Early Childhood Mental Health In Illinois:
Increasing our efforts to screen and identify moms and young children

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Major State Initiatives

Illinois Healthcare and Family Services

- **AllKids** (2006): provides uninsured children access to comprehensive health care coverage with a benefit package similar to EPSDT.
- **Primary Care Case Management** (PCCM): provided incentives and encouraged primary care providers to administer developmental screenings of young children and perinatal depression screening for moms through “medical homes.”

Illinois Children’s Mental Health Act of 2003

- Established the Illinois Children’s Mental Health Partnership
- Mandated the development of a children’s mental health plan; published in June of 2005.
- Allows the Division of Mental Health funds to be used for children 0 – 18.
- Established Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) standards.
Illinois Children’s Mental Health Partnership (ICMHP)

- A successful children’s mental health system engages families and caregivers.

- Prevention and early intervention efforts should start early, beginning prenatally and at birth, and continue throughout adolescence.

- All children and their families should have access to affordable, quality, family-centered, culturally competent interventions and services.

- Public and private resources must be maximized and coordinated, and should build on existing state and local systems and programs.

- Children’s mental health services should be delivered in natural settings.
ICMHP Early Childhood Committee

The Early Childhood Committee envisions a strong early childhood component within the children’s mental health system that:

• Operates from a developmental perspective;

• Values parents and caregivers as full partners;

• Promotes social and emotional health and prevents the development of social emotional problems;

• Provides mental health early intervention and treatment services for children from birth to 5 within the context of their families.
The work group accomplishments include:

• Hosting a Perinatal Depression Summit attended by over 70 key stakeholders to identify priority next steps for advancing the system in Illinois;

• Creating an advocacy team to increase state program funding for key infrastructure needs including consultation, technical assistance and public awareness; and

• Passing the Perinatal Mental Health Disorders Prevention and Treatment Act PA095-0469.
Perinatal Mental Health Disorders Prevention and Treatment Act

The focus of the act is to:

• provide women and their families with information about perinatal mental health disorders;

• develop procedures for assessing women for perinatal mental health disorders during prenatal and postnatal visits to licensed health care professionals and

• promote early detection of perinatal mental health disorders to promote early care and treatment.

While the Act has wide support among various groups, the implementation rules have not been completed. The lack of rules has hindered full compliance throughout the medical community.
Perinatal Depression Initiatives: IHFS and others

- Perinatal mental health consultation services for providers who wish to consult with a psychiatrist on perinatal depression and medications;

- Technical assistance to providers on screening, assessment, treatment, and referrals for perinatal depression;

- Medicaid reimbursement for perinatal depression screening for primary care providers and community mental health centers conducted at either the women’s or infant’s doctor visit;

- Screening is offered in a number of early childhood settings and programs.
Capacity Building Opportunities and Challenges

• ICMHP Mental Health Consultation Project
• Health Families/Parents Too Soon Consultation Project
• Enhancing Developmentally Oriented Primary Care (EDOPC)
• Caregiver Connections Project
• Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
• Illinois DocAssist Initiative
Future Steps and Concerns

Efforts In Progress:

• Developing an Infant Mental Health Credential

• Creating and implementing the DC 0-3 crosswalk

Issues on the Table:

• Adult serving system need to recognize the needs of the young children within their adult patients families.

• Building public awareness about the importance of perinatal depression on a young child’s social and emotional development and the need for further investments.

• Training providers to promote screening and early intervention within all child serving systems.
For more information:

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For Information on the Illinois Children’s Mental Health Partnership:
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