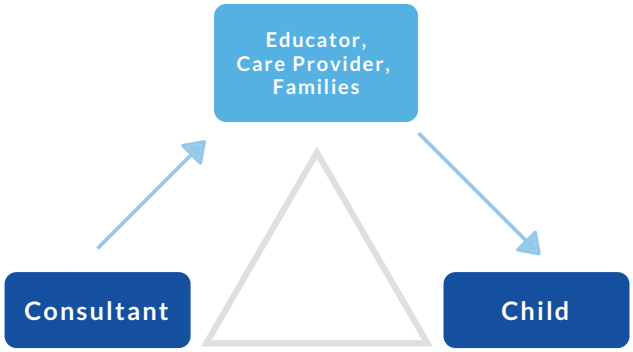
HELPING ADULTS HELP CHILDREN IN PUBLIC 3K, 4K, AND KINDERGARTEN SUCCEED

Mental Health Consultation Belongs in all Early Childhood Settings to Create Healthier, Stronger Communities in Wisconsin

What is Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation?

Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC) is an evidence based collaborative intervention provided by a professional with mental health expertise that improves outcomes for all children. It builds adults' capacity to strengthen and support children's social and emotional health and development.



Why it Matters:

Increases children's levels of **initiative, self-control, and attachment**.

(Wisconsin Early Childhood Association, 2016)

Almost **one in three Wisconsin educators** are replaced every year.

(Wisconsin Early Childhood Association, 2016)

35%

There is a **35% turnover rate** in Wisconsin's ECE field annually. High turnover rate disrupts needed stability for supporting children's development.

(Wisconsin Early Childhood Association, 2016)

Prepared by the Wisconsin Children's Mental Health Collective Impact Infant and Toddler Policy Workgroup
www.children.wi.gov/Pages/Integrate/InfantToddlerPolicyWorkgroup.aspx

How Does it Work?

Consultants help teachers support healthy growth and development of young children in their pre-K and primary school classrooms to:

APPROACHES	OUTCOMES
Problem solve challenging situations with teachers.	**Prevent expulsion and suspension of young children from the school.**
Meet the mental health and social emotional needs of young children and their families.	**Increase parenting skills and reduce stress.**
Increase communication between families and teachers.	**Decrease teacher stress and turnover.**

An Example of Mental Health Consultation

Mr. Johnson and Ms. Baker are teachers in a public school 4-year-old Kindergarten classroom within a primary school building. They have 18 children in their classes. They are noticing that a couple children will retreat under a table or into their cubby during the time children are self-selecting their play and learning throughout the classroom. They also noticed that conflicts seem to arise in the same areas of the classroom. The teachers reach out to their school counselor and principal to let them know that they could use some help from Cory, the IECMH Consultant connected to their school. Cory observes the classes and then meets with the teachers and shares that he noticed the three children that were retreating under tables and into cubbies, were doing so when the classroom became loud and busy. Cory explained that sometimes children need a space where they can take a break from the loud and busy spaces in the classroom. And that creating some quieter spaces to do so could help these children. Cory suggested that they choose a space in the room that is away from the louder and busier spaces and that could be designated as a quiet space. Cory then also agreed to come back for further observations about the conflicts happening in the busy spaces in the classroom and to check in on this new plan. He also said he would send them ideas for upcoming relevant professional development opportunities.

Keys to Success

1. The Right Supports at the Right Time: Consultants are able to respond to experiences with children that arise in public pre-k and primary schools, offer support to the educators and families when they are needed, and to also assist teachers when general classroom challenges may arise.

2. Infrastructure: Public pre-K and primary schools have access to consultants whom they have relationship and rapport with, and who know their school site context.

3. Help the Helpers: Consultants provide ongoing and as-needed support and training to teachers. Sometimes this is for program-wide support, teacher skill development, and support around a specific child or family.

4. Links to Community Resources: Consultants have an extensive network of services and resources that they can utilize or refer teachers and families to that will provide further support for children and their families.

References:
Wisconsin Early Childhood Association. (2016). Wisconsin's child care workforce: wages, benefits, education and turnover of the professionals working with Wisconsin's youngest children. Retrieved from https://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/2016-Workforce-study.pdf