



The **Early Childhood Consultation Partnership® (ECCP)** is an early childhood mental health consultation program designed to meet the social and emotional needs of children birth to five. The program builds the capacity of caregivers by offering support, education, and consultation to promote enduring and optimal outcomes for young children. Through their comprehensive high quality services and commitment to bettering the lives of young children, ECCP has been successful in maintaining children at risk of suspension and expulsion, within their early care and education centers.<sup>1</sup>

In 2002, the high rates of suspension and expulsion of pre-school children in childcare settings across Connecticut prompted early childhood stakeholders to include Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation as one of the initiatives funded by Connecticut's Community Mental Health Strategy Board. The primary goal of the Community Mental Health Strategy Board was to address service gaps in Connecticut's Mental Health System. The Department of Children and Families (DCF) implemented this initiative through a contract with Advanced Behavioral Health (ABH), a non-profit behavioral health care management company. ABH® has been responsible for the development, implementation, and administration of the program throughout the state. Today, DCF continues to contract with ABH® for the ECCP program and provides full funding.

Advanced Behavioral Health (ABH) employs a licensed, Master's level statewide program manager and assistant program manager who oversee the ongoing development and day-to-day operations of the program. In 2010, ABH® subcontracts with 10 non-profit behavioral health care agencies for 20 Master's level Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants, who are imbedded throughout the five regions of the state and provide the program's consultation services.

The goal of the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP) is to reduce the risk factors associated with suspension and expulsion of young children by providing supports and consultation in order to maintain them in their early care and education settings. The program provides supports based upon the unique and expressed needs of each individual center, director, teacher, and child/family. It allows for both the structure necessary to maintain a uniformity of best practice and consistent data collection on a statewide level; as well as allowing for the flexibility necessary to meet individual needs.

Services are available on a continuum of care that includes brief phone consultation, Child-Specific, Core Classroom, Intensive Site services and community based consultation and training. The range of service components includes:

- Standardized pre- and post-assessments

---

<sup>1</sup> 99% of completed Child Specific Cases, where a 1 month follow up was available, were not suspended or expelled from their early education or childcare center March 2010.

- Onsite-classroom observations and technical assistance
- In-home observations and support visits
- A team approach to goal development and implementation
- Action Plans
- Center and community trainings
- Referrals to community agencies
- Center policy and director support
- Development and facilitation of center based Behavioral Health Teams
- Building community collaboratives.
- Community based monthly mental health consultation groups
- Follow up services and satisfaction surveys

Across the state of Connecticut, there has been increased support for the Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP) and a growing recognition that social emotional development is a major key to supporting Connecticut's young children in their school readiness and later life successes.

### **Program Highlights**

- First statewide, data driven, comprehensive Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Program.
- In 2007 the results of a rigorous random-controlled evaluation-one of the first evaluations of a large-scale on early childhood mental health consultation ECCP demonstrated statistically significant decreases in acting out behaviors.
- ECCP is featured in "What Works? A Study of Effective Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Programs." This study, conducted by Georgetown University on Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation identifies ECCP as an Evidence-Based Best Practice model and was released in the fall of 2009. For a full copy of the report please go to the following link. <http://gucchd.georgetown.edu/78358.html>
- ECCP was highlighted in a Federally funded publication through New Project Forum @ National Association for National Directors of Special Education NASDSE - "Early Childhood Mental Health Services: Four State Case Studies." This in-depth policy analysis which provides a background of the early childhood mental health (ECMH) focus of many organizations and legal elements of why it is essential that children with disabilities be included in a comprehensive mental health system. <http://projectforum.org/docs/EarlyChildhoodMentalHealthServices-FourStateCaseStudies.pdf>

**For more information please contact:**

Liz Bicio, LCSW  
 Program Manager  
 Early Childhood Consultation Partnership  
 Advanced Behavioral Health Inc.  
 213 Court Street Middletown, CT 06457  
 (860) 704-6198  
[ebicio@abhct.com](mailto:ebicio@abhct.com)  
 abhct.com