

2021-2022 Impact Report



Partnership and Pioneering for Infant and Early Mental Health



Infant and Early Mental
Health Promotion
IEMHP

A program of

SickKids®

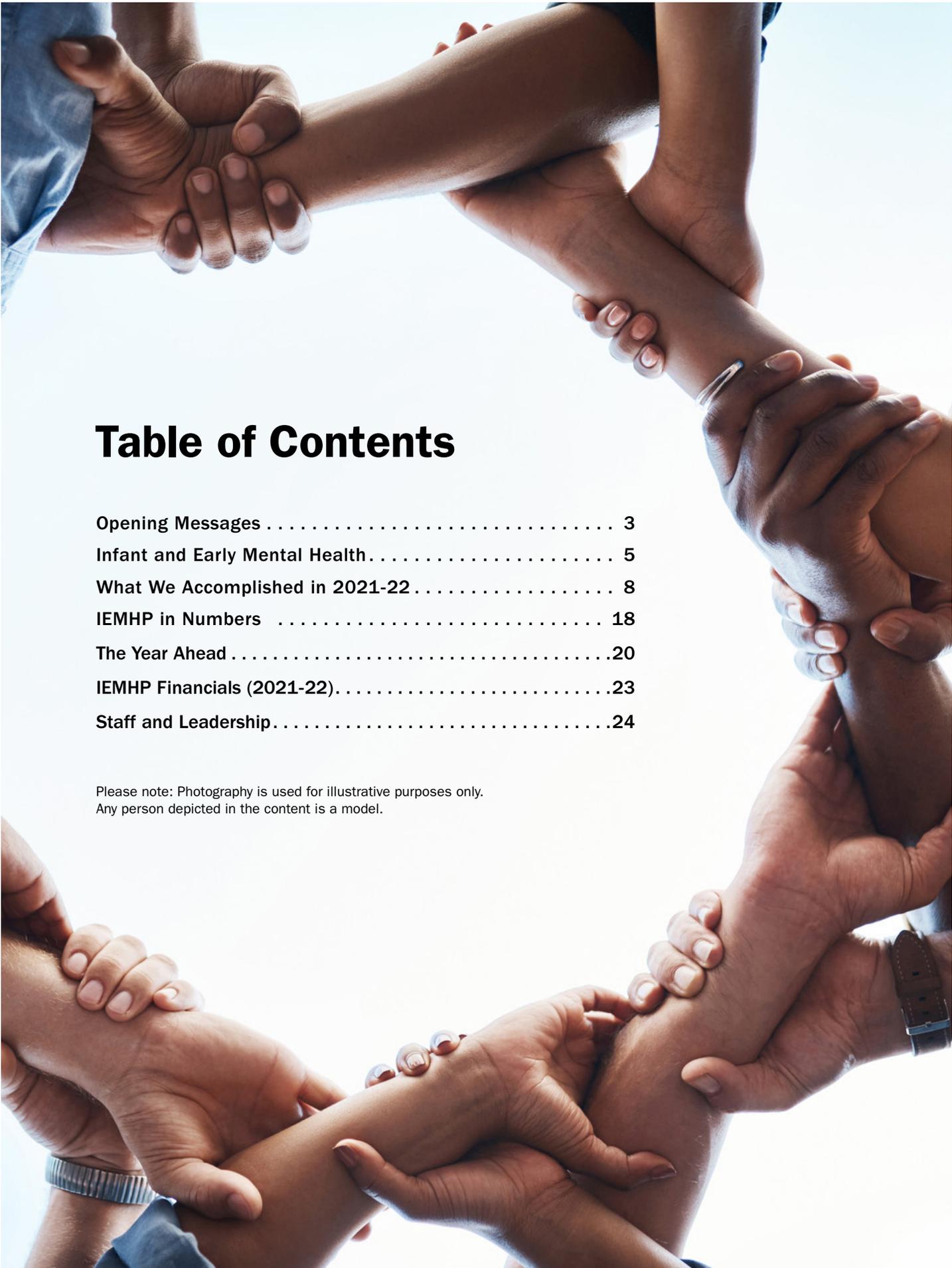


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Please note: Photography is used for illustrative purposes only. Any person depicted in the content is a model.

Opening Messages

Dr. Chaya Kulkarni

Director of Infant and Early Mental Health Promotion

Every year, the writing of our annual Impact Report offers the Infant and Early Mental Health Promotion (IEMHP) team a chance to pause, reflect and learn from the past year, and an opportunity to dream and plan for the year ahead. In 2021-22, the team adapted to the conditions of the pandemic and made great strides in various projects. Trainings were developed and delivered across Canada, a new partnership with the World Association of Infant Mental Health was established, and together the 2022 Lecture Series – Laying the Path for Lifelong Wellness was launched. The team continued their work with Indigenous partners – learning, reflecting, and collaborating to expand the Nurturing the Seed project to many more communities. As we emerge from a globally challenging time in history, IEMHP will continue to prioritize strengthening the knowledge and skills related to infant and early mental health among practitioners.

In 2020-21, we focused on how strengthened knowledge and skill could support systems of care at a local level through established care pathways in communities. Through this work, the team collaborated with local partners and established not only a need for system of care pathways for infant and early mental health, but an understanding of how practitioners' knowledge and skills, community capacity and policies influence this work. To support communities in becoming infant and early mental health friendly, we will utilize our [Infant and Early Mental Health Core Components Framework](#) to guide them in this endeavor. Founded in implementation science, the Framework identifies the policies and best practices that allow systems to effectively support infant and early mental health prenatally to age 6. Additionally, IEMHP will use the [Guiding Principles](#) we developed in collaboration with our Indigenous partners to guide allyship efforts with Indigenous families with young children. The next year will be IEMHP's time to focus on setting a standard of best practice when working with infants, toddlers and preschoolers in a variety of settings.

The science is clear; right from conception into the first few years of life, the opportunity to positively influence a child's developmental trajectory are significantly greater than at any other time of their life. Mobilizing the science behind infant and early mental health, applying it to our practices and creating policies to support this work will be our focus for 2022-23.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chaya Kulkarni".

