



INfancy
Onward

Supporting First Relationships

2024-2025

INFANCY ONWARD ANNUAL REPORT



WHAT IS INFANCY ONWARD?



Infancy Onward is a statewide prevention program of Mental Health America of Indiana and a member association of the global Alliance for the Advancement of Infant Mental Health. Founded in 2000, Infancy Onward became Indiana's association for infant and early childhood mental health, helping to support professionals working with or on behalf of infants and young children up to 6 years of age through mental health education, advocacy, and credentialing.

Our mission is to advance the conditions which provide an early start toward optimal mental health. We do this by supporting professional development with an Infant Mental Health Endorsement®, an Early Childhood Mental Health Endorsement®, free Reflective Consultation groups for members seeking Endorsement, an annual conference and trainings around young children, families, social, emotional and brain development, the effects of trauma on young children, and relationship building.



WHO IS INFANCY ONWARD?

Behind every program and partnership is a team dedicated to advancing the field of infant and early childhood mental health in Indiana!

- **Director of Endorsement** – guides and supports Indiana’s professionals through the IECMH Endorsement® process
- **Director of Outreach & Training** – designs and delivers impactful infant and early childhood mental health training and outreach statewide
- **Education & Resource Development Manager** – serves as subject matter expert for family and consumer education providing infant and early childhood mental health tools and materials

This year brought some transitions for INfancy Onward, as team members moved on to new opportunities and other staff stepped into new roles.

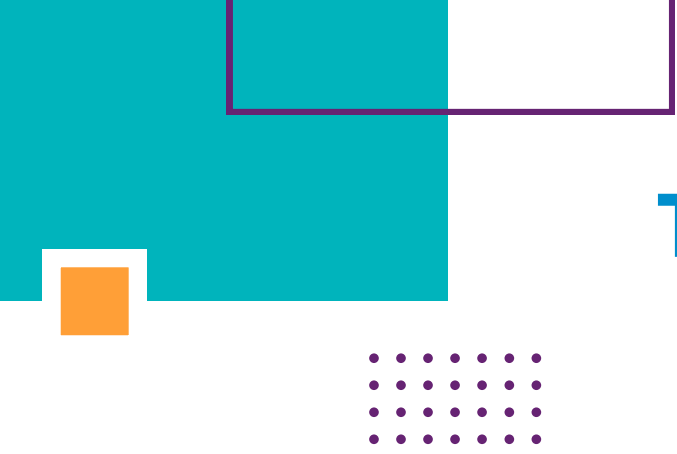
We are growing our team and our reach and are excited to share some great news with you soon!

WHAT IS INFANT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH (IECMH)?



**Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health
is the developing capacity of a child,
from birth to age six, to:**

- ✦ **experience, regulate, and express emotions**
- ✦ **form close and secure interpersonal relationships**
- ✦ **explore the environment and learn**



THE IMPORTANCE OF INFANT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH

Brain Architecture

We have a shared stake to make sure babies develop sturdy brain architecture, because this foundation supports a lifetime of learning and productive participation in society. A reliable caregiver who is responsive to a baby's needs is the base for secure attachment, which allows an infant to explore and learn.



Body and Health

Toxic stress from broken caregiver-infant relationships can push a baby's stress hormones into overdrive. When constantly present, these hormones disrupt brain and physical development. And babies can't learn if their brains and bodies are working against them. The antidote to toxic stress? Affection and protection by a nurturing caregiver.



