

# NM Home Visiting Bits and Bites

September 2023



## Expanding Mental Health Screenings for Caregivers

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Early Childhood  
Education and Care  
Department (ECECD)  
Updates

Story from the Field

Home Visiting, Dates on  
the Horizon

For More Information or  
to Submit an Article

In the wise words of Winnicott, 'there is no such thing as a baby, there is always a baby and someone else' (Winnicott, 1987). Whether it be the birthing parent or another caregiver, a baby cannot exist on their own. To take it a step forward, there is no such thing as just a caregiver. For infants to thrive, caregivers must thrive as well, physically, mentally, and emotionally. Mental health for caregivers is critical to promoting healthy development for the next generation to come and is an investment in our society as a whole.

Screening for perinatal depression is critical to identifying and addressing the mental health needs of birthing parents. We also want to be aware of other caregivers in the baby's life. Who else in the family is tasked with caring for the baby? Home visiting is unique in the intimate and trusting relationships built with not only the primary caregiver but other members of the family system. With the addition of depression screening tools like the [Patient Health Questionnaire \(PHQ-2 & 9\)](#), the New Mexico Early Childhood Education and

Care Department Home Visiting system can expand its reach. The Parent Health Questionnaire (PHQ-2 & 9) can be used with anyone over the age of 12 years old, are validated to screen a variety of populations, are offered in over 50 different languages, and take less than 3 minutes to complete (AIMS Center).

Studies have shown that there are different onset times for maternal depression, that differ from the typically 6-12 weeks postpartum period (Rosander et al., 2020). There is an indication that a later onset of 6-18 months postpartum may be common as well, which is why administering more frequently, and as needed could identify more individuals in need of mental health care. For birthing parents, the highest level of depressive symptoms was found at 9, 12, and 17 months after birth, giving us validation that the best practice is to screen at multiple time points during the first years (Rosander et al., 2020).

### References

Advancing Integrated Mental Health Solutions Center. PHQ-9 Depression Scale | University of Washington AIMS Center. (n.d.). <https://aims.uw.edu/resource-library/phq-9-depression-scale>

Rosander, M., Berlin, A., Forslund Frykedal, K., & Barimani, M. (2020). Maternal depression symptoms during the first 21 months after giving birth. *Scandinavian Journal of Public Health*, 49(6), 606-615. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1403494820977969>

Winnicott, D. W. (1987). *The maturational processes and the facilitating environment: Studies in the theory of emotional development*. The Hogarth Press.

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The transitions, stressors, and changes that come along with parenthood never end, and as Home Visitors, it is important to keep an eye out for signs and symptoms of depression for the longevity of a case. Home visiting plays a profound role in destigmatizing mental health by offering services and administering screening tools universally. Thank you for holding caregivers, as they hold their babies.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION & CARE DEPT (ECECD)

### UPDATES

ECECD Home Visiting Bureau is growing! We hired Flora Martinez in June as a new Manager/Monitor.

Welcome  
Flora!



Thank to our Parents as Teachers programs for submitting your annual APR reports!

Please review the updates to Background Checks at this website: [Comprehensive Background Check Process | Early Childhood Education & Care Department \(nmececd.org\)](#). Scroll down the page for information specific to Home Visiting.

We are in the hiring process for a new Home [Visiting Supervisor and a Business Operations Specialist](#). We hope to have them on-boarded by late August or early September.

## STORY FROM THE FIELD

Molley MacCracken  
Taos First Steps Coordinator, Taos, NM

Cindy is a 29-year-old young mom with W who is almost two years old. We have been meeting since she was pregnant. Cindy is very open to home visiting and often says how much she appreciates the support. The family has many financial issues and there is some stress. We often talk a lot about the stress she is feeling and mom asks for ways to cope with her frustration and anger. She says that she sometimes yells and that she does not want to do this. We have talked about how our brains get wired in the way we were parented and Cindy has been reflective about her own parenting and has observed that her mom yelled too. We have discussed mindfulness and have done some of the [Mothers and Babies curriculum](#). We practiced breathing techniques together and talked about time out for parents and time in for kids.

