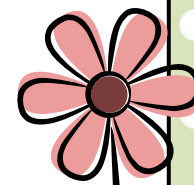




# Lower Shore Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Program



## Spring Newsletter 2025

### Embedded Consultation @ WDS

In 2023, Ms. Crystal attended a professional development event "What is Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation?" at which time she learned the Lower Shore ECMH Program was working with two early childhood program Directors via embedded mental health consultation. After the event, I received an email from Ms. Crystal that she would love to have a graduate student support her staff. This past fall ('24), ECMH interns, Katie and Sydney piloted the embedded consultation model at WDS. As we reach the end of the Spring semester, Katie and Sydney have spent over 7 months at the program, for approximately 16 hours each week (sometimes more) in three and four-year-old classrooms. Their professionalism, self-motivation, willingness to assist, and expertise have exceeded Ms. Crystal's expectations and she has expressed that she is looking forward to hosting a new group in the fall of '25.

### Working Alongside Pre-K Teachers



Katie & Pre-K4  
teacher, Ms.  
Houlihan

Sydney & Pre-K3  
teacher, Ms.  
Logan



Sydney, Ms. Crystal, & Katie

### Intern Experience

The embedded consultation approach has given us the opportunity to form strong relationships and work closely with the staff, which has enhanced our ability to work effectively with the students and families.



# Events



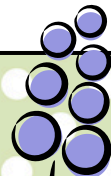
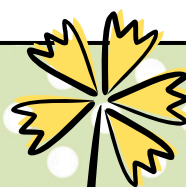
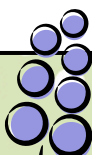
January 9 – Virtual Town Hall Meeting: *Let's Talk About Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation*

ECMH Program Manager, Janelle Parker, LCSW-C presented on the existing challenges in early childcare and how consultation aims to meet those challenges through classroom observations, educational workshops, and support teachers and families. The town hall was spurred by statewide IECMH leadership as a means to share with legislators the impact of the work and advocate for continued funding during the 2025 legislative session. The sessions were held in the afternoon and evening to accommodate working families and professionals. Over 100 members of the early childhood community attended the event, as well as Delegate Eric Ebersole (Baltimore Co.) who shared a few words. Presenters each had 5 minutes to share their experience with IECMH. Early childhood educators, directors, families, and community partners were among those who presented. The State was well represented with presenters from Anne Arundel, Baltimore (County), Harford, Montgomery, Prince George's, Washington and Wicomico Counties.

A very special THANK YOU to our local early childhood partners who gracefully presented on their experiences with the Lower Shore ECMH Program: Trina Tilghman-Dix (Multi-Site Judy Center Coordinator – Wicomico Co.) and Crystal Regels (Preschool Director – Wicomico Day School).



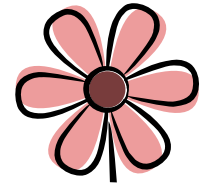
February 10 – Evening in Annapolis for Child Care  
Janelle Parker, LCSW-C and Center for Healthy Communities Director (CHC), Rachel Moore traveled to Annapolis to attend the event at the Maryland State House to advocate for the protection of statewide IECMH funding in the FY '26 budget amid the \$3 billion dollar budget deficit. While in Annapolis, Janelle and Rachel were able to meet with Senate representative Mary Beth Carozza (Wicomico, Somerset and Worcester) to talk about the work of IECMH on the Lower Shore.







## Events Continued



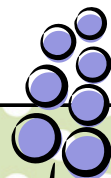
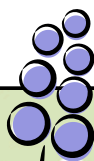
March 14 – Somerset County's Kindergarten Readiness event

The Lower Shore ECMH Program was a vendor at the event and distributed 50 bags with social-emotional learning materials to children/families in attendance. Children were provided with materials (pipe cleaner and colorful beads) to make their own breathing stick (prepared ones were also available) which aim to promote self-regulation through breathing. KUDOS to ECMH MSW Interns, Sydney and Katie for identifying the craft and preparing the materials — the craft was a HIT!



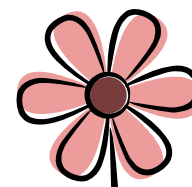
Janelle's training proposal was selected by the University of Connecticut (UConn) for the 2025 Training Institute's conference in July. Her presentation will be in a poster format with the title Embedded Consultation: How MSW internships can benefit families and children.

From the Lower Shore to West of the Bay: Janelle Parker, LCSW-C has been invited to be a panelist at the inaugural Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Association of MD/DC conference! The focus of the panelist discussion is reflective practices in IECMH consultation.





# More Community Involvement



April 28 - ECMH collaborated with the Wicomico County Judy Center for a workshop on early childhood mental health and behaviors in preschool-aged children. MSW interns, Katie and Sydney spent time with a group of young children where they created social-emotional themed crafts and engaged in kid yoga!



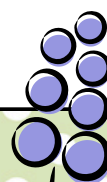
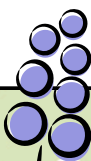
Interested in more ECMHC info? [Click here!](#)

Worcester County Judy Center held a Community Baby Shower. The ECMHC staff put together a diaper bag to contribute to the event!

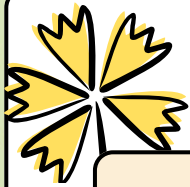


Preschool and Child care Directors/Owners, ECMH would like to support your program's teachers, families, and students with embedded consultation. With help from Master of Social Work (MSW) student interns enrolled at Salisbury University, your program can access weekly center-based assistance for up to 7 months beginning in the Fall of 2025. See description of support offered and how the project supports childcare providers.

If you are interested, have questions, or would like more information please contact Janelle Parker at [jjparker@salisbury.edu](mailto:jjparker@salisbury.edu).







# Concluding Thoughts



As we conclude another year of ECMH field placement, I would like to elevate the voices of the teachers that received support from our MSW intern consultants over the past 7 months. I would like to thank Ms. Logan and Ms. Houlihan for taking the time to share their views on the impact of the work and why it's needed. Here were some of their thoughts (many of which overlapped):

- This kind of support is really needed because we have someone in the classroom who is a considered a specialist in behavior and child development to help give us suggestions when challenges arise.
- It can be difficult to have conversations with families about concerns and having support from an intern consultant helps because they can hear the information from someone else (that's not just the teacher). The intern consultant participates in meetings with families and has those ongoing conversations and meetings that sometimes we are not able to.
- The kids really enjoy having them here to help.
- Because we're a private school we don't have the same resources as public schools so it's something that we need more of to be in a position to help children as much as we can.
- I have really enjoyed having the intern here -- it's been great working with them because they are here every week and they understand the classroom and the needs of the children.

During the past 7 months we have had incredible learning experiences within the school and the community. The embedded consultation approach has given us insight into the importance of relationships and support systems. A big part of our role within this internship has been to bridge the gaps within schools such as those between families and teachers, as well as families and resources. There is so much value to this role for ourselves as developing social workers, and for the families and staff members we've worked with.

