Maryland’s Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Project

2019 Legislative Brief

The National Model

Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation is an evidence-informed intervention for supporting children’s social and emotional development and addressing challenging behaviors in early learning and home environments. IECHMC has been shown to improve classroom climate and child behaviors, and to reduce preschool suspensions and expulsions. Data on expulsions and suspensions for children in early education programs indicate rates triple that of expulsion rates for school-aged peers. National attention has been given to IECHMC as a primary mechanism to address these concerns.

Expulsion and Long Term School Outcomes

As much as 10 times more likely to:
- Fail a grade in school
- Hold negative school attitudes
- Drop out of high school
- Face incarceration

Drivers of Expulsion

- Structural quality
- Gaps in knowledge of early childhood
- Trauma/behavior connection
- Racial and gender disparities in discipline

Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Outcomes

**Workforce Outcomes:** Reduced stress and burnout, reduced turnover, and higher quality interactions.

**Family Outcomes:** Prevention of suspensions and expulsions, improved dyadic relationships, and reduced missed work days for parents.

IECHMC in Maryland

11 consultation programs spanning all 24 jurisdictions

Maryland has used IECHMC to promote positive social emotional development and address behavioral concerns in young children for over a decade. It was one of the first states to pilot the IECHMC model in 2006.

Outcomes in Maryland, FY 2018

- **Increased Positive School Climate**
- **Reduction of Preschool Suspensions & Expulsions**

IECHMC services led to **significant** increases in positive classroom climate, including:
- Positive transitions
- Staff awareness of social emotional needs
- Identification of feelings & problem solving strategies

IECHMC contributed to preventing suspensions and expulsions in 94.31% of this year’s consultation cases in Maryland. Only 5.69% of cases resulted in formal expulsion after initiation of consultation services.
575 CHILDREN RECEIVED SUPPORTIVE INTERVENTION SERVICES IN FISCAL YEAR 2018

Supports Provided
- Child and classroom observation and assessment
- Referrals to early intervention, Child Find, mental health services and community resources
- Parent and teacher training and coaching
- Behavior modification skills
- Strategies for serving children with behavioral health needs

83.65% of services are delivered within child care centers.
The average duration of services is 4 months.

Needs of Families Served
10.16% receive Child Care Subsidy
13.66% had an IFSP or IEP at time of closure
12.55% were adopted or fostered, had exposure to substances, were homeless, or had an incarcerated parent

Gender of Children Served, FY 2018
- 75.3%
- 24.7%

Ages of Children Served, FY 2018
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age in Months</th>
<th>Percent of Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 - 11</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 - 24</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 36</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 - 48</td>
<td>43.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 - 60</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 - 72</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
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</tbody>
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Child Race/Ethnicity
- Hispanic/Latino: 2.39%
- Asian: 5.29%
- Pacific Islander: 0.60%
- Multiracial: 11.96%
- Black: 24.50%
- White: 57.97%

Workforce

Larger Workforce Needed:
16% of children identified as in need were not served. Of those cases, 11% were attributed to consultation not being available, indicating the need for additional consultation capacity.

SEFEL Pyramid Model
18 consultants across 8 of the 11 consultation programs are highly engaged in the implementation of the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning framework, including training and ongoing coaching.

Child Behavior Concerns, Parent & Teacher Reports for Referred Cases in Maryland, FY 2018

- Teacher: 75.6% Pre IECMHIC, 50.6% Post IECMHIC, 57.2% Parent Pre IECMHIC, 41.2% Parent Post IECMHIC

- Maryland’s IECMHIC services led to measurable improvements in child behaviors for both teachers and parents.
- Teachers and parents also reported improvements in children’s ability to be independent, persistent, stay calm, demonstrate self-control, and form relationships.

“In a short amount of time a specialist came to my center, evaluated the child and right away gave my staff and I verbal and tangible tools to work with.”
- Baltimore County Classroom Teacher