Kelly McMillen

Director of the Learning Institute at The Hospital for Sick Children

The vision for the Learning Institute at The Hospital for Sick Children is to improve child health care outcomes and systems of care worldwide through education and learning. The Infant and Early Mental Health Promotion (IEMHP) team exemplifies this approach and works with practitioners to strengthen knowledge and practice about infant and early mental health.

The IEMHP team is passionately committed to improving outcomes across the lifespan through translating and promoting the science of early mental health into practice. This work is done in a variety of ways but fundamental to everything we do is relationships. I continue to be amazed by the commitment and dedication of the IEMHP team and we are so incredibly grateful to our partners who collaborate with us locally, nationally, and around the world.

Despite the pandemic, over the past year the team has worked with infant and early mental health experts, leaders, organizations, communities, and governing bodies to deliver training, facilitate coaching and mentoring sessions, launch a new lecture series, work with communities to create pathways that support early mental health from prenatal to age 6, create the Infant and Early Mental Health Core Components Framework, and so much more!

As we look to the year ahead, there is much to be excited about and I am confident that the team will continue to have a profound impact on building capacity, strengthening networks, and promoting positive infant and early mental health.



K. McMillen

Infant and Early Mental Health

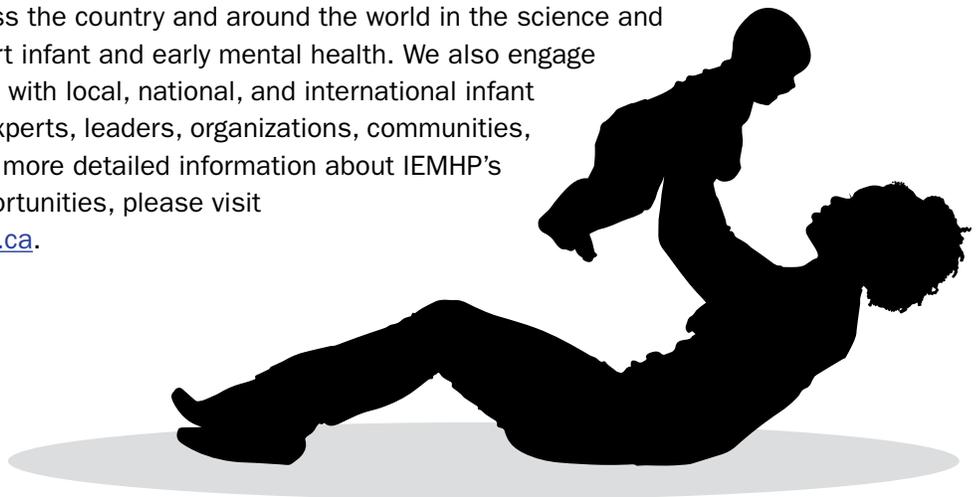
The early years are a period of profound brain development with over 1 million neural connections being made each second. Experiences during this time influence the connections that are made and the ones that are eliminated; therefore, early experiences shape our brains, how we see the world and the relationships around us. At a young age, the relationships children have with their caregivers is the most influential. It will impact a child's development and their capacity to recover when faced with trauma. Numerous studies describe the significant impact early experiences have on physical health, mental illness, and life opportunities. Therefore, focusing on the early years is key.

Infant and early mental health, also referred to as social and emotional development, is the developing capacity of a child from infancy to the age of 6 years to experience, regulate, and express their emotions, form close and secure relationships, and explore their environment. Infant and early mental health services and practices focus on promoting stable and supportive families and communities to buffer against negative outcomes. However, regardless of the growing knowledge surrounding this crucial period in a child's life, and of the evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of early prevention and intervention efforts, infant and early mental health has been notably absent from conversations regarding child health in Canada. Since its inception, the Infant and Early Mental Health Promotion (IEMHP) program has challenged that narrative and grown to become Canada's leading voice on infant and early mental health, influencing policy and practice through training and research.

About IEMHP

IEMHP is a program of the Hospital for Sick Children that strives to work with practitioners across Canada to strengthen knowledge and practice about infant and early mental health. IEMHP provides leadership to those who support the mental health of children prenatal to the age of 6. This is done through numerous activities and initiatives including research, education, and resource development. Over the years, IEMHP has trained thousands of practitioners from across the country and around the world in the science and best practices that support infant and early mental health. We also engage in cultivating relationships with local, national, and international infant and early mental health experts, leaders, organizations, communities, and governing bodies. For more detailed information about IEMHP's current activities and opportunities, please visit

<http://www.imhpromotion.ca>.





Vision

Healthy minds from the beginning.

Mission

To improve outcomes across the lifespan, we translate and promote the science of early mental health into practice with families during pregnancy, infancy and early childhood.

Values

- **Leadership** through resource development and informing promising practices
- **Equity, diversity and inclusivity** as cornerstones for building upon community strengths
- **Understanding** guided by science and the experience and wisdom of others
- **Sharing knowledge** to build capacity and promote scientific inquiry
- **Relationships and collaboration** as the foundation for all that we do

Beliefs

- The first 6 years of life have a unique and formative impact on development, relationships and functioning throughout life.
- Service providers require a specific knowledge and skill-base to provide care in the area of infant and early childhood mental health.
- Many adverse outcomes can be prevented when parents and other caregivers are provided with support that enables them to be optimally responsive to their infants and young children.
- As families have the central role in the lives of their children, it is essential to collaborate with families to build on their strengths and reduce their risks.
- Services must be sensitive to the diverse needs and coping styles of families from varying cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, and to children and caregivers who have diverse health and developmental needs.

What We Accomplished in 2021-22

COVID-19

IEMHP and partners launched a national survey to better understand the impact of pandemic-related changes in services and supports on families with children birth to 6 years of age across Canada. Survey results highlighted the significant struggle with accessing information and supports, added stress negatively affecting babies and toddlers, major mental health and well-being concerns, and mixed experiences accessing virtual services. These learnings, along with expert recommendations, were widely shared through [bilingual reports and a policy brief](#).

