

NORTH CAROLINA INFANT & EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



NCIMHA

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INFANT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD
MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION



ABOUT NCIMHA

The mission of this statewide, interdisciplinary, non-profit organization is to promote mental health for children birth through age 5 and expectant parents by collaborating to strengthen early childhood systems and developing an effective, informed and supported workforce.

The mission is accomplished by providing training on infant and early childhood mental health and reflective supervision/consultation to all early childhood professionals, as well as hosting an annual, in-person conference. It is also accomplished by supporting early childhood professionals to pursue Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) Endorsement status, which formally acknowledges their expertise in working with and/or on behalf of, children under 6, and their families, including expectant families.



In 2023, we continued to expand our three main activities - Endorsement, Professional Development (training/annual conference) and Reflective Supervision/Consultation - to further our mission and help bring a more diverse, cross-sector group of professionals into the infant and early childhood mental health community.

Our Statewide Advisory Committee, made up of almost 30 early childhood leaders across various fields, is in its third year and continues to meet regularly. These leaders provide guidance to NCIMHA on establishing the IECMH competency and Endorsement program to support early childhood mental health initiatives and propose strategies.

“[I have enjoyed] seeing and getting to know colleagues and leaders in the IECMH sector across the state. Seeing the endorsement process grow from the planning stages to implementation and growth across the state. Seeing the appetite for systems building, enhancing and sharing knowledge and working together to strengthen the services offered to IMH professionals across the state.”

