



Hawaii Association for Infant Mental Health (AIMH HI)
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Dear Infant and Mental Health 'Ohana,

As COVID19 consumed our daily lives we all succumbed to what became “virtual contact” and interactions in our communities, and even in our own families. Every individual from adults to infants was affected by the virus. Many agencies and businesses shut down and in-person human interaction decreased, and we all struggled to build resiliency as humans. Organizations that could, looked to virtual platforms to continue serving their communities. The Association for Infant Mental Health Hawaii (AIMHHI) was fortunate to shift programming to a virtual platform that supported growth and accomplishments in 2020 despite COVID19.

An early activity involved partnering with the Director of the Alliance for Advancement of Infant Mental Health (the Alliance) to crosswalk the Georgetown Child Development Infant Mental Health (IMH) competencies with Alliance competencies. These crosswalks are important to recognize and validate the competencies of the current work force to support in the Endorsement process. We also entered into an agreement the Alliance for a consultant to assist in establishing and manage our own AIMHHI Endorsement Program.

Board members established a partnership with the Hawaii Community Foundation (HCF) Promising Minds initiative, which supported two infant and early childhood initiatives. These included Communities of Practice, which involves infant and early childcare providers and the Promising Minds Fellows program, a professional development program structured to develop competence in infant and early childhood mental health practitioners. The HCF supported AIMHHI to establish the Promising Minds Fellows professional development cohorts. Our two clinical professionals endorsed at IMH III and IV facilitated and implemented a program of seminars, training, and mentoring over a twelve-month period for 13 service providers with experience and interest in infant mental health as Promising Minds Fellows. This work began in March 2020 and with the advent of COVID-19, our personnel swiftly pivoted into a virtual program which was highly successful, with all 13 Fellows deciding to apply for endorsement. The 2020 Promising Minds graduates are actively involved with AIMHHI activities such as membership recruitment, community trainings, and this newsletter. In 2021, applications for these Promising Minds Fellows graduates will be processed through our AIMHHI Endorsement Program. We are anxious and proud of all the Fellows! And just this month 24 professionals in fields ranging from medical to early education have been enrolled in the second cohort of Fellows. These achievements are shared with our partners at Hawaii Community Foundation that believed in AIMHHI and would not have been come to fruition without their support, especially Ms. Justina Acevedo-Cross.



The Professional Development Committee continues to plan upcoming community trainings. AIMHHI understands that Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) competencies are the core of our practice whether it is home visiting or therapy. The Professional Development Committee has conducted Infant and Early Childhood trainings over the last seven years for community service providers, many of them have been free of cost with the support of grants. These trainings included the Zero to Three “Growing Brains” curriculum on Maui, Hawaii Island and Oahu. AIMHHI also conducted training sessions on Attachment and Child Abuse, Attachment and Drug Exposed Infants, and Attachment During COVID.

We were fortunate to acquire a grant from the Stupski Foundation for organizational development to position the agency for growth and leadership surrounding Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health in the state of Hawaii. The Stupski Foundation funding has provided support for AIMHHI Board development, business planning, and afforded key positions such as a Program Coordinator and an Administrative Assistant. Many board members are busy supporting key initiative across the state to ensure Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) remains at the forefront of growing healthy keiki. Other AIMHHI achievements include participation in the completion of the Integrated Hawaii Infant Early Childhood Behavioral Health Plan. AIMHHI is also involved in conversations on how we can support an IECMH Consultancy Registry that can support professionals across the state in the important work of our keiki. We are excited to see that these activities have resulted in achieving most of the strategic goals we established for our organization several years ago. We have been busy!

In 2021, we plan to implement the second cohort of Promising Minds Fellows, to support and endorse individuals across our state, provide professional development for various sectors, and remain at the forefront in any and all involving infant and early childhood mental health. We at AIMHHI are grateful for the many new and continued partnerships across our state that continue to support our keiki to be emotionally healthy and resilient.

Mahalo nui loa,

Tina Porrás-Jones, MS, IMH-E®

Board President