

Early Childhood Mental Health Screening and Treatment Connections

Prevention Theory of Change: By identifying and treating mental health issues at the earliest age possible (ages 0-5), self-medicating behavior (SUD), self-harm, and suicide by teenagers will be reduced. At the top of The Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children are “Intensive Interventions” which include Positive Behavior Support (PBS). With more recent advances in ECMH clinical diagnosis and treatment, PBS can be expanded to include these interventions to create a systemic framework to advance the clinical component of ECMH in our county. Screening for ECMH concerns currently takes place within the context of developmental screenings and trauma screenings. The connections between these “public facing” early childhood screening approaches and ECMH clinical diagnosis and treatment are either minimal or non-existent. Creating these connections would improve the ability of the mental health system to reduce the occurrence and severity of mental health issues later in life.

