

AIMH HI Annual Report 2023



Hawai'i Association for Infant Mental Health,
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Introduction

We invite you to share in our journey of promoting the emotional health of Hawai'i's youngest. In 2023, the Association for Infant Mental Health in Hawai'i (AIMH HI), under the leadership of the organization's Executive Director Erin Henderson Lacerdo and Board President JoAnn Farnsworth, underwent a year-long process of strategic planning. Through this process, we refreshed our mission, vision, and values, as well as identified our four main strategies which will take us through 2026. While our vision remains the same - "In Hawai'i the early years are celebrated and revered, first relationships are nurtured, and infant and early childhood mental health is everyone's kuleana" - our mission is now more refined. Our updated mission is "To nurture the emotional health and resiliency of Hawai'i's keiki by growing a network of professionals and a system of care that is founded upon infant and early childhood mental health practices."

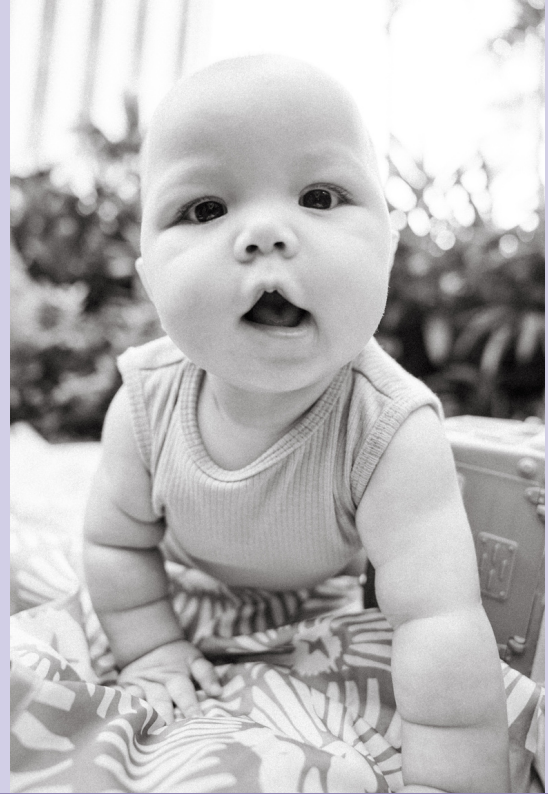
For 2024 through 2026, AIMH HI's strategic areas of focus are to:

- Expand, Develop and Connect an IECMH-Skilled Workforce
- Support IECMH Best Practices in the Field
- Lead IECMH Systems Integration, and
- Build strong organizational infrastructure to support the growing needs of the IECMH workforce.

Our values were recently updated to reflect:

- Pilina (Relationships) - All that we do is centered in fostering positive relationships.
- Ho'olono (Reflective practice) - To lean in to the stories of 'ohana, makua, keiki, and the people who serve them, in the spirit of growth.
- Kaiāulu (Community) - To acknowledge, incorporate, and empower the unique cultures that comprise our island state.
- Laulima (Collective Leadership) - To bring together the many hands that support babies and 'ohana in our community, with the belief that we can achieve more when we work together.

We look forward to continuing to build and be a part of the neighborhood supporting babies, toddlers, preschoolers, and the family and community around them.



Executive Director's Message

If I had to sum up 2023 in one phrase, it would be "everything, everywhere, all at once." 2023 was incredibly busy for us at AIMH HI. We spent the better part of the year developing curriculum and providing training to the providers of home visiting and early intervention services in our state. We led and participated in technical assistance teams to develop infant and early childhood mental health consultation and finding sustainable pathways for financing IECMH services. We've given thought to our mission and how our work will shift and evolve through updating our strategic plan. We also decided to expand our team at the end of the year and elected new board members for the first time!

With all the joyous moments we had at AIMH HI, we know that 2023 was a year of devastation for many. We held hands with our friends and colleagues on Maui, who experienced, and continue to experience, one of the most catastrophic natural disasters of our time. We know there is a long road to recovery and resilience, and we intend to be there to support our Maui friends and colleagues every step of the way. We at AIMH HI are a voice to remind the community that mental health is developing throughout infancy and early childhood, and to not forget that we have an opportunity to proactively intervene for the littlest ones impacted by the wildfires by providing support to their caregivers now.