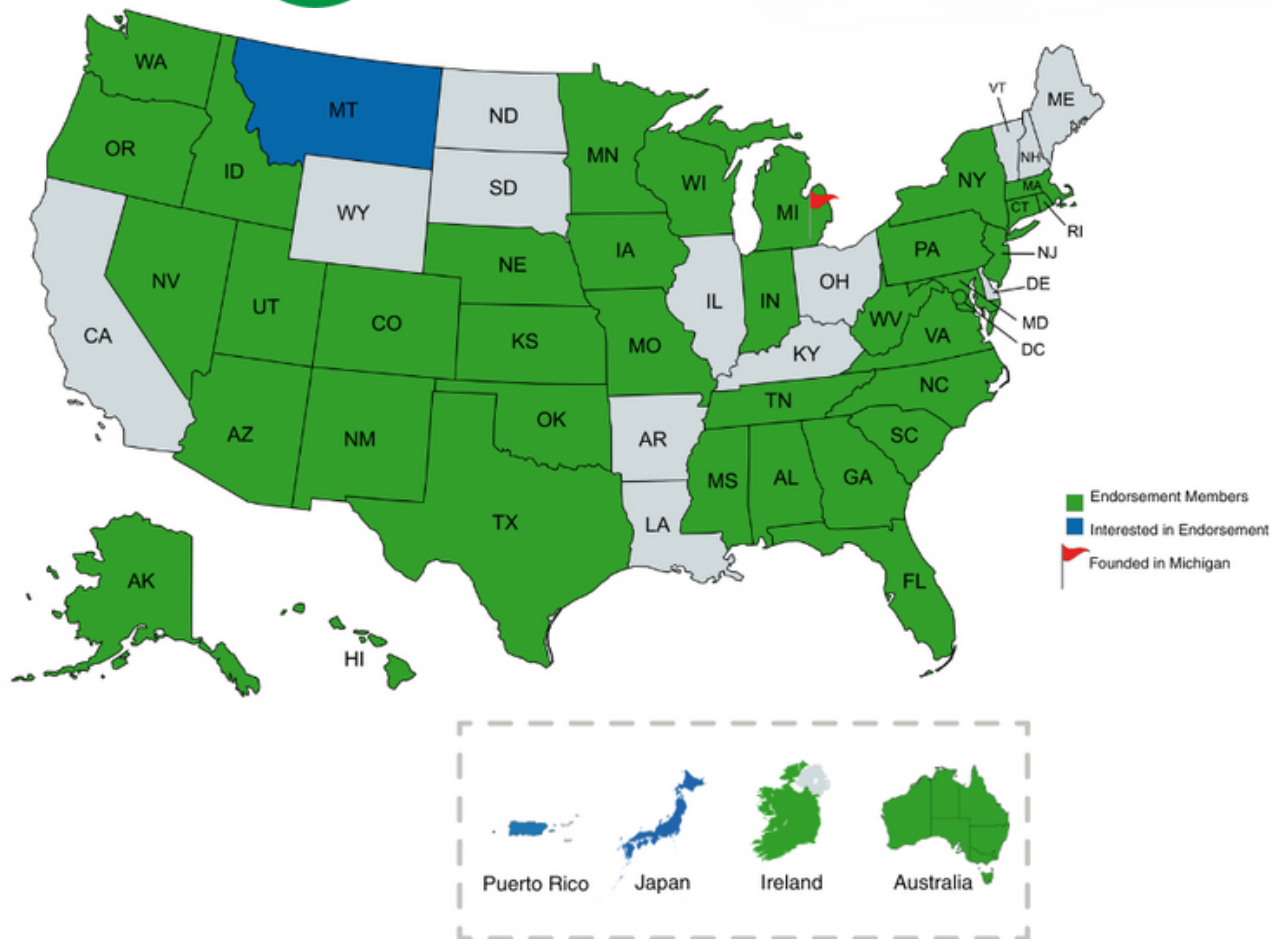
Behavior and Relationships

Secure attachment is a fundamental building block of social function. Children need relationships with sensitive caregivers to self-regulate, get along with others, solve problems, and be productive - the basis for civic and economic prosperity.





Alliance for the Advancement of Infant Mental Health



The Alliance for the Advancement of Infant Mental Health is a **global network** of member associations for infant mental health (AIMHs) consisting of **36 U.S. states**, including INfancy Onward in Indiana, **and two other countries**.

The Alliance promotes infant and early childhood mental health by building and supporting a highly skilled workforce equipped to meet the unique needs of young children through relationship-centered practices. Membership in the Alliance signifies that an AIMH utilizes the workforce development tools, *Competency Guidelines* (MI-AIMH Copyright © 2017) and Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Endorsement® (IECMH Endorsement®).

