



# From Disparity to Empowerment: Advancing Equity in Early Care for Families of Infants and Toddlers with Complex Needs

Presenters:

Grace Schoessow, Lillian McCree, and Lindsay Green

# Our Goals

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Identifying Barriers and Disparities

Empowering Families and Early Care Providers

Understanding Infants and Toddlers with Complex Needs

Promoting a Mindset Shift from “Wait-&-See” to  
“Early-&-Often”



# Our Whys

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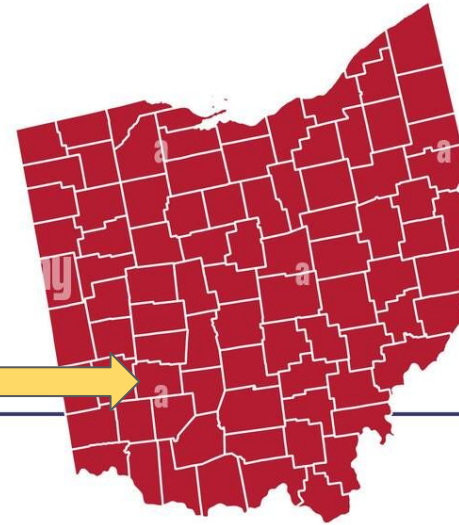
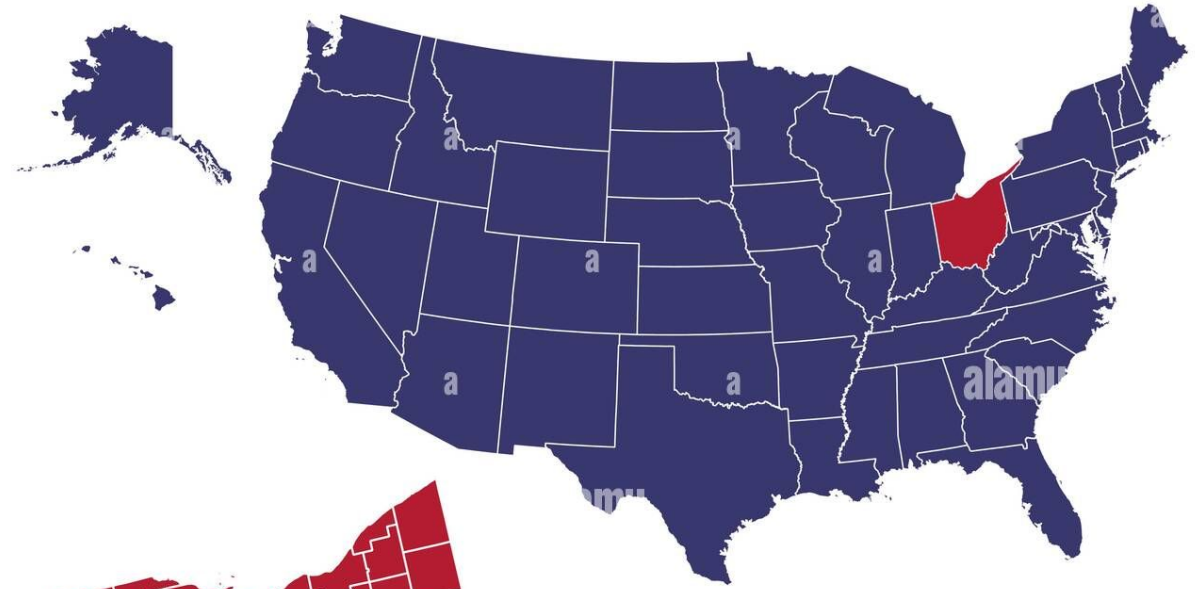
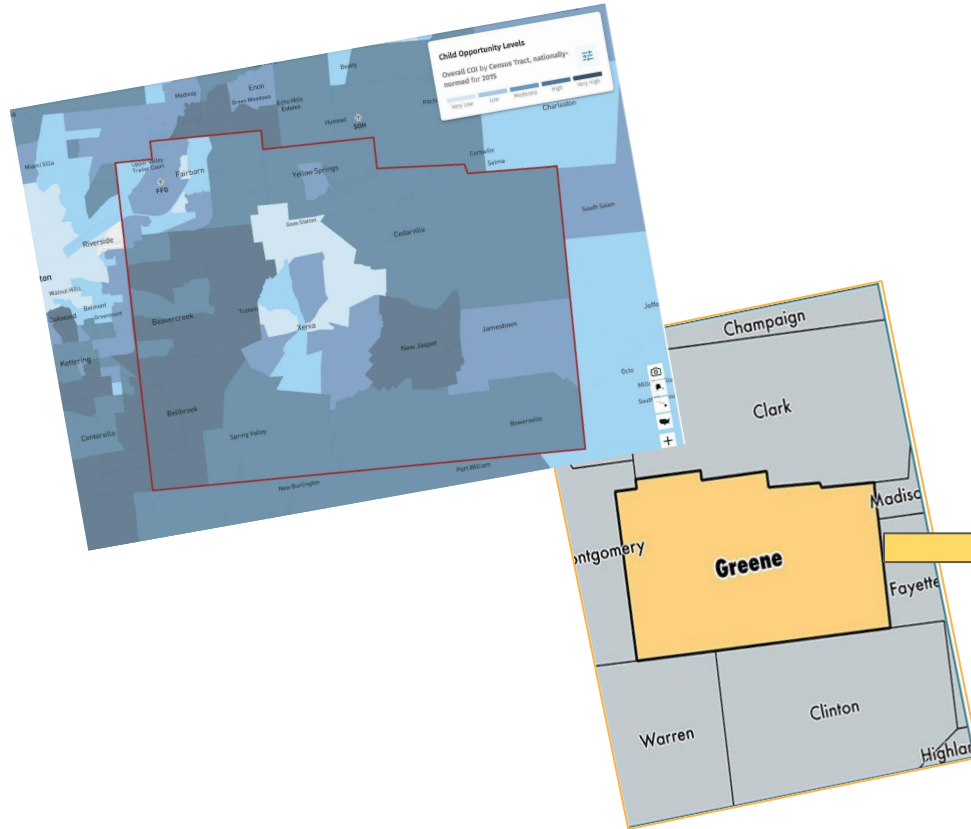


