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Celebrate Babies Week 2024: Supporting Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health

Indianapolis, IN - October 10, 2024 - INfancy Onward, a subsidiary program of Mental Health America of Indiana (MHAIA) is thrilled to announce the observance of Celebrate Babies Week, a dedicated time to raise awareness and promote the mental health and well-being of infants and young children. From October 21-25, we invite communities to come together to recognize the vital importance of nurturing early relationships and environments that support the emotional, cognitive, and social development of children from birth through age six.

During this week we will highlight the critical role of early experiences in shaping lifelong health and mental well-being. Research has shown that the first years of life lay the foundation for healthy brain development, emotional regulation, and social skills. The quality of care and interactions children experience during infancy and early childhood have a profound impact on their ability to form secure attachments, manage stress, and build resilience.

"Investing in the mental health of our youngest children is an investment in their future," said Sarah Bailey, Director of Outreach and Training at INfancy Onward. "Celebrate Babies Week is an opportunity to educate parents, caregivers, professionals, and communities about the importance of fostering positive, supportive relationships for infants and young children."

Why It Matters:

Mental health does not begin in adolescence or adulthood—it begins before birth. Infants and young children experience a range of emotions and their mental health is shaped by the care they receive, the relationships they form, and the environments they grow in. When babies receive the responsive, loving care they need, they are more likely to develop healthy social-emotional skills, learn self-regulation, and build strong, trusting relationships that last a lifetime.

How You Can Get Involved:

For Parents and Caregivers: Participate in local workshops and online webinars about supporting infant and early childhood mental health. Learn more about the power of positive touch, eye contact, and verbal communication in fostering secure attachment.

For Professionals: Attend virtual and in-person events to explore evidence-based practices and research on infant and early childhood mental health and connect with others working in the field.

For Communities: Advocate for policies and funding that prioritize mental health services for young children, and raise awareness through social media using the hashtags #CelebrateBabiesWeek #INfancyOnward #InfantMentalHealth #EarlyChildhoodMentalHealth

Let's work together to create a future where all children have the healthy beginnings they deserve.

For more information about Celebrate Babies Week, visit www.infancyonward.org, www.mhai.net or follow us on social media.

About INfancy Onward:

INfancy Onward is a program of Mental Health America of Indiana committed to advancing the well-being of infants, young children, families, and caregivers. Through education, advocacy, training, and community partnerships, we work to ensure every child has the opportunity for a healthy start in life. We provide Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Endorsements[®], which are internationally recognized credentials for professionals working with or on behalf of pregnant people, infants, toddlers, young children and their families. Endorsement supports and recognizes the development and proficiency of professionals in this specialized field, as it is based upon a comprehensive set of competencies that help define best practice and guide an organized system of culturally sensitive, relationship-based professional growth.

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