



PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOCAL EARLY CHILDHOOD COUNCIL TO WELCOME EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATION TEAM IN JULY

Early Childhood Council of Larimer County continues to expand our focus on infant and early childhood mental health with the addition of the state-funded Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation team, which has been under the direction of SummitStone Health Partners. The transition to Early Childhood Council of Larimer County from SummitStone will be effective July 1, 2021. By continuing to support the use of evidenced-based, social-emotional and inclusive practices in early care and education settings, the Council is working to improve the mental and behavioral health outcomes of young children and their caregivers.

Research has shown that implementing social-emotional programming, including Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation in early childhood environments, is an effective primary prevention strategy, as these programs reduce risk factors that lead to poor mental health outcomes in childhood and beyond. Specifically, these strategies have been shown to reduce the use of inappropriate discipline practices, promote family engagement, encourage use of data for decision-making, and foster inclusion for everyone involved in young children's lives.

“Our vision is to bring the team under our roof, leverage their combined skills with those of our Early Childhood Coaches, and provide more comprehensive social-emotional training and services for our community's young children and their caregivers,” said Liz Means, Early Childhood Mental Health Director at Early Childhood Council of Larimer County.

Both the Early Childhood Coaches at the Council and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants at SummitStone, who will be transitioning to the Council in July, work closely with early childhood educators.

“We are so proud of the work we have done in early childhood care, and we feel that the time is right for the Early Childhood Council of Larimer County to take charge of these efforts, ensuring our very youngest get the care they need when and where they need it,” said SummitStone CEO Michael Allen. “We look forward to continuing to work together to strengthen behavioral healthcare services in our community and provide the best outcomes for the young children in Larimer County, their families, and their care providers.”



By bringing SummitStone's Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Team into the Early Childhood Council of Larimer County's umbrella of services, the Council will be able to expand its consultation and training models and enhance the continuum of care. The Council also has a community and grant funding approach that could support the expansion of Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation services.

As part of the transition, the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Team, which consists of Corinna Crandall and Christina Gomez, will continue to operate as they currently do, but will now be under the oversight of Early Childhood Council of Larimer County. The Council is in the process of hiring at least two additional practitioners to join the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Team. Other elements of the transition include SummitStone maintaining a seat on the Council's board of directors and having access to regular early childhood consultation and ongoing training to improve professionals' ability to prevent, diagnose, and treat mental health problems in the earliest years.

"Early Childhood Council of Larimer County is thrilled to be welcoming this phenomenal group of mental health professionals to our team," said Christina Taylor, Executive Director, Early Childhood Council of Larimer County. "Their work is a key pillar of the early childhood system, and fits beautifully within the goals and vision of the Council."

The addition of the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation team is one of the Council's many new efforts to elevate the importance of early childhood mental health. In addition, the Council successfully launched an ECMH Fellowship pilot program through the CSU School of Social Work, provides ongoing sponsorship for professionals seeking the Colorado Association for Infant Mental Health (COAIMH) Infant Mental Health Endorsement (IMH-E), provides social-emotional coaching and training to early childhood educators, and kicked off an early childhood mental health consultation and wrap-around supports program for local adult-servicing agencies in the past year. The Council is also planning a half-day virtual symposium, Tuesday, September 7, 2021 from 8am-12pm, with the theme: Understanding, Disrupting, and Dismantling the Preschool to Prison Pipeline. The symposium will feature keynote speaker Dr. Rosemarie Allen and a Diversity Informed Tenets Workshop. To R.S.V.P. to the symposium, visit eepurl.com/hypqvD.

About Early Childhood Council of Larimer County

Early Childhood Council of Larimer County is an independent nonprofit organization that rallies support, resources, and awareness to ensure every young child in our community has quality childhood experiences so they thrive from day one. Learn more at www.ecclc.org.

About SummitStone Health Partners

SummitStone Health Partners is a not-for-profit organization with the mission of providing unsurpassed behavioral health prevention, intervention and treatment services across Larimer County. For more information visit www.summitstonehealth.org or call (970) 494-4200.

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