



THE WELL-BEING OF OUR YOUNGEST CHILDREN IS THE FOUNDATION OF A PROSPEROUS SOCIETY.

WE ALL HAVE MENTAL HEALTH - EVEN BABIES.

Just as we have policies and programs designed to nurture children's physical health, we must also support children's social-emotional development.

The first five years is a critical window of opportunity to promote strong mental health and identify emotional and behavioral issues that, if left untreated, can have lifelong negative impacts.

The social and emotional skills children develop in the early years support their lifelong emotional well-being and mental health, as well as their ability to succeed in school and form positive relationships.¹

WE ALL HAVE A ROLE IN GIVING COLORADO KIDS A STRONG START.

Why? Children with strong mental health are prepared to learn and develop the skills that will enable them to grow into healthy, contributing members of our community.

- Children who participate in social-emotional learning in school have an 11 percent gain in academic achievement.²
- Children in elementary school with mental health problems are three times more likely to be suspended or expelled than their peers.³



Policies and programs that promote early childhood mental health help ensure a child's success.

¹ National Scientific Council on the Developing Child; www.developingchild.harvard.edu

² Durlak, et. al., *The Impact of Enhancing Students' Social and Emotional Learning: A Meta-Analysis of School-Based Universal Interventions*; retrieved from www.cpr.org/sites/default/files/durlak_et_al-2011-child_development.pdf

³ Blackorby, J. and Cameto, R., *Special Education Elementary Longitudinal Study*; retrieved from https://seels.sri.com/designdocs/w1w2/SEELS_W1W2_chap8.pdf

⁴ U.S. Department of Education 2013-14

INVESTING IN CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH TODAY WILL SUPPORT A SKILLED AND CAPABLE WORKFORCE TOMORROW.

IN CONTEXT:

"Preschool-to-Prison Pipeline"

Without early intervention and support, children will continue to struggle and the challenges they face will multiply. Kids who are suspended or expelled from school are more likely to drop out and more likely to end up in the criminal justice system. Children with disabilities are more than twice as likely to be suspended as children without disabilities. Often the disability is an emotional disturbance and underlying mental health issue.⁴

PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION WORK.

Early screening, identification and intervention to address mental health issues prevents long-term negative impacts on a child's learning, relationships and health.

Programs that support children's social-emotional development lead to more self-supporting families and reduced public spending on remedial education, incarceration, public assistance and health care.

Learn more about local efforts to support infant and early childhood mental health.

SPOTLIGHT ON OUR COMMUNITY

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CONTACT

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