



OK-AIMH

Oklahoma Association for Infant Mental Health

## ENDORSEMENT GLOSSARY

**Administrative Supervision:** The oversight of federal, state, and agency regulations, program policies, rules, and procedures. Supervision that is primarily administrative will be driven to achieve the following objectives: hire, train/educate, oversee paperwork, write reports, explain rules and policies coordinate, monitor productivity, and evaluate. (From *Best Practice Guidelines for Reflective Supervision/Consultation* at [www.okaimh.org/helpful\\_documents](http://www.okaimh.org/helpful_documents))

**Applicant:** A professional/service provider who has applied for the OK-AIMH Endorsement<sup>®</sup> at Levels I, II, III, or IV

**Applicant's Waiver:** an agreement signed by an endorsement applicant waiving the right to review professional reference forms. The waiver is included on page one of each reference rating form

**Attachment:** An emotional bond between a parent/primary caregiver and infant that develops over time and as a result of positive care-seeking behaviors (e.g., crying, smiling, vocalizing, grasping, reaching, calling, following) and responsive care-giving (e.g., smiling, talking, holding, comforting, caressing).

**Child Protective Services:** a state-wide system to prevent or treat the abuse and neglect of children within the Oklahoma Department of Human Services.

**Clinical Supervision/Consultation:** Supervision or consultation that is case-focused, but does not necessarily consider what the practitioner brings to the intervention nor does it necessarily encourage the exploration of emotion as it relates to work with an infant/very young child and family. Supervision or consultation that is primarily clinical will most likely include many or all of the administrative objectives as well as review casework, discuss the diagnostic impressions and diagnosis, discuss intervention strategies related to the intervention, review the intervention or treatment plan, review and evaluate clinical progress, give guidance/advice, and teach. (From *Best Practice Guidelines for Reflective Supervision/Consultation* at [www.okaimh.org/helpful\\_documents](http://www.okaimh.org/helpful_documents))

**Collaborate:** Work willingly with other direct-service providers, parents, community agencies, faculty, and other professionals to obtain, coordinate, and research services that effectively nurture infants and families.

**Competency Guidelines:** A description of specific areas of expertise, responsibilities and behaviors that are required to earn the OK-AIMH Endorsement<sup>®</sup> as an Infant Family Associate (Level I), Infant Family Specialist (Level II), Infant Mental Health Specialist (Level III), and Infant Mental Health Mentor (Level IV). The areas of expertise, very generally described here, include theoretical foundations; law, regulation, and policy; service systems; direct-service skills; working with others; communicating; reflection; and thinking.

**Consultant:** In most instances, this term refers to a provider of reflective supervision/consultation (RSC). The RSC may be provided to groups of practitioners or individuals. Consultant often refers to a provider of RSC who is hired contractually from outside an agency or organization; ie, separate from a program supervisor.

**Cultural Competence:** The ability to observe, understand and respond, appreciating individual capacities and needs of infants, very young children, and families with respect for their culture, including race, ethnicity, values, behaviors and traditions.

**Cultural Sensitivity:** The ability to respect and acknowledge differences in beliefs, attitudes and traditions related to the care and raising of young children, remaining open to different points of view and approaching families with respect for their cultural values.

**E-form:** The document that endorsement applicants use as a template for the lists of specialized education, work, in-service training, and reflective supervision experiences related to the requirements and competencies for endorsement. The E-form is a required part of the professional portfolio.

**Early Childhood:** A timeframe from birth to five years, including infancy, toddlerhood, and early childhood.

**Early Childhood Professional:** a professional/service provider who works with infants and very young children (birth to five years). Examples include a child care provider, an Early Head Start teacher, a family support specialist, a home visitor, a maternal support specialist, and an infant mental health specialist.

