Young Children and Child Welfare during COVID-19

Wednesday, July 22, 2020
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Presenters

Cynthia Tate
State Liaison/HUB Lead, BUILD Initiative

Marlo Nash
National Director of Partnerships and Policy, Saint Francis Ministries

Lee Johnson III
Senior Policy Analyst, Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health, ZERO TO THREE
PERFORMANCE MOMENT

A snapshot in time that indicates that much has effectively been at work to achieve the intended result.
PERFORMANCE MOMENT
A snapshot in time that indicates that there was a breakdown or gap.
41% Confirmed Maltreatment Cases are YOUNG CHILDREN
Removal From The Family

Higher Risk

53% of African American will be investigated by CPS before age 18 compared to 37% of all children.²

Confirmed Maltreatment Cases are

41% YOUNG CHILDREN¹

Infants and toddlers are removed from their homes at a rate more than double that of children ages 4-17.⁴

FATALITIES³ ABUSE & NEGLECT

NEWBORN AGE 1

NEGLECT

68% 59%

0-4 YR. 4 - 11 YR.

PARENTAL SUBSTANCE USE⁴

46% 30%

0-4 YR. 4 - 11 YR.
The Pair of ACEs

Adverse Childhood Experiences

- Maternal Depression
- Physical & Emotional Neglect
- Emotional & Sexual Abuse
- Divorce
- Substance Abuse
- Mental Illness
- Domestic Violence
- Incarceration
- Homelessness

Adverse Community Environments

- Poverty
- Discrimination
- Community Disruption
- Lack of Opportunity, Economic Mobility & Social Capital
- Violence
- Poor Housing Quality & Affordability

What the Future Could Look Like...

Children Who Are Confirmed By Child Protective Services As Victims Of Maltreatment By Age Group (Percent) - 2015-2018

National KIDS COUNT
KIDS COUNT Data Center, datacenter.kidscount.org
A project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation
What Does the Brain Science Tell Us About Young Children?
The Importance of Understanding Brain Development: Self-Regulation
What is Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health?

• We often use the terms “Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health” and “healthy social and emotional development” interchangeably.

• **Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH)**
  The developing capacity of a child from birth to age five to: experience, express, and regulate emotions; form close, secure, interpersonal attachment relationships; and explore his/her environment and learn, all within the context of family and community.
What is Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health?

It’s all about nurturing relationships.

Early relationships build brains and support future developmental outcomes.
The Impact of Trauma on the Brain: Examining Types of Stress

- **Positive Stress Response**: Brief increases in heart rate, mild elevation in stress hormone levels.
- **Tolerable Stress Response**: Serious, temporary stress response buffered by supportive relationship.
- **Toxic Stress Response**: Prolonged activation of stress response systems in the absence of protective relationships.
The Impact of Trauma on the Brain: Examining Stressors

All of us are experiencing our bodies’ responses to the stressors around us.
Why is Racial Equity important?

• **EQUITY**: Guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.

• **RACE EQUITY/ RACIAL EQUITY**: The elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race. Race equity is one part of race justice and must be addressed at the root causes and not just the manifestations.
Racial Equity: Discussing the Impact of Inequity on Infants, Toddlers, and Families

• Roughly half of today’s 11.8M infants and toddlers are children of color.

• By 2050, an estimated 53% of the U.S. population will be multiracial or nonwhite.

Racial Equity: Discussing the Impact of Inequity on Infants, Toddlers, and Families

Nearly 3 million children under age three – 23 percent of all infants and toddlers – are members of an immigrant family. 84 percent of infant/toddlers are children of color.
Racial Equity: Discussing the Impact of Inequity on Infants, Toddlers, and Families

There are racial disparities across nearly every measure of well-being, including health, economic security, and access to early learning experiences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Racial Group</th>
<th>Infant Mortality Rate (per 1,000 births)</th>
<th>Native American Infants and Toddlers Most Likely to be Uninsured</th>
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<tr>
<td>Black</td>
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<td>AIAN</td>
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<td>14.5%</td>
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<td>White</td>
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<td>Black</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
COVID-19
Young child well-being
COVID-19

- Racial inequities and injustice
- Pregnant and new mothers
- Early childhood development
- Stressors that lead to child maltreatment:
  - Loss of income.
  - Mental Health Issues and Substance Use Disorders.
  - Domestic violence.
- Young children in the child welfare system.
Navigating COVID: Concerns for Young Children and Families

**MYTH** Children are too young to be impacted by trauma since they do not understand traumatic events. Therefore, it’s better if we do not talk to them about it.

**FACT** Young children are adversely affected by traumatic events, even though they may not understand what happened.
Navigating COVID: The Importance of Responding vs. Reacting in Crisis
Considerations for Strategies Amid COVID-19: Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health

**Promotion**

**Prevention**

**Treatment**

Developmentally Appropriate Assessment and Diagnosis

Increasing intensity and specialization of services and supports

*Continuum of IECMH Supports and Services*

Expanding reach. Enhancing impact. Advancing equity.
Key Recommendations for “A Better Normal”

1. Build a bridge between early childhood and child welfare stakeholders and systems.
Key Recommendations for “A Better Normal”

Oklahoma Story

- Collaborative effort for federal Preschool Development Grant (PDG B-5) and Family First Prevention Services Act implementation.

- Strategies for young children and their families who are involved in the child welfare system or at risk of becoming involved.

- Key developments and pandemic considerations for the comprehensive, integrated approach
2. Consider the distinct needs of children and families who have experienced trauma and adversity.

3. Be the voice for the distinct needs of young children involved in the child welfare system or at risk of involvement.

4. Design family-centered strategies that respond to mental health and substance use disorder needs.
Key Recommendations for “A Better Normal”

5. Ensure providers can recognize and respond to trauma and build resilience.

6. Prepare to bridge federal resources for COVID-19 response to meet needs related to trauma and mental health.

7. Encourage focus and planning for effectively re-stabilizing families living with pandemic-induced stressors so they don’t end up involved in child welfare.

8. Be concrete with strategies to ensure race equity.
A Child and Family Well-Being System of Care

- Strategies that intervene when children have entered the child welfare system.
- Strategies to address the needs of families who are experiencing adversities and focus on re-stabilizing families.
- Strategies to keep all families strong and stable in their homes and within the community.
Recommendations Amid COVID-19: Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Policy

ZTT’s legislative recommendations and critical needs of babies to protect them during the COVID-19 pandemic:

Critical Area 1  Sustain childcare and other early learning supports.

Critical Area 2  Ensure economic security.

Critical Area 3  Support strong families.

Critical Area 4  Support strong social-emotional health.

Critical Area 5  Meet basic needs for health and well-being.

BABIES CAN’T WAIT!
Moving Forward: A Better Normal

• Early nurturing experiences matter for a lifetime.
• Relationships are the catalyst and the context for later life success.
• Nurturing early experiences “get under the skin.”
• Strong connections buffer adversity.

Strong connections help buffer adversity!
Resources

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Resources


National Center for Biotechnology Information | https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5227926/


Evaluation

Please respond to the two questions that pop up on your screen.

Also, please tell us in the chat box what was useful, significant, or new and how we can improve the webinar.