I am honored to work alongside the AIMH HI staff and community in strengthening the amazing providers who serve Hawai'i's youngest children. I am looking forward to what the future holds, not only for our organization, but for our beloved state of Hawai'i Nei.

Me ke aloha pumehana,
Erin Henderson Lacerdo

President's Message

As we look around the corner at the end of 2023, the AIMH HI Board of Directors feel deeply grateful.

- We feel deeply grateful for our dedicated and innovative professional staff who have been expanding the field of infant and early childhood mental health (IECMH) here in Hawai'i. In 2023 they have worked in two directions at once on this effort - providing leadership to those partners who recognize the importance of integrating IECMH into the programs and services they are currently providing and, simultaneously, increasing the professional workforce of IECMH providers in IECMH Competencies, Consultation, Reflective Practice and Child Parent Psychotherapy.
- We are grateful for our startup funders - Hawai'i Community Foundation's Promising Minds Initiative and the Stupski Foundation - who are in the truest sense of the word our partners in the development of and belief in the importance of the IECMH work. They have provided counsel and guidance, but most importantly, their faith that their investment is well placed with AIMH HI. We are grateful for our growing base of community donors, as well.
- We are grateful for the practitioners working in Hawai'i's early childhood field who have taken the opportunity to enhance their professional capacity in the IECMH field through attending the Promising Minds Fellows Program, the Reflective Supervision Cohort and the eighteen-month commitment to Child Parent Psychotherapy. We are grateful for our AIMH HI Members and our Endorsed Practitioners.
- We are grateful for our state and private partners who are working together with AIMH HI to build the vision that "In Hawai'i, the early years are celebrated and revered, first relationships are nurtured, and infant and early childhood mental health is everyone's kuleana."
- And I, as Board President, am grateful for our Board of Directors. 2023 has been a year of major transition for the Board and its Founders. AIMH HI was founded in 2008, and for the last 14 years, the work of AIMH HI has been done by an all volunteer (working) board. In 2021 we were blessed to hire our first Executive Director, Erin Henderson, and a Clinical Specialist, Erika Warner. Since then, we have hired a second Clinical Specialist and a Program Coordinator. All of the members of the working board were in early childhood programs or policy positions. We have recognized that with professional staff in place, the role and function of the Board is changing. We are moving from a "working board" to a "governing board". In this transition, the current Board members honor our founders:

- Gail Breakey
- Linda Rich
- Joan Takamori
- Sharon Taba
- Naomi Kau
- Jean Johnson
- JoAnn Farnsworth
- and outgoing Board member Cherilyn Shiinoki

and welcome the members of our current Governing Board:

- Candace Pang
- Amanda Luning
- Gail Breakey
- JoAnn Farnsworth
- Chris Jackson
- Tina Porras Jones
- Devon Chow
- C. Françoise Acra
- Angela Behm

As Board President, I welcome your thoughts and suggestions for AIMH HI at Joann@AIMHHI.org

With gratitude,
JoAnn Farnsworth



JoAnn Farnsworth (Left) and Erin Henderson Lacerdo (Right)

Growing the AIMH HI Team

In November of 2023, AIMH HI hired a full-time Program Activities Coordinator, Megan O'Donnell, and a full-time Clinical Specialist, Anne-marie Cline, to support AIMH HI's efforts across the state. AIMH HI currently has two full-time staff members and three part-time staff members:

- Erin Henderson-Lacerdo: Executive Director
- Erika Warner: IMH Clinical Specialist
- Anne-marie Cline: Clinical Specialist
- Hide Wu: Administrative Coordinator
- Nicole Manu: Executive Assistant
- Megan O'Donnell: Program Activities Coordinator



Membership

In 2023, AIMH HI grew to 145 active members. Members had access to the 2023 AIMH HI Infant and Toddler Mental Health Forum and AIMH HI's bimonthly newsletter, along with a variety of resources (e.g., articles, professional development opportunity announcements) in the infant early childhood mental health field.

Strategic Plan 2024-2026

In 2023, AIMH HI board members and staff worked on the 2024-2026 Strategic Plan, which highlights the work to come while refining our strategic focus. In this process, we revamped our mission statement and identified the primary efforts of the organization for the next three years.