# Who We Are

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# Where We Are



# Understanding Disparities

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- **Healthcare Disparities**
- **Geographic and Transportation Disparities**
- **Racial and Ethnic Disparities & Language Barriers**
- **Educational Disparities & Access to Assistive Technology**
- **Stigma and Discrimination, Social Support & Family Stress**
- **Economic Inequities, & Housing and Food Insecurities**



# Case Study



**3 Generations**

**3 Competing  
Priorities**

**1 Home**



# Coping with Complex Needs

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Families and caregivers of infants and toddlers with complex needs often:

- Experience higher levels of stress
- Feel hopeless
- Feel overwhelmed
- Feel pressure
- Lack confidence
- Feel helpless
- Feel alone or isolated



# Excess Screen Time

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# Family Risk Factors for Disparity Impact

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- Atypical family factors
  - Multi generational
  - Kinship care
  - Teen parent
  - Military deployment
  - Foster care
- Traumatic events
- Adversity
- Family violence
- Chronic poverty
- Family member with Mental Illness
- Family member with Substance Use Disorder
- In utero polysubstance exposure
- NAS, NOWS
- Family member with high care needs
- FASD
- Homelessness, housing insecurity



# Identifying Local Barriers to Equity

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Access to Healthcare

Language Barrier

Military Culture

Educational Attainment

Socioeconomic Factors

Cultural Competence of Service Providers

Community Beliefs

Stigma and Mental Health

Access to Higher Education

Community Resources

Cultural Traditions

Bias and Discrimination



# Who provides early care in your community?

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Families with a child with complex needs may encounter **many types of early care providers** as they seek services and supports.

**More is often not better.**



# Local IECMHC Efforts



Please join us online for a session on...

## Positive Parenting

**GREENE ESC**  
GREENE COUNTY EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER

The Social and Emotional Development Team at the Greene County ESC will facilitate virtual meetings to empower parents of children ages 0-10, through positive supportive networking. Each month new information will be presented to encourage us to reflect on communication with our children without blame or shame, but through the use of humor, support, and resource sharing. We will create a space for honest conversations about the challenges of raising children to help avoid burnout and build stronger relationships.

*This month's topic: Understanding Your Child's Behavior and Strategies to Help Your Child with Big Emotions*

**Session Times:**

Tuesday September 12th - 8:00pm-8:30pm  
Wednesday September 13th - 1:00pm-1:30pm  
Tuesday September 26th- 8:00pm-8:30pm  
Wednesday September 27th - 1:00pm-1:30pm

\*\*Attend any of these sessions, no commitment needed. We will always guide our discussion. Feel free to just listen.

