



Early Relational Health: Foundations for Health, Early Learning and Future Wellbeing

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**Center for the
Study of
Social Policy**
Ideas into Action

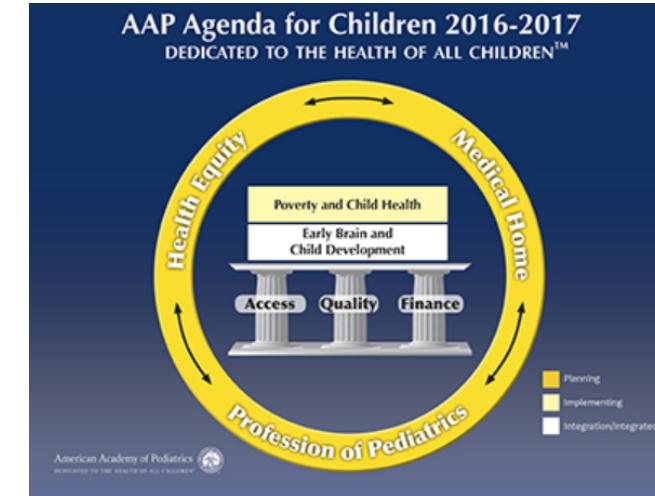




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The Core Story of Child Development

- Early experiences in life build “brain architecture”
- Children develop in an **environment of relationships**
- Genes and environments interact to shape the architecture of the brain
- Cognitive, emotional and social capacities are inextricably intertwined
- “Toxic stress” and adverse experiences derail healthy child development
- Brain plasticity and the ability to change behavior decrease over time



National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2015

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A baby's future
starts now.

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“Early Childhood requires nurturing care....

***....health, nutrition, safety and security,
responsive caregiving, and early education.”***

The Lancet *Early Childhood Development Series*, 2016

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What does Early Relational Health look like?

Engagement, Emotional Connection

Serve and Return, Initiation, Imitation

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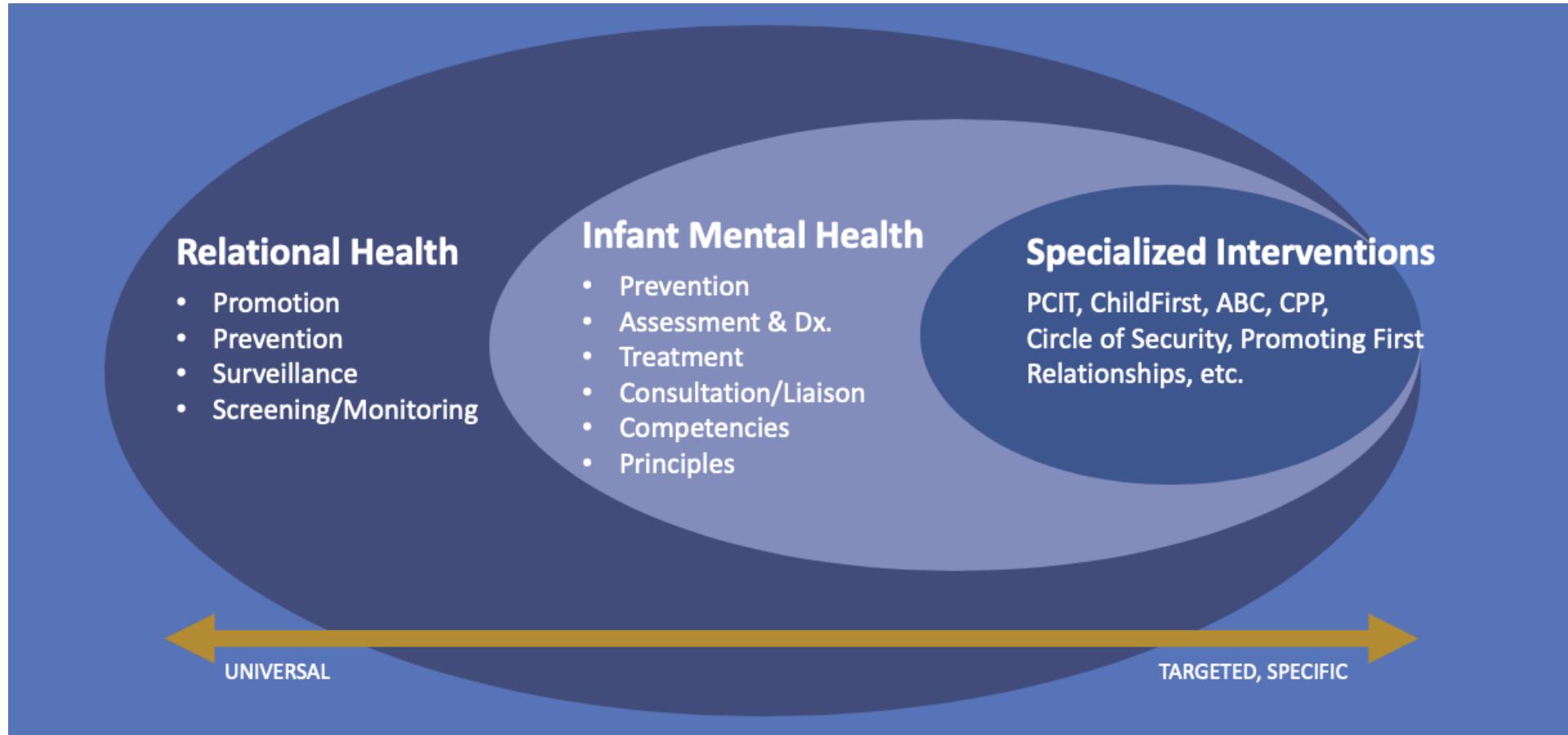
Definitions of Early Relational Health