The next few pages share a snapshot of the 2024-2026 Strategic Plan.





Association for Infant Mental Health Hawai'i

www.AIMHHI.org

MISSION

We nurture the emotional health and resiliency of Hawai'i's keiki by growing a network of professionals and a system of care that is founded upon infant and early childhood mental health practices.

VISION

In Hawai'i the early years are celebrated and revered, first relationships are nurtured, and infant and early childhood mental health is everyone's kuleana

VALUES

- Pilina (Relationships) – All that we do is centered in fostering positive relationships.
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Strategic Plan 2024-2026



Association for Infant Mental Health Hawai'i

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKFORCE & COMMUNITY CONSULTATION IECMH SYSTEMS INTEGRATION ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Expand, Develop & Connect an IECMH-skilled workforce in Hawaii

- Develop & grow IECMH competencies for providers
- Grow Reflective Supervision/Consultation (RSC) capacity in the field
- Grow AIMH HI staff capacity to train the IECMH field
- Grow & support diverse & connected IECMH provider community in Hawaii



Support IECMH Best Practices in the Field

- Develop & support Reflective Practice in the field
- Support IECMH competency-based practice in the field
- Expand IECMH Consultation utilization for providers serving young children
- Develop useful IECMH resources to providers



Partner on IECMH Systems Integration

- Support IECMH competency-based practice in systems
- Lead implementation of best practices in IECMH-Consultation
- Grow understanding & impact awareness around need for IECMH practice integration
- Ensure diverse representation in systems-level partnerships & strategies for growth of IECMH field



Strengthen AIMH HI to support growing needs of IECMH workforce

- Build sustainable systems for operations & programs
- Assess & strengthen membership engagement efforts
- Expand data management & evaluation systems
- Continual development of governance structure, policies & practices
- Demonstrate commitment to learning & implementing DEIB practices in our work



Brand Story

As a grantee of the Stupski Foundation, we were privileged to participate in a Communications Bootcamp, expertly led by Wall to Wall Studios. Through this bootcamp, we were able to clarify for ourselves how we hope to be received in the community and to identify ways we can be more effective in helping others understand what we do. Our brand story is included at the beginning of this report, along with our updated tagline: “Holding the hands of those who hold the hands of babies.”

Website Refresh & Membership Experience

In 2023, we wanted to have more control over and ease in creating a website that is more dynamic and responsive to our needs. We moved our website to a new platform and brought website maintenance in-house. We now have the ability to update our website regularly and to ensure that the information is relevant for our members and the general public. We are thankful to members of AIMH HI who have stayed with us through the years, and we have our eyes set in 2024 to create an even more meaningful member experience!

Fellows and Professional Development

Promising Minds Fellows, Cohort 4

AIMH HI kicked off the fourth cohort of Promising Minds Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Fellows in July 2023 and will complete the final session in April 2024. This program is designed to deepen knowledge and expertise in prevention, promotion and intervention professionals who work with Hawai'i's youngest and their families, as well as to create and strengthen a network of support and collaboration. This year, we welcomed some new faculty; focusing on previous fellows and other community experts such as Kalauokekahuli whose focus is on providing culturally-based prenatal, birth, and postpartum education and service, as well as resource caregivers. As a learning community, Fellows also provide deep dives into their own work and share with their peers as a way to connect resources across programs and agencies. We strive to amplify the diversity of voices heard in our Fellows program as we continue to demonstrate the depth of expertise in our own communities through those who are supporting the healthy development of first relationships.



Infant Mental Health Foundations

AIMH HI worked with previous Fellows – Eri Rodrigues, Lee Lacerdo, Staci Hanashiro, Wendy Herrera, and Janina Martin – to develop a 10-module series designed to train providers working in the prevention scope of practice. The intent of this series is to provide a baseline of common language, theories, and understanding that align to the Competencies of Infant Mental Health that will go across sectors. This series was delivered to home visitors in the Department of Health's Your 'Ohana Network, as well as to providers in the Department of Health's Early Intervention Section, and we look forward to delivering these modules to other early childhood providers in 2024.

