



Early
Childhood
Mental
Health
Program

www.ecmhp.org

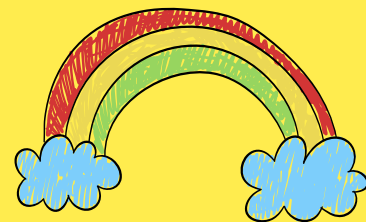
SPRING 2025

THE DYAD

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



**ECC expands
services with
Contra Costa
County Early
Learning Centers**



**ECMHP Summer
Family Fun**

Created by: Vanice Robinson

Serving Contra Costa and Solano County

A message for you....



A Season of Growth and Gratitude

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

As we embrace the spring season, I'm proud to share the many ways Early Childhood Mental Health Program (ECMHP) is growing and thriving. Our programs are expanding across Contra Costa and Solano Counties to meet the increasing demand for high-quality mental health services for young children and their families. This growth is a direct reflection of the extraordinary skill, dedication, and compassion of our staff. Their clinical excellence and professional commitment are the driving forces behind the trust our communities place in us.

This season, we are excited to highlight some of the incredible accomplishments and contributions from our team. Whether it's launching new initiatives, deepening our trauma-informed practices, or partnering with families in new ways, their work continues to elevate our mission. We also look forward to our upcoming events, like our 3rd Annual Block Party and Family Nights!

At ECMHP, our focus remains steadfast—access, equity, and justice are not just values we uphold, they are embedded in every aspect of our service. As we grow, we remain deeply committed to ensuring that every child and family we serve is met with care, respect, and dignity.

We invite you to learn more about our agency, engage with our work, and continue spreading the word about the vital importance of early childhood mental health. Together, we are building stronger, healthier communities. Wishing you all a joyful and hopeful spring. Thank you for your continued support, engagement, and belief in our mission.

In community,

Jeff Sloan, MS, MBA, AMFT
Executive Director



The latest news...



Introducing “ECC” Early Childhood Consultation



We're excited to announce some changes to our 2nd oldest program, formally known as Childcare Solutions — **now known as the Early Childhood Consultation (ECC) Program**. This program aims to support the healthy social-emotional development of young children across Contra Costa County.

Our ECC team provides infant and early childhood mental health consultation services to community preschools and Head Start programs across the county. Our team works closely with early learning providers, caregivers, and program staff to strengthen relationships, build inclusive and trauma-informed classroom environments, and support children with behavioral and social emotional concerns.

By partnering with those on the front lines of early learning, we help build a stronger early learning workforce in Contra Costa County and foster safe, nurturing spaces where every child can build resilience and thrive.

Stay tuned for more updates as ECC grows!

Clinical Program Highlights

We kicked off the year with some exciting developments and transitions!

In January, our team attended the second CPP (Child-Parent Psychotherapy) Conference — see the attached photo for a glimpse into the event!

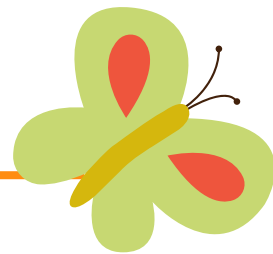
Four of our clinicians recently completed training in the Attachment Vitamins model and are now leading their first groups. We are coming to the end of our Practicum Program's inaugural year. Our 1st MFT trainee, Nadia Hossein, will be completing her practicum at the beginning of June. We are excited to welcome new trainees in the 25/26 fiscal year.

We bid a heartfelt farewell to Anna Cabezas after 15 incredible years of dedicated service to the agency. Her contributions will be deeply missed.

Stay tuned for more updates as we continue to grow and serve our community!



Agency & Staff Highlights....



Welcoming our new staff members...



Jessica Kuhfal
Early Childhood
Mental Health Consultant

Anniversaries

Samantha Watson - Alvarado, LMFT

12 Years

Lawrence Burke

8 Years

Carolina Lucero-Funes, LMFT

8 Years

Andrea (Deia) de Brito, LMFT

4 Years

LaReisha Trapps

4 Years

Maria Lopez

3 Years

Aaron Hume, ASW

2 Years

Maria Figueroa, ASW

1 Year

Kyler Stanion

1 Year

Jessica Ayala

1 Year

Staff Promotions



Gabby Vargas, M.A., IFECTMHP
Early Childhood Consultation
Program Manager

Gabby Vargas is an endorsed Infant-Family and Early Childhood Mental Health Practitioner. She attended Mills College where she completed their 4+1 Bachelors/Masters Infant Mental Health Program. She started at ECMHP in 2021 as a bilingual Preschool Mental Health Consultant, after working at Building Blocks for Kids as their Lead Therapeutic Teacher.

In her time at ECMHP, she has been instrumental in sustaining our summer social skills group, helping our consultation services with Head Start expand, and co-creating our Community Safety Committee that she leads. She is also on our Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Committee. She is currently attending Cal State East Bay working on her Master's in Social Work and plans to obtain licensure. It is with great excitement that we announce her promotion to ECC program manager. Gabby's commitment and passion is admirable. We look forward to seeing her develop in this role.

Join
Our
Team

**Bilingual Intake
Coordinator**

**Bilingual Child &
Family Therapist**

**Mental Health
Consultant**

Visit our website for position
details.

[www.ecmhp.org/job-
opportunities-1](http://www.ecmhp.org/job-opportunities-1)

*Submit cv/resume to
employment@ecmhp.org*

Staff Spotlight....



Heather Coleman, Ph.D

We're proud to shine this month's spotlight on **Heather Coleman, PH.D** a licensed clinical psychologist and a vital member of our Early Childhood Mental Health Program.

