



NEWSLETTER

December 2021 Edition

Contents:

- Child Care Social Emotional and Mental Health Funding Support
- The Power of Positive Experiences
- Lived Experience Insights
- Mental Health 101 – Holidays and Mental Health
- OCMH Updates
- Legislative & Policy Updates
- Children's Mental Health in Professional Literature Of Interest

Welcome to the Office of Children's Mental Health (OCMH) December Newsletter!

Child Care Social Emotional Development and Mental Health Funding Support

Support for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC) has been a longstanding priority for our Children's Mental Health Collective Impact initiative. Financial support for IECMHC and additional evidence-based programs that improve children's mental health are included in the Department of Children and Families (DCF) request for authority from the Committee on Joint Finance to spend \$194 million from the Supplemental Discretionary Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) award provided by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). [DCF's request](#) includes:

- **\$7.78 million** for evidence-based social emotional tools for children in early care and education programs, including funding to expand the [Wisconsin Pyramid Model](#), funding for the trauma-informed social emotional development framework [Conscious Discipline](#), funding for social emotional and mental health supports for school-age children, and funding for [Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Endorsements](#) credentials for professionals who work with or on behalf of infants, toddlers, young children, and their families
- **\$5 million** to build a statewide system of [Infant Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation \(IECMHC\)](#)

If your organization is interested in submitting a letter in support of this request, please contact Amanda Merkwae (amanda.merkwae1@wisconsin.gov) by **Friday, December 17th**.

Individuals who live in a Joint Finance Committee member's district may wish to contact their Legislators to express their opinion. For a list of Joint Finance Committee members use this [link](#), then scroll down to the Member tab.

(continued)

The Power of Positive Childhood Experiences

Positive childhood experiences are more powerful than we may think. Researchers are beginning to understand how we are shaped by both the negative and positive experiences we have in childhood. Recent studies show that positive experiences during childhood build the foundation for people's ability to cope and thrive throughout life.



Lots of research has shown that abuse, neglect, and other adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) increase the risk of poor physical and health outcomes throughout a person's life. However, children who experienced trauma but can also point to positive experiences and relationships generally do better than similarly traumatized children who haven't had the benefit of positive experiences. Many researchers consider positive childhood experiences to be a "buffer" that protects against the worst consequences of trauma.

What we can do:

- **Schools** – Find ways to help low-performing or marginalized students feel a sense of pride and belonging at school.
- **Communities** – Promote school, youth sports, and other youth functions where parents and other community members can support and encourage youth.
- **Policymakers** – Fund libraries, parks, and other public spaces where all children can connect positively with other people, regardless of family income.
- **Parents** – Start, or stick with, family routines such as meals together, bedtime stories, chore time, gaming together, or family walks.

Positive Childhood Experiences is the topic of OMCH's December Fact Sheet. Read the [Fact Sheet](#) to see more recommendations on what we can do and examples of positive childhood experiences.

Lived Experience Insights

OCMH Lived Experience Partner Shalene Fayne shares her insights on positive childhood experiences.

A lot of people didn't grow up with positive experiences. Schools and social workers should give a list of positive experiences to parents so they know how to positively impact their children. It would help parents to be able to incorporate that within their parenting. It will help them to understand the flip side. If we have more positive things to look towards, we can see the positive things that can happen. If I interact more with my child, if they have that one positive caregiver, that friend, or that school, it will help change that narrative.

I had a lot of trauma in my past but also a lot of positive experiences, like Black Achievers, church, Lutheran Puppet Shows, and Kids for Christ on Saturday. In the home, we had movie nights and structured dinner time. I always had that one friend I could talk to. That was beneficial for positive outcomes for me. I don't see that I have that many health conditions because I had those positive

LIVED EXPERIENCE PARTNERS BUILD CONNECTIONS AND CAPACITY TO CREATE SYSTEMS CHANGE



influences in my life. I did have some positive interactions. Even if you don't have the money to spend, making cookies and family movie nights are those little moments that are significant.

