

# Building the Capabilities and Competencies of Early Childhood Professionals in Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health: A New York City Case Study

NYS Coalition for Children's Behavioral Health's & NYS OMH  
Annual Staff Development Training Forum, November 2022



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in partnership with **NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene**

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# Objectives

*As a result of this session, participants will be able to:*

- Understand what infant and early childhood mental health is and why it is important
- Recognize the importance of building workforce capacity by pairing training and technical assistance with a focus on business sustainability
- Gain an understanding of a model for building the IECMH workforce capacity across child serving systems
- Recognize opportunities to address racial and social inequities in their ongoing work

# What is IECMH?

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Infant and early childhood mental health is the capacity of the child, birth to age 5 to:

- Experience, regulate, and express the full range of positive and negative emotions.
- Form close and secure interpersonal relationships. Relationships and attachment are the key ingredients in healthy development.
- Explore the environment and learn.

All of these components exist within the context of family, community and culture

**(Zero to Three, 2004)**

# Why is IECMH Important?

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- In NYC, nearly one in three parents/caregivers has concerns about their child's development (NYC DOHMH. EpiQuery – NYC KIDS 2017)
- Between 9.5 and 14 percent of US children ages birth to 5 experience social-emotional problems that negatively affect their functioning, development, and school readiness (Brauner & Stephens, 2006)
- The quality and consistency of early relationships impact on young children's learning, development and lifelong health and mental health outcomes



# Effective Intervention Strategies to Support IECMH

- Dyadic or family-based treatment using evidence-based relational models
- Interventions that address the mental health needs of the parent/caregiver
- Programs to build parent/caregiver skills that strengthen the relationship and the child's social-emotional functioning (parenting models, consultation to early childhood professionals)
- Trauma-informed approaches that reduce stress and promote safety
- Link to concrete supports that improve living conditions
- Policies, programs and practices that promote equity

**NYC**

# Early Childhood Mental Health Network



**TTAC**

NYC Early Childhood  
Mental Health

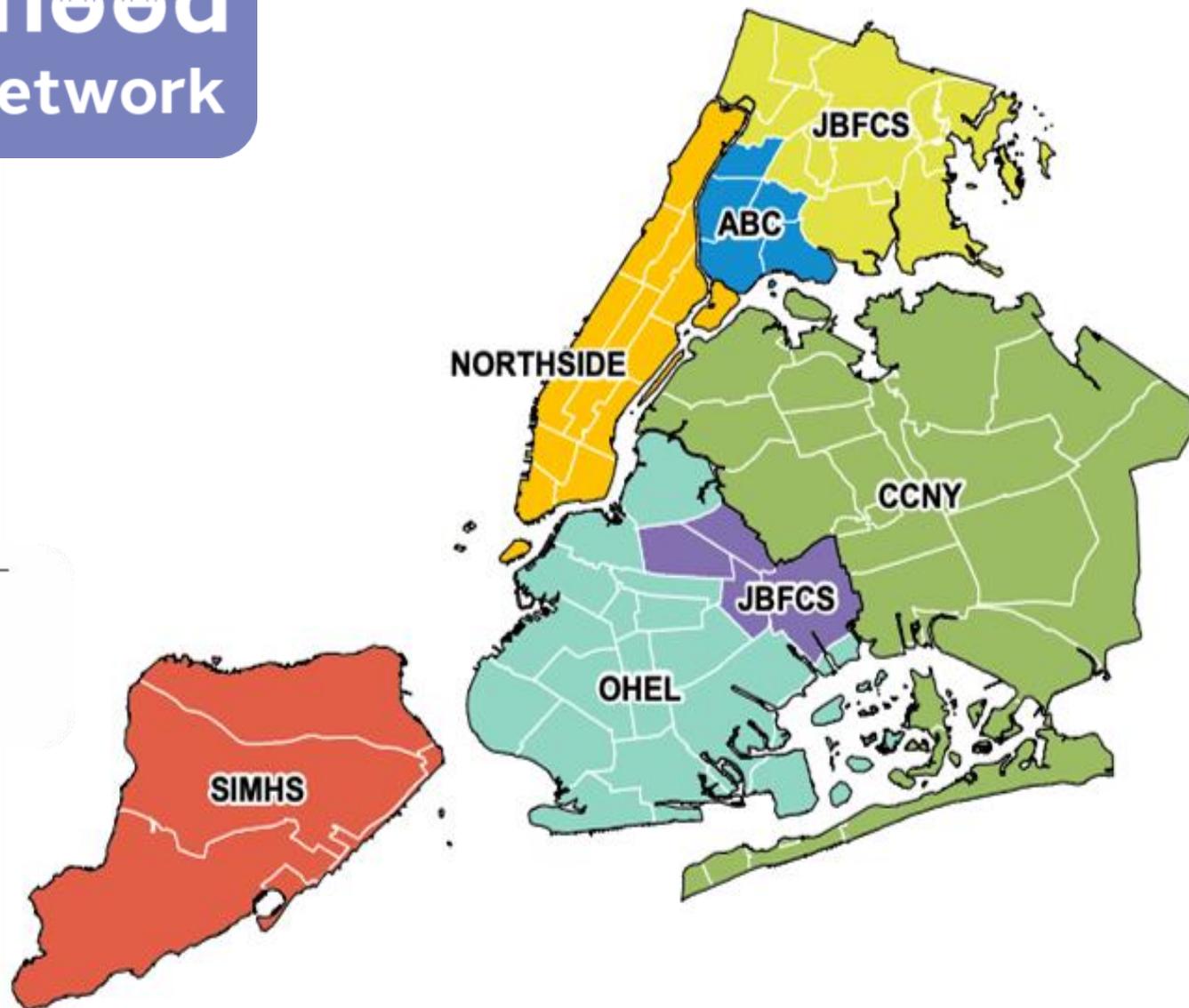
Training and Technical Assistance Center