Nurturing the Seed

Nurturing the Seed (NtS) is a community-based and culturally informed program that supports the mental health and wellbeing of Indigenous children prenatal to age 6. Developed by IEMHP, NtS initially began as a resource that has now grown into a Canada-wide research project to determine its efficacy amongst Indigenous children.

In 2021-2022, over 150 practitioners from 12 Indigenous communities participated in training and Coaching Connect sessions and enrolled 63 new families in the NtS program. The staff involved with the program influenced agency policies, developed and implemented peer mentoring programs and saw themselves as leaders in infant and early mental health in their communities. In a survey completed by parents and caregivers participating in the program, we learned that the program helped them feel less stressed (64%), feel better equipped to meet their child's needs (100%) and increased their confidence in supporting their child's development (93%).

"It allowed me to recognize my grandchild's growth and gave me insight into what I could help with to improve my grandchild's progress"

In early 2022, IEMHP received PHASE 2 funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada. This funding will allow us to expand the project to more sites, further strengthen the capacity of frontline practitioners to support infant and early mental health and begin to look at long-term sustainability of the model. In addition, we will begin to build training and coaching capacity at the local level for those sites that began with us in 2019. Data continues to be gathered and reviewed to understand the impact of the program. Learn more about the progress of this wide-scale, [ground-breaking initiative](#).



Coaching Connect Model

In March 2022, IEMHP launched our Coaching Connect model which provides trainees with ongoing support to encourage knowledge retention and optimize the implementation of the training into each participants' practice. The model was initially piloted with practitioners participating in the NtS project with monthly sessions to strengthen their competency, confidence and capacity in engaging families, completing developmental screenings and creating a Developmental Support Plan (DSP). In these sessions, each community was assigned a month to present a case study, and as a larger NtS community, participants discussed the possible ways in which both the practitioner and the family can be supported, and collectively a DSP for the case presented was created. These sessions provide practitioners with an opportunity to network with practitioners from other NtS sites, share the successes and challenges of their work, and support one another in embedding this work into their practice.



IEMHP Coaching Connect

Connecting with communities to increase competency, confidence and capacity in infant and early mental health

Over 90% of participants answering our follow-up survey reported that they felt more confident engaging families, supporting infant and early mental health, administering developmental screenings, and creating DSPs. Our first Coaching Connect session in March was a success and there is a growing number of practitioners registered for upcoming Coaching Connect sessions.

“It was great, I am really enjoying these sessions to hear how others are using the tools and questions they have as everyone’s perspective is different. Thank you for this opportunity”

“Appreciate the opportunity for follow up support after I’ve been using the tool in the field.”

“I am so excited to see what happens in the next Coaching Connect session [...] because I find it so helpful to hear stories from other care and service providers about real families they interact with and have relationships with, and from there create a DSP from their ASQ. [...] I get more confident completing more ASQs with the families I service as well, and hear about the different resources and referrals available to other communities.”

Launch of the 2022 Edition of the Lecture Series with WAIMH

In 2022, IEMHP in partnership with the World Association of Infant Mental Health (WAIMH) launched the newest lecture series, Laying the Path for Lifelong Wellness. Our relationship with WAIMH provided participants an opportunity to hear from pioneers and experts in infant and early mental health from around the world. Within the first month, over 1,500 global users registered for the series which is available in English and French, and this number continues to grow as we work on providing transcripts in several other languages in the next year. Learn more about this global [series](#) including how to register and the training details.



“Well done! In particular, the anecdotes, examples and stories are so powerful to bring the teachings to life”

“It is great to see the global commitment and hear from various cultural perspectives. I look forward to the sessions.”

“Very relevant to planning underway for early childhood mental health and engaging the community.”

“I found this lecture most relevant to the work I do within Public Health – it provided concrete examples of programs that help tackle maternal mental health.”

Infant and Early Mental Health Pathways to Care

In November 2019, the City of Hamilton, County of Simcoe, and Hastings and Prince Edward Counties participated in the Infant and Early Mental Health Care Pathways, a project piloted in partnership with the Knowledge Institute on Child and Youth Mental Health and Addictions. The pilot was based on a key recommendation from the Beyond Building Blocks paper that identified the need for mental health pathways for infants, young children and their families, prenatal to 6 years-old. The goals of the project included the strengthening of knowledge and practice among those working with young children and families (prenatal to 6) and the creation of a pathway that would lead to a more efficient and equitable way for families to access supports.



As of January 2022, the City of Hamilton and County of Simcoe completed this work in their communities and each created pathways that support early mental health from the prenatal period to the age of 6. In partnership with Indigenous agencies within each community, pathways for Indigenous children were also created. Community members participated in cross-sectoral meetings that spanned a variety of organizations and practitioners who support the prenatal to 6 years-old population.

These meetings were an opportunity for members to discuss the current state of services offered to families, share challenges and successes, and identify the priorities that needed to be addressed in the new pathways. An implementation team comprised of decision makers from various sectors was developed in each community. The implementation team was responsible for maintaining momentum in the pathways work and to ensure sustainability beyond the completion of the pilot.

These meetings were an opportunity for



All communities committed to training their practitioners in infant and early mental health to improve their knowledge and skills. The training requirement established a common language, tools and resources amongst practitioners, allowing them to better support families in accessing mental health support for themselves and their children. Hastings and Prince Edward Counties are currently still meeting and determining the critical components of their pathways.

This pilot has highlighted a number of key learnings for IEMHP and the community partners participating in this project;

- The mental health needs of children, prenatal to 6, are complex and span a number of supports and levels of expertise, and therefore require a unique approach;
- There is not a consistent level of knowledge and skill specific to infant and early mental health. As a result, services delivered were often disjointed revealing gaps in knowledge and skill among practitioners, discrepancies and inconsistencies in practices and policies within and among agencies, sectors and communities;
- Each pathway will look and operate differently based on the identified priorities, community needs and existing capacity of the community; and

- Leadership and commitment to the training, ongoing support, communication and understanding of the needs of the prenatal to 6-year-old population is paramount to the successful implementation of pathways work.

