



Lower Shore Early Childhood
Mental Health
Consultation Program
at Salisbury University

SPRING NEWSLETTER

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PICTURED (FROM LEFT TO RIGHT) KACIE AKERS AND SEQUOIA CHUPEK

2023 - 2024

INTERNS

**LEARN MORE ABOUT
THEIR EXPERIENCES IN
THEIR ROLES OF AN
INTERN ON PG 3!**

**THIS QUARTER THE LOWER SHORE ECMHC
CONTINUES ITS PURSUIT OF EDUCATING THE
COMMUNITY ABOUT THE WORK OF
INFANT/EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH
AND HOW IT SUPPORTS FAMILIES, AND
EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS TO
BEST MEET THE NEEDS OF YOUNG CHILDREN
FROM BIRTH TO 5.**

WORCESTER COUNTY JUDY CENTER COMMUNITY BABY SHOWER

Janelle Parker, LCSW-C and ECMHC Intern, Sequoia attended the Worcester County Judy Center Community Baby Shower event. The Program donated essential baby supplies including a diaper bag which was raffled to a parent/family. A very special THANK YOU to ECMH Intern, Kacie who created developmental milestones booklets which included visuals and descriptions for parents to reference as their child grows. The booklet covered the early stages of child development from birth to 36 months. This event allowed the ECMH team to inform attendees about the work of ECMH in early learning environments as families make decisions about enrolling their child(ren) into a program/home-based childcare. The information was also beneficial for attendees who have toddler aged children or family members.



Pictured: developmental milestone booklet

Pictured: ECMH Intern Sequoia, and Program Manager Janelle Parker LCSW-C

INTERNS EXPERIENCE

SEQUOIA'S EXPERIENCE:

I will always be appreciative of the invaluable experience gained during my first internship at Bundles of Joy in Salisbury. The support and collaboration from both the director and the staff were exceptional. Being fully immersed in one center fostered a deep familiarity with teachers, parents, and children, as well as an understanding of the daily operations. I had the opportunity to lead an in-person staff training at the Berlin location on ASQs, and also developed an online training module for the Salisbury location. Working closely with clients throughout the year, I became a trusted resource for staff seeking guidance on interactions with children and parents, while also providing a supportive environment for voicing concerns or challenges.

This experience was pivotal in helping me recognize my inclination towards either a more hands-on role with clients or a broader, more macro perspective—a realization I hadn't anticipated. While I eagerly look forward to new opportunities and experiences, leaving Bundles of Joy is undoubtedly bittersweet.



Pictured: Pre-K 4 and Kindergarten students watching the solar eclipse



Pictured: Sequoia attending the Bundles of Joy Easter egg hunt!

KACIE'S EXPERIENCE:

My experience interning at the Jordan Center has been a wonderful learning opportunity. Through my time at the Jordan Center, I was able to build positive relationships with the director, staff, and children. The time I have spent observing the PRE-K 3 classroom has been a pleasure. I have been able to witness the growth of so many children throughout the school year and wish them success as they venture off to PRE-K 4. This internship has provided me with so much knowledge and has allowed me to improve my skills as a social worker. By being placed at the Jordan Center for the fall and spring, I was able to enhance my consultative skills throughout the entire year and provide long-term support for the center's classrooms and staff. My time at the Jordan Center has granted me many learning opportunities that I will be forever grateful for. It saddens me to leave the Jordan Center, but I wish them the best of luck on all of their future experiences!



Pictured: Kacie enjoying a hay ride with the Pre-K 3 class at their field trip to Adkins farm!

2024 COMMUNITY EVENTS

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In March, Janelle Parker, LCSW-C was invited to speak about the work of IECMHC with staff members at Diakonia in Ocean City. Diakonia is an organization that serves the homeless population including veterans on the Lower Shore.

UPCOMING EVENT!

The program is in the planning stages of a professional development/community education event scheduled for August 2024. The event will focus on helping early childhood professionals and families to navigate initiating services when there are concerns about a child's development. More information will be available in the coming weeks on registration and location.

LITTLE PEOPLE - BIG EMOTIONS

Program Manager, Janelle Parker, LCSW-C presented to 40 parents and caregivers of preschool aged children at Snow Hill Christian Nursery. The presentation: Little People/BIG EMOTIONS sought to deepen participants understanding of emotional dysregulation in toddler and preschool aged children. Externalized (hitting, tantrums) and internalized (anxiety, shutting down) behaviors were explored in addition to the important role families and caregivers play in recognizing what factors contribute to a child's dysregulated response. Additionally, the lasting impact of COVID-19 pandemic and increasing prevalence of children experiencing mental health challenges were also discussed. Participants also received social emotional literacy materials at the end of the presentation.

ADVOCACY



DAY

Attending Advocacy Day alongside numerous students and professionals statewide presented an incredible opportunity. What particularly resonated with me was a conversation centered on social workers transitioning into political roles, spanning from local to higher levels of

The idea of running for office and becoming a political figure had previously seemed somewhat niche and beyond reach for many, but this discussion changed my outlook. It made me realize that such aspirations weren't as far-fetched as I had imagined. It highlighted the significance of drive, passion, and the desire to enact change on a broader scale as essential indicators of potential success in such endeavors.

SEQUOIA'S TAKEAWAY:

THE CONSULTATIVE STANCE

The ECMHC Interns Kacie and Sequoia received the opportunity to attend The Consultative Stance: Foundation For & Power of Our Practice Part II with Kadija Johnston LCSW.

KACIE'S TAKEAWAY:

Attending the consultative stance training part II was a great opportunity. I was able to meet with other consultants to discuss their experiences thus far in their roles. I enjoyed being able to share my experiences as an ECMH intern and hear similar feedback from other professionals. During the training, we were able to gain knowledge about the 10 different elements of the consultative stance, my favorite being "holding hope," which refers to having hope that change can occur. Another highlight of the training was learning about the different levels of influence within the consultative stance. After gaining this knowledge, we were able to discuss in groups a consultative session we had where the consultee was impacted by one of the levels. This experience was beneficial because I was able to hear about how other consultants have handled cases where these influencing factors have impacted their work.

SEQUOIA'S TAKEAWAY:

I found attending the second segment of this training, months following the initial part, to be beneficial. In the first phase, I had solely completed online training and had been working in the field as a consultant for just a few weeks. At that time, the information was valuable but more in a theoretical context. However, in the latter half of the training, I was able to connect real-life experiences to the discussions, observing genuine personal and professional development over the short span of a few months. At this stage, the information and discussions felt more pertinent and practical, given the substantial increase in my experience and exposure from almost none.



CONTACT US!

Consultation goes beyond classroom observation in that education and training are also key components.

If your organization, agency and/or early learning program would like to learn more about the work of

IECMH please contact us at

410-677-6590 or via email at

jiparker@salisbury.edu.

IMPORTANT UPDATES

A new website is in the early stages of development to increase the program's media presence. Stay tuned for more information as it becomes available!

In an effort to meet the linguistic and cultural needs of families who speak Haitian Creole the program has partnered with an agency to translate referral forms and other program materials to increase services accessibility!