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN

**NEW YORK  
CENTER FOR CHILD  
DEVELOPMENT**

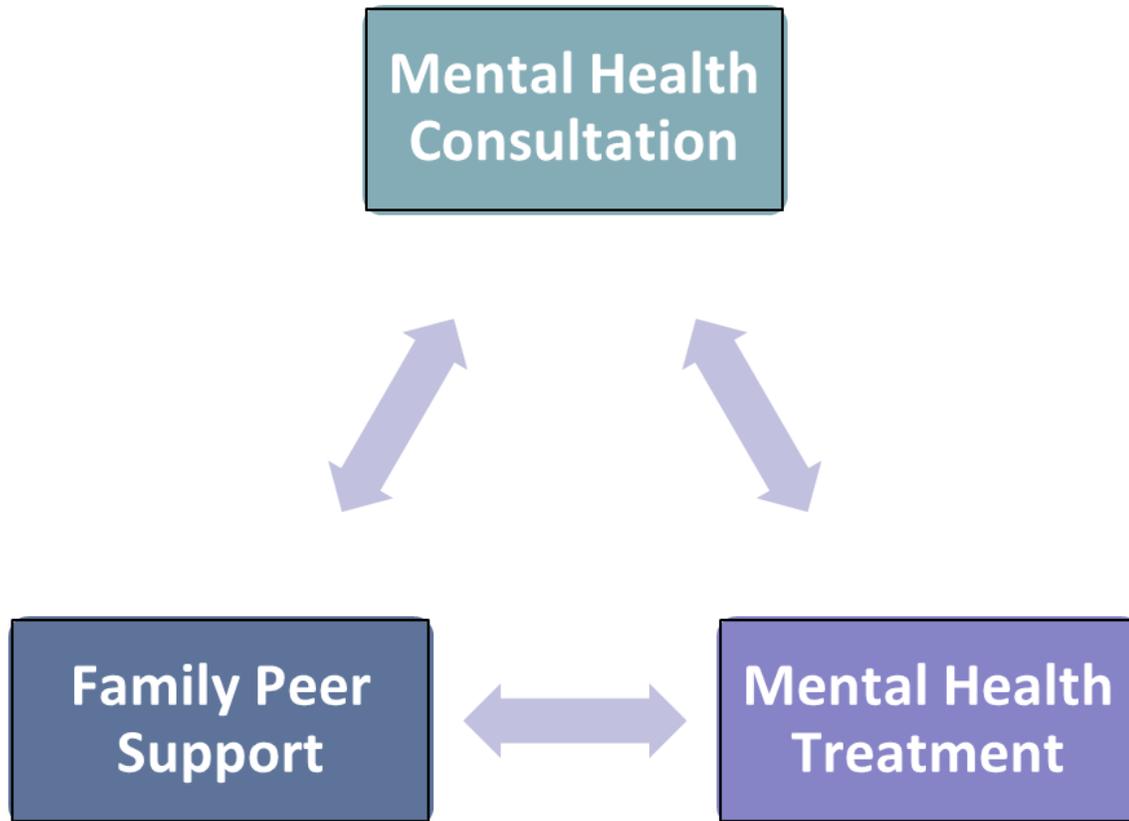
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OF SOCIAL WORK