Case-Based Learning for Medical Providers

Partnering with the Department of Health's Public Health Nursing Branch and a federally qualified health center, Kooka Kalihi Valley, AIMH HI developed a 4-part series of workshops aimed to introduce IECMH to the medical field through partial content and partial case review. Through offering this series to both organizations, we were able to share about IECMH with over 100 medical providers.

Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Systems Development

Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation is a prevention-based approach pairing highly trained consultants with adults who work with infants and young children in a variety of settings. Mental health consultation is not about “fixing kids.” Nor is it therapy. “Mental health consultation equips caregivers to facilitate children’s healthy social and emotional development” (CoE, 2023) AIMH HI was part of a cross-sector team that was provided technical assistance by ZERO TO THREE to work towards building an Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health consultation system. The work of this group, consisting of public and private partners, resulted in a list of recommendations, as well as considerations, to help build a competency-based consultation system for Hawai‘i. A key agreement between the members of the workgroup was that consultants should be steeped in competency, as opposed to mental health licensure, and that multiple pathways to become a consultant should be accessible to the wide range of professionals who support the mental health needs of the community. This agreement is a result of the group’s commitment to equity, dismantling systemic barriers to accessing mental health training and education, and the recognition of existing cultural healing practices in our community.

AIMH HI is using the recommendations from this workgroup to develop its Competency-based Consultation Rostering System to provide relationship-focused, culturally-sensitive and reflective consultation to the hands that hold our keiki. In late 2023, a crosswalk between the Competency Guidelines for Endorsement for Culturally-Sensitive, Relationship-Focused Practice Promoting Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health and the Center of Excellence for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Competencies was released. AIMH HI played a pivotal role in developing this crosswalk by connecting with the Hawaii Community Foundation to provide funding, as well as by participating in feedback and utilization of such a tool. The crosswalk is a foundational piece of an AIMH HI IECMH Consultation Rostering system, as it outlines the many paths to demonstrating competency in both IECMH, as well as IECMH consultation - both nationally recognized sets of competencies which will bring both quality and access to mental health consultants in our state.

Consultation Intensive, Cohort 1

Consultation Intensive, Cohort 1

In October of 2022, 16 Infant and Early Childhood professionals embarked on our first Promising Minds Consultation Intensive (CI) Fellows Program. CI Fellows learned together in a virtual format for 4 months about the key elements of the consultative stance developed by Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development’s Center of Excellence for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation. The consultative stance, which is a way of being and a way of guiding the collaborative work between consultant and consultee, is a key competency in high-quality mental health consultation in early childhood settings. Fellows then applied their learning and skills in small group field experiences to observe, assess and provide mental health consultation to seven early childhood centers.

Feedback from Infant and Early Childhood professionals receiving consultation from CI trainees included comments such as: “The consultation impact my work by making me realize how important it is to understand a child on the why and how’s.” “I also feel with their visit and appreciation for my work I feel like I MATTER.” “It gave me more confidence to run my child care business and get more serious.”

To learn more about the outcomes of this cohort, visit this [link](#).



Child Parent Psychotherapy Learning Collaborative

In December of 2022, AIMH HI launched its first Child Parent Psychotherapy (CPP) learning collaborative. This 18-month intensive learning and practice opportunity trains and supports licensed clinicians with backgrounds working with children ages 0-5 in a dyadic, trauma- focused therapeutic intervention, supporting both keiki and makua. CPP places significant emphasis on relationships and culturally-sensitive work with families who have experienced trauma, separation, loss and grief. The CPP cohort currently includes 10 clinicians from O'ahu and Hawai'i Island. They will complete their training in June of 2024, increasing the number of interventionists who are specially trained to treat trauma in infants, children and their families - a much needed resource in Hawai'i. We will continue to invest in the systemic integration of dyadic intervention within our community and have a second cohort slated to begin in late 2024, focusing on supporting therapists serving Maui County.



