



March 8, 2018

Infant and Early Childhood: Principles of Development and Mental Health Webinar

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Discussion Guide/Questions

1. Why is it important to consider specific age of a child when considering developmental principles? How might these principles vary across the 0-3 age range?
2. Think about a family with whom you work or have worked. Using the Bronfenbrenner model discussed, identify factors in each of the 'levels' that might impact the child (e.g. individual child/microsystem, family/neighborhood = mesosystem, community/workplace = exosystem, values/laws/cultural customs = macrosystem).
3. Think about the iceberg concept of culture presented. What things do you think about when you initially think about cultural differences? How do those compare to the picture (i.e. are they 'above the surface' or 'below the surface')? What factors were surprising to you on the 'below the surface' list? How do those factors relate to your work with children/families?
4. Where might your own blindspots/implicit biases be based on your own experiences/background? How can you use your current agency/supervisor or personal relationships for support in exploring these?
5. Discuss the role of genes and environment in child development? Why is the idea of 'epigenetics' important?
6. How can you use the Developmental Domains/milestones resources to discuss expectations for development in young children with their parents and caregivers ?
7. Why is language development so important from an early age? What can caregivers do to support language development? How can you teach or coach these strategies during your visits?
8. What do we know about brain development in young children? How can we explain this to parents/caregivers in a supportive way that also still gives hope?
9. What areas of development are included when we think about the idea of infant/early childhood mental health? How would you explain/coach these areas in interactions with parents and caregivers?
10. What are some ways that development can get off-track? What 'red flags' should you look for? How might our own beliefs/biases shape whether or not we believe something to be a concern?
11. Discuss Walter Gilliam's work on preschool expulsion (listen to the audio clip and/or read more details on the slides). What implications do his findings have for our own work as providers?
12. What does being a 'behavior detective' mean? Think about a child whose behavior you or the caregiver finds to be challenging. Develop a list of hypotheses or guesses as to what might that child might be trying to communicate with his/her behavior.