# Early Childhood Therapeutic Centers (ECTCs) Services

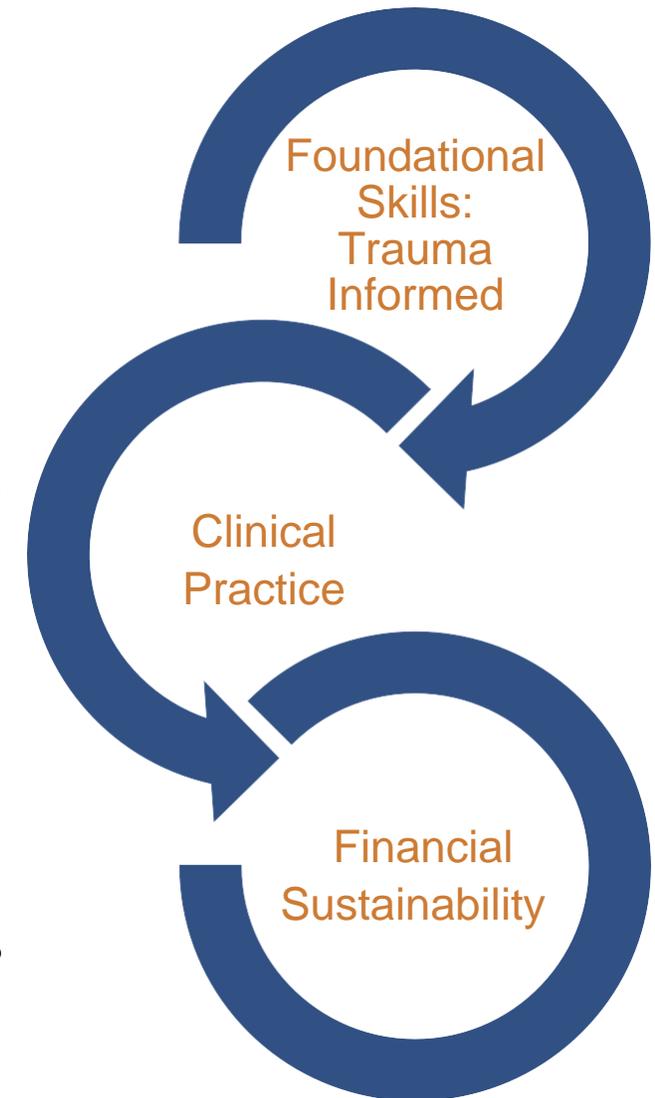
Licensed mental health clinics offer 3 linked services:



- **Mental Health Treatment**
  - Perinatal to age five, siblings, and parents/caregivers
  - Relational, trauma-informed therapy models
- **Mental Health Consultation**
  - Capacity building support to staff at early care and education (ECE) sites
- **Family Peer Support**
  - Peers integrated into clinics to support parents and caregivers