- **Relational Health** reflects the capacities of individuals, families, classrooms, schools, or communities to engage in positive, growth-promoting and responsive interpersonal interactions.
- **Early relational health** describes the positive, stimulating, and nurturing early relationships that ensure the emotional security and connections that advance physical health and development, social well-being, and resilience.
- **Relational health care** are those elements of health care that specifically address relational health as an integral component of physical, developmental, mental health and other health care.

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Early Relational Health



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Early Relational Health

- A dyadic and two-generational focus
- A bidirectional perspective for parent-child development with the centrality of shared positive affect
- Foundational to equity, resiliency, recovery and protection
- Health, MEB health, early learning, and social-emotional competencies are outcomes of ERH
- Science-based, strength-based and family-centric
- Recognizes cultural variability in parenting, but sees ERH as universal
- A paradigm shift for early childhood, society and out culture

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Early relational health is about advancing a framework that.....

- Builds MEB health and social emotional competences in children (and in society) through positive family child interactions (social competence)
- Intentionally strengthens the relationships of “the first 1000 days”
- Is not one program, but an “all-in approach” across all place-based, community efforts with young families
- Expands the social capital in a community to support all families
- Is strength-based and builds resilience and recovery in face of trauma
- Is not about teaching parenting, but about supporting the development of healthy relationships
- Is a mind shift from the individual to a universal relational focus



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Early Relational Health in action: Advances in child health systems

- Reach Out and Read (ROR)
- Promoting First Relationships in Pediatric Primary Care
- Triple P Positive Parenting Program
- Video Interaction Project (VIP)
- Early Relational Health Screen (ERHS) and video feedback
- Welch Emotional Connection Scale (WECS)
- Filming Interactions to Nurture Development (FIND)
- Evidence-based home visiting
- Healthy Steps and DULCE



MIECHV Program

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Early relational health in action: Across early childhood systems

Programmatic impacts

- The advanced pediatric medical home linked with communities
- The continuum of home visiting
- Advancing relational care in early care and education programs
- Child welfare, upstream prevention

