



Presented to
 Department of Public Welfare
 Secretary Estelle Richman

September 1, 2009

pennsylvania Early Childhood Mental Health Advisory Committee

Vision:

Because every child is Pennsylvania's future, we envision that all young children will have a strong social and emotional foundation on which to grow.

Mission:

Ensuring that coordinated and effective mental health services are available for all young children across the commonwealth.

Recommendations for Immediate Implementation (6 months)

- Include language related to early childhood mental health in the guidelines for county integrated children's services plans.
- Adopt and promote a set of early childhood mental health competencies for all professionals and across all levels of service provision for families with children from conception through age five.
- Develop an implementation plan for the OMHSAS/OCDEL joint announcement on "Behavior Supports for Young Children," providing specific guidelines for how to ensure access to and coordination of services for young children.
- Include information about early childhood mental health in the Early Learning Council's communications plan.
- Develop an ongoing structure for the Early Childhood Advisory Committee that is modeled after Community Engagement Groups, statewide in scope and focused on early childhood mental health.

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Early Childhood Advisory Committee Recommendations

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PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION	PROFESSIONAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	COMMUNICATION AND COLLABORATION
Short-term Recommendations (12 months)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access to and coordination of mental health services for young children. • Support and expand the use of existing screening instruments throughout programs serving young children (early care and learning facilities, pediatric and family practice offices, child welfare programs, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a plan to systematically implement the core competencies. • Promote the concept that children must be understood and served within the context of their families. • Assist and support universities and training institutes in promoting early childhood mental health specialty programs at the graduate level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a culturally competent social marketing campaign on the importance of early social and emotional development (partially in collaboration with Pennsylvania's Promise for Children) • Host an internet discussion group and use existing organizational and agency newsletters and web sites to promote collaboration and share information about evidence-based and promising practices in ECMH with all early childhood providers and professionals.
Intermediate Recommendations (12-24 months)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand early childhood mental health consultation to all early childhood serving systems. • Identify and promote evidence-based, best practice emotional coaching programs to better support the social-emotional foundation for all young children • Ensure the availability of well-coordinated and age-appropriate interventions for those young children and caretakers who need more intensive supports. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with higher education institutions to develop the consistent inclusion of social and emotional curriculum in early childhood education programs. • Implement the core competencies in the professional development plans of all professionals working with young children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a branded social marketing campaign promoting social and emotional development. • Embed early childhood mental health information in all early childhood communications plans and programs. • Create a dedicated early childhood mental health web site with resources for families, early learning practitioners and agencies. • Develop a brochure/booklet containing information about ECMH competencies and where and how to obtain training.
Long-term Recommendations (36 months)		
<p>None: the workgroup believes it is not appropriate to have long-term goals for serving young children because they need these supports and services now.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a system that supports comprehensive and effective clinical supervision (reflective practice consultation) to ensure better rates of retention for ECMH professionals and better outcomes for children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage local communities in promoting healthy social and emotional development in young children.