Learn more about the key learnings from this [pilot project initiative](#).

Raising Infant and Early Mental Health Awareness, One Practitioner at a Time

In September 2021, the Introduction to Infant and Early Mental Health was launched as a free webinar to practitioners across Canada. This free, 3-hour introductory series provides an overview of early development with a focus on infant and early mental health. Some key concepts and theoretical models that are explored include the importance of relationships, the developing brain, understanding behaviours, cultural competence and embedding a family approach into practice. The series will encourage practitioners to think about the practical applications of these concepts via reflective questions. To date, there have been over 1,400 people participating in the series. Those who completed the series also completed an online feedback survey asking them about their experience. From that survey we found that:

- Some of the information presented was new to them (81%);
- The presentation really opened their eyes on the importance of the early years for lifelong improved outcomes (84%) even though 75% had over 10 years of experience working with young children and 89% of them held a college degree or more; and
- The training was relevant to their work and daily practice (91%), the strategies and knowledge presented will be used in their work (92%)

“I work in public health and see families and new babies often. I found this a very useful resource that I will definitely be drawing from to help improve my practice.”

“I wish I knew this a long time ago!”

Participants showed an average 10% increase in knowledge scores and their self-evaluated knowledge increased by over 30%. Learn more about and register for this free, [introductory series](#).

Broadening Partnerships

Just as relationships are the foundation for our work with infants and their caregivers, they are also very important to all IEMHP projects. Over the past year our work has continued to be enriched through our collaborations with organizations such as WAIMH, Knowledge Institute for Child and Youth Mental Health and Addictions, Child and Youth Melopemahtesewin Services, Nishnawbe Aski Nation and many others. What has made our partnerships so meaningful and impactful is our shared passion for, commitment to, and understanding of the importance of infant and early mental health to short- and long-term outcomes across the lifespan. These relationships are essential to implement trainings and policies that are required to build a system for infant and early mental health. From our partnerships we have achieved the following:

- Last Fall, SickKids CEO, Dr. Ronald Cohn visited with the Elder Council and community members who have guided our work in Timiskaming. Together they increased access to health care by setting up a system for referrals to be expedited from Timiskaming’s Mino M’shki-ki Health Centre to SickKids for mental health support and intervention.
- In collaboration with WAIMH, we successfully launched 2022 Lecture Series and we look forward to exploring the next series to be launched in 2024 among other joint initiatives.
- With our 12 NtS communities we continue to train practitioners and build capacity within the community

**A big
THANK YOU
to all our
partners**

Aamjiwnaang First Nation

**Amiskwacy Cultural Society
Aboriginal Head Start**

Bent Arrow Healing Society

**Child and Youth
Milopemahtesewin Services**

Children First

City of Hamilton

**Georgian Bay Native
Women’s Association**

Government of Alberta

**Hasting and
Prince Edward Counties**

Keepers of the Circle

Kids Brain Health Network

Kids First North

**Mino M’shki-ki Indigenous
Health Team**

Nishnawbe Aski Nation

**Knowledge Institute on
Child and Youth Mental Health
and Addictions**

**Ontario Association of
Children’s Aid Societies**

Pidaban Child Care Centre

Pikangikum Health Authority

**Public Health Agency of
Canada**

Queen’s University

County of Simcoe

Wisdom Keepers

**World Association for
Infant Mental Health**

IEMHP Leadership Table

In 2019, IEMHP established a Leadership Table (LT) to bring together voices from across Canada whose work and/or expertise in some way was connected to infant and early mental health and who would provide IEMHP with guidance in all areas of its work. This past year, the LT has provided invaluable direction to IEMHP on initiatives such as the development of the Infant and Early Mental Health Core Components Framework, the Certificate and Fellowship Program. The LT also informed the ongoing focus IEMHP has on supporting Indigenous children and their families. The LT is supported by our Working Groups (WG) that focus on specific initiatives or aspects related to infant and early mental health. Below are descriptions of our on-going work.

Working Group on the Development of the Certificate and Fellowship Program

In the past year, we drafted program descriptions, identified the qualifications for potential participants, expectations for the program, and explored possible courses and faculty. The goal of the [Certificate program](#) is to provide a formal training program for those who are working with young children and their families that strengthens their knowledge and skill specific to infant and early mental health. The role of the Fellowship program is to strengthen the capacity of those who see themselves as leaders in the work of infant and mental health so they can be effective leaders, advocates and decision makers and influencers.

Working Group on Supporting Indigenous Competency and Capacity

Canada has much work to do in actioning the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and other reports focused on Indigenous Peoples in Canada. In 2021, the WG guided IEMHP in creating the [Guiding Principles](#) that will not only strengthen the competency of IEMHP staff in our work with Indigenous communities, but also guides and supports IEMHP partners to actively engage in this work.

Working Group on Health and Allied Health Professionals

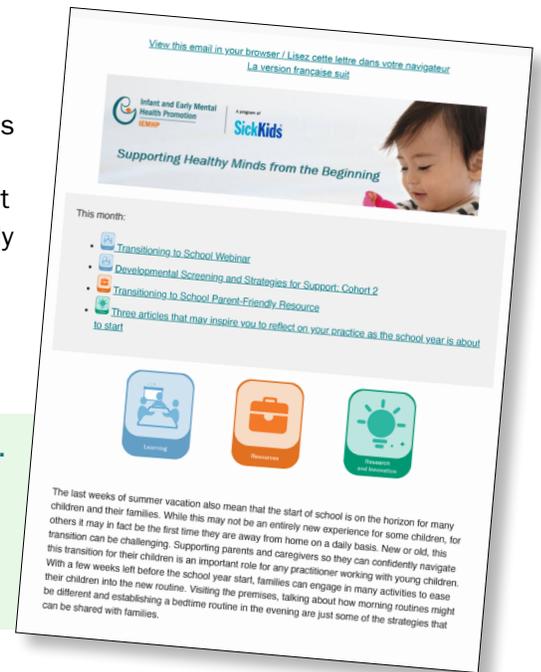
Health care professionals in Canada that serve infants and young children need to understand the pivotal role they can have to change a child's life trajectory before they enter the school system. A solid understanding of infant and early mental health is crucial to ensure that they can act early and provide young children with services and support to ensure optimal outcomes. This past year the WG developed surveys, that are currently pending Research Ethics Board approval, to be distributed across Canada to understand health care practitioners' current knowledge, needs and beliefs.



