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MCHB/DHSPS
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Infant Mental Health



Moderator:

Johannie G. Esarne, MPH



The Impact of Maternal Depression on Parenting and Infant Development

What is Infant Mental Health?



Presented by:

A. Yasmin Welch, MSW, LCSW,
Harris Fellow, Tulane University Infant Institute
Director of Programs and Services
The Family Tree Healthy Start Program
605 W. St. Mary Blvd.
Lafayette, LA. 70506
337-237-2160
yasmin@thefamilytree.ws



What is Infant Mental Health?

- Infant Mental Health refers to the quality of social and emotional development of children in the first few years of life.
- Because young children's social experiences and opportunities to explore the world depend on the love and care they receive, the relationship between the baby and caregiver are central to Infant Mental Health.

Why Does It Matter?

- Research indicates that problems like delinquency, school failure, interpersonal violence and premature parenthood have their roots in early childhood experiences.
- Intervening at an early stage therefore, is a proven preventive approach to significant social and economic issues.

What are the goals of Infant Mental Health?

- To enhance social competence and emotional well-being in very young children and their families.
- To prevent risk factors such as adolescent parenting, pre-maturity, poverty, family violence, etc. from having an adverse effect on development.

Goals of Infant Mental Health

- To improve and enhance the systems of care for young children and their families.
- To inform and influence early childhood policy through the application of established research findings.



Some aspects of Infant Mental Health

- Emotional development includes the experience of feelings about self and others, with a range of positive and negative emotions, as well as the ability to control and regulate feelings in culturally appropriate ways.
- Healthy social-emotional development is essential for success in school and life.



Caregivers and Babies in Relationships

- A loving, nurturing relationship enhances emotional development and mental health.
- Provides a “secure base” from which children can begin to explore the world.
- The more babies explore and try new things, the more success they experience.

- 
- Kind, nurturing relationships also teach children how to treat others.
 - Good relationships help children feel valued.
 - Children who feel loved and cherished grow up to be adults who care about others.



How can caregivers nurture social-emotional development?

- Identify and get treatment for emotional problems. For example, depressed mothers have a significant negative affect on their babies.
- Understand and respond to baby's cues.
- Develop routines to promote predictability and security



Women and Depression

- Females are 2X more likely than males to suffer from depression, but only during the childbearing years.
- 5 Biologically vulnerable times for depression are:
 - Puberty
 - Premenstrual
 - Pregnancy
 - Post-Partum
 - Perimenopause



Postpartum Mental Illness

Postpartum "blues"
50 – 70% of adult women within 10 – 14 days
Transient, nonpathologic

Postpartum Depression
10% of adult women, 14% of teen moms
onset by 6 weeks postpartum
Serious and disabling

Post partum Psychosis
1-2/1000 live births
Medical emergency



Therapeutic steps

- Talk to and observe mother regarding signs of depression. Ask open ended questions to promote dialogue.
- Use a standardized screening or assessment
- BDI, Edinburgh, etc.
- Refer for treatment or develop treatment plan for mother AND child.



Neonatal Effects of Maternal Depression

- Poorer orientation skills, tracking etc.
- Decreased motor tone
- Lower activity level
- Right EEG asymmetry
- Impaired attachment
- Cognitive disturbances
- Maternal depression predictive of "Negative" Infant Temperament



Ways Depression Impacts Parenting

- Interaction
- Attachment
- Perception of child behavior
- Social factors – depressed husband, poverty, stressful life events.



Attachment

- The deep and lasting connection between a baby and caregiver in the first few years of life.
- Something that children and caregivers create *together, in an ongoing turn-taking* relationship. Baby and parent influence each other over time.



Attachment

- Biologically Based Human Need:
- Babies reach out to caregivers for safety and security.
- Parents instinctively protect and nurture their babies.



Three Parts of Attachment

- Care-Seeking (Baby) – baby's instinct to seek closeness to a specific person who will comfort, protect and help sort out or organize baby's feelings.
- Care-giving (Mom) – mom's instinct to watch out for baby and comfort, protect and organize baby's feelings.
- Exploration (Baby) – Baby's instinct to follow inborn curiosity and desire to learn.



What is a "SECURE" Attachment

- A relationship that creates confidence in the baby that a specific, protective caregiver is available if needed and supports baby's exploration of his surroundings in order to learn.



Importance of Secure Attachment

- Patterns of attachment between infants and parents are one of the strongest predictors of social, emotional and cognitive development.
- Infant attachment classifications are:
 - Stable over time
 - Predictive of later infant and parent behavior

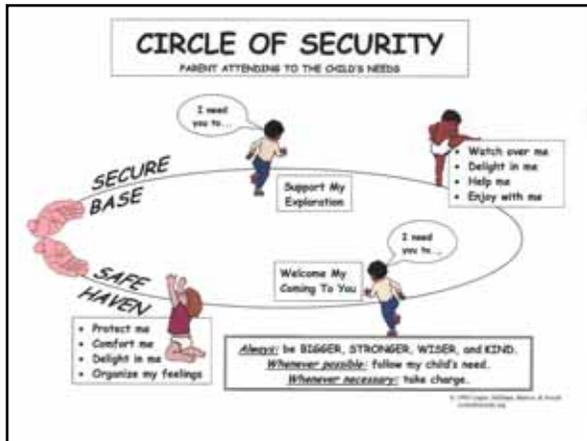


Importance of Secure Attachment

- Children who begin their lives with the essential foundation of a secure attachment have better:
 - Self Esteem
 - Ability to handle stress
 - Relationships with parents and authority figures
 - Behavior and academic success in school
 - Relationships with their own children

