AGENDA OVERVIEW

1. Welcome and introductions
2. What is Early Childhood Mental Health and the preschool to prison pipeline?
3. Defining the problem- what does the data and research tell us?
4. What can we do about it- promising and evidence-based best practices
5. Integration into programs and daily practices

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Take a few minutes to introduce yourself at your tables and choose one of these questions to reflect/ respond to.

1. In what ways does Early Childhood Mental Health show up in your work?
WHAT IS EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH?

The developing capacity of infants, toddlers, and young children to experience, manage, and express emotion; form close, secure relationships; and actively explore the environment and learn.

- Adapted from ZERO TO THREE (www.zerotothree.com)

EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH OVERVIEW

https://youtu.be/L41k2p-YRCs

EARLY BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

'Sensitive periods' in early brain development

Graph developed by Council for Early Child Development (See: Nade, 1997; Early Years Study, 1999; Stainf, 2003.)
PREVALENCE AND RISK FACTORS

- 9-14% of children experience diagnosed Early Childhood Mental Health disorders (ZERO TO THREE, 2016)
- Up to 30% of children living in concentrated low-income communities exhibit moderate to severe social, emotional or behavioral concerns (Barbarin, 2007)

- Sub-optimal development (physical, social, emotional, cognitive)
- Mental health/behavioral concerns
- Preschool expulsion

- Parental loss
- Parental substance use
- Parental mental illness
- Toxic stress/trauma

WHAT IS PRESCHOOL EXPULSION?

WHAT IS PRESCHOOL EXPULSION?

PREVALENCE AND DISPROPORTIONALITY

10% nationally; 3x rates in k-12 system in state preschools
DATA & RESEARCH: CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

- Child/Family
- Teacher
- Program

DATA & RESEARCH: CHILD LEVEL FACTORS

- Preschool Suspensions
- Discipline
- Quality

DATA & RESEARCH: TEACHER LEVEL FACTORS

- Implicit Bias
- Stress
- Training
- Quality of support and supervision

EDUCATION WEEK
DATA & RESEARCH: ROLE OF IMPLICIT BIAS

Implicit Bias Is...

DATA & RESEARCH: PROGRAM LEVEL FACTORS

Class size

Clear disciplinary policies

Ratios

Access to behavior/SEL supports

Length of program

DATA & RESEARCH: RIPPLE EFFECT OF UNTREATED ECMH CONCERNS AND EXPULSION

• Connectedness/ "learner identity"
• Healthy development
• Learning/ school readiness
• Preschool to prison pipeline

• Stress level
• Employment
• Financial impact

• Investment in K-12, mental health, and other critical interventions
• Future residents, citizens, and employees

• Stress level/ well-being
• Financial impact
WHAT IS THIS PIPELINE?

Disrupting the Preschool To Prison Pipeline

OK, SO WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT PRESCHOOL EXPULSION?

Promotion  Prevention  Intervention

AND WHAT ABOUT EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH?
AND WHAT ABOUT EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH?

- Responsive Relationships
  - Attachment as a key buffer
  - Foundational for social emotional competence

- Core Skill Building
  - Adult and child level
  - Executive functioning, self-regulation, managing adversity

- Family Strengthening
  - Protective factors as buffer to adversity and trauma
  - Resilience

TANGIBLE EXAMPLES

- Responsive Relationships
  - Interventions for parental mood disorders
  - Early screening and referral
  - Trauma informed service delivery systems

- Core Skill Building
  - Parent education programs
  - Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

- Family Strengthening
  - Addressing protective factors in family serving programs
  - Integrating authentic family engagement in education settings

FAMILY STRENGTHENING PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Knowledge of parenting and child development
- Concrete support in times of need
- Social and emotional competence of children
IT ALL COMES DOWN TO ADULT CAPACITY AND SKILL BUILDING!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urU-a_FsS5Y

REFLECTION

PARTICIPANT TAKEAWAYS

Do you...
1. Have a deeper understanding of the relationship between Early Childhood Mental Health and the preschool to prison pipeline?
2. Have a sense of the data and research and recommendations related to preschool expulsion?
3. Have some ideas on how this connects to your work and how you may integrate some of these best practices?
THANK YOU

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