



Early
Childhood
Mental
Health
Program

The Dyad

Quarterly Newsletter
Fall 2023 Issue

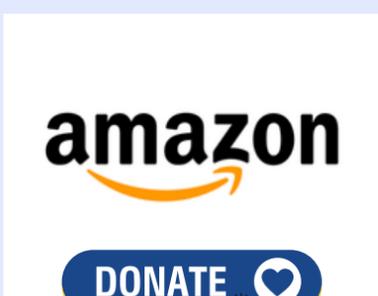
Our annual campaign goal is to raise \$150,000.00



We need your help now more than ever. We invite you to join us in our mission of keeping families together and offering hope to West County families this holiday season. Your gift is tax deductible. Click on the button below to support ECMHP today.



Shop directly for ECMHP to support the work we do with the families and children we serve through our Amazon Wish List. The list is updated regularly to help replenish our play therapy rooms, home visiting equipment, and the therapeutic preschool.



Dear Friends,

It can be difficult for many of us to understand the deep feelings of fear, distress, disappointment, and skepticism that our young clients feel when they first come to the Early Childhood Mental Health Program for support and services. Poverty and marginalization leave them without a voice and discrimination makes them disposable targets of a turbulent time. Substance abuse and addiction, domestic violence, and mental illness threaten the safety and stability of the homes that are meant to be sanctuaries for the very young. Many of these families struggle every day to stay together.

Today many of these same children run around our Comprehensive Therapeutic Preschool that specializes in creating a safe, caring, and educational environment for children with trauma and stressor-related challenges. Children also engage with their therapists in our play therapy rooms and strengthen bonds with their parents at our Family Enrichment Nights, slowly leaving their fear, distress, and shame behind.

In addition to serving our young clients, our Child and Family Therapists work with dozens of their parents and caregivers daily to better understand and address their children's needs. We offer a safe place for them to learn how to emotionally self-regulate, use words to express how they are feeling and foster healthy relationships.

Every week a brave group of parents draw strength and courage from each other while re-creating their personal sense of self-worth and resilience by attending one of our Support Groups: Being Dad and Calm Mom, Calm Baby.

In preschools across Contra Costa County, ECMHP clinicians provide mental health consultation to students, teachers and parents, helping to create a circle of support to make classrooms safer and learning easier.

Unfortunately, we are facing a unique challenge this year. Contra Costa County has instituted changes in billing practices that makes it nearly impossible to continue the level of service we are accustomed to providing and our community is accustomed to receiving. Cuts to the programs mentioned above will leave dozens of families without these vital services.

Please, take a little time to explore our Fall Newsletter for all the latest events, announcements, and services. Finally, please consider supporting our work with a donation as we strive to change our struggling world one family at a time.

In Gratitude,
JEFF SLOAN, MS, MBA, AMFT
Executive Director



Together we can face any challenge

Fall has been a busy time for us. We hosted two big events: one for the community and our generous donors and another for our amazing staff. It was a beautiful evening on October 21st at the Piedmont Center for the Arts where ECMHP hosted a benefit concert that featured pianist, Gwendolyn Mok and cellist, Jerry Chang, who performed a composition of the Sonata by composer Sergei Rachmanioff. We want to thank all our of board members, staff, and people who attended this event. A special thank you to Dr. Hunter Harris, a former ECMHP board member of 19 years, who worked to have this amazing evening come together to benefit ECMHP. It was an honor to celebrate the work ECMHP does and to connect how what we do supports the reduction of mental health difficulties later in life.



On November 3rd, our staff spent a perfect fall afternoon at Kennedy Grove Regional Park. Our all staff picnic celebrated our Director of Administration, Shereen Khan-Amrikani, for her contributions to the agency and her commitment to the young children and families over the last 7 years. We are sad to see her leave ECMHP, but we are equally excited for her as she steps into the next phase of her professional development. Staff enjoyed a BBQ lunch which was grilled by our very own executive director, Jeff, and clinical director, Sami. The tables and lawn were sprawled with fun games like corn hole and Uno. A great way to end the work week and a wonderful way to transition into the holiday season.



Agency & Staff Highlights

Vanice, our executive assistant, and other staff have been attending several community events for outreach and as a way to share what programs and support services we have for the community. Most recently, ECMHP had informational tables at Head Starts Resource and Wellness Fair, the Soul Festival in Richmond, The Family Justice Center's October Neighborhood Party, and at CoCo Kids 29th Annual Early Learning Conference. Staff also participated in GRIP's Harmony Walk at Nicholl Park.



Sam, Director of Mental Health Programs, presented at the 29th Annual Early Learning Conference. She facilitated a group of 47 early learning providers on how to *Arrange Environments to Reduce Children's Stress and Promote Healing Through Play*, which is a module she developed as an adaption from chapter 3 in the the book she co-authored: *Supporting Young Children to Cope, Build Resilience, and Heal from Trauma Through Play.*



Reni, Comprehensive Therapeutic Preschool program (CTP) manager, attended the California Early Childhood Mentor Program Institute at Chabot College where 75 mentor teachers and directors joined together for 2 days of professional development, networking, and relationship building. CTP is a proud practicum site for early learning teachers attending Contra Costa College.



Paola, Perinatal Circle of Care (PCOC) program manager, was chosen to participate in an advanced clinical training program at the Bernard Center at the University of Washington.

This program focuses on specialized clinical infant and early childhood mental health rooted in contemporary understanding.



Did you know?

1. From 1985 to 1989, our Infant Parent Program, currently known as our CFB program, was housed on the 7th floor at Brookside Hospital in San Pablo.
2. Currently, we are able to provide services in 5 languages: English, Spanish, Portuguese, German, and Mongolian.



Workversaries

We are grateful for our staff's dedication to serving the children and families of West Contra Costa County. We appreciate you.

October 2023

Heather- 15 years
Juliane- 8 years
Shereen- 7 years
Mary Lynn- 6 years

November 2023

Sami- 10 years
Tiara- 4 years

January 2024

Anna- 14 years
Sam- 11 years
Carolina- 7 years

Mindful Minute

Mind the 'shoulds' and focus on what feels right for you

It's easy to let the flurry of holiday expectations weigh you down. Whether it's the pressure of attending one-too-many holiday dinners, finding that perfect gift, or whipping up a mind-blowing meal. Anytime you feel those 'shoulds' creeping in, become aware of them and ask yourself: Does this really matter to me? Do I have the energy for this right now?



Follow us on social media



Donate today

You have the power to change a child's life.



Contact Us

510.412.9200

www.ecmhp.org