Reflective Supervision/Consultation (RSC), Endorsement and IECMH Consultation

We continue to support the field by providing training on Reflective Supervision/Consultation. In 2024, we focused on building the capacity of the Department of Health Early Intervention Section by training their administrative leadership and program managers across the state. This year-long initiative included 18 hours of didactic training on the provision of RSC and 36 hours of group RSC, and serves as the starting point for Early Intervention programs to increase the support of their workforce through RSC. We also continue to provide direct support to other providers through individual and group RSC. We are humbled and grateful for the opportunity to support the workforce in this capacity, with the vision that we will one day have enough RSC providers across our communities to serve our

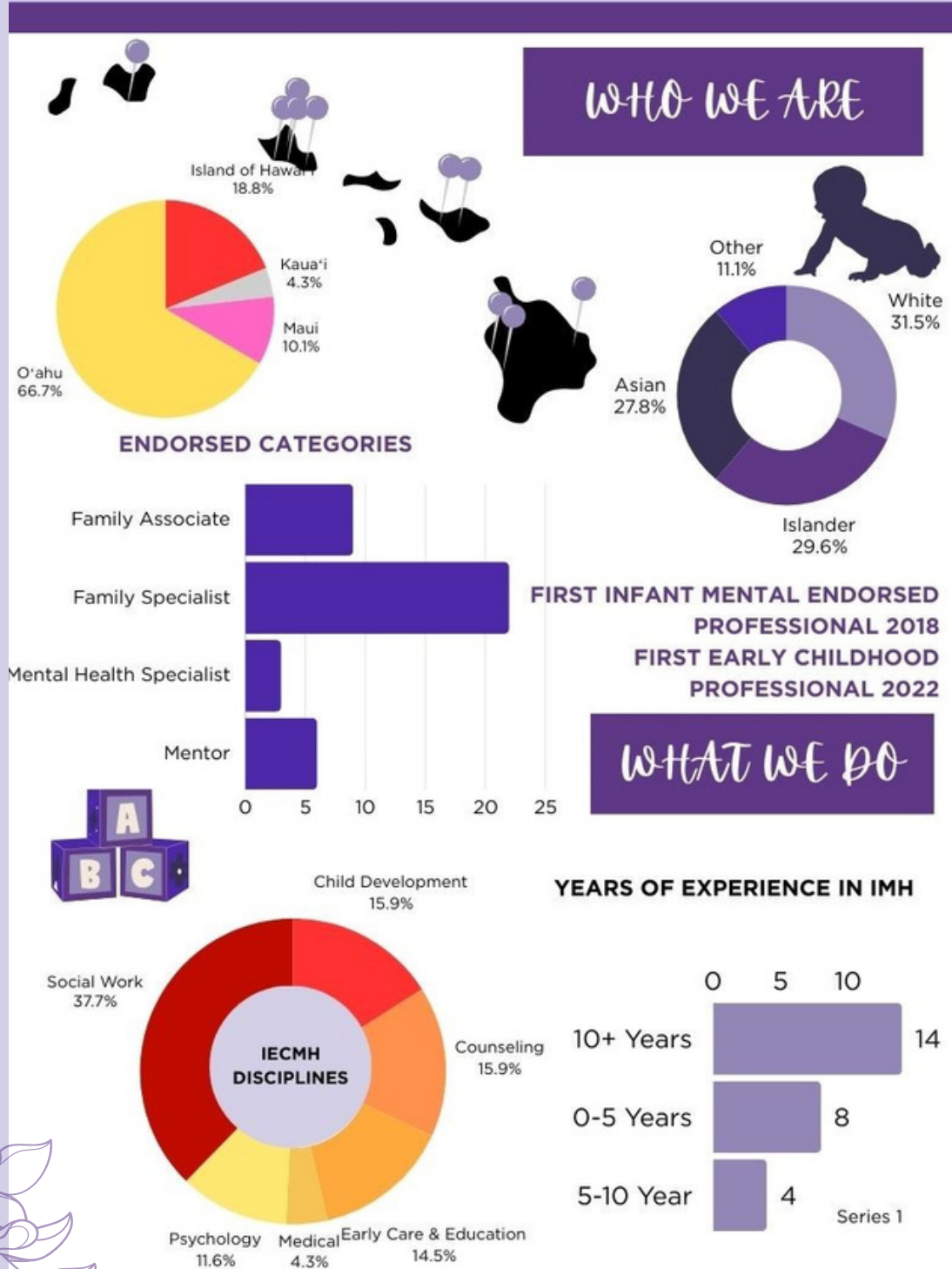
Endorsement

Endorsement® is meant to honor professionals who apply infant & early childhood mental health (IECMH) principles to their practice. It is granted through documentation and verification of the required specialized education, work, in-service training, and reflective supervision/consultation (RS/C experiences). Endorsement® is not a license but an overlay that complements one's professional license and/or other credentials.