Register and join each session at:  
<https://zoom.us/j/9111111111>

E-mail: [ECMHTeam@greeneesc.org](mailto:ECMHTeam@greeneesc.org)  
learn more or for more information.  
Or ask to join our Social Emotional Development freebies, and more!



# Case Study

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# Sharing Success Stories

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# Ohio's Investment in Early Childhood Matters

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Streamlined Coordination  
Unified Vision and Priorities  
Enhanced Funding Opportunities  
Consistency in Policies and Standards  
Improved Data Sharing and Analysis  
Increased Collaboration  
Advocacy and Policy Influence  
Resource Sharing





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# Activity: Spectrogram

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Criterion Question: “How have you been in the field of IECMH?”

100 represents “A long, long time” and 0 represents “a tiny bit”

Place a mark on the line to indicate where you land.



0

100





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# Activity: Spectrogram

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Criterion Question: “How prepared do you feel right now to address equity in early care for infants and toddlers with complex needs?”

Zero indicates unprepared and 100 indicates very prepared. Note: How you feel could change day by day or even moment by moment

Place a mark on the line to indicate how you feel.



0

100



# IECMHC's Role in Empowerment

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Enhanced Understanding

Individualized Support

Improved Communication Skills

Behavioral Strategies

Emotional Support



# Strategies for Empowerment



# Empowerment through Acknowledgment

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Respectfully acknowledge family and provider:

- Feelings about the child's complex needs
- Differences in perspectives or beliefs
- Conflict as it arises
- Contradicting opinions
- Disregard for recommendations or best practice
- Unrealistic expectations
- Intrusion or invasion of privacy



# Changing Beliefs and Attitudes

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Education and Training  
Reflective Practice  
Cultural Competence  
Trauma-Informed Care  
Strengths-Based Approach  
Collaboration and Partnerships  
Family-Centered Care  
Data-Informed Decision-Making  
Advocacy  
Case-Based Learning  
Empathy and Compassion  
Continuous Learning



# The Power of Shared Language

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Clarity and Understanding  
Effective Communication  
Consistency in Care  
Empowering Families  
Reducing Anxiety



# IECMHC Use of Shared Language is Empowering

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Education and Training

Mediation and Facilitation

Support for Families

Promoting Collaboration



# IECMHC Promoting Inclusive Environments

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Professional Development and Training  
Cultural Competence  
Individualized Consultation  
Behavioral Support  
Family Engagement  
Promotion of Social-Emotional Development  
Addressing Trauma-Informed Care  
Support for Inclusive Policies  
Professional Collaboration  
Data-Informed Decision-Making  
Advocacy and Awareness  
Reduction of Disparities  
Building a Supportive Community



# Regional Partnerships and Workforce Development

Access to Expertise and Research  
Professional Development Opportunities  
Clinical Resources:  
Access to Diverse Populations  
Interdisciplinary Collaboration  
Research Opportunities  
Access to Technology and Resources  
Community Outreach  
Support for Military Families  
Policy Advocacy  
Workforce Development



# Data Collection for Equity

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Identifying Disparities  
Assessing Service Effectiveness  
Tailoring Interventions  
Resource Allocation  
Quality Improvement  
Cross-Systems Collaboration  
Tracking Long-Term Outcomes  
Identifying Systemic Barriers  
Policy Advocacy  
Equity Monitoring



# Action Planning

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Choose one way to take action:

I will empower myself by...

I will empower colleagues by...

I will empower early care providers by...

I will empower caregivers by...

I will empower my community by...

Share in the chat one way you'll take action.



# Resources

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SAMHSA Center of Excellence for Infant Early Childhood Mental Health

[www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/toolbox](http://www.samhsa.gov/iecmhc/toolbox)

Center of Excellence for Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation, Georgetown University

Center for Child and Human Development [ECMHC.org](http://ECMHC.org) <https://www.iecmhc.org/>

OCALI- ASD Strategies in Action, Many Faces of Autism and Toddler & Preschool Age

[autismcertificationcenter.org](http://autismcertificationcenter.org)

Yale University Edward Zigler Center for Child Development and Social Policy

[medicine.yale.edu/childstudy/zigler/](http://medicine.yale.edu/childstudy/zigler/)

Devereux Center for Resilient Children [centerforresilientchildren.org](http://centerforresilientchildren.org)

Center on the Developing Child Harvard University [developingchild.harvard.edu](http://developingchild.harvard.edu)

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network [www.nctsn.org](http://www.nctsn.org)

Consideration of Developmental Stage and the Debate on the Effects of Screens Use -

Not All Things Are Created Equal [Screen Usage JAMA Article](#)



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