Heather specializes in dyadic relational play therapy with children under 7 and their families, bringing compassion, insight, and expertise to her work every day. Her journey into early childhood mental health began during her training practicums, where she discovered a deep passion for working with young children. This passion led her to pursue specialized training in Infant-Parent and Child-Parent Psychotherapies at Children's Hospital-Oakland's Early Childhood Mental Health Program.

Heather earned her doctorate in clinical psychology from the California School of Professional Psychology – San Francisco Bay Area Campus. Since joining ECMHP in 2008 as a therapist, she has continued to grow and impact our community. In 2015, she expanded her role as a supervisor for Wraparound, supporting and guiding clinicians in delivering holistic, family-centered care.

Today, Heather continues to make a lasting impact as a Child and Family Therapist and Clinical Supervisor, providing direct services to our clients and supporting fellow clinicians with her extensive knowledge and thoughtful supervision. She is an active member of the 0-5 Care Collaborative which is a voluntary group of agencies that banded together to improve care coordination for services for young children in Contra Costa County. She is currently the co-facilitator of the collaborative which meets monthly to identify care coordination obstacles that families are experiencing, familiarize members of community programming for the 0-5 population and share important community and 0-5 county updates.

We're grateful for Heather's years of service and the warmth, skill, and clinical leadership she brings to our team. Thank you, Heather, for your unwavering commitment to early childhood mental health!

Events....



YOU'RE INVITED!

Join us for our 3rd Annual Summer Kick-Off a fun, free event for children and families! Celebrate the start of summer with us as we come together to promote early childhood development and mental health awareness.

Enjoy games, activities, and community resources in a welcoming environment for all ages. Your support helps us continue creating positive experiences for families in our community. To learn more contact Vanice Robinson at vrobinson@ecmhp.org or to make a donation, visit www.ecmhp.org/donatetoday.

Early Childhood Mental Health Program

3rd Annual Summer Kick-Off

FREE EVENT
FRIDAY, JUNE 6TH
3PM-6PM

FIRST 50 GUESTS RECEIVE A CHANCE TO WIN A VISA GIFT CARD!
3 CHANCES TO WIN!

Taco Stand, Kona Ice, Family Prizes, Live Entertainment, Community Resources, Special Guest & More...

200 24TH ST. RICHMOND, CA 94804

LIVE ANIMAL SHOW! FUR, SCALES AND TAILS @ 4:30 PM

Sponsored by:

Event Donors

Sara Ortega-Wong
Marena Brown
Michael Pherson
Jeff Devine
John Bashor
David Chaplin
Pauline Shallen

Mechanics Bank

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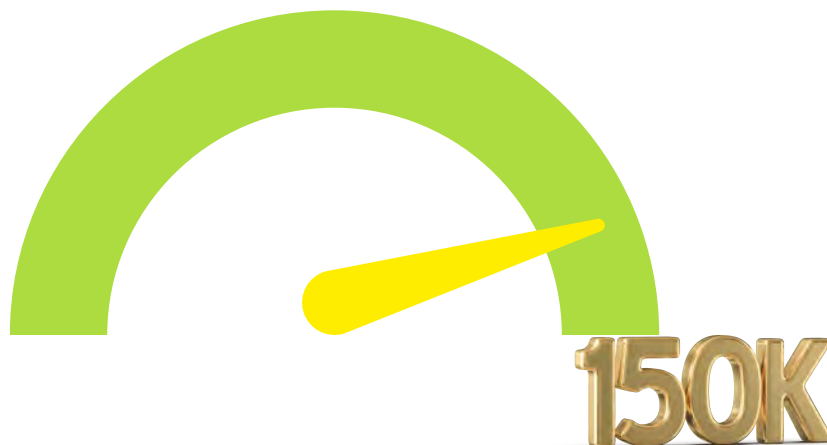
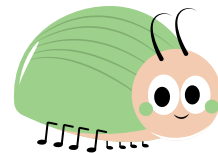
RAISER PERMANENTE

ECMHP FAMILY NIGHTS



Join us every **4th Tuesday** of the month for ECMHP Family Nights a special evening dedicated to fun, connection, and community! Each month features a new engagement activity designed to help families bond and create lasting memories together. Enjoy a delicious family meal and exciting activities, all free and open to the community. **Next one is scheduled for May 27th.** We can't wait to see you there! ❤️

Thank you to our supporters!



To Our Cherished Supporters,

Year after year, your generosity has made it possible for us to create spaces where parents and their children feel safe, supported, and empowered. Your commitment fuels our mission to uplift families offering them not just resources, but a true sense of community on their parenting journey.

Because of your continued support, we're proud to share that this year we've raised **\$130,000** to fund events and initiatives that bring parents and children together. These event programs provide opportunities for connection, learning, and joy helping families grow stronger, together.

We are deeply grateful for your unwavering belief in our mission. Your kindness continues to create lasting impact in the lives of so many families.

With heartfelt appreciation,

ECMHP



Mindful Minute

Mindful Eating

Mindful eating is a practice we use in CTP, our therapeutic preschool. This practice involves encouraging the children to pay attention to their hunger and fullness cues, slow down during mealtimes, and appreciate the taste and texture of their food.

It's about fostering a healthy relationship with food and avoiding distractions.



- Take a bite of food and focus on the experience of eating.
- Notice the colors, textures, smells, and tastes of the food.
- Pay attention to how it feels to chew and swallow.

Did you know?

Recent data indicates that roughly 16% of children under 6 years of age living in the United States experience clinically significant mental health problems. These problems often manifest as dysregulated emotional or behavioral patterns, such as anger, aggression, or anxiety (CDC, 2025).

Donate Today!



CONTACT US



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