-- Statewide Advisory Committee member



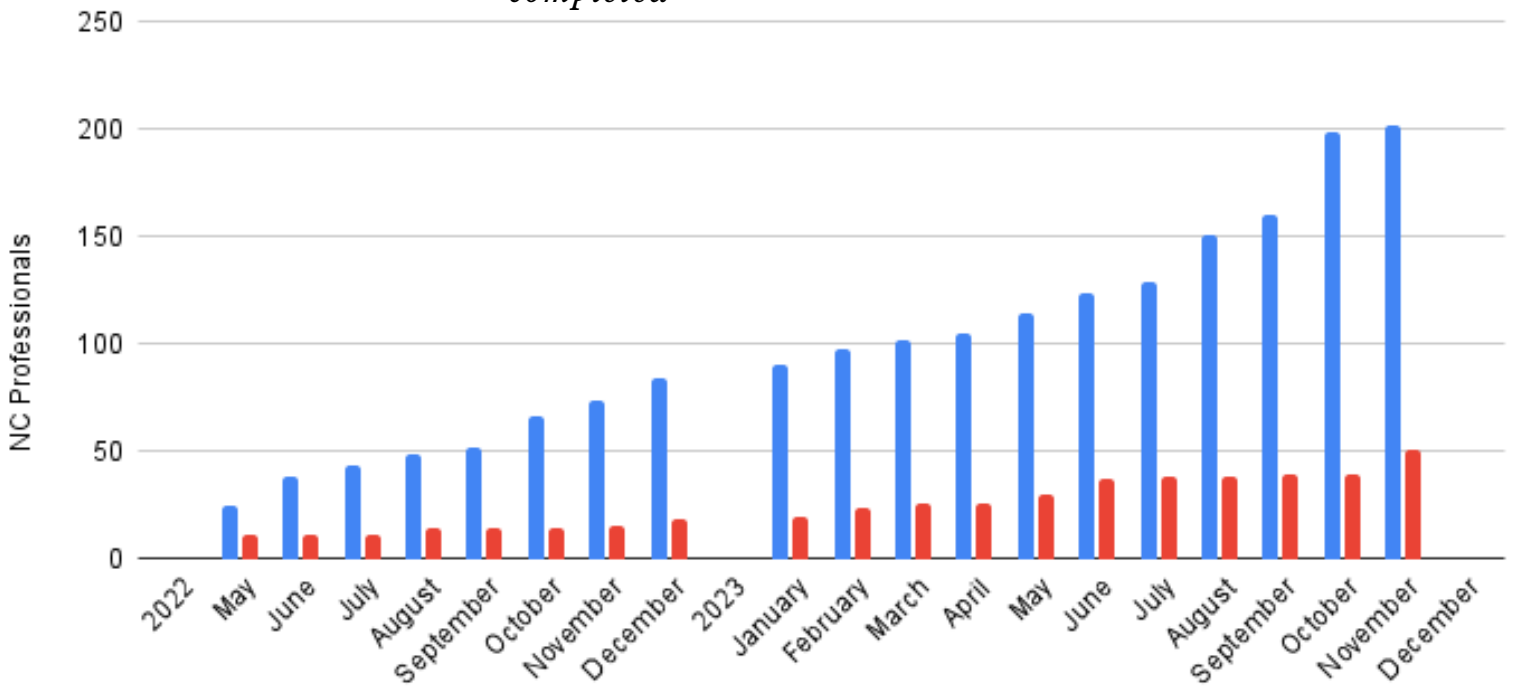
I/ECMH ENDORSEMENT®



In 2023, NCIMHA added the Early Childhood Mental Health Endorsement® credential for professionals supporting children ages 3-6. The initial leadership cohort became Endorsed in May of 2023 and the ECMH was opened to the entire professional community. As of May 2023, both the Infant Mental Health (ages prenatal-3) and the Early Childhood Mental Health (ages 3-6) Endorsements are available to North Carolina professionals. 111 professionals were engaged in the NCIMHA Endorsement process in 2023.

Engaged in Endorsement and Endorsed Professionals Over Time

Interest from completed ■ *Endorsed* ■



“I feel like endorsement helps to demonstrate that our work is serious and should be taken as such; so often society treats us as glorified babysitters but we have so much specialized knowledge and experience and deserve to be respected.” --Endorsed professional

I/ECMH ENDORSEMENT®



In 2023, NCIMHA introduced two new supports for Endorsement applicants. Teams of professionals from the same organization or workforce were offered specialized assistance: **Enhanced Endorsement Support Cohorts**. We piloted this approach, with funding from DCDEE, for the Family Child Care Home Technical Assistance (TA) Workforce in the summer of 2023 and towards the end of the year with the Healthy Social Behavior Specialists. A total of 56 technical assistants/coaches serving NC early care & education settings were engaged in the application process.

These cohorts were supported through the Endorsement process by an **Endorsement Ambassador**. Participants attended monthly sessions, each dedicated to completing a different section of the Endorsement application.

There were 51 Endorsed professionals by end of 2023.



“I pursued endorsement because it matters! I wanted to join my esteemed colleagues on the NC Healthy Social Behaviors Initiative in becoming approved and certified by NCIMHA. Earning such an endorsement shows I care about the quality of service I provide when working with young children and their families. I am honored to be endorsed by NCIMHA!” -- Endorsed Professional

TRAINING



In order to help professionals meet the competencies necessary for an Endorsement and enhance their infant and early childhood mental health (IECMH) knowledge, NCIMHA sponsored 36.5 hours of training in 2023. The newly hired Training Coordinator, funded by a SAMHSA contract, coordinated the following opportunities:

1. *Quarterly webinar series in March, May, September and December (8 hours)*
2. *Reflective Supervision Consultation Advanced Series (9 hours)*
3. *Nurturing Attachment in Early Care and Education (3 hours)*
4. *2023-2024 Reflective Supervision Learning Collaborative kickoff (11 hours)*
5. *Annual Conference (5.5 hours)*

To contribute to the knowledge and skills needed for Endorsement, our quarterly webinars, that were virtual, free to members and targeting cross-sector professionals, covered:

- Understanding, Assessing, and Strengthening a System of Care for Early Wellbeing: Reflections from Durham's READY Project
- Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation: Voices from the Field
- Role of Attachment in the Perinatal Period
- Ghosts in the Frontera: Integrating Trauma Healing and Migrant Justice During the Perinatal Period

"I'm so appreciative of NCIMHA offering simultaneous interpretation. Way to go! "

-- Quote from a Ghosts in the Frontera training participant

ANNUAL CONFERENCE



In 2023, we offered our first in-person annual conference, **Linking Arms & Learning Together: Building Professional Relationships to Promote Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health**, since 2019. In an effort to have geographic equity, we chose to hold our 2023 annual conference in the eastern part of our state in Rocky Mount in Nash county. 150 participants were in attendance. The conference was supported by the Area L AHEC. In addition to our keynote speaker, Darneisha Allen from Zero to Three, we offered 13 IECMH related workshops.