# Early Childhood Workforce Development

- Identified gaps to expand and strengthen workforce to address the mental health needs of children birth to 5
- Funded a Training and Technical Assistance Center (TTAC)
- The TTAC is tasked with building capacity and competencies of mental health professionals and early childhood professionals in family serving systems to identify and address the social-emotional needs of young children and their families



# Embedding Workforce Development

- We use a multi-year model of training professionals across organizations and systems
- We assess needs, plan across years, implement trainings and reflective supervision supports, evaluate our trainings and assess new and ongoing needs
- Meet monthly with stakeholders and biweekly with strategic planning team to consider practitioner requests and expert input
- We evaluate all trainings and review clinic data to inform ongoing supports, and enhance the quality of our trainings and clinic services



# Adaptations during the COVID-19 pandemic

- Telehealth opportunities and challenges 
  - Convenience (no travel)
  - Gain insight into family environment, deal with issues in real time; Shorter sessions; challenges with dyadic/play therapy
- Online trainings reach more participants and peer learning beneficial. Focus on implicit bias and anti-racist practice, and the impact of the pandemic (e.g., loss and grief).
- *Continue to advance practice and policy to flexibly respond to the needs of families and providers.*

# NYC Early Childhood Mental Health Training and Technical Assistance Center (TTAC): A Collaboration



## **New York Center for Child Development**

- Major provider of early childhood mental health services in New York
- Expertise in informing policy and supporting the field of Early Childhood Mental Health through training and direct practice

## **McSilver Institute for Poverty, Policy and Research**

- At New York University
- Houses the Community and the Managed Care Technical Assistance Centers (CTAC/MCTAC)
- TTAC website, registration, and infrastructure support



**TTAC**

**NYC Early Childhood  
Mental Health**  
Training and Technical Assistance Center

# TTAC's Tiered Approach

**11,742 individuals trained**

*Total number of individuals who attended at least one training offered since the Network launched (October 2016-October 2022)*

## Tier 1

- Supervisors, clinicians, consultants, family peer advocates in the 7 Network clinics

## Tier 2

- Mental Health Providers serving young children & families in other settings

## Tier 3

- Early Childhood Allied Professionals in other child serving systems

# TTAC's Trainings

TTAC offers trainings on a range of essential topics in early childhood mental health as well as cutting edge issues

Trauma and Resilience

Foundational Knowledge and Best Practices in Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health

Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders

Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

Reflective Practice

Clinical Assessment and Diagnosis

Racism, Inequality, and Early Childhood Mental Health

COVID and Early Childhood Mental Health

Recordings and PPTs available through [ttacny.org](https://ttacny.org)

# Evidence-Based Practices



**Child Parent Psychotherapy (CPP)** is a dyadic model for children ages 0-5 who have experienced traumatic events and/or mental health, attachment and/or behavioral problems.

**Perinatal Child-Parent Psychotherapy (P C-PP)** is an application of Child-Parent Psychotherapy to the perinatal period, for expecting mothers who have experienced trauma or significant stress.



**Triple P Positive Parenting Program (Triple P)** is a multi-tiered system of evidence-based education and support for parents and caregivers of children ages 0-12

**Interpersonal Therapy (IPT)** is an empirically validated treatment for a variety of affective disorders in adults used for parental depression and anxiety, and adapted for perinatal depression



**Circle of Security**  
INTERNATIONAL™  
*Early Intervention Program for Parents & Children*

**Circle of Security (COS)** is a group based model that focuses on helping caregivers reflect upon children's attachment needs in order to promote secure attachment with a child.

# Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

- TTAC provides training on Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
- Trainings are informed by the Georgetown Framework
- Provide monthly coaching calls
- Consultation is currently provided in early care and education sites
- Piloting consultation in the healthcare settings (perinatal & pediatric)



# Family Peer Advocate Trainings

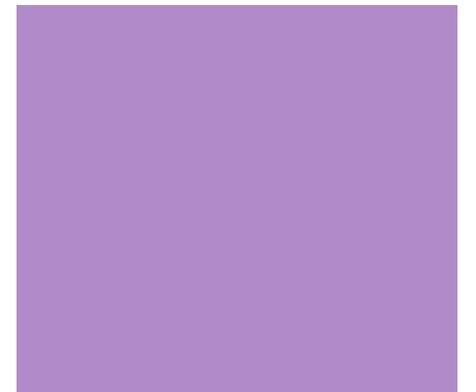
- Family Peer Advocates (FPAs) make up an important part of the TTAC workforce
- As part of supporting FPAs, McSilver developed and led trainings that were tailored to areas relevant to FPAs specifically.
- This includes, but is not limited to trainings on:
  - Motivational Interviewing
  - Trauma Informed Approaches to supporting families with young children
  - Engagement
  - The role of FPAs on a clinical team
  - Support for FPAs for success in a COVID environment
  - Parents as a Change Agent (PAC) model
- When possible, these offerings were eligible for continuing education credits

# Ongoing Supports to all ECTC staff

- Provide Ongoing Reflective Supervision for Clinic Directors and Supervisors
- Ongoing Support to all staff including:
  - monthly calls for EBPs
  - supervision for interns
  - monthly opportunities for peer learning and interaction
  - Interactive sessions with our ECTC following webinars

# Racial Equity and Social Justice

- Young children of color and their families experience disparities in opportunity and outcomes due to structural racism and discrimination
- DOHMH, TTAC and the ECMH Network work together to promote anti-racist practice through:
  - **targeted trainings**
  - **guidance and resources**
  - **reflective supervision**



# Trainings to Address Racial Equity & Social Justice

- 2022 Annual Conference:  
*Deconstructing Racism Within our Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health and Early Childhood Systems*

## Experiential Training

- *Addressing Racism and Systemic Inequity Through ECMH Consultation*
- *Bias Reduction Training*
- *DePoliticizing Your Practice*

# Targeted Trainings for other Child Serving Systems

## NYC ACS:

- Helping Families Access ECMH Services
- Trauma & Complex Trauma
- Building Protective Factors for Young Children
- Trauma & Its Impact on Children's Attachment Development

## NYC DOHMH:

- **Nurse Family Partnership:** Developmental Screening with the ASQ:D & ASQ:SE
- **Newborn Home Visiting Program:** Maternal Depression & Anxiety

## NYC DOE: Family Childcare Providers, Occupational Therapists & Others

- The Intersection of Sensory Processing and Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health
- Supporting Families & Caregivers of Infants & Young Children Affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Self-Care in the Time of Covid-19
- Supporting Young Children's Mental Health and Social-Emotional Development

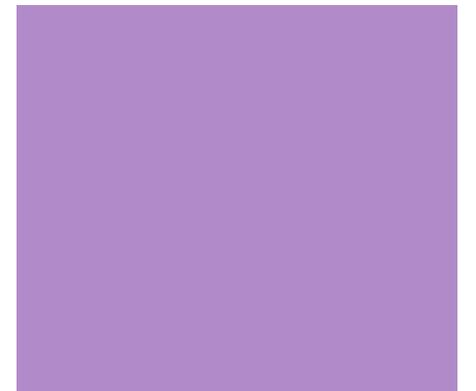
# Training Modules for all Child Serving Professionals

## **Foundations of Social Emotional Development in Infants and Toddlers**

- Three webinar series developed for the NYC Early Intervention Program
- Reviews the fundamental principles of Early Childhood Mental health and development.
- Offers CEUs across a range of professionals

## **2 LMS Modules on Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health**

- will be available soon and announced via TTAC Listserv!



