Developing an Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Professional Development System in Maryland: A GAP ANALYSIS AND STRATEGIC PLAN

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A child’s capacity to form close and interpersonal relationships; experience, express and regulate emotions; and explore the environment and learn in the context of family, community, and cultural expectations.
CONTEXT

Disproportionality
Toxic Stress
ACEs
Lack of Readiness in Social Foundations
High Rates of Emotional/Behavioral Issues

NATIONAL FOCUS ON IECMH

IECMH GAP ANALYSIS AND STRATEGIC PLAN

PREVALENCE OF IECMH ISSUES IN MARYLAND

SUSPENSION & EXPULSION LEGISLATION

PDG B–5

Need for Implementation Supports
Funding Opportunity

Need for Implementation Supports
Needs Assessment
Strategic Plan

Implementation Supports
Funding Opportunity

Supports
PDG B–5
Maryland IECMH Supports Inventory and Mapping

Key Questions
1. What IEMCH resources are currently available to the MD ECE workforce?
2. What gaps exist in awareness, access, and application of these resources?
3. How can the system be strengthened to better support teachers/providers?

Stakeholder Focus Groups & Convenings

- 20 ECE Providers
- 15 IECMH Consultants
- 10 State-Level Stakeholders

METHODS

Trainings
- In-Person
- Online

Websites & Peer-to-Peer Networks
- Relationship-Based PD
- Coaching
- IECMH Consultation

Relationship-Based PD
Maryland has a strong foundation of IECMH resources and supports.

**KEY FINDINGS**

**SEFEL Pyramid Model**
- **Training Modules**
  - Online
  - In-person

**Practice-Based Coaching**
- SEFEL Master Cadre

**MD Pyramid Model Website**
- SEFEL resources, training, & support

**Higher Education**

**MSDE-Approved Trainings**
- Offered through CCRCs
- Over 250 titles (not offered concurrently)

**IECMH Consultation**
- Evidence-based
- 11 regional programs

**Outcome Monitoring System (OMS)**
- TPOT & TPITOS
- Reach of IECMH consultation and SEFEL training and coaching services
- Coaching fidelity
- Classroom and child outcomes
The current ECE workforce

Feels under-supported and overwhelmed in meeting IECMH needs, especially challenging behavior

Uses a patchwork of IECMH strategies and needs significant support around preventive and intensive interventions

Lacks foundational knowledge and skills around:
- typical vs. atypical development
- toxic stress & trauma-informed care
- preventing challenging behavior
- self-care strategies
- partnering with families

Maryland has a strong foundation of IECMH resources and supports

and yet...
The current ECE workforce feels under-supported and overwhelmed in meeting IECMH needs, especially challenging behavior. They use a patchwork of IECMH strategies and need significant support around preventive and intensive interventions. They lack foundational knowledge and skills around:

- typical vs. atypical development
- toxic stress & trauma-informed care
- preventing challenging behavior
- self-care strategies
- partnering with families

Maryland has a strong foundation of IECMH resources and supports, but there are gaps in awareness, access, and application.
Gaps in awareness

• Many educators unfamiliar with IECMH Consultation and Pyramid Model, especially training and coaching.

• Most rely primarily on informal sources of information (e.g., online resources, colleagues).

• Lack of single access point for IECMH resources or trainings.
• Limited capacity of coaching and IECMH consultation programs.
  ▪ 16% of children not served due to lack of available IECMH consultants.
  ▪ Referral process and obtaining parental consent additional barriers.

• Regional variation in IECMH services and supports
  ▪ Mapping showed wide range (1–13) of IEMCH trainings across CCRCs

• Barriers to accessing training & higher education
  ▪ program resources, funding, workload, schedule, and location
Gaps in application

- Current trainings skew heavily toward knowledge-building with few opportunities for applied practice.
- Coverage of IECMH content in higher education often narrow and shallow.
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Building IECMH systems-level foundations
2. Designing an IECMH professional development system blueprint
3. Strengthening IEMCH professional development supports
4. Facilitating awareness and access to IECMH supports
5. Evaluating progress on IECMH process and outcome measures
**RECOMMENDATION 1: Systems-Level Foundations**

**IECMH Advisory Group**
- Group to shepherd IECMH strategic plan work
- Draw from or adapt existing groups (e.g., sub-committee of ECAC or ECMH Steering Committee)
- Diverse membership across sectors and roles

**IECMH framework**
- Model after *Maryland Family Engagement Framework*
- Coordination, collaboration, and integration across all IECMH touchpoints

**Additional funding**
- Child Care and Development Block Grant
- Preschool Development Grant B–5 Renewal
What IECMH outcomes do we want for children?

