



Alliance for the Advancement of
Infant Mental Health

Early Childhood Mental Health Endorsement® Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is Early Childhood Mental Health Endorsement (ECMH-E)®?

The ECMH-E® is meant to provide a path to Endorsement® for professionals who are promoting and implementing infant and early childhood mental health principles in their work with or on behalf of children ages 3 up to 6 years old and their families. ECMH-E® is built upon the existing IMH-E® structure, e.g. Early Childhood Family Associate, Early Childhood Family Specialist, Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist and Early Childhood Mental Health Mentor, using existing IMH-E® criteria as a template.

2. How were the ECMH-E® criteria created?

A workgroup of IMH-E® endorsed professionals with experience across diverse early childhood practice settings including early intervention, early childhood education, Head Start, early childhood mental health consultation, and early childhood mental health practice were convened over a course of several months to come to agreement for the new criteria. Workgroup participants came from Alaska, Michigan, New Jersey, New Mexico, and Washington. Later, other national experts weighed in on the final draft.

3. Are the qualifications of reflective supervision/consultation (RS/C) providers different from IMH-E® requirements?

RS/C requirements for ECMH-E® are consistent with requirements for IMH-E®. It has been a core component of the IMH-E® standards that RS/C come from a professional who has expertise in infant/very young child development, mental health issues (infant/very young child and adult), and reflective supervision. Masters -prepared professionals who provide services in promotion and prevention programs inevitably serve families with much higher levels of risk. For example, we consistently hear from home visitors across the states who feel unprepared to manage the needs of families who have experienced trauma and/or are affected by mental health problems. In order to best support the practitioners and the families, the provider of RS/C should have training and experience in how trauma and mental illness affect

the infant/very young child's caregiving relationships so that those issues can be identified and appropriately responded to. Professionals who have earned Infant Mental Health Specialist (III) and Infant Mental Health Mentor - Clinical (IV-C) have passed an application review and a written exam to document their competence in these areas.

See <https://www.allianceaimh.org/endorsement-requirements-guidelines/> for more about RS/C requirements for IMH-E®.

4. Were the competencies revised?

No, the competencies remain the same for both IMH-E® and ECMH-E® as the competencies already cover a range of knowledge and skill areas that drive best practice with or on behalf of pregnant moms, children ages 0 up to 6 years old, and their caregivers.

5. How can we use this process as an opportunity to include more professionals from early care and education?

The ECMH-E® offers recognition for those whose work is: a) with 3 up to 6 year olds and b) IMH- and ECMH-informed. We have long heard from Head Start staff, therapists who work 3-6, ECMH consultants, etc. that they have pursued IMH training and RS/C, but were very disappointed that they could not receive the IMH-E® recognition because their paid work experiences were not with 0-36 months. Said another way, the ECMH-E® now offers a path for those whose work is primarily with 3-6 and families and is informed by IECMH principles.

6. How do associations license ECMH-E®? And how much will it cost?

It is required that associations also be licensed to use the IMH-E® in order to purchase the license to use the ECMH-E®. Associations who are a part of the Alliance before December 31, 2018 are able to purchase a 3-year license for ECMH-E® for \$8,000. Associations who join the Alliance on or after January 1, 2019 will be able to purchase the ECMH-E® 3-year license for \$18,000.

7. Will professionals who hold the Infant Mental Health Endorsement® have the opportunity to be “grandfathered” into the Early Childhood Mental Health Endorsement® if they qualify?

We hope to provide an expedited process for those who already hold the IMH-E®. Professionals who have already demonstrated that they have the breadth and depth of competencies necessary for the IMH-E® would still need to demonstrate knowledge and skill, acquired through education, spe-

cialized in-service training, reflective supervision, work experience and references, related to work with children ages 3 up to 6 years old and their families. It is also important to note that in the beginning stages of rolling out the ECMH-E®, when building capacity will be a priority, professionals who are endorsed providers of reflective supervision/consultation (in categories IMHS and IMHM-C) for IMH-E® applicants will also be approved providers of RS/C for ECMH-E® applicants.

8. When and how can I apply for ECMH-E®?

The Early Childhood Family Associate (ECFA) and Early Childhood Family Specialist (ECFS) categories will be available to applicants whose state infant mental health associations have purchased the license to use ECMH-E® in 2018. The application process will be available online via the Endorsement Application System (EASy), the same system that is used for the IMH Endorsement®.

Individuals are not required to be IMH-E® in order to earn ECMH-E®. Individuals who wish to be endorsed in both, however, will have access to an expedited process.