AIMH HI is the exclusive license holder in Hawai'i for the Endorsement credential and belongs to a national group of other infant mental health associations that seek to support an early childhood workforce that shares a set of competencies in their work.

AIMH HI ENDORSEMENT AT A GLANCE 2023

Endorsement is an internationally recognized credential used to demonstrate specialization in the infant-early childhood mental health (IECMH) field. Endorsement supports and recognizes the development of professionals who work with or on behalf of pregnant people, infants, young children, and their families.



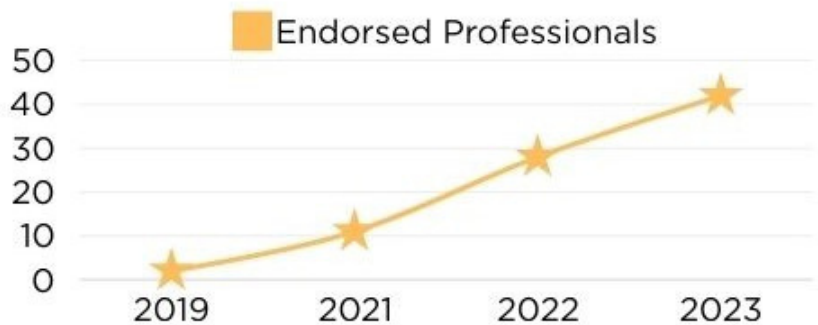


HOW WE'VE GROWN



OVER 50% HAVE BEEN MENTORED THROUGH THE PROMISING MINDS FELLOWSHIP GAINING IMH FOUNDATIONAL TRAINING AND REFLECTIVE SUPERVISION

HAWAII'S INFANT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMUNITY OF MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS HAS OVER 80 PROFESSIONALS ENDORSED OR BECOMING ENDORSED



Mental Health Consultation

The field of early childhood has a need for mental health consultation that is developmentally appropriate, recognizing the early relational needs of young children. AIMH HI provides infant and early childhood mental health consultation directly to agencies, as well as in systems-work. We are currently working with two Head Start programs (Maui County, East Hawai'i). We also support the greater system in our connection with Kakou 4 Keiki on Maui. In August of 2023, a devastating wildfire tore through beautiful Lahaina, and we quickly pivoted to share resources and provide connections to support the mental health needs of young children and their providers. With funding from the Perigee Fund, we are providing direct consultation to programs and helping to build capacity within the workforce on Maui to support the long-term needs of the community.