What classroom practices foster these outcomes?

How do teachers develop these skills?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KNOW</th>
<th>SEE</th>
<th>REFLECT</th>
<th>DO</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Active knowledge-building opportunities</td>
<td>- Videos</td>
<td>- Observation and feedback</td>
<td>- Practice in classroom setting</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Presentation of information</td>
<td>- In-person modeling</td>
<td>- Guided reflection and self-assessment</td>
<td>- Goal-setting and planning</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Descriptions/sample language</td>
<td>- Vignettes</td>
<td>- Prompt/reminder</td>
<td>- Role-play</td>
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**Indicators from TPOT™ and TPITOS™ and/or other similar resources**

**Recommendation 2: Professional Development Blueprint**

**Know-See-Do-Reflect Instructional Design Framework**

**Maryland Early Learning Standards Birth – 8 Years**
RECOMMENDATION 2:

Key IECMH Practices
- Identify teacher behaviors most important for child IECMH outcomes
- “Guiding stars” of professional development system

PD System Inputs
- Determine PD inputs based on key IECMH practices and instructional design

Note: Key IECMH practices are the items from the “Teaching Children to Express Emotions” subscale of the T-POT; Fox, L. K., Snyder, P., & Hemmeter, M. L. (2013). Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT™) for Preschool Classrooms. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co. Child outcomes are derived from the Maryland Early Learning Standards Birth–8 Years (indicators for 4-year-olds under “Expresses, Understands, and Responds to Feelings/Emotions of Others” within the “Initiates and Maintains Relations” standard of the Social Foundations Domain). The professional development system components were developed based on the Know-See-Do-Reflect framework.
RECOMMENDATION 3: Professional Development System Infrastructure

Enhance existing trainings
- Map PD components onto existing trainings and fill any gaps to ensure full coverage

IECMH training approval
- Incorporate IECMH category into training approval process through MSDE

IECMH college course
- Foundational course offered through MD institutes of higher education

Leverage technology
- Explore hybrid online/in-person models of IECMH professional development
- Create video library of IECMH key practices
- Explore on-demand TA services
- Develop IECMH teacher texting program
RECOMMENDATION 4: Awareness, Access, and Application

Communications strategy
- Improve Pyramid Model “brand” to clearly convey focus of model
- Redesign of SEFEL Pyramid Model website completed; further integration of resources/trainings into single access point
- Increase awareness of IECMH consultation for providers and families

IECMH in MD EXCELS
- Consider ways to incorporate IECMH as element of program quality
- Explore IECMH Achievement Badge

Expand effective programs
- Increase capacity of IEMCH consultation program
- Expand access to SEFEL Pyramid Model practice-based coaching
RECOMMENDATION 4: Awareness, Access, and Application

Restructure IECMHC model

- Explore “embedded model” of consultation
- Parent opt-out strategy to increase number of children served
- Increase coordination with SEFEL coaching

Sharing and scaling practices

- Formal infrastructure to share resources, increase access to supports, and scale effective practices across the state
  - Engaging pediatricians in IECMHC referral model
  - Embedded consultation model
  - Administrator capacity-building training groups
  - Family engagement and home visiting through IECMHC
RECOMMENDATION 5: Evaluation of Progress

Outcomes framework

- Develop outcomes framework with results, headline indicators, and process measures.
- Proposed metrics in report; should be reviewed, amended, and approved by state advisory group.

RESULT 3: There is an IECMH professional development system that the ECE workforce is familiar with and connected to and has adequate capacity and funding to meet the needs of those it serves.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Indicators and Measures</th>
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<tr>
<td>Percentage of providers/programs who have participated in SEFEL trainings/SEFEL coaching/IECMH consultation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statewide number of SEFEL trainers/SEFEL coaches/IECMH consultants (OMS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of total referrals to IECMH consulting program/percentage served (OMS)</td>
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<td>Average waitlist times for IECMH referrals (OMS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total number of communication/outreach strategies employed around IECMH professional development</td>
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<td>SEFEL website usage data</td>
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<td>Total state and federal dollars funding IECMH professional development system</td>
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<td>Progress on bills presented in the Maryland State Legislature that support IECMH efforts</td>
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GUIDING QUESTIONS

What opportunities do you see to connect to or build on existing work?

What are potential challenges or barriers to implementation?

framing by Nicole Hammonds from the Noun Project

Bricks by icon 54 from the Noun Project

Blueprint by Weltenraser from the Noun Project

measuring tape by monkik from the Noun Project