Newsletter

In 2021-22, IEMHP published nine bilingual newsletter editions and seven e-blasts to over 11,000 subscribers on topics including Lifelong Learning, Early Literacy, A Focus on the Most Vulnerable and Supporting Pathways of Care in Infant and Early Mental Health. About 80% of our audience is Canadian, with the remainder from the US, Australia, Pakistan, Qatar, the UK and Germany. Read previous [IEMHP newsletters and e-blasts](#).

“Thanks for this jam-packed message of incredible resources. They will be used and passed around. A great big thanks to all who worked so diligently to put this together, compiled the research, write the articles... We much appreciate your valuable work.”



IEMHP Expanding Relationships with Indigenous Communities

IEMHP is strengthening our relationship within the SickKids community through our work with the Indigenous Health Council. The Indigenous Health Council, co-chaired by Melanie Laking, an Indigenous Advisor and parent, acts to support and advance practices to cultivate a culturally safe environment for Indigenous patients and families. IEMHP's role is to

contribute to the discussions and support the hospital in actioning the recommendations from reports, such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Reports, to better meet the needs of Indigenous Peoples and their families.

Moreover, IEMHP continues to learn about and from our Indigenous partners by participating in the San'yas Indigenous Cultural Safety online training. Over 500 SickKids staff have registered for the San'yas training offered by Indigenous Cultural Safety Ontario in partnership with PHSO (Ontario). We examined the role we can have in eliminating Indigenous-specific racism. We use the learnings in all our work with our Indigenous partners and families and continue to reflect and learn from our Indigenous partners who have created a space for us to not only learn, but explore how we can do better.



Supporting Kin and Foster Parents of Young Children

In partnership with Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, IEMHP developed a resource package for foster families in their work with infants and young children. It has been identified that families caring for infants and young children are often not provided with the training, resources and supports needed for this very important role. These resources are geared to better support the unique needs of infants, toddlers and preschoolers in care and/or involved in service with child welfare, recognizing that these needs are different to those of older children.

IEMHP worked with an advisory group to guide the direction of the project and the creation of the resource package which includes the following variety of materials and supports:

1. The First Five Years guide, a user-friendly booklet that provides a general overview of developmental milestones over the first five years.
2. Three 30-minute recorded sessions geared specifically to foster parents working with infants and young children presented by experts Dr. Susan Dundas, Mary Rella and Dr. Chaya Kulkarni. These topics of these videos are an overview of infant and early mental health, trauma in very young children, and what children need to thrive and how can foster parents best support children in care.
3. Tip sheets that highlight key actions that support healing and relationship-building.

Grounding IEMHP's Work in Implementation Science

Fundamentals

In collaboration with the Kids Brain Health Network's implementation scientists Melanie Barwick and Jacquie Brown and with support from the [KDE Hub](#), the IEMHP team undertook a series of exercises resulting in, among other things:

- a complete practice profile of IEMHP's activities, that led to the creation of the Infant and Early Mental Health Core Components Framework
- an onboarding protocol for organizations and communities
- implementation support services that include IEMHP Coaching Connect

Infant and Early Mental Health Core Components Framework

Supported by our leadership table and inspired by IEMHP's practice profile, IEMHP developed a community-led, capacity building model for the embedding of infant and early mental health into current health, education and social services called the Infant and Early Mental Health Core Components Framework. It proposes that to properly build and sustain capacity to deliver effective and appropriate infant and early mental health support services and systems, a community or organization must have 5 core components in place:

- System of care pathways for infant and early mental health
- Resources and tools for strengthening infant and early mental health knowledge and practice across the IEMHP Competencies Framework
- Leadership within the community that is committed to the work required to ensure optimal infant and early mental health
- Infant and early mental health knowledge and skill building through training and coaching
- Research and evaluation systems to track progress and make informed decisions

By developing and validating tools to embed this framework into the implementation of infant and early mental health related community interventions, IEMHP plans to confirm that it leads to enhanced capacity within communities to support infant and early mental health and to recognize and respond to vulnerability for poor mental health outcomes in the early years.



IEMHP in Numbers

Despite IEMHP transitioning to a virtual setting and launching our Learning Management System last September, 2021-2022 was a significant year for training. We offered 3 cohorts of our Pathways project, 3 cohorts of our Nurturing the Seed project, 3 cohorts of our Alberta Home Visitor training, and multiple agency-specific trainings. Additionally, we were able to offer our [Developmental Screening and Strategies for Support training](#) to the public, providing the opportunity for independently motivated learners and new staff from previously trained groups to gain the knowledge and skills that their colleagues are using in their practice. We also launched our IEMHP Coaching Connect model with our NtS community sites (see above) and released an updated version of our free introductory training, Introduction to Infant and Early Mental Health.



