

Help Me Grow National Forum
St. Paul, Minnesota
Plenary: April 26, 2017
9:45 am - 11 am

Plenary Title:

Personal, Institution, and System Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: Introduction to the Diversity-Informed Infant Mental Health Tenets

Overview:

It takes personal commitment, conscious effort, and intentional resource allocation to implement diversity and inclusion principles in organizations and systems working with young children and their families. The Diversity-Informed Infant Mental Health Tenets (Tenets) promote deeper self-knowledge and intentional action for justice. The Tenets are a set of guiding principles that raise awareness of inequities and injustices embedded in our society by empowering individual practitioners, agencies and systems of care to identify and address the social justice issues intricately intertwined with all infant mental health, child development, and family support work.

This plenary introduces the Help Me Grow National Forum to the Tenets via experiential exercise, video and lecture. Each Tenet is considered in light of its salience with respect to a range of spheres of work: clinical practice, teaching/training, research/writing, and policy/advocacy.

Learning Objectives:

- Participants will examine current sphere of practice and consider how their practice will be revised given Tenets
- Participants will demonstrate familiarity with the Tenets
- Participants will identify ways social justice issues arise within participants sphere of practice
- Participants will develop strategies for using the Tenets in striving for social justice

DIVERSITY-INFORMED INFANT MENTAL HEALTH TENETS ~ KEY DEFINITIONS

Diversity-Informed Practice

Diversity-informed practice is a dynamic system of beliefs and values that shapes interactions between individuals, organizations and systems of care. Diversity-Informed practice recognizes the historic and contemporary salience of race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, age, able-ism, xenophobia, and homophobia and works to strive for the highest possible standard of inclusivity in all spheres of practice: teaching and training, research and writing, policy and advocacy, as well as direct service.

Chandra Ghosh Ippen, 2009

Privilege

Privilege is unearned power, status, authority based on class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, ability. It gives you advantages, favors or benefits over non group members. Privilege works on an individual, social and institutional level.

Privilege and discrimination are made possible because of one another and both are products of a paradigm and a mindset defined by hierarchy and exclusion, in which value is afforded to a few at the expense of the many.

Infant Mental Health

Infant mental health is the developing capacity of the infant and young child to experience, express, and regulate emotions; form close and secure relationships; and explore the environment and learn, all in the context of cultural expectations...A major premise of infant mental health is that babies' emotional, social and cognitive development and competencies unfold in the context of relationships; thus supporting both the infant and the primary caregiver is crucial to optimize the young child's functioning.

Osofsky, J.D. & Thomas, K. (2012). What is infant mental health? In Thomas, K., Osofsky, J.D. & Powers, S. (Eds.). (2012). Emerging issues in infant mental health featuring the Irving Harris Foundation Professional Development Network. *Zero to Three*, 33(2).

Social Justice

Social justice is a virtue that is rooted in and striving for fair and equitable treatment, equal rights and human rights for all. Social justice argues that all people across nationality, residence, sexuality, sex, ethnic origin, color, religion, and language are treated equitably and just.