All together, there are over **6,000 active Endorsements globally**, with more than **9,000 total credentials awarded** since it's start!

INDIANA'S ENDORSED PROFESSIONALS

INfancy Onward offers two mental health Endorsement types for Indiana professionals working with, or on behalf of, infants, toddlers, and young children.

Infant Mental Health Endorsement (IMH-E)[®]

Indiana purchased the license for this Endorsement in 2010. The first cohort of professionals in Indiana earned this Endorsement in 2012.

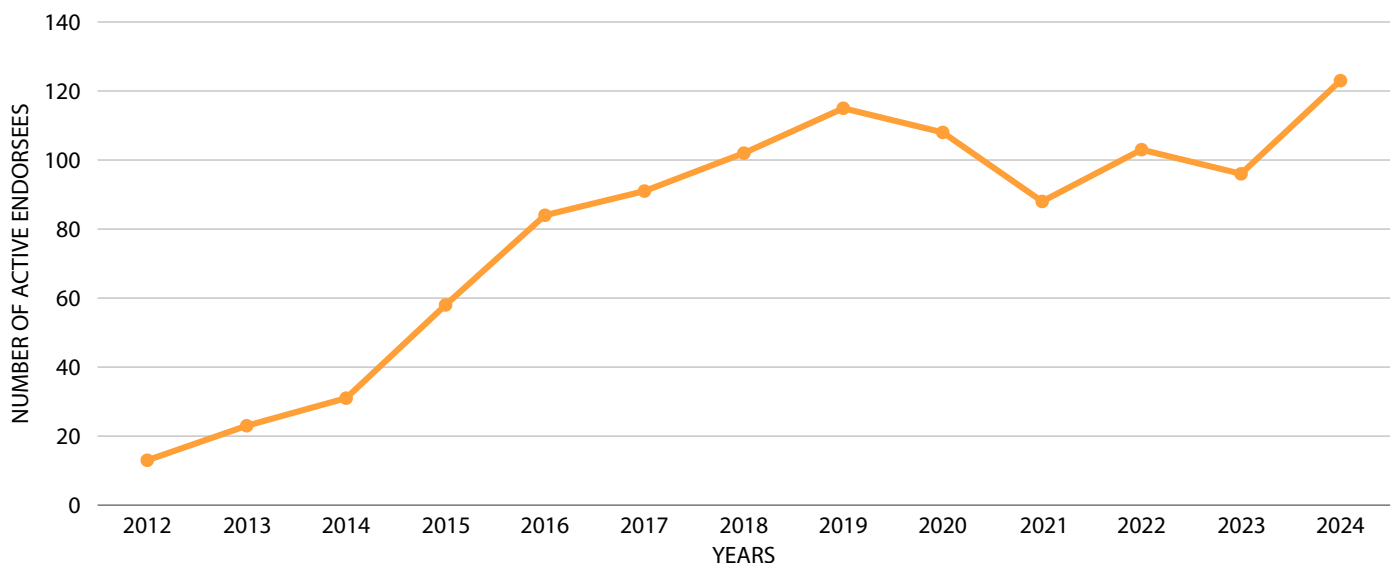
Early Childhood Mental Health Endorsement (ECMH-E)[®]

Indiana purchased the license for this Endorsement in 2019. The first cohort of professionals in Indiana earned this Endorsement in 2020.

45 new INfancy Onward **Endorsements** were awarded in **2024**

- 9 Infant Family Associate
- 16 Infant Family Specialist
- 1 Infant Mental Health Mentor - Clinical
- 5 Early Childhood Family Associates
- 14 Early Childhood Family Specialist

Number of Active INfancy Onward Endorseees Through the Years
(End-of-Year Values)



Between **July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025**, INfancy Onward administered **32 Endorsements** and Indiana gained **24 new endorsed professionals**.

