INFANT MENTAL HEALTH ENDORSEMENT®

What it is, Why it Matters, and How to Apply

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Infant and Early Childhood Conference:
May 5, 2016
Tacoma, WA
IECC Workshop Objectives

1. Understand Endorsement® and how it benefits Washington.
2. Learn about the four levels of Endorsement® and how to identify the appropriate level to pursue.
3. Learn about the competencies that underlie the Endorsement® process and how to pursue training and experience that relates to the competencies.
4. Steps to take to get Endorsed.
First things First:
What is Infant Mental Health?
IMH: the work of all Endorsed® Professionals

Infant Mental Health (IMH) is the developing capacity of the child from birth to three to:

- Experience, regulate, and express emotions;
- Form close and secure interpersonal relationships;
- Explore the environment and learn, all in the context of family, community, and cultural expectations.
- Infant mental health is synonymous with healthy social and emotional development.

Zero to Three, the National Center on Infants and Toddlers, 2001
IMH Principles

- Babies develop in the context of relationships
- Caregiver/child attachment is the foundation for all areas of the child’s development. Therefore:
  - IMH work is dyadic in nature
  - Caregivers often explore issues from their own lives that may be interfering with strong attachment
  - Focus is on building resilience in baby, primary caregiver(s) and their relationship
IMH work is Multidisciplinary

- IMH principles can be applied to any work with young children and families that promotes positive social emotional development of child
- Mental health, case work, home visiting, early childhood education, child care, nursing, early intervention, primary care/pediatrics, and many more...
- How might this relate to your field?
The Big Picture: Why IMH Endorsement® Matters in Washington

- All providers working with children age 0-3 and their families need specialized knowledge (with focus on social-emotional development) to provide consistent, high-quality services.
- Prior to Endorsement®, WA had no agreed-upon set of IMH competencies for providers working with young children.
- Many parts of the state, especially rural areas, have a shortage of IMH professionals.
- More IMH awareness, training, and Reflective Supervision/Consultation is still needed throughout the state.
- Providers working with people of all ages benefit from IMH training, as we are all influenced throughout the lifespan by our first years of life.

(“Now I know what ACEs are, but what can I do about them?”)
Alliance for the Advancement of Infant Mental Health (League of States)
Endorsement is organized into four distinct levels, to represent and include many different types of professionals.

- Infant Family Associate - Level I
- Infant Family Specialist - Level II
- Infant Mental Health Specialist – Level III
- Infant Mental Health Mentor – Level IV
  - Includes Clinical, Policy and Research/Faculty designations
Mindfulness Moment

Our mantra:

*Endorsement is a journey...not a race.*

- Any level of Endorsement reflects your significant expertise and commitment to the field of infant and early childhood work.
- Start wherever you are, and use the structure of this system to inspire your professional development plan, giving direction to your training, work, education, and reflective supervision goals.
Infant Family Associate

Level 1

IMH Promotion

• Focus: promoting healthy social-emotional development, regardless of family risk factors, stressors, or identified delays/concerns.

• Professionals: child care educator, play group leader, CASA, doula

• Pursue this level if you do not meet criteria for other levels, but have qualifying education/work experience and training for Level I.
Infant Family Specialist

Level II

IMH Prevention/Intervention

• Focus: Prevention and early intervention targets social-emotional delays and relationship concerns within child/family.

• Services are largely present-focused, and psycho-educational in nature, helping families build skills and relational capacities, and screen for/address identified risks and concerns.

• Professionals: home visitors, early intervention providers, NICU and NFP nurses, parent educators, family resource coordinators, CPS workers
Infant Mental Health Specialist

Level III

IMH Treatment

- Focus: Treatment of social-emotional delays, mental health concerns and relationship disturbances within child/family that often includes clinical assessment and diagnosis.

- Services tend to be longer-term, and include focus on both the present and the past: attachment disturbances, trauma, abuse/neglect, bereavement, mental health, “ghosts in the nursery”.

