 2013. To read more please go to www.ct-aimh.org.

THE 2014 ANNUAL SPRING MEETING was held on April 25, 2013 at the University of Hartford. Michele Levy described her work with the Mom's Partnership in New Haven,



a program focused on the mental wellness of mothers by coordinating community resources. The project received recognition in 2014 as the recipient for federal money to expand.

The partnership is a collaborative of the Yale School of Medicine, All Our Kin, Clifford Beers Clinic, the Diaper Bank and National Diaper Bank Network, Housing Authority of New Haven, New Haven Health Department, New Haven Healthy Start, New Haven Public Schools and Connecticut Department of Children and Families.



THE 2014 ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE

was held on November 20, 2014 at the Wood Winds in Branford. Drs. Phyllis Cohen and K. Mark Sossin presented their work with mothers who were pregnant and whose husbands died in the 911 tragedy, *A Trembling Nest: Risk, Primary Prevention and Pathways of Intervention in the Wake of Disaster*. Their work emphasized the importance of using videos with parents in intervention.

Growing the Field

Developing IMH Knowledge and Best Practice



CT-AIMH was asked to become a founding Planning Board member to develop the Alliance for the Promotion of Infant Mental Health. Margaret Holmberg will represent CT-AIMH on this planning board. The Alliance will be the formal organization of the states that hold the Competency and Endorsement for Culturally Sensitive, Relationship-Focused Practice Promoting Infant Mental Health®. The Alliance will also include the Infant Mental Health Journal and Early Attachments, a home visiting program using the Competencies®. Currently 19 states, one county, and one region of another country are using the Competencies and Endorsement®. A map of these locations is below.

League of States (Alliance)

CT-AIMH membership reached a record high of 286. Members through their agencies numbered 175. Individual members numbered 111. Members included a broad spectrum of those working with infants and toddlers and their families: staff in Birth to Three, Child Guidance, Early Head Start/Head Start, Home Visiting, DCF, and higher education programs.

CT-AIMH is one of 19 states to offer the Competencies and Endorsement in Infant Mental Health. Leaders from these states meet annually. Heidi Maderia, MS, IMH-E® and Kim Shepardson Watson, LCSW, IMH-E® and Margaret Holmberg, PhD, IMH-E® attended the 2014 states meeting in Kansas City, MO. Margaret facilitated the discussion about the future plans for the League along with Nichole Paradis, MS, IMH-E® from Michigan.



CT-AIMH was invited to be a partner in a state pilot Peer Learning Collaborative for Social Emotional Development sponsored by Grade Level Reading and National Center for Children and Poverty. Nine Discovery Communities provided and gave opportunity for CT-AIMH to promote its childcare series on infant mental health.

Infant and Toddler Mental Health Training Series for Early Care Providers

CT-AIMH provided training for Early Care and Education (ECE) providers in Infant Mental Health, based on the competency-based

“Thank you for a wonderful training. Well organized. Thank you for recognizing the importance of early childcare providers.”

■ *Training Series Participant*

CT-AIMH Endorsement, and a curriculum designed by the TX-AIMH. So far, this four-day training series was held in 2 of 3 proposed communities: Enfield and Torrington, with the third series planned for Vernon in the spring

of 2015. There were 30 providers trained in Enfield and 33 in Torrington. Evaluations of the pre/post tests were conducted by UCONN and indicated a statistically significant difference in the scores of the pre test and the increased scores of the post test.

Overall, 100% of the participants indicated on their evaluations that they agreed or strongly agreed that they had acquired new knowledge and skills.

“Something that I will take with me is to observe attachment with parents at drop-off and pick-up times.”

■ *Training Series Participant*

“Areas of new learning for me were the sections on brain development (stages), scaffolding and temperament.”

■ *Training Series Participant*

Infant Mental Health Endorsement®

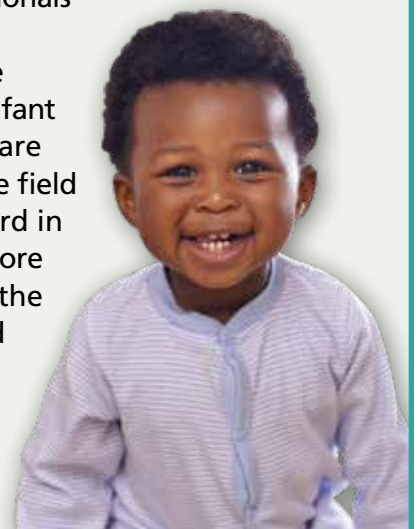
A total of 26 people held Endorsement in Culturally Sensitive, Relationship-Focused Practice Promoting Infant Mental Health® in Connecticut and are listed in the endorsement registry on our web site (ct-aimh.org). They include:

- 1 Infant Family Associate
- 9 Infant Family Specialists
- 2 Infant Mental Health Specialists
- 14 Infant Mental Health Mentors (clinicians or policy related)

We are pleased to have the first developmental pediatrician (Dr. Darcy Lowell) endorsed in CT and in the country and the first Infant Mental

Health Mentor in Research/Faculty in Connecticut (Dr. JoAnn Robinson).

