

# Consultant Self-Assessment and Resources Crosswalk

**Introduction:** Early childhood mental health consultation is an emerging evidence-based intervention for supporting young children's social-emotional development and addressing challenging behaviors. The following definition frames the work of the Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (CECMHC):

Early childhood mental health consultation is a problem-solving and capacity-building intervention implemented within a collaborative relationship between a professional consultant with mental health expertise and one or more caregivers, typically an early care and education provider and/or family member. Early childhood mental health consultation aims to build the capacity of staff, families, programs, and systems to prevent, identify, treat and reduce the impact of mental health problems among expectant families and children from birth to age 5 and their families<sup>1</sup>. (Adapted from Cohen & Kaufmann, 2000, 2005).

The CECMHC views early childhood mental health consultation as an essential strategy to improve the mental health of young children, their families and staff in Head Start, early care and education programs, and other child and family serving settings. We also recognize the need for prepared and experienced early childhood mental health consultants to assure effective consultation services.

There are a growing number of resources and opportunities for professional development related to early childhood social emotional development, mental health, family supports, and consultation. A major purpose of the CECMHC website is to translate research into materials tailored to the needs of early childhood mental health consultants. The intent of the **Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant Self-Assessment** and the accompanying **Resources Crosswalk** is to help mental health professionals and consultants navigate the CECMHC website and to individualize their access to on-line professional development and resources.

Please complete the **CECMHC Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant Self-Assessment (next page)**. After completing the self-assessment, link to the **CECMHC Resources Crosswalk** to identify resources and learning opportunities on the CECMHC website to support your personal professional development.

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of the CEMHC, the definition of early childhood mental health consultation includes services focused on expectant families and children birth to age five consistent with the Office of Head Start, Grant (90YD0268).

# CECMHC Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant SELF-ASSESSMENT

**Purpose:** The 30-item Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant Self-Assessment was developed for consultants to reflect upon you current knowledge, skills and disposition related to infant and early childhood mental health consultation practices and approaches. The outcome of the self-assessment can be used to develop a personal plan for professional development and support related to this important work.

**Directions:**

1. Review each domain of skills associated with effective early childhood mental health consultation.
2. Rate your competence on where you feel you **currently stand** in regard to your skills using the following scale:
  - **Not Yet:** I have minimal experience/knowledge and significant training and support is needed.
  - **Somewhat:** I have moderate experience/knowledge and some additional training and support is needed.
  - **Yes:** I have extensive experience/knowledge and little or no training or support is needed.
3. Use the **My Comments and Ideas for Growth** column to identify next steps (information, activities, or resources) that will help to build your skills in each area.

DOMAIN 1: Professional Role and Responsibilities <i>Currently I can...</i>	Not Yet	Somewhat	Yes	My Comments and Ideas for Growth
1. Articulate my early childhood mental health (ECMH) consultation philosophy, principles and practices.				
2. Recognize the difference between providing direct and consultative services.				
3. Collaborate effectively with other consultants and professionals working with staff and families				
4. Describe qualifications and credentials necessary for providing ECMH consultation.				
5. Describe strategies for maintaining confidentiality of children, families and staff.				
6. Provide effective training and education to staff and families.				

<b>DOMAIN 2: Consultative Stance</b> <i>Currently I can...</i>	<b>Not Yet</b>	<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>My Comments and Ideas for Growth</b>
7. Demonstrate relationship-based principles and practices.				
8. Demonstrate active listening skills.				
9. Use strength-based practices to motivate others.				
10. Use reflection to understand my own and other's perspectives.				
11. Value and build upon the diversity of consultee(s) including culture, language, and caregiving practices.				
12. Demonstrate enthusiasm and hope toward the consultee(s) and the consultation process.				
13. Work as a partner with families and staff without asserting myself as the expert.				
<b>DOMAIN 3: Consultation Process</b> <i>Currently I can...</i>	<b>Not Yet</b>	<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>My Comments and Ideas for Growth</b>
14. Articulate the consultation process and steps that meet fidelity to the ECMHC approach.				
15. Demonstrate the techniques and principles of quality observation and ongoing assessment.				
16. Facilitate the development of an individualized plan in partnership with consultees.				
17. Demonstrate how to effectively support staff and families to engage in intentional practices to elicit children's positive development. (e.g. modeling, narration, written feedback, etc.)				
18. Collect and interpret ongoing information to improve consultation practices.				
<b>DOMAIN 4: Screening and Assessment</b> <i>Currently I can...</i>	<b>Not Yet</b>	<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>My Comments and Ideas for Growth</b>
19. Demonstrate knowledge of <b>infant and toddler</b> typical and atypical ("red flags") developmental milestones.				
20. Demonstrate knowledge of <b>preschool</b> typical and atypical ("red flags") developmental milestones.				

21. Demonstrate knowledge of the importance of early relationships and attachment theory.				
22. Demonstrate knowledge of risk factors which can impact early development, such as:	Rate your competence level for each risk factor area:			
a. Abuse and neglect →				
b. Adult mental illness →				
c. Caregiver depression →				
d. Interpersonal violence →				
e. Poverty →				
f. Substance abuse →				
g. Trauma →				
23. Help staff identify, administer and interpret standardized, reliable and valid social and emotional screening and assessment tools for children birth–5.				
24. Help staff identify, administer and interpret best practice screening and assessment tools for measuring <u>caregiving practices</u> related to enhancing social and emotional well-being of children.				
<b>DOMAIN 5: Effective Strategies and Interventions</b> <i>Currently I can...</i>	<b>Not Yet</b>	<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>My Comments and Ideas for Growth</b>
25. Demonstrate knowledge of evidence-based and best practice strategies, which <b>promote</b> the social and emotional well-being of all children (0-5) in a group setting.				
26. Demonstrate knowledge of evidence-based and best practice strategies to <b>prevent</b> social and emotional challenges for children (0-5) at-risk.				
27. Demonstrate knowledge of evidence-based and best practice social emotional <b>interventions</b> for children exhibiting challenging or troubling behavior.				
28. Demonstrate knowledge of strategies that support adult mental wellness (for staff and families).				
29. Demonstrate knowledge of strategies that foster collaborative relationships between families and staff.				
30. Evaluate the effectiveness of my intervention strategies and revise plans in response to caregiver feedback and available outcome data				

<b>DOMAIN 6:</b> <b>Resource and Referral</b> <i>Currently I can...</i>	Not Yet	Somewhat	Yes	My Comments and Ideas for Growth
31. Demonstrate knowledge of early intervention systems (e.g. Part C, preschool special education, community mental health, public health, etc.) and the services they offer.				
32. Demonstrate knowledge of family support and adult service systems and the services they offer (e.g. substance abuse services, homeless shelters, food banks, etc.)				
33. Demonstrate knowledge of how to provide a facilitated referral and link consultees to outside services.				
34. Identify professionals that can meet the diverse and complex needs of all families, including considerations related to culture and language.				
<b>DOMAIN 7:</b> <b>Professional Development</b> <i>Currently I can...</i>	Not Yet	Somewhat	Yes	My Comments and Ideas for Growth
35. Actively seek professional development opportunities to enhance my consultation skills.				
36. Actively seek clinical guidance and support related to child, family and staff consultation.				
37. Engage in reflective supervision.				
38. Use reflective supervision experience to enhance my consultation work with others.				

Now that you have completed the Self Assessment and identified areas for personal professional growth, link to the **CEMHC Resources Crosswalk** on the [www.ecmhc.org](http://www.ecmhc.org) website to identify and utilize recommended, best-practice tools developed by the *Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation* to enhance professional development.