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ENDORSEMENT® OPPORTUNITIES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH
Learn more about the Possibilities from First 5 Alabama



Montgomery, Ala. - All babies in Alabama need good health, strong families, and positive early learning experiences to foster healthy brain development and realize their full potential. The Alabama Association for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (AAIEMH), also known as First 5 Alabama, is a statewide non-profit professional organization dedicated to advancing the infant and early childhood workforce by ensuring professionals are trained in the most current scientific advances in child development, infant and early childhood mental health principles, and relationship-based practices.

First 5 Alabama strives to help build strong communities, thriving families and children that are healthy, safe and ready to learn by matching caregivers with trained infant and early childhood mental health informed professionals during a child’s earliest years in life, from pregnancy through kindergarten.

A primary function of First 5 Alabama is to build the capacity and competency of those who work with young children and families through professional development, receiving reflective support, and engaging in the Endorsement® process. The Endorsement® for Culturally Sensitive, Relationship-Focused Practice Promoting Infant Mental Health (IMH-E®) and Early Childhood Mental Health® (ECMH-E®) provides recognition of specialized knowledge and expertise for professionals working with or on behalf of children, birth through age 5 and their families.

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Endorsement® is meant to honor professionals who apply infant and early childhood mental health principles to their practice. Endorsement® is cross-sector and multidisciplinary and is open to professionals in fields that include, mental health, nursing, psychiatry, home visiting, early intervention, early care and education, among others. Endorsement® also represents a commitment to the promotion and practice of infant and early childhood mental health within the professional's chosen discipline and scope of practice.

While Endorsement® is available across diverse specialties spanning the promotion, prevention, intervention continuum of care, licensed mental health providers have the opportunity to join their peers in international recognition, research, and scholarship in the rapidly growing field of infant and early childhood mental health.

The First 5 Alabama staff and leadership work to facilitate, support, and encourage cooperation, coordination, and collaboration among those concerned with promoting the optimal development of infants, toddlers, young children and families. To learn more about how to become Endorsed®, please contact Dallas Rabig, LPC, IMH-E®, Endorsement Coordinator for First 5 Alabama.

In January 2017, First 5 Alabama was chartered as a professional association becoming an affiliate of the Alliance for the Advancement of Infant Mental Health (Alliance), with support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. By joining with the Alliance, First 5 Alabama establishes the Competencies® and Endorsement® for Culturally Sensitive, Relationship-Focused Practice Promoting Infant Mental Health®, created by the Michigan Association of Infant Mental Health (MI-AIMH). First 5 Alabama joins 38 other state infant mental health (IMH) associations, two international associations, that together are members of the Alliance.

Please contact Dallas Rabig, LPC, IMH-E®, State Coordinator, Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH), Endorsement Coordinator First 5 Alabama at dallas.rabig@ece.alabama.gov for more information about the program or endorsement.

First 5 Alabama is headquartered in Montgomery, Alabama. First 5 Alabama endorsees operate in various settings, including health departments, hospitals, schools, faith-based and non-profit organizations. For more information, visit www.first5alabama.org or Twitter @First5Alabama.

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