Impact of Maternal Depression on Parenting Behavior

- Mothers less attuned
- Give less positive affirmation
- Increased irritability and hostility towards child
- Disengaged towards child
- Less positive play
- Less pleasant social interactions



What can happen if a child does not have healthy early relationships?

- Baby may be sad, rejected, lethargic.
- Some babies may develop eating or sleeping problems.
- Some will "self-stimulate" rocking back and forth to nurture themselves...or seek hugs from anyone.
- Some babies will get angry and aggressive.



Behaviors that may indicate emotional or mental health problems

Infants and toddlers:

- displays very little emotion
- does not show interest in sights sounds or touch
- Unusually difficult to soothe or console
- Unable to comfort or calm self
- Does not turn to familiar adults for comfort



Preschool children

- Cannot play with others
- Absence of language
- Frequently fights with others
- Extremely active
- Sudden Behavior changes
- Destructive to self and/or others



How Infant Mental Health Interventions can help

- A specially trained infant mental health consultant can assess and screen Mom and Baby in their relationship interactions and provide recommendations.
- These may include interventions with just Mom or baby or with the dyad together.
- Evidence indicates interventions are effective in enhancing development and preventing later problems.



- Research has also shown that **Infant Mental Health interventions can prevent other dysfunction and disturbances of early childhood to ultimately be quite successful and cost effective in the long term**

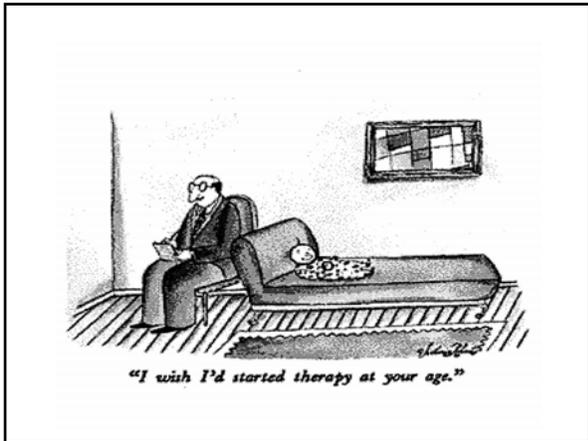


Credentialing and Training

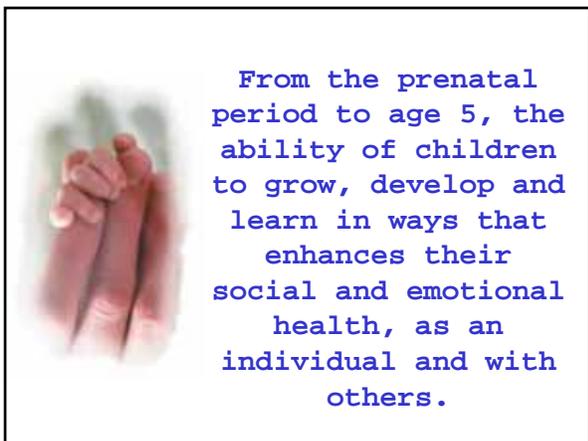
- Infant Mental Health training is available for clinicians who have a behavioral science degree.
- www.infantinstitute.org
- www.zerotothree.org
- The Handbook of Infant Mental Health, edited by Charles H. Zeanah, Jr.

What is
Infant Mental Health?

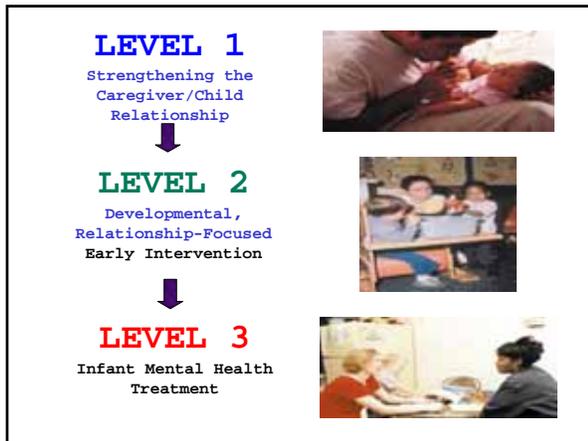








From the prenatal period to age 5, the ability of children to grow, develop and learn in ways that enhances their social and emotional health, as an individual and with others.





- Level 1 Services**
- Strengthen the caregiver/child bond by:
- Responding to baby's cues
 - Incorporating brain development and attachment theory
 - Supporting emotional development
 - Modeling responsive caregiving
 - Providing family support and education
 - Identifying early signs of problems
 - Referring for further screening/assessment

What is **Baby** telling you ?