**Early Intervention:** Early intervention typically refers to a system of coordinated services that promotes a very young child's growth and development and supports families during the critical early years. Early intervention services to eligible infants, very young children, and families are federally mandated through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Part B and/or Part C). Early intervention services delivered within the context of the family are intended to:

- Improve both developmental, social, and educational gains
- Reduce the future costs of special education, rehabilitation, and health care needs
- Reduce feelings of isolation, stress, and frustration that families may experience
- Help alleviate and reduce behaviors by using positive behavior strategies and interventions
- Help children with disabilities grow up to become productive, independent individuals

**Endorsement:** The OK-AIMH *Endorsement for Culturally Sensitive, Relationship-focused Practice Promoting Infant Mental Health* (IMH-E<sup>®</sup>) is intended to recognize experiences that lead to competency in the infant-family field. It does not replace licensure, certification, or credentialing, but instead is meant as an "overlay" to these. The OK-AIMH Endorsement<sup>®</sup> is multidisciplinary including professionals from psychology, education, social work, psychiatry, child and/or human development, nursing, and others. Endorsement indicates an individual's efforts to specialize in the promotion/practice of infant mental health within his/her own chosen discipline.

Those who have earned endorsement have demonstrated that the individual has received a minimum of specialized education, work, in-service training, and reflective supervision/consultation experiences that have led to competency in the promotion and/or practice of infant mental health. Endorsement does not guarantee the ability to practice as a mental health professional, although many have earned endorsement as licensed mental health professionals

There are multiple paths to endorsement. Individuals demonstrate competency by completing a wide range of coursework and specialized in-service training while performing a wide range of paid roles with or on behalf of infants, very young children, and families. There is no one defined way, course, or set of training sessions that exclusively lead to endorsement

**Family-Centered Practice:** An emphasis on the infant or very young child within the context of the family with respect for the family's strengths and needs as primary when conducting assessments and/or interventions

**Graduate Certificate Program in Infant Mental Health:** Refers to a university-based program of course work related to infant development, attachment theory, family studies, and relationship-based practice with infants, very young children, and their families.

**Infant Family Associate:** a professional/service provider who meets the requirements for OK-AIMH Endorsement at Level I

**Infant Family Specialist:** A professional/service provider who meets the requirements for OK-AIMH Endorsement at Level II

**Infant Mental Health:** An interdisciplinary field dedicated to promoting the social and emotional well-being of all infants, very young children, and families within the context of secure and nurturing relationships. Infant mental health services support the growth of healthy attachment relationships in early infancy, reducing the risk of delays or disorders and enhancing enduring strengths.

**Infant Mental Health Mentor:** a professional/service provider who meets the requirements for OK-AIMH Endorsement at Level IV

**Infant mental health specialist:** a professional/service provider who meets the requirements for OK-AIMH Endorsement at Level III

**League of States:** When a state's infant mental health association has purchased licenses to use the *MI-AIMH Competency Guidelines* and the *MI-AIMH Endorsement*<sup>®</sup>, they become members of the US League of States. League members meet regularly to support one another in the implementation of the competencies and endorsement. States work together to promote workforce development, reflective supervision/consultation, and to ensure integrity of endorsement policies and procedures across states. Endorsement reciprocity is honored across the League of States. Each state's infant mental health association is an affiliate of the World Association for Infant Mental Health.

**OK-AIMH Endorsement Advisor:** A volunteer who has earned endorsement at Levels II, III, or IV, is a member of OK-AIMH, and who agrees to guide an endorsement applicant through the OK-AIMH Endorsement<sup>®</sup> (IMH-E<sup>®</sup>) process

**OK-AIMH Endorsement Committee:** Members identified by the MI-AIMH President and Executive Board to develop the endorsement for infant and family professionals/service providers for the association. The committee works to create and integrate policies that promote workforce development in Michigan and helps to maintain integrity and reciprocity between League of States affiliates.

**Mentor:** An experienced infant mental health practice leader who offers guidance, support, and learning opportunities to professionals/service providers within the infant and family field. An Infant Mental Health Mentor meets the requirements for MI-AIMH Endorsement<sup>®</sup> at Level IV

**Observation:** The infant and family professional/service provider's ability to describe what he/she sees when working with infants and families and to examine and reflect on the meaning of those observations with a colleague or supervisor/consultant.

