

Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC) Assists Early Childhood Programs Statewide

The Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC) service works in partnership with early childhood program staff to offer effective strategies for addressing and supporting young children's social and emotional development. The service is provided by licensed behavioral health clinicians with experience working in early childhood settings and is available upon request to all Delaware Stars programs. The consultants provide child-specific and classroom-wide consultation and also offer professional development training to help early childhood professionals better manage children with challenging behaviors. The service is managed by the Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services of the Delaware Children's Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families.

One training in very high demand is Child-Adult Relationship Enhancement (CARE), a 6-hour workshop which focuses on skills designed to build positive relationships so children feel more connected to the adults who care for them and, as a result, are more likely to use positive behaviors. Although there is a small lecture component with handouts, the majority of the time is spent practicing the skills, being observed by and getting feedback from the trainers. CARE is offered at least twice each month. Early childhood program staff register for trainings online through the University of Delaware's Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood which quality-assures training and maintains an online professional development database for early childhood program staff.

Teacher-Child Interaction Training (TCIT), a research-based classroom-wide training program is designed to promote positive teacher-child relationships and provides teachers with effective tools for classroom behavior management. This intensive, on-site training is 8 weeks long, requires strong commitment from the early childhood program and its staff and consistently gets both very high satisfaction ratings from early educators and measureable reductions in classroom disruptions that are sustained over time.

May 2013 E-News