



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Supports

“Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation is Equitable and Inclusive. It understands broad and local historical and systemic dynamics that have generated racialized disparities in outcomes for infants, young children, and families. It further understands that adult race/ ethnicity, primary language, culture (beliefs, values, voice, communication style, behavioral norms, and attitudes), abilities, biases, disposition, and life circumstances (e.g., poverty and domestic violence) impact the learning environment. I/ECMHC explicitly and intentionally acts on this understanding to create equitable and positive experiences for all infants and young children, including those from historically marginalized and oppressed communities.”

— Center of Excellence for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation at Georgetown University

The Illinois Model for Infant/ Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation has eight competencies that guide Consultants across the state. Two of the competencies are listed below that speak to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging.



Competency #3: Ability to Work Effectively Throughout Diverse Cultures and Communities

Consultants are aware of the influence of culture on the values, beliefs, and practices related to parenting and how this affects the social-emotional development of children. Cultural beliefs can impact the way families and communities approach the sensitive topics of children’s mental health and social-emotional skills, and are integral to the forming of trusting, collaborative partnerships.

Consultants actively and sensitively seek to understand the culture and climate of the families and programs with whom they work and are aware of their own responses and reactions to any differences.

Governor’s Office of Early
Childhood Development
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bit.ly/IL-IECMHC

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Competency #8: An Understanding of the Impact of Trauma on Early Childhood Development

Collaboratively the staff, consultant, and adults in the child's life design a safe, responsive, and nurturing environment in which young children can learn and grow. Consultants work with programs to understand the underlying factors that influence the interactions and reactions of very young children and staff who may be experiencing trauma while becoming aware of their own biases and triggers.

Professional Development Opportunities for Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging is embedded in every facet of professional development for Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants. The menu of offerings continues to evolve to respond to the community's needs. It provides a lens to reflect and facilitate conversations with the early childhood education and care programs that consultants support. The professional development opportunities discussed below are offered free of charge, in a virtual format and offer continuing education credits for participation.

Synchronous

- Orientation to the Illinois Model for Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
- The Impact of Trauma on Child Development
- Supporting I/ECMH Consultant Understanding and Use of Screening and Assessment Tools for Maternal Depression, Substance Use/Abuse, and Intimate Partner Violence
- Social and Emotional Strategies in Early Childhood
- Diversity-Informed Tenets for Work with Infants, Children, and Families
- Annual Symposium for Infant Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants

Asynchronous

- Available via: i-learning website at courses.inccrra.org
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Considerations
- What is I/ECMHC?
- Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant's Way of Being
- A Systems Framework: Understanding the Process of I/ECMH Consultation
- The Role of the I/ECMH Professional
- *and many more...*

Reflective Learning Groups (RLGs) are a core component of extending the learning and growth of the Consultant beyond the initial Orientation to the Illinois Model. RLGs are free to consultants, offer Continuing Education credits, and cultivate a reflective community to enhance the skills of the Consultant.

“My RLG has been amazing. I love our group and get so much out of our conversations and reflections. It is invaluable for me to be able to witness and participate in reflection with those who have so much more experience in the field than I do. This modeling has absolutely helped me improve my own reflective skills.” – RLG participant

