



Rick Scott, Governor
David Wilkins, Secretary



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**Building ECMHC in Child Care:
 Systems Issues and Strategies**

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Mission: Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families,
 and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency.

**Challenges and Strategies
 National**

What Works? Study (2009)

- National Scan
- Brief online survey
- Sent to all states' and territories' Children's Mental Health Directors and ECCS Coordinators
- 35 states/territories responded

Source: What Works? A study of Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Programs. Center for Child and Human Development, Georgetown University.

**Challenges and Strategies
 National**

Challenges

- 1. Funding**
 - ECMHC needs adequate funding from diverse funding sources
 - Funding is limited for prevention and promotion activities
- 2. Consultant Workforce**
 - Few mental health professionals trained with the necessary skill set of a consultant
 - Challenges in recruiting and retaining consultants- salaries are less competitive and demand is higher
- 3. Stigma**
- 4. Family Engagement**

**Challenges and Strategies
 National**

Challenges

- 5. Provider Engagement**
 - Common challenges of a consultant to be seen as a helper and not a judge
- 6. The Nature of Consultation**
 - Consultation is a capacity building intervention – families/providers are less familiar with it than direct services
 - Challenge in achieving behavior change – requires skills and patience
 - Challenge to manage expectations of funders and program partners – large case sizes, duration of services
- 7. Outreach and Awareness**
 - Still a need for greater awareness if early childhood mental health (social and emotional development, impact of early trauma, attachment) and the need to incorporate mental health when building early childhood systems and supports

**Challenges and Strategies
 National**

Strategies

Recommendations for ECMHC expansion targeting four key audiences

1. Policymakers and funders
2. ECMHC Providers
3. Early care and education program administrators
4. Researchers/Evaluators

**Challenges and Strategies
 National**

Strategies

Overarching Recommendations for moving ECMHC forward

- 1. Build Consensus**
 - Core values, principles, components of ECMHC; competencies and qualifications; and important outcomes for children, families and ECMHC providers
- 2. Engage families and cross-system partners**
 - They help to promote ECMHC as an effective strategy to support social and emotional development
- 3. Identify key research questions that remain and support efforts to address those questions**

Challenges and Strategies Florida

Challenges

1. No dedicated funding source for ECMHC
 - 24 different sources are used to fund ECMHC in Florida
 - No dedicated funding source – all sources are limited and have a specific population and focus
 - No strategic approach to fund across agencies and programs
2. Limited availability of ECMHC professionals and opportunities for supervision
 - No professional network to provide support, information, etc.
 - Funding mostly geared toward intervention with child/family

Source: Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Summit – Florida State Center for Prevention and Early Intervention (June 30, 2010)

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Challenges and Strategies Florida

Challenges

3. No lead agency for ECMHC
 - Children's Mental Health/DCF has taken the lead with other key partners (FSU Center for Prevention and Early Intervention) to promote expansion
4. Limited awareness and understanding of ECMHC
5. No minimal standards set for consultant credentials, training, and supervision

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Challenges and Strategies Florida

Strategies

Moving ECMHC Forward in Florida (3 Core Program Components)

1. Solid Infrastructure

- Assemble strategic partners to promote statewide implementation
- Increase awareness and understanding of ECMHC and its value
- Design uniform method for ECMHC data collection and program evaluation
- Develop a funding matrix to increase utilization of funding sources for ECMHC
- Expand involvement of funders by educating on the needs, benefits, and their role in ECMHC

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Challenges and Strategies Florida

Strategies

2. Highly Qualified Mental Health Consultants

- Provide specific training
- Hire qualified ECMHC staff
- Form a professional network to support early childhood mental health consultants
- Provide orientation training to the early childhood mental health consultant
- Provide administrative and reflective supervision to early childhood mental health consultants

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Challenges and Strategies Florida

Strategies

3. High-Quality Service Delivery

- Implement a relationship-based program model that provides emotional support when and where needed
- Individualized services using flexible program model
- Involve and engage children, parents, and classroom teachers in the consultant's work
- Compile and offer training on the best and most well-established intervention models
- Promote connections among community partners to offer a continuum of supports

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