At our last visit, Cindy told me that she is using time out for herself and going outside. She also stated that she has started breathing with W who is very responsive to it. She told me that at times W will initiate the breathing and that they then sit together and breathe. Cindy states that this helps both of them in the moment to calm down and to connect.

We have also talked about rupture and repair and she says she has begun to do this as well although it is a little challenging. At our next visit, we will role-play rupture and repair.



Molley MacCracken



Home Visiting  
Training Calendar



Previous COL Sessions,  
Articles, Tips, and Resources



Reflective Practice



## HOME VISITING DATES ON THE HORIZON

<p><b>September 4</b></p> <p><b>Mothers and Babies NM Consultation</b></p> <p><b>12-1 p.m., via Zoom</b></p>	<p><b>September 6</b></p> <p><b>Mothers and Babies NM Consultation</b></p> <p><b>9-10 a.m., via Zoom</b></p>	<p><b>September 7</b></p> <p><b>SPANISH Reflective Case Review</b></p> <p><b>1:30-2:30 p.m., via Zoom</b></p>	<p><b>September 11</b></p> <p><b>Mothers and Babies NM Consultation</b></p> <p><b>10-11 a.m., via Zoom</b></p>	<p><b>September 11, 20</b></p> <p><b>Reflective Case Review</b></p> <p><b>9-10 a.m., via Zoom</b></p>
<p><b>September 12</b></p> <p><b>Community of Learners - Closing the Gap</b></p> <p><b>10-11 a.m., via Zoom</b></p>	<p><b>September 12, 13, 15</b></p> <p><b>Mothers and Babies Training</b></p> <p><b>9:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., via Zoom</b></p>	<p><b>September 26, 28</b></p> <p><b>Introduction to ASQ-3®/ASQ:SE-2®</b></p> <p><b>9:00-12:30 p.m., via Zoom</b></p>	<p><b>September 26</b></p> <p><b>Reflective Case Reviews</b></p> <p><b>1:30-2:30 p.m., via Zoom</b></p>	<p><b>September 27</b></p> <p><b>Program Manager Brown Bag Session</b></p> <p><b>11:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m., via Zoom</b></p>
<p><b>October 2</b></p> <p><b>Mothers and Babies NM Consultation</b></p> <p><b>12-1 p.m., via Zoom</b></p>	<p><b>October 4</b></p> <p><b>Mothers and Babies NM Consultation</b></p> <p><b>9-10 a.m., via Zoom</b></p>	<p><b>October 5</b></p> <p><b>SPANISH Reflective Case Review</b></p> <p><b>1:30-2:30 p.m., via Zoom</b></p>	<p><b>October 5, 6, 19, 20</b></p> <p><b>New HV Interactive Orientation</b></p> <p><b>9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m., via Zoom</b></p>	<p><b>October 9</b></p> <p><b>Mothers and Babies NM Consultation</b></p> <p><b>10-11 a.m., via Zoom</b></p>
<p><b>October 9, 18</b></p> <p><b>Reflective Case Reviews</b></p> <p><b>9-10 a.m., via Zoom</b></p>	<p><b>October 24</b></p> <p><b>Reflective Case Reviews</b></p> <p><b>1:30-2:30 p.m., via Zoom</b></p>	<p>Visit the HV Training Calendar link above or <a href="#">HERE</a> to register for events.</p> <p>Individual registration is required to receive a certificate. If you cannot attend, please cancel in advance to allow those on wait lists to register.</p>		

## SEPTEMBER OBSERVANCES/AWARENESS

[September 17-23: Child Passenger Safety Week](#)

[September 10: National Grandparents Day](#)

[September 23: National Seat Check Saturday](#)

## SUBMIT NEWS!

To submit information to be shared in future newsletters, please send an email to: [HSC-ECLN@salud.unm.edu](mailto:HSC-ECLN@salud.unm.edu)

For more information, visit us below.



[CDD/HOME VISITING](#)



[ECSC](#)



[NMECED.ORG/HOME-VISITING](http://NMECED.ORG/HOME-VISITING)



UNM Early Childhood Services Center,  
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NEW MEXICO  
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Education & Care Department