# Business Sustainability

- Over the course of the TTAC project McSilver has partnered closely with NYCCD and DOHMH to provide timely technical assistance to support financial sustainability through:
  - relevant billing trainings on topics such as Billing Best Practices for clinics
  - ensuring ECTCs are aware of and connected to billing updates on clinical services from NYS
  - conducting a Fiscal Analysis of implemented Evidenced Based Practices (EBPs)

# Business Sustainability: Fiscal Analysis

- McSilver facilitated a Fiscal Analysis of the Evidence Based Practices (EBPs) the ECTCs implemented through TTAC.
- All participants acknowledged that implementing EBPs comes at a cost, the Fiscal Analysis allowed TTAC to quantify what this actually means.
- **Model Tool**: this was developed as a resource for providers to use to learn what it would cost for their clinic to implement each EBP
  - very provider centric
  - costs varied by EBP & requirements
  - variability also related to provider cost, salary, region
- Currently engaged in 3rd year of Analysis, examining costs of implementation.

# NYC IECMH policy is influenced by the Network

The Network serves as an example for how we might impact infants and toddlers

- Some policy areas we aim to influence through our experiences:
  - 2-generational care (billing for dyadic models)
  - Appropriate diagnostic system for young children (using the **DC: 0-5**)
  - Trauma and resilience informed approaches
  - **Mental health consultation** in early care and other settings
  - Peer services
  - Integrated services
  - Understanding socioeconomic drivers of mental health
- Our policy proposals are shaped by: scientific knowledge, best practices, and evaluation of the innovative work of the ECTCs and TTAC - understanding challenges/barriers and how to do this work effectively

# Advocating for funding mental health consultation

## A Year of Mental Health Consultation in Early Care and Education Settings: Evaluating Classroom and Child-Level Outcomes

Presented at ACF National Research Conference on Early Childhood, June 2022

Manuscript accepted for publication in Infant Mental Health Journal, November 2022

**Infant/early childhood mental health consultation was associated with improved classroom practices and child outcomes**

- Significant improvements in classroom **environment** and **management**.
- Significant improvements in classroom **behavioral difficulties**, including improvements in severe difficulties.
- Associations between **improved classroom practices** among ECE teachers and **behavioral outcomes for children** at the classroom level.
- Significant improvements in **children's protective factors** and **behavioral concerns**.

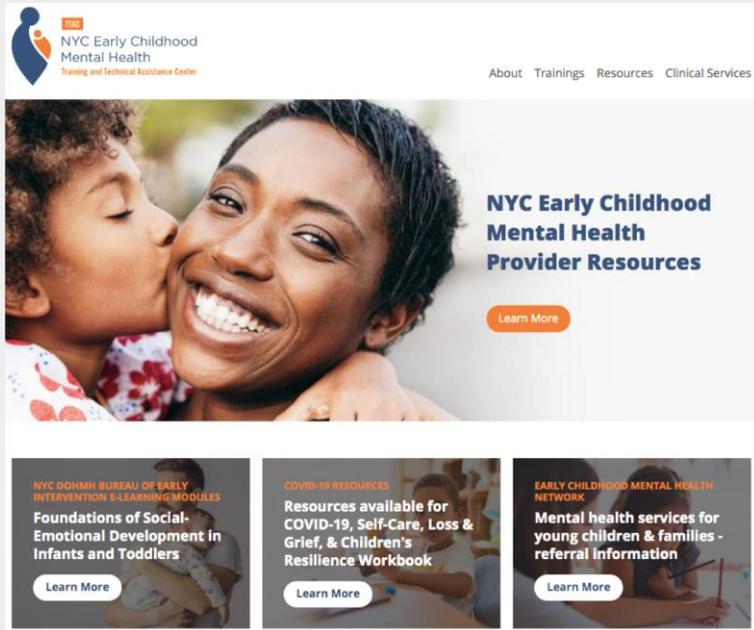
# **DC:0–5™: Diagnostic Classification of Mental Health and Developmental Disorders of Infancy and Early Childhood**