One participant said, “the conference was absolutely amazing. I have attended countless conferences and symposiums and all I seem to leave unfulfilled. This conference was enjoyable, the venue was conducive for what the conference was about and the staff of the conference were very helpful, professional and fun. This was a top tier experience.”



REFLECTIVE SUPERVISION

In our second year of funding from The Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Association (SAMHSA) to grow the capacity of Reflective Supervision/Consultation in North Carolina, we kicked off our first cohort of an annual Reflective Supervision/Consultation Learning Collaborative. The goal of the Learning Collaborative is to develop an effective community of RSC providers who will support each other, staff at their agencies or organizations as well as candidates for Endorsement.

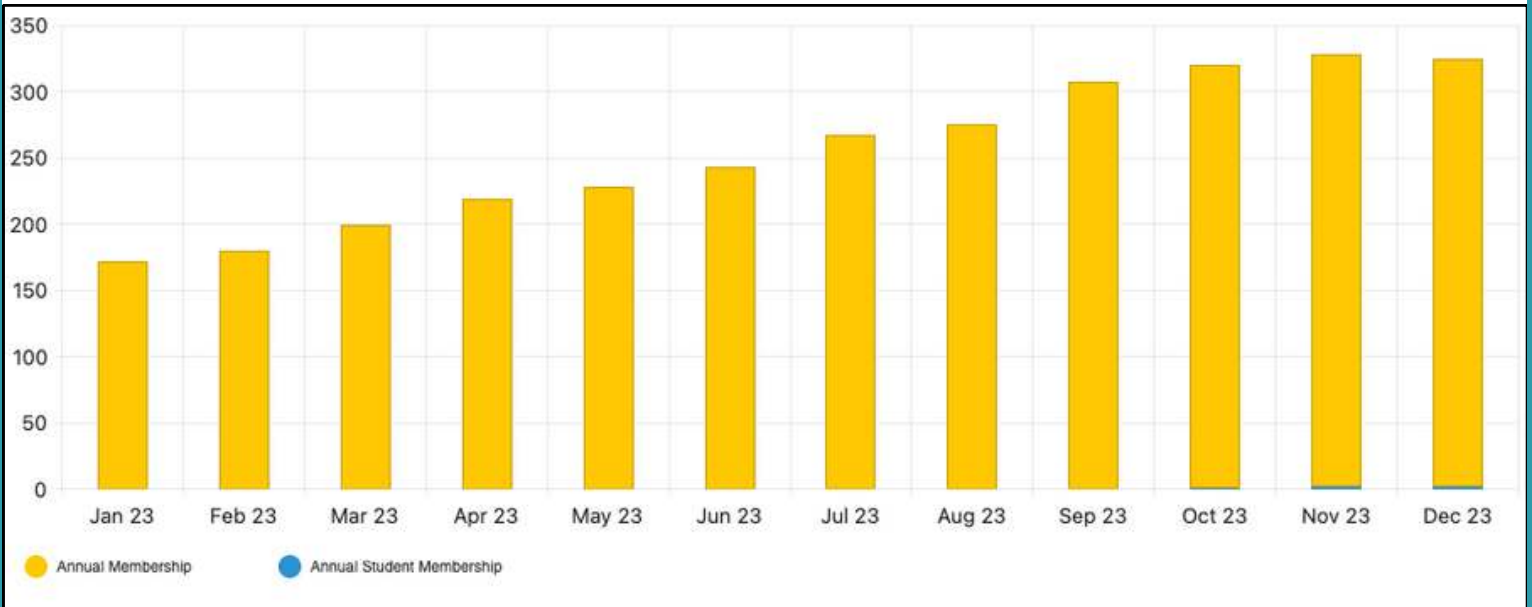


The Learning Collaborative commenced in the fall of 2023 with a two-day, in-person training session with facilitators from the Alliance for the Advancement of Infant Mental Health. After the initial 11 hours of training, there will be one day of virtual training in April of 2024 and then conclude with a final virtual training day in September of 2024. During the year-long collaborative, participants will meet monthly in small groups with a Reflective Consultant to receive their own group reflective supervision as they begin the process of providing reflective supervision their own agencies.

