Social Emotional and Mental Health Screening, Referral and Resources for Children
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Overview
- Children’s mental health in Colorado
- Colorado processes for social-emotional screening and referral
- Resources for programs, initiatives and services
- Colorado Project LAUNCH overview and potential for Colorado learnings and resource development
- Child Mental Health Treatment Act
- Pulling it all together: What’s needed?

Critical points about ECMH
- All children do not have “mental health.”
- Significant mental health problems can and do occur in children five years of age and younger.

Early Childhood Mental Health is the developing capacity of the child to:
- Form close and secure adult and peer relationships
- Experience, manage, and express a full range of emotions, and
- Explore the environment and learn--
All in the context of family, community, and culture.

More critical points...
- Young children develop and grow in the context of important relationships.
- The emotional quality of the parent/caregiver-child relationship has a profound effect on the health and well-being of young children.

Some data on young children in Colorado
- Approximately 200,000 infants and toddlers live in Colorado
- 58% have at least one risk factor known to increase the chance of poor health and developmental outcomes
- Fewer than 1% receive services through Colorado’s public mental health system
- 16% of Colorado’s parents of young children report concerns about their children’s emotions, concentration, behavior, or getting along with others
- Of these, 64% identify these difficulties as moderate or severe
- Only 25% of these parents reported seeking counseling or treatment
A public health approach to ECMH

Promotion
- Home
- Child care centers
- Family child care homes
- Preschool
- K-3
- Pediatric offices

Prevention
- Promotion +
  - ACE
  - Head Start/Early Head Start
  - Child welfare/Foster care
  - Poverty
  - Homelessness
  - Parental circumstances (substance abuse, diagnosis/MH disorders)
  - Other risk factors

Intervention
- Promotion +
- Prevention +
- Early Intervention/Part C
- Victims of abuse and neglect
- Trauma
- Chronic fear/stress

Why use a screening tool?
- American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends the use of valid and reliable developmental surveillance and screening instruments
- Formal protocols in the primary care setting
- Improve accuracy and increase the likelihood that developmental/social-emotional issues will be identified and referrals for services made in a timely fashion

Screening tools improve detection rates

Without screening:
- 70% of children with developmental disabilities not identified (Palfrey et al. J Pediatr. 1994;111:651-655)

With screening:
- 70% to 80% of children with developmental disabilities correctly identified (Squires et al, 1996, JDBP, 17:420 - 427)
- 80% to 90% of children with mental health problems correctly identified (Stumer, 1991, JDBP; 12: 51-64)

Screening process
- All children should receive a developmental and social-emotional screening that is delivered as part of a structured screening process
- Screening can happen in different types of environments, but needs to be coordinated
Screening instruments do not confirm a developmental delay, establish eligibility for services through an EI or preschool special education program, and do not allow for diagnoses to be made.

Early Intervention in Colorado: Birth to Three

- Federal funding for early intervention comes from Part C of IDEA
- State oversight by the Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Early Childhood
- Implemented locally through system of Community Centered Boards
- Eligibility usually determined through the Child Find system

Level of risk identified

Referral algorithm

Early Intervention in Colorado: Birth to Three

- Children are eligible if they:
  - Are under age 3 and live in Colorado
  - Significant delay in development (adaptive, cognitive, physical, communication, social/emotional) as determined through a multidisciplinary evaluation
  - Have a diagnosis highly likely to result in developmental delays

Early Intervention in Colorado: Birth to Three

- Services typically include:
  - Service coordination
  - Development of Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)
  - Services to meet the goals of the plan
- Services are delivered in “natural environments,” primarily home or child care settings
- For more information: http://www.eicolorado.org/
Early Intervention in Colorado: Three to Six

- Services include
  - Development of Individualized Education Plan
  - Services to meet the goals of the plan - goals are education focused
- Services are typically delivered in preschool classrooms through local school districts with appropriate professionals available for individualized sessions as needed

EPSDT

- Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment
- Medicaid benefit for children - covers mental health as well as physical health
- Community mental health centers - point of entry for Medicaid insured children

Community Mental Health Centers

- Each of 17 CMHCs have an early childhood mental health specialist
- State block grant dollars through Office of Early Childhood (formerly through the Office of Behavioral Health)
- All must be trained in the DC0-3R
- ECMH specialist positions created with great flexibility allowing specialists to provide treatment but also to serve a consultative role in child care settings and the community
DC:0-3R

- Specifically for early childhood
- Annual training
- Mandatory for early childhood specialists in community mental health centers
- Recommended for all early childhood mental health practitioners

Colorado’s Infant/Early Childhood MH Endorsement

- Endorsement for Culturally Sensitive, Relationship-Focused Practice Promoting Infant Mental Health (IMH-E ®)
- Best practice competencies at multiple levels and across disciplines
- Overlay onto a person’s professional credentials that recognizes achievement of knowledge and training in the area of infant and early childhood mental health

ECMH Consultation

- Reflective practice
- Assistance with basic needs
- Health and mental health integration
- Parent/young child/infant mental health services
- Advocacy
- Emotional and relationship support
- Child development and parenting considerations
- Creating high quality care and education environments

Early Childhood Social Emotional & Mental Health Navigation Guide

www.tinyurl.com/ecmh-navigation-guide

Best and evidence-based practices

- Promotion:
  - Surveillance and screening for social-emotional health
  - Creating environments and positive relationships for young children
- Prevention:
  - Pyramid Plus
  - Incredible Years
  - EOT
  - Mental health consultation
- Clinical interventions:
  - Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy
  - Parent Child Interaction Therapy
  - Circle of Security
  - Child/Parent Psychotherapy for Children Exposed to Family Violence

A few other good resources

- Early Childhood Colorado
  www.earlychildhoodcolorado.org
- Pyramid Plus - The Colorado Center for Social Emotional Competence and Inclusion
  www.pyramidplus.org
- ZERO TO THREE tips and tools
  www.zerotothree.org/child-development/social-emotional-development/tips-and-tactics/social-emotional-development-for-your-child
- Healthy Steps
  http://healthysteps.gov/
- Fussy Baby Network Colorado
  www.fussybabynetworkcolorado.org
- Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations of Early Learning
  http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/
- The National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education
  www.nrckids.org
For additional information or follow up

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