

Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health

The **Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health** (CAECMH) at Montclair State University began in September 2011 as a thought-leading center focused on professional formation and development, academic education and research, and clinical and family support services around the issues of infant and early childhood mental health and developmental differences and disabilities.

Central to the philosophy of the CAECMH is the belief of the role of social-emotional/mental health development at the core of developmental and educational progress. The CAECMH is anchored in a developmental approach to meet the needs of infants, children and their families, and is supported by theoretical education, research-based methods and clinical application. Serving Montclair State University and neighboring communities as a resource on the issues of autism, infant and childhood development and mental health, the Center's programs include professional development and consultation, a post-graduate certificate program and continuing education, clinical services, and research.

The Center operates under the auspices of the **College of Education and Human Services**, and its academic programs will be located in the department of Early Childhood, Elementary and Literacy Education.

[Autism Fact Sheet](#)

Academic Programs and Services

Clinical and Family Support Services

Community clinical services for individuals, families and groups; special contracts for mental health promotion in schools; Lamaze childbirth education and clinical support; and infant and pediatric massage are among the services provided.

Academic Education and Research

Graduate-level academic offerings including the Developmental Models of Autism Intervention Certificate, and continuing education for professionals in Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health. The New Jersey Autism Center of Excellence Coordinating Center researches, applies and advances best practices in the understanding, prevention, evaluation and

treatment of autism spectrum disorders.

Professional Development and Formation

Coming Soon.

Timeline of Growth

In slightly more than five years, our Center has become a leader in autism and early childhood mental health in New Jersey. Supported by more than \$7.2 million in grants, contracts, fees, tuition and gifts, we have developed a spectrum of programs and achievements including:

- A clinic for families from pregnancy to age 10
- Graduate offerings in infant/child mental health and in developmental approaches to autism
- Establishment as a Brazelton Touchpoints Center and a Lamaze International Training Site
- Designation as the only U.S. licensed "self-reg" center in partnership with the MEHRIT Center in Canada
- A school consultation service that promotes inclusion
- The only U.S. licensed trainer of a school-based, early childhood mental health promotion program, Zippy's Friends
- Parent support, breastfeeding promotion and pediatric massage trainings
- Training in Qigong Sensory Training (QST) for children with autism and other neurosensory difficulties
- A Center-created infant mental health curriculum, Keeping Babies and Children in Mind, that has been offered to more than 2,000 multidisciplinary staff throughout New Jersey
- Designation by the NJ Department of Health as the "New Jersey Autism Center of Excellence Coordinating Center," through which we support 25 clinical research projects and five autism medical homes
- The first statewide autism summit in 2015
- The annual Todd Ouida Children's Foundation conference for "workers in the vineyard"
- A NJ Department of Human Services-founded "Socio-Emotional Formation Initiative" (SEFI) through which we are helping infant and child care centers throughout the state by overseeing the Pyramid Model and supporting four regional technical assistance centers that help early childhood programs meet the state's quality improvement system, Grow NJ Kids

Our Vision for the Future

- Develop a new division, Professional Formation for Life Span Services in Autism

- Integrate the "Self-Reg" framework into all of our programs and services in partnership with the MEHRIT Center and Dr. Stuart Shanker in Canada
- Create a Network for Inclusive Early Care and Education to promote social justice, responsive care/education and full inclusion in infant and early childhood centers
- Create a capital campaign for current and future growth of the center

To support our work, join our mailing list and request additional information, please call 973-655-6685 or email us at caecmh@montclair.edu.

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