System Integration of Infant Early Childhood Mental Health

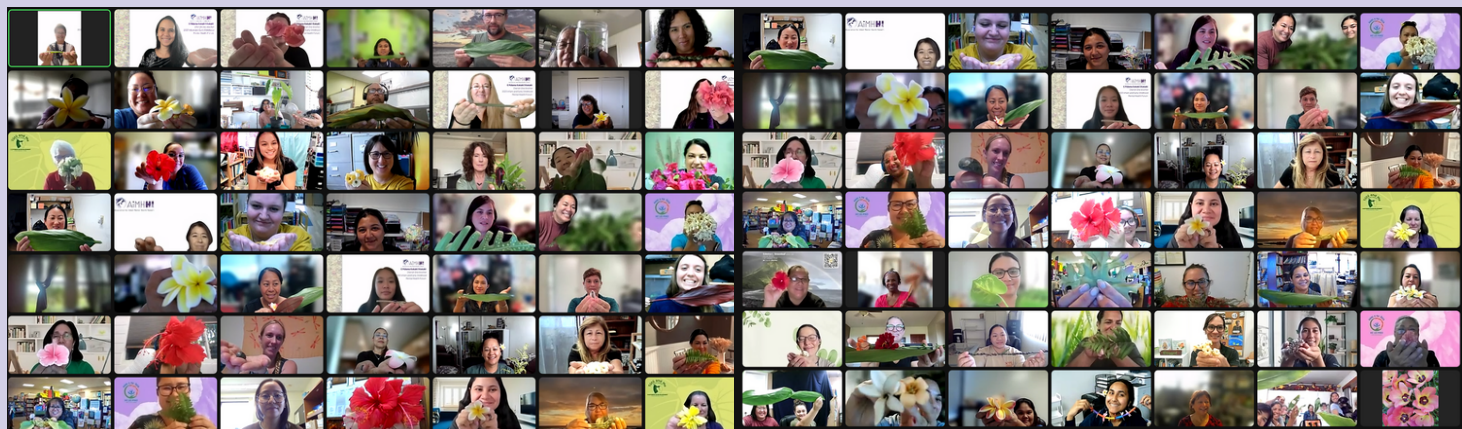
Celebrate Babies Week

Governor Josh Green proclaimed October 16-20th, 2023 as “Celebrate Babies Week,” coordinated with other states across the nation. AIMH HI kicked off Celebrate Babies week by sharing information all week long, and ended the week with the Annual Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Forum on October 20, 2023. AIMH HI members and some of their children told us in short videos how to “Celebrate Babies.” We were honored that Governor Green accepted our request to have this week recognized as a time to celebrate babies.



AIMH HI Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Forum 2023

AIMH HI hosted our second annual Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Forum on October 20th, 2023 – titled “E Pūlama Kekahi i Kekahi” and translated to “Care for One Another.” The Forum was aptly titled, as the event was just a few short months after the Maui Wildfires. We quickly moved to ensure the Forum was responsive to the community and asked Chandra Ghosh-Ippen to be our keynote speaker. As an expert in treating trauma in young children, Chandra shared tangible strategies to talk about trauma with young children and a way for adults to understand how trauma might show up in children. The Forum also featured our colleagues at Maui Family Support Services and Maui Economic Opportunity, providers of Early Head Start and Head Start, to share about their experience in being on the front lines of supporting families who experienced some of the worst moments of their lives. We were honored to have 101 participants from across the state attend this event. Check out the pictures of the virtual lei created with the attendees of this event, below!





Integrated Infant and Early Childhood Behavioral Health State Plan (IECBH)

As the plan for integrating infant and early childhood mental health across sectors and departments is now in its third year, AIMH HI continues to participate in the tracking of progress and helping to move the plan forward. To learn more about the status of the plan, please visit Early Child Action Strategy's website which includes more information about the progress of the plan and steps that have been completed.

Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH)



Addressing mental health needs of all young children and their caregivers in Hawai'i

Technical Assistance Teams

ZERO TO THREE, a national non-profit organization whose mission is to ensure that all babies have a strong start in life, led two technical assistance teams in Hawai'i. AIMH HI was fortunate to be a part of both teams, one focusing on consultation and the other on financing infant mental health services.

The IECMH Consultation TA group consisted of partners from state departments (Department of Health, Department of Human Services, Department of Education), as well as private organizations (Hawaii Community Foundation, Parents and Children Together, Early Childhood Action Strategy, AIMH HI). Together, this group spent two years thinking through what an IECMH system could and should look like with respect to a consultation model, referral system and data collection, workforce qualifications and development, and infrastructure.

The group has transitioned to meeting quarterly to discuss the current state of consultation and how we all can partner for a seamless system across sectors. The financing TA group consists of partners from the same organizations and departments indicated above. Part of the work in 2023 included fiscal mapping, identifying what services are already funding, and where the gaps are in sustainable funding. The team went to Minnesota for a convening, and relationships were built that are aiding in moving the work forward. This group will continue through 2024 with ZERO TO THREE technical support.



Our Partners

- Hawai'i Community Foundation
- Stupski Foundation
- Perigee Fund
- EPIC 'Ohana
- Zero to Three
- Partners in Development Foundation
- Hawai'i State Department of Health (FHSD, HVSU, EIS)
- Family Support Hawai'i
- Child and Family Service
- Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc.
- Child Parent Psychotherapy Dissemination Team
- Early Childhood Action Strategy
- Family Hui Hawai'i
- Parents and Children Together

Mahalo

We are grateful to YOU, our partner in this work of supporting the healthy development of first relationships. We invite to you to journey with us by staying in touch by being a member of AIMH HI, joining hands with over 100 other professionals in our state with the same vision - keeping our babies in the middle of all the work we do.

We look forward to another year of holding the hands of those who hold the hands of babies.

all our aloha,
the staff of AIMH HI

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