Number of Trainees Registered

1,403

Introduction to Infant and Early Mental Health

1,614

2022 Lecture Series

11,824

2020 Lecture Series

183

Pathways Pilot Project

141

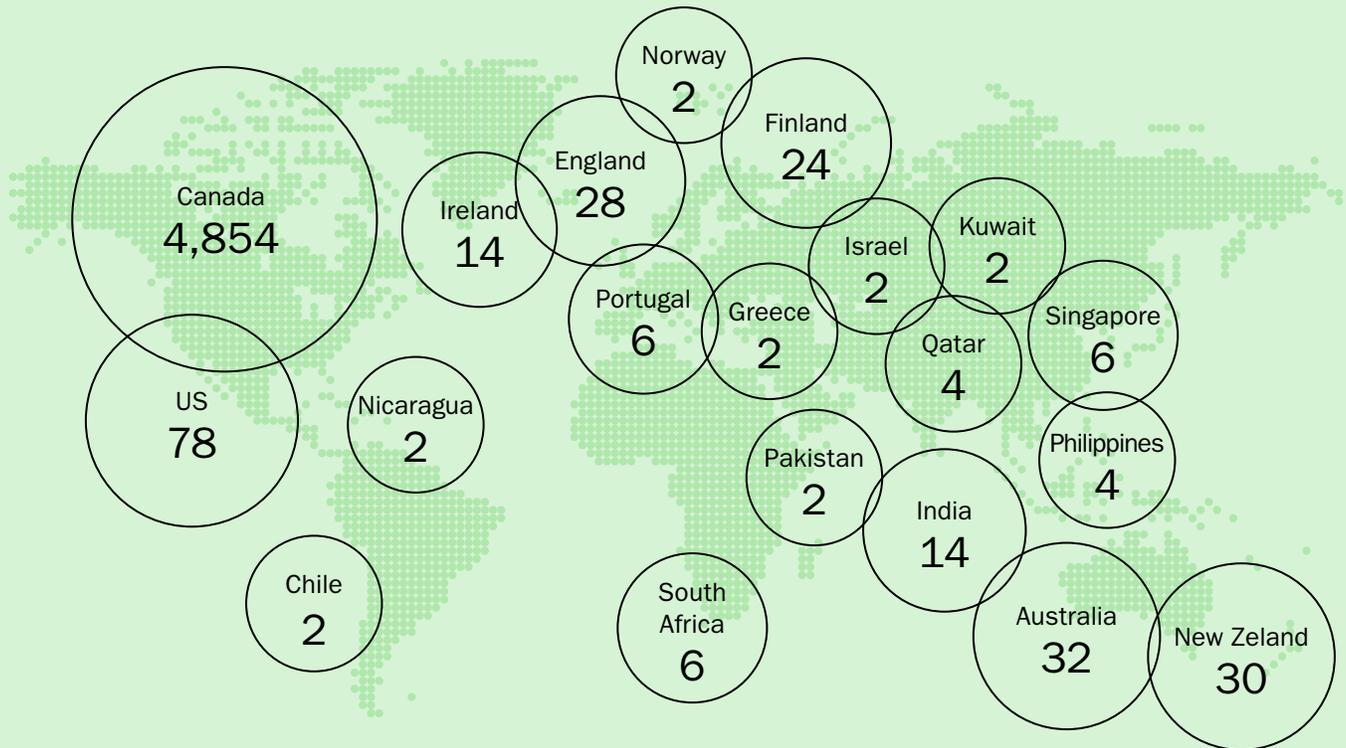
Nurturing the Seed

195

Agency-Specific Trainings (including AHVNA)

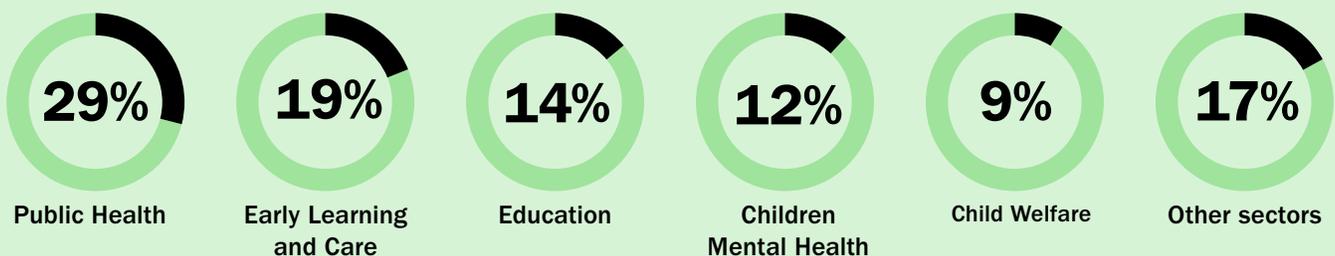


Our 2021-22 Trainees



Proportion of Respondents

75% of all respondents who answered the question have over 5 years of experience working with children less than 6 years



“By far one of the best trainings I have attended – super clear and I love how geared towards the child’s support unit it is! Simplistic is good!”

“This training followed a very systematic, organized, layered approach to learning. Well Done! It has been the best and most useful training that I have received professionally. This will benefit many families and children in our community.”

“I’m excited to put into practice the skills that were so clearly laid out and explained. Thank you for this training opportunity!”

The Year Ahead

Nishnawbe Aski Nation

IEMHP is collaborating with the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) to develop the Natural Helpers training for community members. Though multiple delays due to pandemic restrictions interfered with our 2021 launch date, we are pleased to report that we are on-track for a roll-out of the pilot in the fall of 2022.

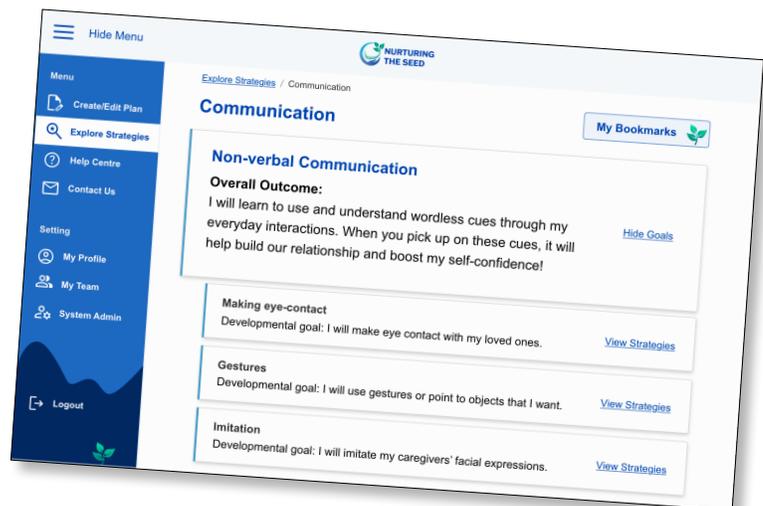
The Natural Helpers initiative is designed specifically for a broad and inclusive audience and though professionals would also benefit from the program, it is hoped that all community members will be interested in participating. The program has been developed with a local committee of experts and leaders who are committed to ensuring strong supports and caring communities for all children. Those taking the training will have an opportunity to learn about healthy growth and development in young children and, more importantly, how they can better support the young children and families in their community. It aims to build awareness within communities, and to ensure that all community members understand how they play an important role in supporting future generations.