- DC:0-5 was developed since existing classification systems such as DSM V did not adequately reflect the unique developmental and relational experiences of infants and young children
- DC:0-5 is used by professionals across disciplines to prevent, diagnose, and treat mental health problems in children from birth to five, by identifying and describing disorders not addressed in other classification systems
- Efforts are underway to make a cross walk of DC:0-5 the recommended diagnostic tool in NYS as is being done in other states

## **Introductory Webinar to DC:0–5**

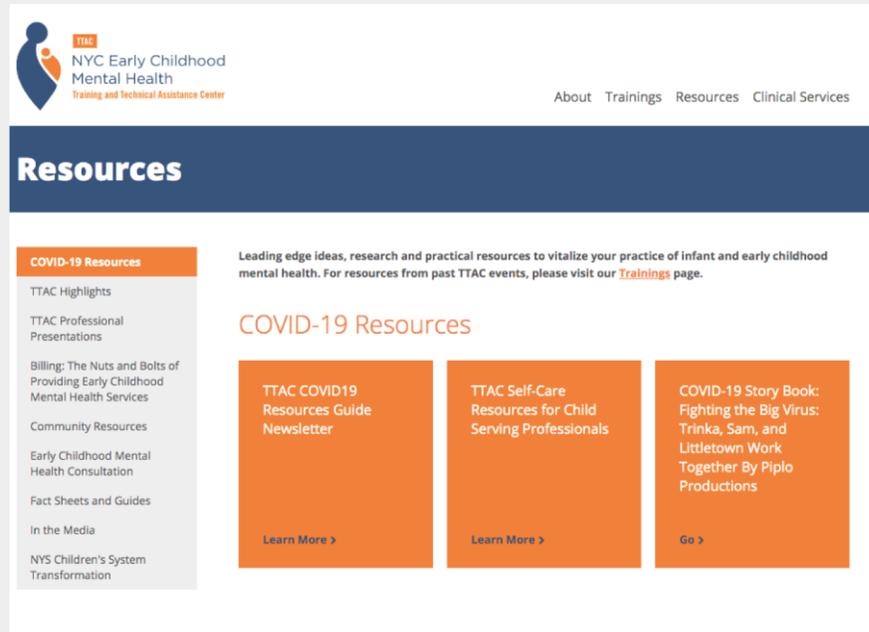
[The Diagnostic Classification of Mental Health and Developmental Disorders of Infancy and Early Childhood \(DC:0-5\): An Overview for Early Childhood Professionals](#)

# Technical Assistance Resources



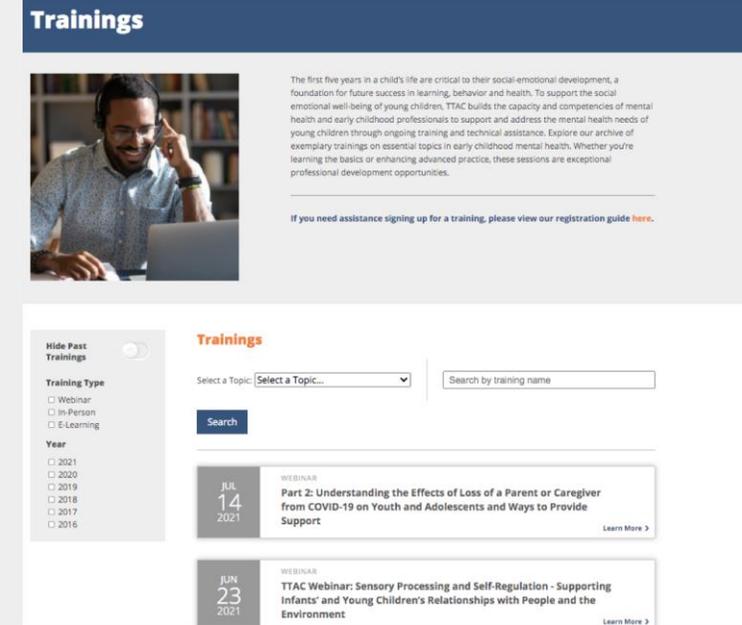
The screenshot shows the TTAC Home Page. At the top left is the logo for NYC Early Childhood Mental Health Training and Technical Assistance Center. Navigation links for 'About', 'Trainings', 'Resources', and 'Clinical Services' are in the top right. A large hero image features a woman smiling as a child kisses her on the cheek. Below the image is the text 'NYC Early Childhood Mental Health Provider Resources' with a 'Learn More' button. At the bottom, there are three smaller resource cards: 'Foundations of Social-Emotional Development in Infants and Toddlers', 'Resources available for COVID-19, Self-Care, Loss & Grief, & Children's Resilience Workbook', and 'Mental health services for young children & families - referral information', each with a 'Learn More' button.