MEMBERSHIP



A big part of our mission to strengthen the early childhood workforce across sectors is focused on getting the word out that early childhood (0-5) mental health is important. North Carolina now has a dedicated organization whose purpose is to champion and promote this message.



Professionals in various early childhood fields are becoming members of NCIMHA! As people participate in our trainings, experience the Endorsement process and meet our staff at many statewide early childhood initiatives, membership remained steady in 2023 (77 new).

The Early Care and Education workforce continues to make up the majority of our membership. However, 2023 saw an increase in professionals in the early intervention workforce and clinicians becoming members.

To support engagement with students enrolled full-time in higher education, we also created a new discounted membership category - Annual Student Membership.



In 2023, our primary funding source remained the Division of Child Development & Early Education (DCDEE) through the Preschool Development Grant (PDG). Our remaining funds from 2022 (\$52,923.75) were rolled into 2023 and an additional **\$175,000** was added that will conclude at the end of the year. This funding was to develop and implement the initial Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Endorsement System with assistance from the national Alliance.

October 2022 through August of 2023 was our first year of funding from Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA), in collaboration with the Center for Child and Family Health (CCFH). We were able to hire a training coordinator and update our website to accommodate the revision of the IECMH resource catalog.

Our second funding year kicked off in September of 2023 with our first SAMHSA funded Reflective Supervision/Consultation Learning Collaborative (RSCLC) for 60 early childhood professionals seeking experience and training in reflective supervision/consultation.

2023 FINANCIALS



Statement of Activity

Revenue - **\$305,613.15**

Expenses - **\$282,635.93**

Bank Account Balances

Checking - **\$71,822.08**

Money Market - **\$33,050.67**



Professional partnerships remain critical to successfully reaching the full, multi-sector workforce and to making the critical systems-level impact. In 2023, NCIMHA collaborated with the efforts of the following organizations or initiatives:

- Alliance for the Advancement of Infant Mental Health
- EarlyWell - a policy initiative of NC Child and the Early Childhood Foundation
- Think Babies NC Alliance
- The Attachment Network of NC
- IECMH Consultation Workgroup
- Division of Child Development & Early Education (DCDEE)

This year we presented at a number of other professionals' conferences on how NCIMHA supports and prepares the early childhood workforce to support positive infant and early childhood mental health. These conferences included:

- Smart Start Conference
- ASK conference
- Exceptional Children's Conference
- Behavioral Health Springboard Conference

NCIMHA staff attended the The National Black Child Development Institute and the NC Pyramid Model State Leadership event.

“[NCIMHA and Endorsement] gives connections to colleagues to help me navigate the field and feel supported in my work”

-- NCIMHA member

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY



In 2023, the NCIMHA Board of Directors put into practice their commitment to the Diversity Informed Tenets for Work with Infants, Children and Families. The Board partnered with consultant Dr. Paulette Stephens to begin an internal exploration of power, privilege and oppression and how it shows up for individuals as well as its impact on the organization. The work began in August of 2023 with a series of trainings for the NCIMHA Board and staff. The work will continue in 2024.

NCIMHA seeks to be continually informed by the wisdom of diversity and to become a more high-performing, inclusive organization. As such, the Association is committed to maintaining a Board composition reflecting diversity in ethnicity, professional experience, gender, age, and geographic area.

The staff of NCIMHA also made some shifts at the end of 2023. The previous role of a Training Coordinator was replaced by a Professional Development Outreach Coordinator.



NCIMHA is excited to continue our goals. We remain committed to:

- Increase the competency-based trainings we provide through our quarterly webinar series and annual conference.
- Increase infant and early childhood mental health awareness, our membership and participation in NCIMHA activities.
- Develop further partnerships and increase our representation in important early childhood spaces.
- Continue building NC's capacity to offer Reflective Supervisions across the state and within various sectors.
- Expand our membership levels to include students and organizations.
- Increase and diversify our funding sources.

*We thank YOU
for your support
and partnership!*



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