As part of the preparation and planning for the program, IEMPH team members and a film crew will travel to Moosonee and Moose Factory in the spring of 2022 to meet advisory group members in-person and further work on the design and content for the project. This will be an opportunity for IEMHP to meet and connect with community leaders, service providers, parents and children. We aim to gain insight into the hopes they hold for their children, as well as the challenges faced and specific needs within their communities. Our film crew will be incorporating our interviews with community members, practitioners, and families into the training modules.

Nurturing the Seed App

NAN is also funding the development of the NtS app, the web-based application of the NtS DSP tool. Nurturing the Seed is a resource that supports the developmental needs of infants, toddlers and preschoolers while they wait for more intensive services. The resource was created in partnership with an Elders Council to specifically support Indigenous children. The creation of the app-based tool will make it easier for practitioners to create a DSP and share it with families and other practitioners. Available only to trained frontline practitioners involved in the NtS study, the app will allow practitioners to create DSPs on their computer or mobile device, during home visits or in the community with families. The NtS app will enter the testing phase in the upcoming year.



New “Broker” Model

With the success of launching our trainings on the Learning Management System, IEMHP is working towards providing practitioners with more opportunities to learn and build capacity within their practice. We are currently developing a model that will connect practitioners to professionals who are furthering understanding and practices in infant and early mental health, across professions and sectors. These sessions will include the latest in research and practice, followed by opportunities for discussion and resources that support practical approaches to implementation. Look out for our newsletter where we will announce the launch of this exciting new initiative, in the winter of 2023.

Pilot the Self-Assessment Tool

Based on the Infant and Early Mental Health Core Components Framework, the Self-Assessment Tool was developed by IEMHP to assess how each of the core components is grounded in the community organization's activities and policies. Formatted as a questionnaire, it's a tool organization leaders can use to assess the strengths of their organization related to infant and early mental health, identify areas to focus their efforts, and monitor their success. This tool will be validated in the coming months through several pilot projects, before being offered online and integrated in IEMHP activities including the onboarding of organizations and community interventions' evaluation.

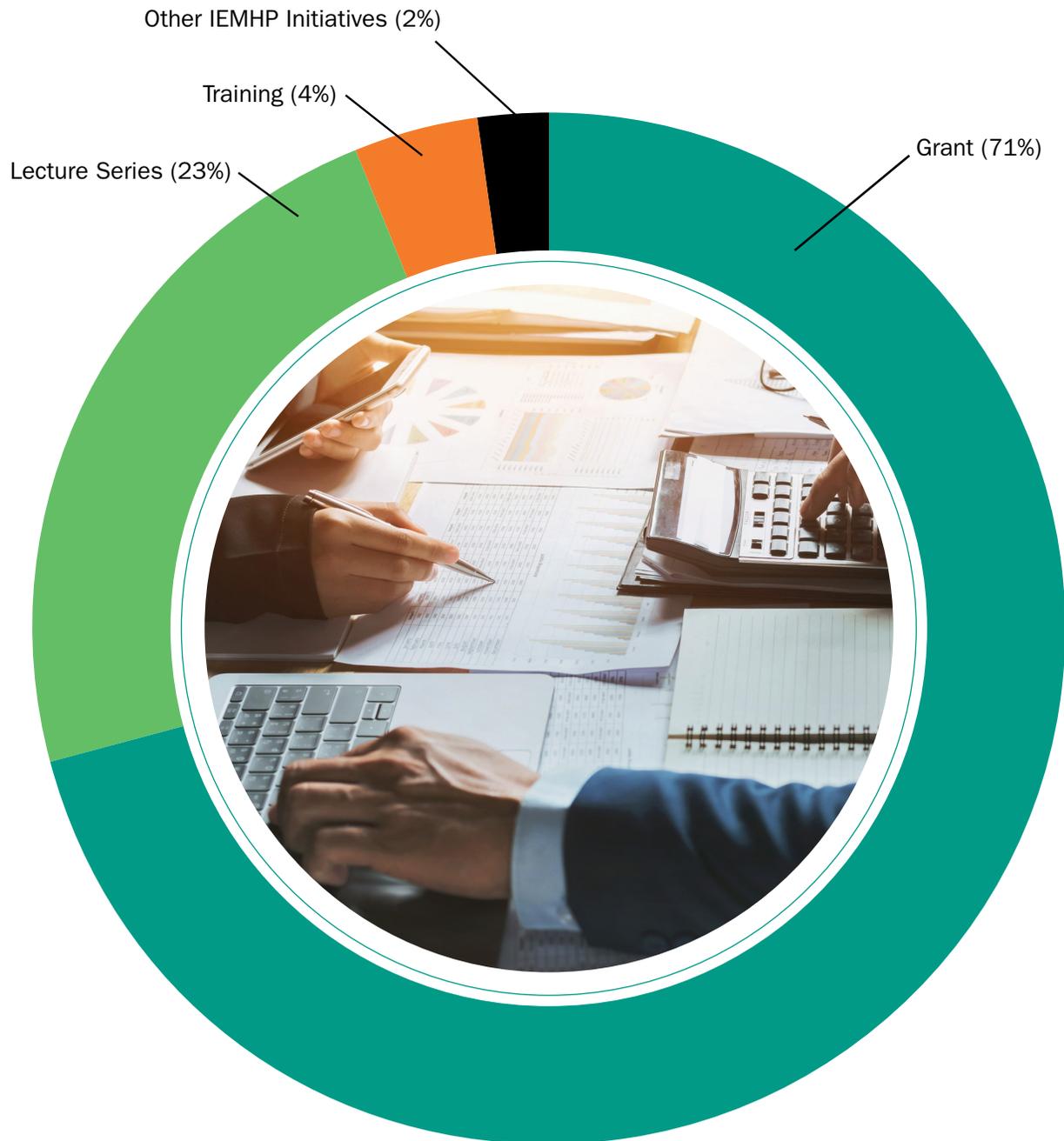
Healthcare Sector Series of Surveys

As caregivers' consistent point of contact for of their child's concerns, health care providers are in a prime position to promote infant and early mental health. However, health care practitioners currently do not have the training to provide the specialized health care approaches that infant and early mental health clinical practice demands. As the national leader in infant and early mental health, IEMHP aims to address this gap in services. We have developed surveys that will provide a better understanding of health care practitioners' needs in terms of training and tools to better support infant and early mental health in their practice. Pending Research Ethics Board approval, the surveys will be released in the coming year. The results will direct IEMHP as we develop a strategy specific to support health care practitioners integrate infant and early mental health best practices in their work with children prenatal to 6.