- Professionals: mental health clinicians and supervisors, clinical nurse practitioners, psychologists
Infant Mental Health Mentor

Level IV

IMH Leadership: three designations

• Clinical (IV-C)
  ■ Level III qualifications, + experience as a reflective supervisor and leadership activities to advance the IMH field

• Policy (IV-P)
  ■ Some Level III qualifications, + expertise and leadership in IMH policy initiatives to advance the IMH field

• Research/Faculty (IV-RF)
  ■ Some Level III qualifications + IMH expert in conducting/publishing research, teaching University-level coursework

• Professionals: IMH Program Supervisor, Administrator, Researcher, Faculty Member, Policy Specialist, Physician
# What is Endorsement®?: Requirements Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Infant Family Associate Level 1</th>
<th>Infant Family Specialist Level 2</th>
<th>IMH Specialist Level 3</th>
<th>IMH Mentor: Clinical, Faculty, or Policy: Level 4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td>CDA/Associate</td>
<td>Bachelors or Masters</td>
<td>Masters or Post-Graduate</td>
<td>Masters, Post-Graduate</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Work Experience</strong></td>
<td>2 yrs. in infant/family field</td>
<td>2 yrs. in infant/family field</td>
<td>2 yrs. post-masters IMH practice</td>
<td>3 years as IMH practice leader</td>
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<td><strong>In-Service Training</strong></td>
<td>30+ hrs. (Min Avg: 45-60)</td>
<td>30+ hrs. (Min Avg: 60-75)</td>
<td>30+ hrs. (Min Avg: 75-100)</td>
<td>30+ hrs. (Min Avg: 100+)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>References</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reflective Supervision</strong></td>
<td>Not required</td>
<td>Minimum: 24 hours</td>
<td>Minimum: 50 hours</td>
<td>Clinical: Minimum 50 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Code of Ethics &amp; Agreement</strong></td>
<td>Signed</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Written Exam</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td><strong>Membership</strong></td>
<td>Yes</td>
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What is Endorsement®?:
Competencies Overview

Endorsees at all levels must demonstrate that they have participated in specialized IMH training and work experience in the following areas:

- Theoretical Foundations
- Direct Service Skills
- Law, Regulation, and Agency Policy
- Systems Expertise
- Working with Others
- Communicating
- Thinking
- Reflection

The depth and breadth of this knowledge and expertise increases with each successive Endorsement level.
Why Endorsement® Matters: Individual Benefits

- **Affirm** the specialized knowledge and skills you have acquired through formal education experience and in-service training

- **Validate** the work that you have done under the guidance and supervision of experienced mentors in the infant and family field

- **Link** your professional growth and development to culturally sensitive, relationship-focused competency standards that reflect best practice

- **Identify** yourself as a competent professional in a system that reflects commitment to best practice and quality care for all infants, toddlers and families
Why Endorsement® Matters: Professional Testimonials

When asked how Endorsement® has changed their view/perception of infant mental health:

• “I have a better understanding of the importance of this work.”
• “[I am] well-prepared for work with families.”
• “I obtained more relevant training and supervision than I would have otherwise.”
• “The time spent preparing my application helped increase my understanding of IMH work.”
• “The material for the exam deepened my understanding.”
• “Increased my credibility.”
Why Endorsement® Matters: Families get better care

- “I think it maximizes my capacity to be fully present with them.”
- “I’m a more ‘well-rounded’ clinician due to requirements for reflective supervision and continuing education.
- “My knowledge/studies make me a better therapist.”
- “I am a better advocate in court.”
- “Increased breadth of knowledge and treatment approaches.”
Why Endorsement® Matters: System-wide Benefits

- **Cross-systems collaboration**: IMH training and reflective supervision standards become consistent across the workforce
- **Workforce Development**: Strategies are put in place to support infant and family professionals
- **Professional Development/Higher Education**: Training requirements for various professions and University (pre-service) programs can be designed to align with the Competency Guidelines®
- **Reimbursement**: Endorsement® is linked to higher reimbursement rates for services in other Alliance states
Pursuing Endorsement®: Next Steps

- WA-AIMH website: www.wa-aimh.org/endorsement/
- Review Requirements and Competency Guidelines to best determine which Level you qualify for
- Submit Registration through the Endorsement Application System (EASy)
- Complete Portfolio Application through EASy, with assistance from a WA-AIMH Advisor
- Levels III and IV take written exam after Application is accepted
Additional Information

Contact the WA-AIMH Endorsement team at: endorsement@wa-aimh.org

Access additional resources, including new instructional webinars, through Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health site: www.mi-aimh.org