



Infant Mental Health Endorsement® & Early Childhood Mental Health Endorsement® (I/ECMH-E®) Informational Booklet



Alliance for the Advancement of
Infant Mental Health

**The Internationally Recognized Credential for
Relationship-Focused Practice Promoting
Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health**



IECHM Endorsement®

What is it?

Endorsement is an internationally recognized competency-based credential used to demonstrate specialization in the infant and early childhood mental health (IECMH) field. Endorsement supports and recognizes the development of professionals who work with or on behalf of pregnant people, infants, young children, and their families. Endorsement was developed by the Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health in 2002 and is now used by 36 U.S. state associations of infant mental health (AIMHs) and two international associations. Each of those AIMHs is a member of the Alliance for the Advancement of Infant Mental Health. Through the Alliance, Endorsement in Indiana is recognized in each of the 38 AIMHs!

Who can apply?

The Endorsement credential is intended for any professional who has experience working with or on behalf of pregnant people, infants, young children, parents, and/or other caregivers.

Four categories of Endorsement represent the varied disciplines in the field of IECMH:

I/EC Family Associate - for individuals whose primary focus is promotion of healthy growth, development, and relationships. This includes early childhood educators, Early Head Start/Head Start teachers, pediatricians, program administrators, and others.

I/EC Family Specialist - for individuals whose primary focus is prevention/early intervention. They support the infant/young child and caregiver together to assess social emotional needs, provide preventative support, and connect families to additional services. This includes home visitors, family support specialists, First Steps providers, program directors, parent educators, inclusion specialists, NICU nurses, and many others.

I/EC Mental Health Specialist - for individuals providing mental health treatment and clinical intervention to infants/young children through their primary caregiving relationships. This involves delivering relationship-focused parent-infant psychotherapy. This includes parent-infant/child psychotherapists, private practice therapists, and other licensed IECMH mental health professionals.

I/EC Mental Health Mentor - for individuals promoting IECMH on a macro level. This includes a broad range of professionals under three separate designations: Policy, Clinical, and Research/Faculty. Some examples include providers of RSC, policy specialists, university faculty, and researchers.

IECHM Endorsement®

How do I earn it?

The specific requirements for Endorsement vary for each category. Eligibility is based on specialized education, work experiences, in-service training hours, leadership, and RSC experiences. The applicant must also be an active member of INfancy Onward.

1. Identify your scope of practice and align that with the category of Endorsement that fits best. *If you are unsure which category is best for you, please contact your Endorsement Coordinator via email: Endorsement@infancyonward.org*

	IFA/ECFA	IFS/ECFS	IMHS/ ECMHS	IMHM/ ECMHM	ERS add-on
Registration Fee:	\$15	\$25	\$25	\$25	-
Processing Fee:	\$25	\$50	\$50	\$300 (includes exam fees)	\$50
Total Application Fees:	\$40	\$75	\$75	\$325	Endorsement fees + \$50

2. Register on EASy, the web-based system for applying for Endorsement, at <https://infancy-onward.myeasy.org/>.

- The first time you visit EASy, click Register under New Applicant, complete the form, and submit. Be sure to include payment for the registration fee and membership. All applicants and endorsees must maintain an active INfancy Onward membership.

	Individual Professional Memberships	Agency Memberships
Annual:	\$50	\$225 for five + \$45 per additional staff
2-year:	\$95	\$425 for five + \$85 per additional staff
3-year:	\$135	\$600 for five + \$120 per additional staff

