

## New Hampshire Association for Infant Mental Health (NHAIMH)



### What is Infant Mental Health?

Infant Mental Health is an evidence-based field having a family-centered, strengths-based, holistic, multi-disciplinary, inclusive focus that works to strengthen the emotional, physical, social, and cognitive wellbeing of children from 0-5 years of age and their caregivers.

Infant Mental Health Services include the following components:

- Concrete Assistance
- Emotional support
- Developmental guidance
- Early relationship assessment and support
- Advocacy

NHAIMH supports early childhood professionals in achieving Infant Mental Health credentials and competencies. For a more thorough understanding of competencies and the endorsement process [click here](#). The following principles guide our practice.

### Guiding Principles:

1. We support caregivers' curiosity to understand the child's perspective (i.e., keep the baby in mind).
2. We empower caregivers to support brain development through reciprocal interactions (i.e., serve and return).
3. We strengthen caregivers' skills in supporting their child's growth through scaffolding.
4. We seek to understand and respect the unique culture and diversity of each family.
5. We approach interactions with an open, curious, and self-reflective viewpoint.
6. We listen for the past as it is expressed in the present.
7. We identify, treat, and/or collaborate with others within our scope of practice.
8. We believe reflective supervision, continuing education, and ethical practice are vital to our work.
9. We observe and support in a holistic framework.

These principles are informed by a number of sources including: Zero to Three, Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health, Washington Association for Infant Mental Health, New Hampshire Association for Infant Mental Health, and thought leaders in the field including Vygotsky, Fraiberg, Fonagy, and Zeanah.

Approved by the NHAIMH Board 8/8/23

