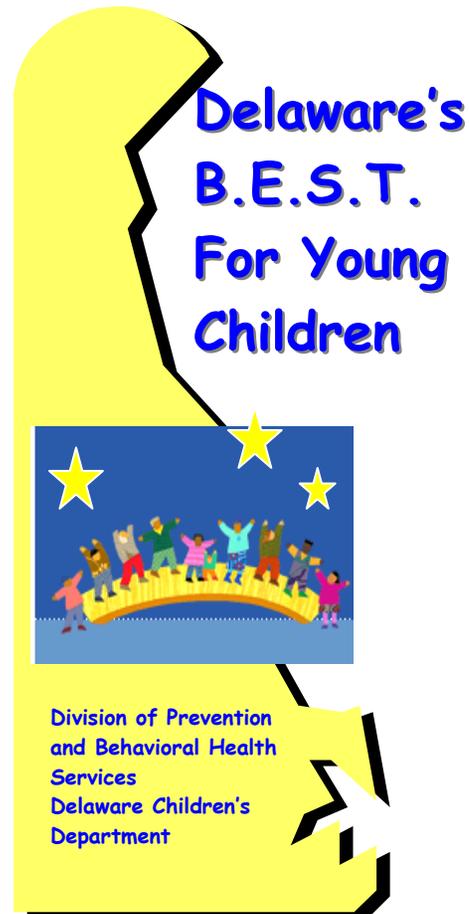


What is Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation?

Mental health consultation in early childhood settings is a problem-solving and capacity building intervention implemented within a collaborative relationship between a mental health professional consultant and one or more caregivers, typically an early care and education provider and/or parent or foster parent.



Early childhood mental health consultation aims to build the capacity and improve the ability of staff, families, programs, and systems to promote positive relationships and social emotional skills as well as to prevent, identify, treat and reduce the impact of mental health problems among children from age 2 through age 5 and their families. (*adapted from Cohen & Kaufmann, 2000*).



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Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Partnership



Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services
Delaware Children's Department



Delaware's *B.E.S.T. for Young Children and Their Families**
(Bringing Evidence-based System of Care and Treatment)

Tel: 302-781-3211

Why Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC)?

In recent years, there has been growing concern among many in the early care and education (ECE) community that increasing numbers of very young children are manifesting behavior problems.



According to the Center for Mental Health in Schools (2005), the prevalence of clinically significant emotional and

behavioral disabilities among young children ranges from 4 to 10%, with significantly higher estimates for children living in families with low income levels. In very young children these behaviors can be severe enough to warrant their removal from their pre-school programs (Gilliam, 2005), setting into motion a cascade of negative experiences.

Early childhood mental health consultation (ECMHC) is an effective strategy for addressing these challenging behaviors and supporting young children's social/emotional development in early care and education settings (Gilliam & Shahar, 2006).

Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Application

Program Name:

Program Director Name and Signature:

Program Location/Address:

Program Phone Number:

Total Number of Children in Care: _____

Estimated percentage of children with Purchase of Care-tuition assistance:

Estimated number of children for whom child-specific ECMHC is requested: _____

FAX to: 302-453-4112 OR save and send as email attachment to:

Nancy.widdoes@state.de.us

What is the ECMHC Partnership?

The Division of Child Mental Health Services offers Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation across Delaware as a **free service** and a **partnership** with early childhood education programs, with a focus on children 2-5 years of age and on programs with a significant proportion of children whose care is assisted through the State of Delaware's Purchase of Care program.

All of DCMHS' consultants are licensed mental health professionals with experience in working in early child care settings and with children and their families.

The commitment and collaboration of the center director and staff, along with a child's parents or caregivers is essential to a successful partnership.

