



# THERAPY NEWS

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## Early Childhood Mental Health

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Being aware of infant mental health is vital to preventing difficulties stemming from childrens' developmental issues. Infant and early childhood mental health reflects social and emotional capacities and primary relationships in kids from birth-age five. Because childrens' social experiences and opportunities to explore the world depend on the love and care they receive,

kids' *relationships* are crucial (CT-AIMH, 2007). The child brings to the parent-child link, various levels of development, temperament, genetics, ability to bond and affective style. Parents bring their hopes and dreams for the child, their personal and cultural projections onto the child, biology, epigenetics and expertise about the child. The quality of interaction between significant

others and children can influence their emotional and social functioning capacity, which connects to their overall global development.



*A culture is defined by how it cares for its babies, its sick and its elderly. It would follow that the field of infant mental health be moved from the little-known esoteric subfield of psychology and psychiatry to one of scientific study in its own right.* M. R. Witten, Ph.D.

### Age of Referral for Physiological Issues

*Clinical evaluation involves observing behavioral patterns that express deficits in: Body routines (sleeping & eating,) attention and arousal, sensory processing, emotional regulation and relational flexibility.*

### Problem/Age of Referral

Sleep: 10-12 months

Visual: 10-12 months

Self-regulation issues:

13-18 months

Emotional: 13-18 months

Feeding: 19-24 months

Tactile: 19-24 months

Listening: 19-24 months

Movement: 19-24 months

Attention: 25-30 months

[www.http://zerotothree.org](http://zerotothree.org)

## Diagnosing Mental Health & Developmental Disorders with the DC:0-3R

The Diagnostic Classification of Mental Health and Developmental Disorders of Infancy and Early Childhood (DC:0-3R) is a system that deals with babies

and children. The book focuses on developmental issues and dynamics, such as relationships. The analysis of important developmentally-adaptive patterns

are central. It can be used with existing frameworks, such as the DSM-IV or ICD-9. The manual is used for treatment planning and intervention, not for classification.

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Dedicated to the Art of Healing  
Children and Families through  
the Power of Play



## The Lazy Days of Summer.....



This paperback was published in 1994 and draws from empirical research and clinical practice. The system has five blocs—*Axis I: Clinical Disorders; Axis II: Relationship Classifications; Axis III: Medical and Developmental Disorders; Axis IV: Psychosocial Stressors and Axis V: Emotional and Social Functioning.* Usage helps the clinician to understand various developmental challenges that exist in young children and how relationships and environmental factors contribute to these disorders. The book is a useful adjunct for those who use others classification systems to diagnose young children to get an better grasp of a child in order to make a complete diagnostic assessment. The clinician needs a number of sessions to know how the child is developing in each functional area. Such as, parental interviews, observation of dyadic interactions and assessment of child's sensory reactivity/ processing, motor tone and planning capacities. This volume addresses the nature of the

patterns of strengths and difficulties, including a child's social-emotional, relational, cognitive, language, sensory and motor abilities. Family interactive patterns, the role of stress and maturation is covered. This book is a helpful resource for working with parents to instill the significance of their parent-child interactions. Emotional attachment, which occurs around seven-12 months, is essential for brain functioning and development (Preston, S. D. & de Waal, F. B. M., 2002).

Relationships are associated with a child's intelligence, self-esteem, self-reflection, coping, creating symbolic capacities for pretend play, interactive conversation, as well as their ability to discriminate, generalize and build abstract, logical and creative thought. This vital bonding process is engaged when a parent is: 1) consistent 2) responsive to the child's cues 3) and is physically present for an appropriate amount of time.