Babies talk, not with words, but with their whole body. Learning to recognize the signals that babies give will help parents know how to respond to their baby.

Attachment

A reciprocal, profound, emotional and physical relationship between a child and his parent setting the stage for all future intimate, trusting relationships.

www.iamyourchild.org

Knowing How to Effectively Manage Behavior That Support Social Emotional Development

Responsive Caregivers



When the care children receive is sensitive, responsive and of better quality, they are more likely to be securely attached to their providers and achieve higher levels of cognitive competence

Gallinsky, Howes, Krotos, & Shinn, 1994

Responsive, secure caregiving plays an important role in buffering stress in young children.

Gunnar, 1998



Family Support



Parallel
Process



Understanding The
Sequence of
Development



Knowledge Of
Ways to Prevent or Comfort
Child
During Difficult
Developmental Stages



Appropriate
Developmental
Expectations



Can Recognize
Problems & Know When
to Intervene



Signs of
Problems in Baby

- Resists holding
- Clings unceasingly
- Cries uncontrollably for prolonged periods
- Failure to thrive
- Doesn't explore
- No preferred caregiver



Signs of Problems in Caregiver

- Little interest in baby
- Rare eye contact
- Little physical contact
- Rarely speaks
- Angry and hostile
- Joyless interactions
- No attempt to comfort or protect baby from harm



Who provides Level 1 Infant Mental Health services?

Front-line caregivers including:

- Parents
- Childcare Providers
- Health Care Providers
- Home Visitors
- Parent Educators
- Social Workers
- Child Protection Case Workers
- Police Officers, Judges, Lawyers



LEVEL 2

Developmental,
Relationship-Focused
Early Intervention



IMH for High Risk
Newborns



Expand IMH for children
with risks, delays or
disabilities



IMH for Pregnant & Parenting
Teens & Their Babies



Who provides Level 2 Infant Mental Health Services?

- Social Workers (MSW), Psychologists, Mental Health Therapists
- Child Development Specialists
- Early Interventionists
- Therapists (Occupational, Physical and Speech)
- Public Health Nurses
- Developmental Pediatricians

LEVEL 3

Infant Mental Health Treatment



Attachment Disorder

When emotional and behavioral attachment-related difficulties are so profound and pervasive that there is a high risk of chronic distress.



Infant Mental Health
Specialists with
clinical competencies
and expertise in young
children



5 Characteristics of
Infant Mental Health
Approach

1. Relationship-Based Framework
2. Multidisciplinary Nature
3. Developmental Orientation
4. Multigenerational Perspective
5. Prevention Emphasis



1. Relationship Based
Framework



There is no development without
relationships

Dr. Jack P. Shonkoff



Children grow and thrive in the context of dependable relationships that provide love and nurturance, security and responsive interaction, and encouragement for exploration

(Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000)

Cycle of Need

Year 1





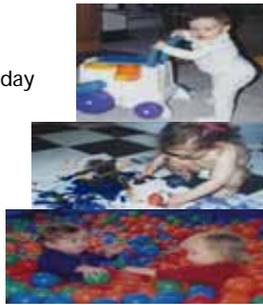
2. Multidisciplinary Approach

3. Developmental Approach



Young Children Learn Best When They...

- Feel safe & cared for
- Feel competent
- Are learning through everyday experiences
- Are initiators of learning
- Are playing



4. Multigenerational Approach

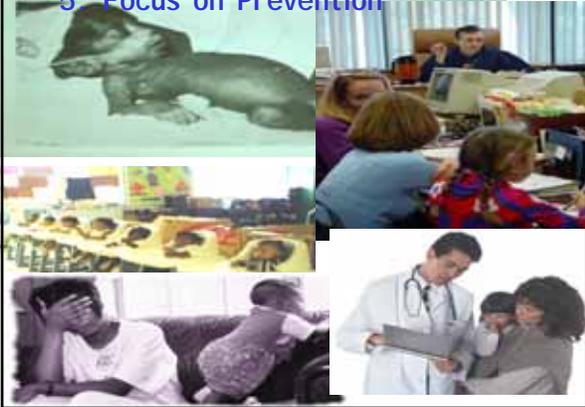


Attunement

The process of being "in synch" ...aware and intentional about connecting and reconnecting the relationship

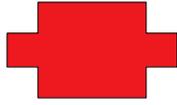


5 Focus on Prevention



IMH into Health Care





American Red Cross



Hurricane Resources



• www.cpeip.fsu.edu/resources.cfm



A hundred years from now, it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove — but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child.
—Dwight D. Eisenhower

The day will come when the progress of nations will be judged not by their military or economic strength, nor by the splendor of their capital cities, but by the well-being of their peoples; by the level of health, nutrition, and education that is afforded to the growing minds and bodies of their children

— Unicef



mgraham@fsu.edu
850-922-1302



Florida State University
Center for Prevention & Early Intervention Policy

Questions and Answers

Please complete the evaluation at the end of the webcast.

An archive of this event and others are located at <http://www.mchcom.com>