Population health and developmental impacts

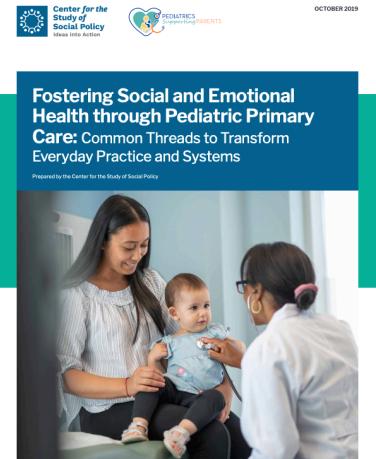
- Addressing equity in health and development with a relational and resiliency focus
- Foundational for kindergarten readiness
- Promoting MEB health and preventative mental health
- Breaking the generational transmission of ACE's by a resiliency focus
- The potential for bending the cost curve of health



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PSP Common Practices: **Nurture Parent's Competence and Confidence**

- Use strengths-based observations and positive-affirming feedback
- Model activities and use strengths-based observations
- Provide enhanced and tailored anticipatory guidance materials
- Partner with parents to co-create goals
- Create opportunities for families to connect with other families
- Integrate strategies to support the parent's well-being and mental health



Fostering Social and Emotional Health through Primary Care: Common threads to transform everyday practice and systems, 2019.

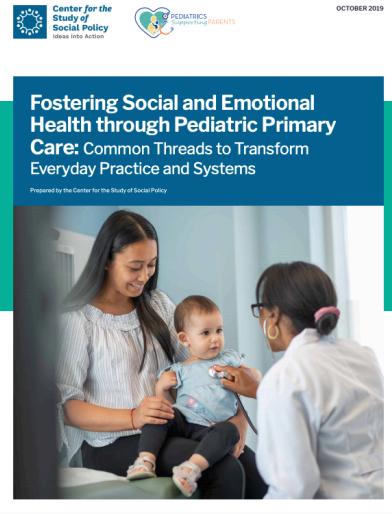
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PSP Common Practices: **Connect families to supports to promote SED and address stressors**

- Standardize workflow to provide developmental, behavioral, and SDOH screenings, health promotion, support and resources
- Cultivate community partnerships through clear processes and protocols
- Outreach to parents during pregnancy



Fostering Social and Emotional Health through Primary Care: Common threads to transform everyday practice and systems, 2019.

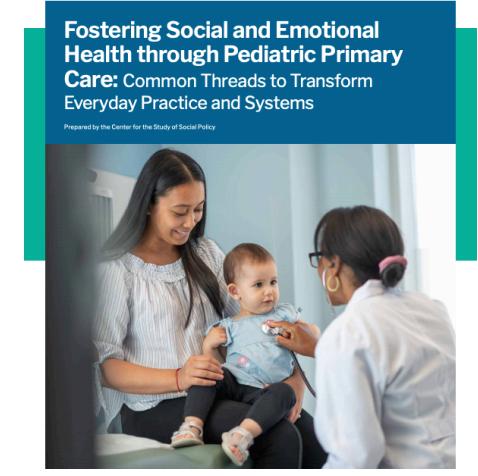
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PSP Common Practices: **Develop the care team and clinic infrastructure and culture**

- Integrate new roles into the care team
- Foster care team communication and collaboration
- Provide ongoing learning and development opportunities
- Support care team well-being to prevent burnout/stress/fatigue and retention issues
- Create environments and structures that promote respectful relationships and positive patient experiences



OCTOBER 2019



Fostering Social and Emotional Health through Primary Care: Common threads
to transform everyday practice and systems, 2019.

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CSSP Early Relational Health Initiative

Progress

- Framework ERH Study
- National ERH Advisory Team
- Place-based EC system and network explorations (EC-LINC)
- Family voice and equity pilot study in Portland, OR
- Emerging next efforts, in partnerships, for advancing ERH
 - ERH tool development for scalability for child health practice
 - Expanding video feedback within home visiting programs
 - Survey of current ERH activities across networks
 - Making visible policy levers to advance ERH

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***“The key to success is simple:
make people dream”***

Gerard de Nerval
French Writer, 1808-1855



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