

The goal of the Early Childhood Mental Health Professionals program (ECMHP) component of Access to Better Care is to increase knowledge, awareness, resources and skills necessary for communities to meet the behavioral health needs of young children and their families, especially those at risk for abuse, neglect and poor social and emotional health by building protective factors in young children and increasing competencies and skills of parents and early childhood providers.

Early Childhood Mental Health Providers (ECMHP)

The ECMHP program is aimed at promoting healthy social and emotional development (i.e., good mental health) of young children-those ages birth to six years. It focuses on ensuring that these children thrive, increasing their readiness for school and later school success by addressing their behavioral health care needs.

Through the collaborative efforts of the Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH) and the Ohio Children*s Trust Fund (OCTF), all 50 local mental health boards have been provided allocations to fund early childhood mental health professionals trained to provide mental health consultation services to early childhood providers and families of young children. This program has additionally facilitated the development of community early childhood mental health wellness and prevention activities targeting the healthy social and emotional development of infants, toddlers, young children and their families. These activities focus on the development of needed early childhood mental health services, as well as building the capacity of the local mental health system to support local early childhood collaborative efforts. Services and activities are targeted to programs serving young children (birth to age 6) and families and included:

- * Clinical consultation to early childhood programs, including mentoring, coaching, and classroom observation
- * Training and educational sessions, as part of the consultation process, including problem identification, referral processes, classroom management strategies, the impact of maternal depression, substance abuse, domestic violence, and other stressors on young children's well being
- * Work with parents/families/grandparents/foster parents, as identified through the consultation process, to enhance their ability to create strong, nurturing environments for and relationships with their young children

A list of contact information for those agencies providing ECMH consultation services as part of the ABC program is attached. Contact with local mental health boards may also be made for any additional information needed regarding services for children and families in local communities.