As of **June 2025**, there are **135 active endorsed** professionals serving **all 92 counties** in the state of Indiana.

View the Endorsement Registry here:

<https://infancy-onward.myeasy.org/endorsement-registry>

2024-2025 ENDORSEMENT UPDATES

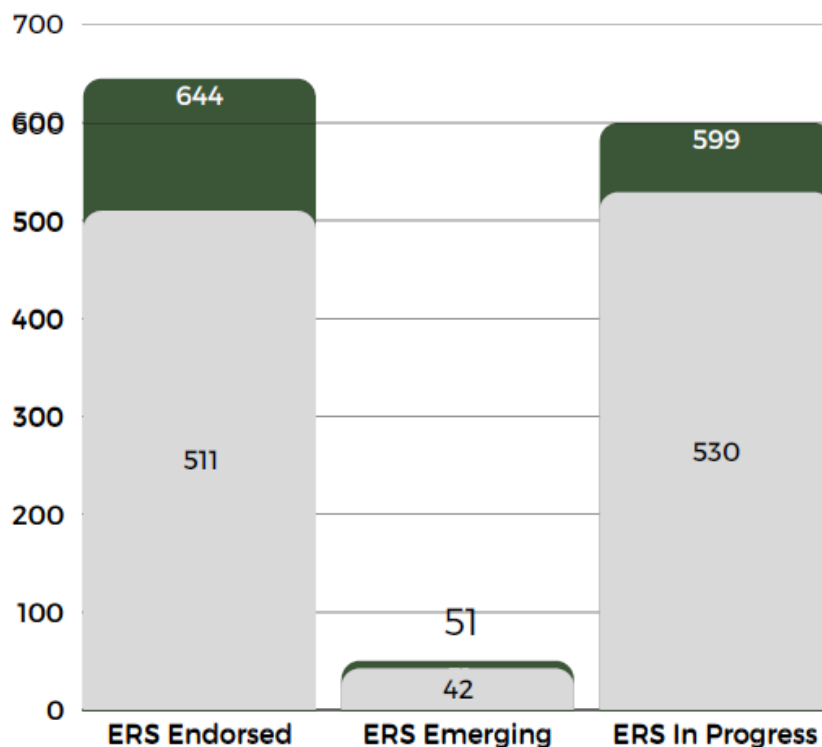
Effective January 1, 2025:

- Endorsed Reflective Supervisor (ERS) add-on is available for all active endorsees at any category with requirements having been adjusted to allow for greater access
- Mental Health Specialist requirements have been updated and an exam is no longer required
- Endorsement renewal has moved to a 3-year cycle and will be completed via an attestation and audit system. The next renewal period will be conducted in 2027 and future renewals will follow a three-year cycle (e.g., 2030, 2033, etc.)
- Professionals who are no longer on the active Endorsement registry can now reinstate their Endorsement by completing the self-guided process in EASy
- The Inactive registry policies are considered null and void and have been removed from the policy manual.

March 2025:

- Reference rating forms no longer expire
- Updated Code of Ethics, Training and Work requirements to improve access

With these changes, the Endorsement system has already experienced a **4.35% increase in active Endorsements** (231 professionals either earned a new credential or reactivated a previously inactive one) and a **20% global increase in Endorsed Reflective Supervisor add-on activity** between **January 1 - June 30, 2025**