- *Shalene Fayne, Parent Lived Experience Partner, Milwaukee*

Mental Health 101 – Holidays and Our Mental Health

*By Renee Sutkay, Journey Mental Health, Associate Director,
Comprehensive Community Services*

The holiday time brings up so many emotions and feelings: joy, excitement, fun, grief, loneliness, worry, etc. Oftentimes, these emotions stir memories that were positive and/or negative. Not everyone has had the magical holiday times that are depicted on the commercials that drown the nighttime news. These emotions can sometimes be at odds with each other, causing us to feel pulled one way or the other and then we aren't exactly sure how to feel.



COVID adds an extra layer this year, especially as our world is more open. Should I have dinner with friends? What if I say no? Is it too much of a risk? There are lots of ongoing questions that we continually ask ourselves during the busy holiday season and often pass judgement on ourselves with how we respond. During the holiday season, be kind to yourself and the decisions you make. Sometimes we need to ask ourselves is this hurting me or helping me? It is important to prioritize ourselves and our immediate family during this time.

For more information, read "[My Mental Health Ritual: Self-Compassion and Setting Boundaries.](#)"

OCMH Updates

Happy Holidays and Thank You!

As we close 2021 we reflect on all the truly amazing people that are connected to children's mental health work and our office. Each team and council we have is comprised of talented and passionate people who collectively move our work forward. We can't thank each of you enough for the time you have committed to our meetings and for rolling up your sleeves to get the work done! **From each of us in the Wisconsin Office of Children's Mental Health we thank you and wish you the very best holiday season!**



(continued)

OCMH 2021 Annual Report Event

Save the date – Tuesday, January 11, 2022 at 9 am OCMH will announce the release of our 2021 Annual Report. OCMH is required each year to submit a report to the Legislature that summarizes the work we have done, children’s mental health outcomes data we track, and areas for improvement. The Annual Report Event on January 11th will be virtual and open to the public. [Reserve your spot.](#) If you are on one of our OCMH teams or councils and have already accepted the meeting invitation you do not need to reserve a spot.

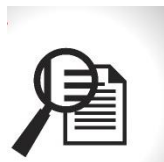


Legislative & Policy Update

Postpartum Medicaid Coverage. (SB 562 /AB 592) This [bill](#) would increase postpartum Medicaid coverage from 60 to 365 days. Mothers during the postpartum period are particularly vulnerable to depression and suicide. Untreated mental illness and substance abuse disorders have lasting impacts on the health and wellbeing of both children and their mothers. This bill was introduced by Senator Joan Ballweg (R-Markesan), a co-chair of the Legislature’s Children’s Caucus and Amy Loudonbeck (R-Clinton). Its more than two dozen co-sponsors include Republicans and Democrats in each house. The Senate version has been referred to the Senate Health Committee; the Assembly version has been referred to the Committee on Insurance, Licensing, and Forestry.

Children’s Mental Health in Professional Literature

OCMH Research Analyst - Advanced Kate McCoy spotlights new, open access articles about children’s mental health.



American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Children’s Hospital Association: Declaration of a National Emergency in Child and Adolescent Mental Health. [Read the article.](#)

Association of Childhood Adversity with Morbidity and Mortality in U.S. Adults: A Systematic Review. [Read the article.](#)

Loneliness in America: How the Pandemic Has Deepened an Epidemic of Loneliness and What We Can Do About It. [Read the article.](#)

The COVID-19 Pandemic Disrupted both School Bullying and Cyberbullying. [Read the article.](#)

More articles are available on the [OCMH Website.](#)

Of Interest

Applications for Coordinated Specialty Care Services grants for regional, county and/or tribal consortiums with a population of at least 300,000 are available. Applications are due January 20, 2022. [Lean more.](#)

QUESTIONS AREN'T CONNECTIONS

QUESTIONS CAN *INCREASE* ANXIETY
FOR MANY KIDS

Instead, try statements that show you are interested and paying attention:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| • How was school? | ← | • You look like you've had a long day |
| • Did your math test go ok? | ← | • I was thinking about you today during your math test. |
| • Did you find a friend to play with at recess? | ← | • I remember last night you were worried about recess. |
| • How do you feel? | ← | • Your smile is SO big! |

@LINDSAYBRAMAN



lindsaybraman

The Office of Children's Mental Health

Children.wi.gov

OCMH@wisconsin.gov

Follow us on Twitter @WIKidsMH