TTAC Home Page



The screenshot shows the TTAC Resources Page. It features the same header as the home page. A dark blue banner at the top reads 'Resources'. Below this, a 'COVID-19 Resources' section is highlighted with an orange bar. A list of resource categories is on the left: TTAC Highlights, TTAC Professional Presentations, Billing: The Nuts and Bolts of Providing Early Childhood Mental Health Services, Community Resources, Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation, Fact Sheets and Guides, In the Media, and NYS Children's System Transformation. The main content area is titled 'COVID-19 Resources' and contains three orange boxes: 'TTAC COVID19 Resources Guide Newsletter', 'TTAC Self-Care Resources for Child Serving Professionals', and 'COVID-19 Story Book: Fighting the Big Virus: Trinko, Sam, and Littletown Work Together By Piplo Productions'. Each box has a 'Learn More' or 'Go' button.

TTAC Resources Page



The screenshot shows the TTAC Trainings Page. The header includes the logo and navigation links. A dark blue banner at the top reads 'Trainings'. Below the banner is a hero image of a man on a laptop. To the right of the image is introductory text about the importance of early childhood mental health and a link to the registration guide. Below this is a search and filter section. It includes a 'Hide Past Trainings' toggle, a 'Training Type' filter (Webinar, In-Person, E-Learning), and a 'Year' filter (2021, 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016). A search bar is labeled 'Search by training name'. Two training cards are visible: 'Part 2: Understanding the Effects of Loss of a Parent or Caregiver from COVID-19 on Youth and Adolescents and Ways to Provide Support' (dated Jul 14, 2021) and 'TTAC Webinar: Sensory Processing and Self-Regulation - Supporting Infants' and Young Children's Relationships with People and the Environment' (dated Jun 23, 2021). Each card has a 'Learn More' button.

TTAC Trainings Page



# Resources - Workforce Development, Policy & Practice

Planting Seeds in Fertile Ground: Actions Every Policymaker Should Take to Advance Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health, 2018 <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/1221-planting-seeds-in-fertile-ground-steps-every-policymaker-should-take-to-advance-infant-and-early-childhood-mental-health>

Three principles to improve outcomes for children and families, Center on the Developing Child, Oct 2017 <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/three-early-childhood-development-principles-improve-child-family-outcomes/>

Infographics, including How Racism Can Affect Child Development: <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resourcecategory/infographics/>

Supporting Social-Emotional and Mental Health Needs of Young Children Through Part C Early Intervention: Results of a 50-State Survey Sheila Smith, Daniel Ferguson, Elisabeth Wright Burak, Maribel R. Granja, Catalina Ortuzar, November 2020 <https://www.nccp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Part-C-Report-Final.pdf>

ECMH Training and TA Center (TTAC) Archived Webinars <https://www.ttacny.org/trainings/>

Community Technical Assistance Center of NY (CTAC) and Managed Care TA Center of NY (MCTAC) Upcoming Events/Trainings <https://calendar.ctacny.org/>

Kadik, Shaff, Okeke & Berger (2020) Integrating evidence-based practices into early childhood mental health clinics: A dynamic approach to strengthening the resilience of children birth to five and families, *Journal of Family Social Work*, 23:2, 164-176, DOI: [10.1080/10522158.2019.1694345](https://doi.org/10.1080/10522158.2019.1694345)

# How to Contact Us

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thank you!