2025 MID-YEAR DATA

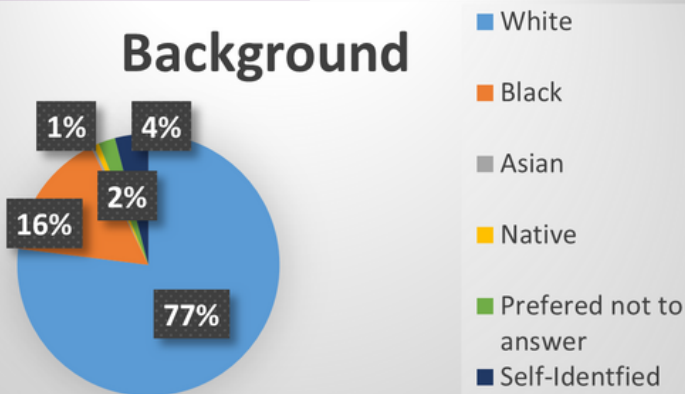
2024 END OF YEAR DATA



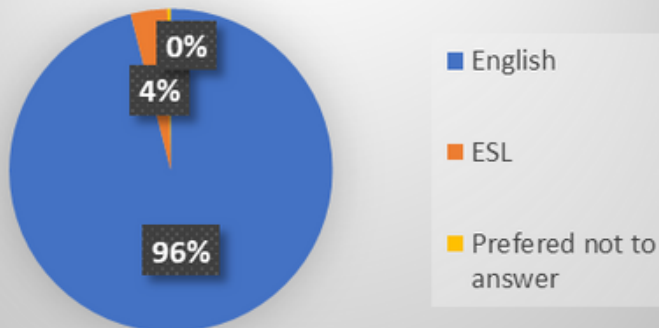
Alliance for the Advancement of
Infant Mental Health

2025 MEMBERSHIP

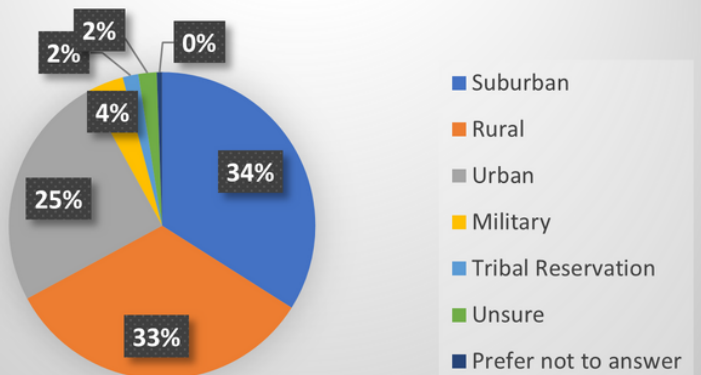
Background



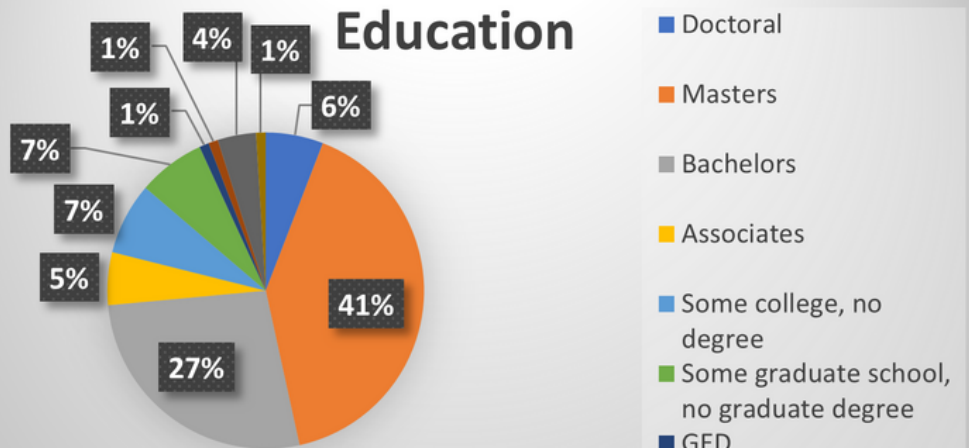
Language



Communities Served



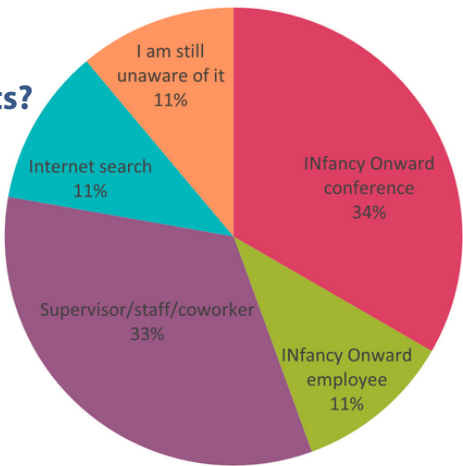
Education



2025 ANNUAL SURVEY RESULTS

Early Childhood Education Programs and Directors Survey

How did you learn about the Endorsements?