3. Once processed, receive login information and welcome email.

4. Log into EASy and prepare application.

5. Once completed, submit application for review along with payment of the processing fee.

6. Application review (followed by Mental Health Mentor applicants' successful completion of a written exam).

7. Endorsement! Begin using the IMH-E® or ECMH-E® credential after your name.

8. Complete renewal by attesting every three years to maintain your Endorsement.

IECHM-E® Categories

	Infant/Early Childhood Family Associate	Infant/Early Childhood Family Specialist	Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Specialist	IECMH Mentor - Clinical, Research/Faculty, or Policy	(Add-On) Endorsed Reflective Supervisor
Scope of Work	PROMOTION	PREVENTION/ EARLY INTERVENTION	CLINICAL INTERVENTION/ TREATMENT	MACRO	Prerequisites: •IECMH Endorsement® •24 hours of RSC while completing IECMH relevant work.
Education	Any academic degree	No Degree	Post-Graduate	Post-Graduate	NA
Work Experience	Min. 2 yrs. of infant or early childhood related work experience or volunteer experience in an applicable role	Min. 2 yrs. of prevention and/or early intervention services with 0 to 3 yr. olds or 3 to 6 yr. olds & their caregivers/families; served a min. of 10 families	Min. 2 yrs. post-graduate IECMH licensed practice providing relationship-focused parent-infant/child psychotherapy	Min. 3 yrs. as an IECMH practice leader CLINICAL: Plus provider of RSC for 3+ yrs.	NA
In-Service Training	Min. 33 hrs.	Min. 33 hrs.	Min. 33 hrs.	Min. 33 hrs. (Policy & Research/Faculty) CLINICAL: Plus min. 15 hrs. on the provision of RSC	Min. 15 hrs. on the provision of RSC
References	3	3	3	3	2
Reflective Supervision/ Consultation with a Qualified Provider	Not required	Min. 24 hrs. received	Min 50 hrs. received	Min. 50 hrs. received; CLINICAL: 25 hours about the provision of RSC	1 year of providing RSC to infant/child-family professionals while receiving 12 hours of RSC from a qualified provider about your provision of RSC to others
Written Exam	No	No	No	Yes	No

This is just a summary of the requirements; for a full description, please review the Competency Guidelines:

<https://infancy-onward.myeasy.org/competency-guidelines>

Reflective Supervision/Consultation

Reflective Supervision/Consultation (RSC) involves regular meetings between individuals or groups and a reflective supervisor/consultant, who facilitates thoughtful discussion focused on the emotional content of work in the infant/early childhood family field. This specialized supervision/consultation goes beyond clinical or administrative supervision to shared exploration of the parallel process.

In RSC, there is attention given to all of the relationships, including that between professional and caregiver, between caregiver and infant/toddler/young child, and between professional and supervisor/consultant. It is critical to understand how each of these relationships affects the others. The reflective relationship, in which the professional feels seen, heard, and understood, provides a model for strengthening relationships and promoting the growth and development of babies, young children, their parents, and caregivers. RSC supports professionals in addressing the challenges of their work and leads to better service within one's discipline.

Concretely, RSC provides a regular opportunity for a professional to talk about their work and the impact their work has on themselves and others. RSC fosters critical self-awareness and the ability to consider multiple perspectives, all of which enhance an organization's implementation of a relationship-based culture.

RSC is recommended for all Endorsement applicants, however, only Family Specialists, Mental Health Specialists, Mental Health Mentor- Clinicals, and those with an Endorsed Reflective Supervisor add-on are required to receive it.

INfancy Onward offers all active members working towards Endorsement a spot in one of our virtual Reflective Consultation groups, led by qualified endorsed professionals!

Endorsed Reflective Supervisor (Add-on)

The ERS add-on is a pathway for all categories of Endorsement to provide qualifying hours of RSC for others seeking Endorsement.

For those who do not yet meet the requirements for the ERS add-on, they can apply as "emerging" and take two years to earn those requirements while still offering qualifying hours of RSC for others. Please reach out to your Endorsement Coordinator for more information about emerging ERS.

Renewal

To maintain your earned Endorsement, it is required to participate in ongoing professional development, RSC, and maintain active INfancy Onward membership. Endorsement renewal is conducted on a 3-year fixed cycle (2024, 2027, 2030, 2033, etc.) via an attestation-audit model. During a renewal year, the Endorsement renewal window is open from October 1 with a hard deadline of December 31. When Endorsement is earned mid renewal cycle a fraction of the requirements will be required. Determine your renewal requirements by noting the number of years you have been endorsed by the time of a renewal deadline. The next renewal deadline is December 31, 2027.

NUMBER OF YEARS ENDORSED	REQUIREMENTS	
3	45 hours training (9 hours on provision of RSC for RSC providers) 36 hours RSC, if required Active INfancy Onward membership	
2	30 hours training (6 hours on provision of RSC for RSC providers) 24 hours RSC, if required Active INfancy Onward membership	
1	15 hours training (3 hours on provision of RSC for RSC providers) 12 hours RSC, if required Active INfancy Onward membership	
Less than a year	You do not need to renew an Endorsement the year it was earned!	

**Up to 50% renewal training hours can come from time spent providing training to others (e.g., provided an in-service training; hosted a workshop, taught a college course, etc.).*

**Up to 10 hours spent volunteering to support an AIMH's Endorsement capacity growth (e.g., application reviewing, conducting vetting conversation, committee work, etc.) can count towards renewal training hours. Reach out to your Endorsement Coordinator for more info.*

Questions?

Any questions about IMH or ECMH Endorsement® may be directed to your
Endorsement Coordinator: Endorsement@infancyonward.org
Please do not hesitate to reach out if you need help!