**Parallel Process:** The ability to focus attention on all of the relationships, including the ones between practitioner and supervisor, practitioner and parent(s), and parent(s) and infant/very young child. It is critical to understand how each of these relationships affects the others

**Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA):** This program mandates a statewide, comprehensive, multidisciplinary service system to address the needs of infants and very young children who are experiencing developmental delays or a diagnosed physical or mental condition with a high probability of an associated developmental disability in one or more of the following areas: cognitive development, physical development, language and speech development, psychosocial development, and self-help skills. In addition, states may opt to define and serve at-risk children. Commonly cited factors that may put an infant or very young child at risk of developmental delay include low birth weight, respiratory distress as a newborn, lack of oxygen, brain hemorrhage, infection, and prenatal exposure to toxins through maternal substance abuse. In Oklahoma, Part C is administered under the name SoonerStart and the lead agency is the Department of Education

**Professional Development Plan:** an individual approach to professional growth within the infant and family field that encourages the fulfillment of requirements for the OK-AIMH Endorsement through education, training, and supervised work experiences.

**Professional Portfolio:** The portfolio submitted by endorsement applicant contains the following:

- Official transcripts in a sealed envelope from all colleges/universities attended
- E-form with lists of **specialized** education, work, in-service training, and (for Levels II, III, & IV) reflective supervision/consultation experiences while working with infants, very young children, and their families
- Three reference ratings
- Signed Code of Ethics
- Signed Endorsement Agreement
- Proof of membership in OK-AIMH or other infant mental health association
- Endorsement Processing Fee

**Reference Rating:** Three reference ratings are required as part of the professional portfolio submitted by each endorsement applicant. Requirements for who shall provide ratings are specific to the level at which the applicant is applying. Raters will answer questions about the applicant's level of knowledge and skill in the competency areas defined at the level at which the applicant has applied

**Reflective:** Self aware, able to examine one's professional and personal thoughts and feelings in response to work within the infant and family field

**Reflective Consultation:** An opportunity for professionals/service providers to meet regularly with an experienced infant mental health professional to examine thoughts and feelings in relationship to work with infants, very young children, and families

**Reflective Practice:** Able to examine one's thoughts and feelings related to professional and personal responses within the infant and family field.

**Reflective Supervision/Consultation:** Supervision or consultation that distinctly utilizes the shared exploration of the parallel process. In addition, reflective supervision/consultation relates to professional and personal development within one's discipline by attending to the emotional content of the work and how reactions to the content affect the work. Finally, there is often greater emphasis on the supervisor/consultant's ability to listen and wait, allowing the supervisee to discover solutions, concepts, and perceptions on his/her own without interruption from the supervisor/consultant

**Relationship-Focused Practice:** Supports early developing relationships between parents and young children as the foundation for optimal growth and change; directs all services to nurture early developing relationships within families; values the working relationship between parents and professionals as the instrument for therapeutic change; values all relationship experiences, past and present, as significant to one's capacity to nurture and support others

**Service Plan:** a plan for family guidance, support and intervention that is discussed and mutually agreed upon by a professional/service provider and parent(s)

**Specialized In-Service Training:** A training experience that offers opportunities for discussion and reflection about the development, behavior, or treatment of infants and very young children within the context of the family. Examples include half-day or full-day training experiences or training overtime, i.e., 6 hours monthly for 6 months or 3 hours monthly for 12 months. A specialized training that is eligible for endorsement should meet the following criteria:

1. Is culturally sensitive, relationship-focused, and promotes infant mental health
2. Relates to one or more of the competencies in the *OK-AIMH Competency Guidelines*
3. Is specific to the level of endorsement at which applicant is applying

**Specialized Internship/Field Placement:** Either during or after earning a Master's degree and/or a graduate certificate in infant mental health, an endorsement applicant may have participated as a (paid or unpaid) intern in an infant mental health service program. If the intern's supervisor has earned endorsement as an Infant Mental Health Mentor – Clinical (Level IV) or Infant Mental Health Specialist (Level III), and if the internship lasted for at least one academic year, and if the duties of the intern match the specialized work criteria for the level at which the applicant is applying, then the specialized internship/field placement may count toward one year of the specialized paid work experience criteria for endorsement.