Fellowship & Certificate Program

IEMHP aims to launch Canada's first online Fellowship and Certificate Program on infant and early mental health for those who work in the field of infant and early mental health and bring experience to the learning process. This initiative led by a national working group consisting of Canadian professionals from across all sectors whose insight will ensure that the program appeals to a wide group of practitioners. 2022-2023 will be a critical year as we plan to establish the syllabus during this time. Descriptions of the program can be found [here](#).

IEMHP Financials (2021-22)



Staff and Leadership

IEMHP Staff

Chaya Kulkarni, Project Director

Nicole Tuzi, Sr. Training and Education Manager

Lesley Watts, Sr. Program Manager

Magali Bouhours, Evaluations Manager

Yvonne Zhang, Marketing & Technology Manager

Stefanie Watmough, Project Coordinator

Rup Patel, Project Coordinator

Annie Gelibolyan, Project Coordinator (maternity leave)

Donna Hill, Communications Advisor

Corey Dong, Technical Project Coordinator

John Zheng, Technical Project Support

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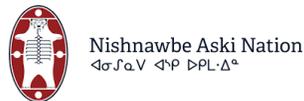
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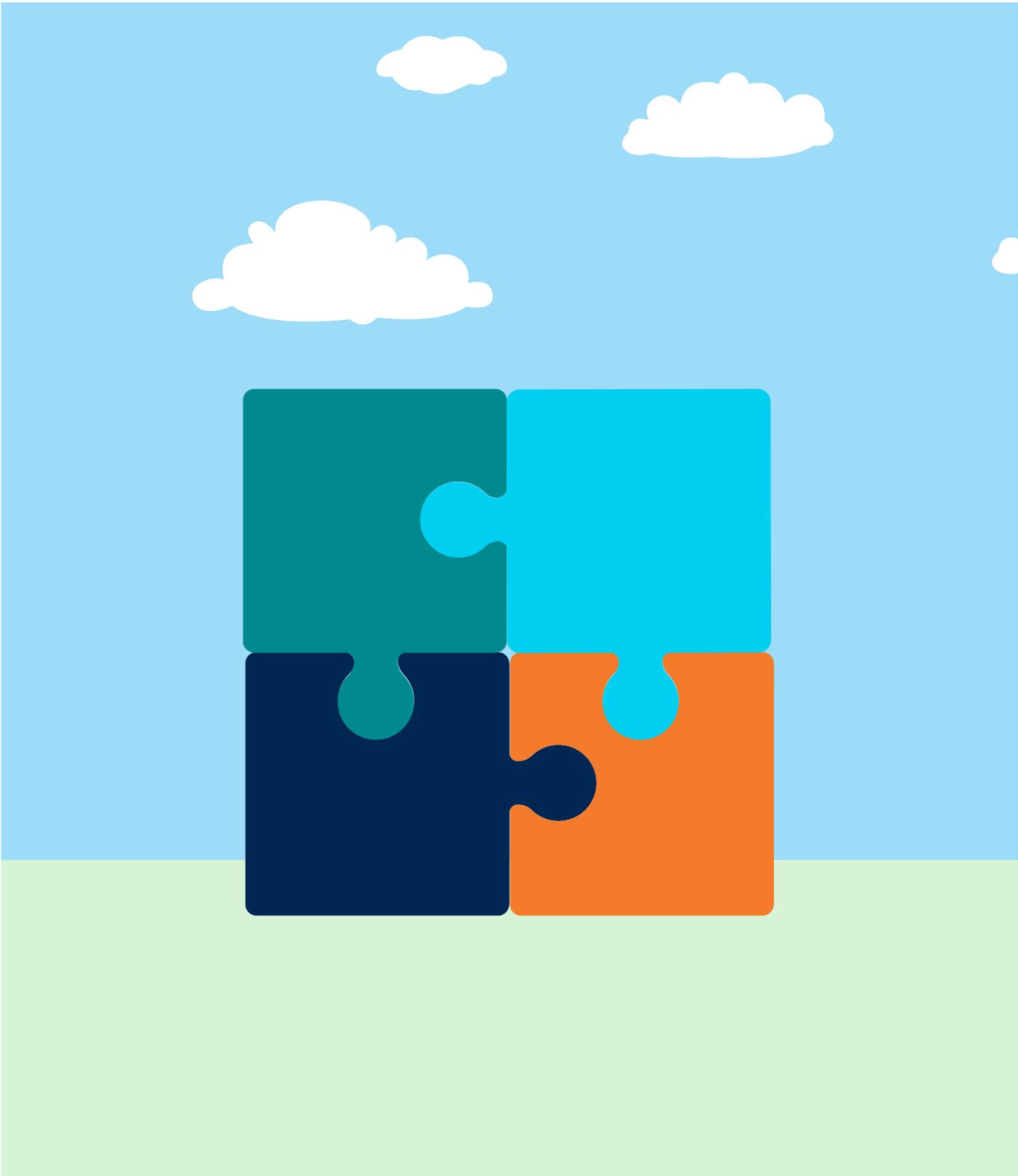
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A Big Thank You to Our Collaborators!



Right from conception into the first few years of life, the opportunity to positively influence a child's developmental trajectory are significantly greater than at any other time of their life.

Dr. Chaya Kulkarni, Director of IEMHP



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