

PRINCIPLES AND BEST PRACTICES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH

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INTRODUCTION

- Workshop Agenda and Participants
- History of Early Childhood Mental Health in Southeast



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THEORETICAL/RESEARCH BASED FOUNDATIONS

- Infant/child growth and development
- Brain research
- Attachment Theory



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THEORETICAL/RESEARCH BASED FOUNDATIONS

- Infant Mental Health
- Trauma
- Carl Rogers



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PRINCIPLES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH

- Social-Emotional Development
 - Early Childhood Mental Health = social and emotional development. At the core of children's mental health is social and emotional development



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PRINCIPLES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH

- Relationship Based
 - Optimum growth and development occurs within the context of positive relationships. Children learn to feel safe and secure and to regulate their bodies and emotions with the nurturing support of trusted, responsive caregivers.
 - Helpful interventions begin with positive relationship with child and family.


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CHILDREN LEARN BY DOING
AND
IN THE CONTEXT OF SUPPORTIVE
RELATIONSHIPS

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PRINCIPLES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH


- **Strength Based**
 - Focusing on positive strengths and resources for children and their parents is empowering and key to positive outcomes.



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PRINCIPLES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH

- **Family Centered**
 - Children are viewed, understood, and supported in the context of the family and culture.



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PRINCIPLES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH

- **Trauma Informed**
 - We must consider exposure to violence and chronic stress as a core area of early childhood programming. Traumatic experiences affect the brain. Children who suffer traumatic stress develop reactions that linger and affect their daily lives long after the traumatic event has ended.

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PRINCIPLES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH

- **Importance of Play**
 - The means of processing, communicating (safety, attunement, reflection, empathy). Promotes self regulation, affect regulation, coping skills.



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PRINCIPLES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH

- **Self Awareness/ Self Care**
 - We need to manage ourselves when relating to children. This includes self awareness; our attitudes, beliefs, expectations, relationships, attunement, and communication with children.

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PRINCIPLES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH

■ Environment

- The environment – materials, space, routines, activities, interactions, attitudes, etc – directly influence the child's emotions and behaviors.



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PRACTICE

■ Pyramid model



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PRACTICE

- Early Intervention
- Prevention to promote successes
- Wellness versus Medical Model
- Partnerships - multi disciplinary team



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PRACTICE

- Teaching/Practicing Social and emotional development and skills
- Child Centered, Developmentally Appropriate, Individualized
- Family focus
- Self Care for all providers



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THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS AND STRATEGIES

- Client Centered Child Therapy
 - Play Therapy - directive and non directive
 - Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Family Therapy
 - Parent-child therapy
 - Filial Play Therapy
 - Family, relationship focused therapy
 - Parent Child Interaction Therapy PCIT

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THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS AND STRATEGIES

- Family Support, Parent Education
 - Positive parent-child relationships, positive parenting strategies
 - Nurture and Structure
 - Empathy, Attunement
- Group therapy and group skill building
 - Group play therapy
 - Social and Emotional Skill building

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EARLY CHILDHOOD CONSULTATION

- ECMH consultation - what it is and what we do
- History – Blanket of Wellness



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EARLY CHILDHOOD CONSULTATION

- Who we are and what we do
 - Professions and credentials
 - Areas of expertise
 - Programs we serve
 - Consultation services
 - Pyramid model – focus on prevention
 - Collaboration
 - Reflective supervision
 - Observations and referrals

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RESOURCES

- Blanket of Wellness Project: Mental Health Consultation to Early Care and Learning Programs, 2003 <http://www.southeastfamilies.org/bowmanual.pdf>
- Second Step, A violence Prevention Curriculum, Committee for Children <http://www.cfchildren.org>
- Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel>
- ZERO TO THREE: National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families. <http://www.zerotothree.org>
- EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATION: An Evaluation Tool Kit, Georgetown University, National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health
- Zeanah, C. H. (editor) (2000), Handbook of Infant Mental Health. New York: Guilford Press.
- Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA), the Devereux Foundation, 1999.
- Association for Play therapy <http://www.apa.org>

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