All of these professionals are recognized for having achieved the Competencies® in infant mental health and are helping to move the field and practice forward in Connecticut. For more information about the Competencies® and the Endorsement® process, please visit our website at www.ct-aimh.org.



World Association for Infant Mental Health (WAIMH)



In June 2014, CT-AIMH Board members and others in CT working in the infant mental health field presented at the 14th World Congress for the World Association for Infant Mental Health (WAIMH) held in Edinburgh, Scotland. Margaret Holmberg was also a discussant for an international panel describing work with the Competencies and Endorsement®.

In August those nine presentations were highlighted at a forum in Middletown sponsored by CT-AIMH, Head Start Collaboration Office, and the Office of Early Childhood. The filmed presentation by CTN can also be found on our web site ct-aimh.org under Events, Past Events. Thirty people attended from DCF, child care, Birth to Three, clinics and higher education.

PAPERS PRESENTED INCLUDED:

When Words Aren't Enough: Reaching a Toddler and His Parents Through Kitchen Floor Family Yoga

■ Dale Saul, Yale Child Study Center

Differential Outcomes by Parenting Risk Level: Randomized Comparison of Service Delivery Models for Adolescent Mothers

■ Beth Russell, University of Connecticut

Minding the Baby: A Reflective Parenting Model Across Continents: Lessons Learned in the UK and US

■ Tanika Simpson, Yale Child Study Center

Infant Mental Health Collaboration Within an Early Head Start Playgroup: Practical Issues and Evaluation Results

■ Marianne Barton, JoAnn Robinson & Jennifer Acker, University of Connecticut

Creating a Trauma-Informed, Infant Mental Health Competent Service System Through Cross-Sector Training and Reflective Supervision

■ Margaret Holmberg, CT-AIMH
■ Grace Whitney, CT HSSCO/OEC

Building a Community Service Safety Net for Families at Risk for Early Childhood Mental Health Challenges: Mid-Level Developmental Assessment (MLDA)

■ Sandy Kyriakopoulos, Director of Maternal and Child Health

Readiness for Group-Based Learning: Supporting Toddlers to Adapt to the Preschool Classroom

■ JoAnn Robinson, University of Connecticut

Critical Examination of Excessive Infant Crying Classification and Its Effects on Maternal Mental Health

■ Beth Russell, University of Connecticut

What Does An Early Childhood Mental Health (ECMH) Consultant Do in the Classroom? Establishing Practice Standards for Delivering ECMH Consultation

■ Elizabeth Bicio, Advanced Behavioral Health Early Childhood Consultation Partnership

Inside CT-AIMH

Strengthening Our Organization's Financial and Communications Infrastructure

As well as hiring our first Executive Director, under the leadership of Heidi Maderia, meetings were held with the Old Lyme Mentoring Corps for Community Development. After two introductory meetings the Corps invited CT-AIMH to meet with them to brainstorm next steps in building our development, marketing and fund raising capacity. Future meetings are planned.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO BUILD A REFLECTIVE, RELATIONSHIP-BASED FOCUS ON BABIES AND THEIR FAMILIES.

Our office continues in New Haven at 230 South Frontage Rd. with thanks to Dr. Linda Mayes, Director, Yale Child Study Center.

We welcomed to our Board one new Director, Dr. Gerald Calnen, retired pediatrician from Enfield. Dr. Calnen is presenting the Infant Mental Health EPIC to pediatric offices through our CHDI/OEC work.

THANK YOU TO THESE KEY RESOURCES WHO RECOGNIZE THE IMPACT OF EARLY RELATIONSHIPS ON OUR FUTURE:

- Child Health & Development Institute, Children's Fund
- State of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
- State Head Start Collaboration Office
- State of Connecticut Department of Children and Families
- Old Lyme Mentoring Corps for Community Development
- Casey Family Programs
- CT Birth to Three System





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