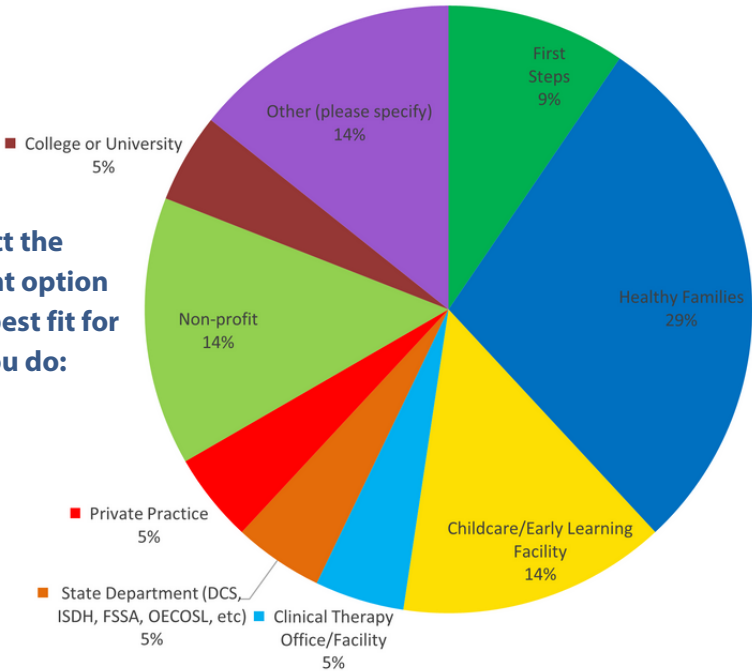


Which best describes your current role?

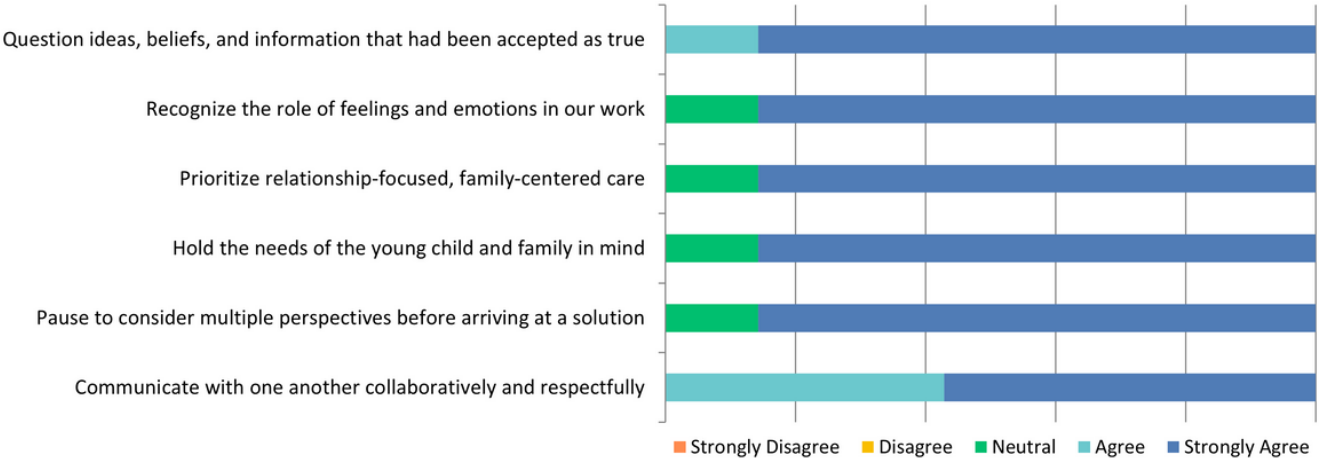
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Teacher	0.00%
Assistant	0.00%
Center Director	33.33%
Program Director	33.33%
Administration	16.67%
Consultant	16.67%
Clinician	0.00%

Endorsed Professionals Survey

Please select the employment option that is the best fit for the work you do:



My INfancy Onward reflective group consultant facilitates reflective thinking that encourages me and other group members to:



2024-2025 OUTREACH AND TRAINING

Hosted **40 live trainings** providing over **100 training hours** to more than **700 participants!**



Staffed over **30 exhibit tables** at conferences and provider fairs making more than **325 connections** with potential Endorsement candidates and future training and collaboration opportunities around the state



Supported over **20 family engagement** opportunities reaching over **600 people!**



Provided trauma-informed training, mentoring, and support for a **cohort of 30 early childhood educators** across three child care programs in Marion County's underserved communities

ADVANCING EARLY RELATIONAL HEALTH IN INDIANA

Between Winter 2022 and Spring 2025, INfancy Onward partnered with **Marie-Celeste Condon, Ph.D., and Dominique Charlot-Swiley, Ph.D.** to implement a workforce development initiative aimed at **strengthening sustainable reflective and relationship-based practices** across Indiana's early childhood workforce.

22 Indiana professionals completed at least one year

5 participants from year one returned for year two

100% of participants applied for, or earned, I/ECMH Endorsement® credentials!

Year one began in Spring 2023 and was focused on revitalizing reflective practices and building foundational knowledge.

"I find myself being able to pause and attend to what is important. Being more intentional. I've improved my relationship with those in reflective consultation and reflective supervision spaces. I spend more time with (supervisees, clients) as people."



Year two expanded to include **direct service providers**, which further supported the parallel process. Between **Spring 2024 and Spring 2025**, virtual planning, orientation, and monthly touchpoint meetings explored topics like **transformational relationships, storytelling, and cultural humility**. The final in-person retreat and wrap-up was on **April 15-16, 2025, in Indianapolis**.

"Remember the value of intentionally choosing to slow down, pause, and make space for people to feel seen, heard, and valued."

"I feel so much gratitude for the space you've held for us, and the learning and growth that's happened."

Reported Outcomes:

- Greater self-awareness and reflective capacity
- Stronger communication and relational skills
- Increased ability to apply learnings with teaching, mentoring, RSC, assessment, evaluation, and program development
- A connected, sustainable network of professionals across Indiana

"My capacity has changed in a meaningful way. I use to have a hard time juggling a lot. Now I am better with being present in the moment."

2024-2025 EVENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS

SUMMER 2024

Piloted **cohort model** of Endorsement application support for **two Healthy Families agencies** sponsoring their staff's credentialing



FALL 2024

Over **570 visits** to Infancy Onward's website during **Celebrate Babies Week** media campaign and training event



WINTER 2024

Reflective consultant **Amanda Kinnaird MSW, LCSW, IMH-E®** awarded the **2024 Heroes for Recovery "Advocate of the Year"**



SPRING 2025

May is **Mental Health Month** and **Children's Mental Health Awareness Month**



CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

INfancy Onward

Supporting First Relationships

On April 24, 2025, INfancy Onward turned 25 years old!



We got to celebrate on the day during **MHA's quarterly all-staff meeting** and share INfancy Onward history and highlights

In 2025, we are **“Celebrating IECMH Relationships”** by collaborating with our partners in the northern and southern parts of the state to increase access to our **annual conference**

We went to **New Albany** on **June 6th** this fiscal year and provided a full day conference for over **65 professionals**, serving all Indiana, and some Kentucky and Michigan, counties!



CONNECT WITH US!



INfancyOnward.org



[@INfancyOnward](https://www.facebook.com/INfancyOnward)



INfancyOnward.eventbrite.com



mhaitraininginstitute.org

This report was created with funding from the Child Care and Development Block Grant awarded to the Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning, a division of the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration