



NYS-AIMH

NEW YORK STATE
ASSOCIATION FOR
INFANT MENTAL HEALTH

2021 Annual Report

www.nysaimh.org



Message from the Presidents

We were built for times like this

At the start of 2020 and continuing through 2021 until now, no one could have imagined how dramatically our world and work would change. By any measure this was a time dominated by uncertainty and complex emotions. Throughout this time, the New York State Association for Infant Mental Health was focused, resourceful, and driven by our Guiding Principles:

- We believe babies and their families deserve a highly-competent, well-trained and professional workforce and we are committed to equipping those working in the field of infant mental health with the knowledge and skills they need.
- We promote and uphold uniform and nationally recognized standards in the field of infant mental health through the Endorsement process, our statewide competency system, and through the programs, training opportunities and technical assistance NYS-AIMH provides to support this process.
- We value and respect our members and will ensure that every member has the tools and support to be actively engaged with NYS-AIMH.
- We will make information and resources equitably accessible to all for whom we provide our services, and we will continually strive toward cultural responsiveness, humility, and understanding, holding in mind the diversity of professionals we support, and the families they serve.
- We partner with families, caregivers, organizational and community leaders and others to serve as advocates for raising awareness about the science of child development, issues impacting young children and their families and for the continued professional development of those working in our field.

These Guiding Principles directed our work and compelled us to clarify our priorities, reinforce our values and champion our message “to keep babies, young children and their families’ well-being foremost”.

During this period of ambiguity, NYS-AIMH accomplished much. We met or exceeded our strategic objectives as outlined in our 2019 Strategic Plan. We:

1. Aligned the entire organization, staff, Board, key stakeholders with our mission and Guiding Principles;
2. Attained financial stability and profitability;
3. Increased the numbers of Endorsed professionals and those actively seeking Endorsement;
4. Strategically grew and strengthened our educational and professional development activities, providing numerous training programs, consultations and supervision aligned with Competences and Standards;
5. Increased and retained membership in all categories;
6. Increased partnerships with state agencies, and professional groups; and
7. Increased staff and defined their roles and responsibilities.

Difficult times spur excellence.

In 2022, we will continue to draw on our successes of 2021. Specifically, we will broaden our work to better connect science, policy and practice. We will educate policy-makers on the importance of funding child-serving programs, and in professionalizing and endorsing the workforce. We will expand and diversify our Board. We will support the work done by our Executive Director, Wendy Bender, by building on her leadership and the strong foundation she and the team set in place.

Thank you to our staff, Board, partners and members for your wisdom and continued support.

Candida Cucharo & Sarah Fitzgibbons Board Co-Presidents



Strengthening Knowledge, Competencies and Skills
of the Infant -Early Childhood Workforce

The New York State Association for Infant Mental Health (NYS-AIMH) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to strengthen and promote social and emotional well-being for all children between the ages of 0 and 6 in New York State. NYS-AIMH promotes uniform and nationally recognized standards to ensure those engaged in the multidisciplinary fields supporting young children are trained in up to date science of child development and relationship based practices. It provides professional development, creates a statewide competency system, and advocates for policy and resources for young children.



NYS-AIMH is dedicated to all members of the human family. We strive to achieve programming that is inclusive and equitable, and addresses the rich diversity that makes our communities strong and responsive. This provides the best environment for all children to grow and thrive.



What is Infant Mental Health?

People are often surprised by the concept of Infant Mental Health. There is a common misperception that young children will not remember their experiences. Many people feel that young children who suffer a traumatic experience are far better off than older children, because they are too young to remember. It is easy to understand this misperception. Most of us experience memories as language, a story. Very young children have limited language and thus have limited ability to create a story of their memories. We know, from research, that young children experience the world through their senses. We also know that our brains store sensory memories, and these memories affect children's health, mental health, and overall well-being. Even a one-year-old can be diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and this child may never have a story to make sense of those memories.

Zero To Three defines Infant Mental Health as, "The capacity of the child from birth to age five to:

- Experience, regulate and express emotions
- Form close and secure interpersonal relationships
- Explore the environment and learn all in the context of family, community and culture."

(Zero to Three Policy Center Fact Sheet, May 18, 2004)

A young child's experiences create a foundation for the rest of life. Like the building of a house, if the foundation is built to be strong and sturdy, the house is prepared to weather future stress and storms. This is the same for a person's social emotional well-being – our mental health. When the foundation is strong, we are prepared to weather the storms that life brings. But, when a young child is exposed to traumatic experiences, without the buffering support of nurturing relationships, the foundation can be fragile. For far too long, too little attention has been placed on the importance of social-emotional development. This means that many children are facing the storms that life brings without a strong foundation leaving them vulnerable, fragile and unable to manage.

NYS-AIMH was established to support early childhood professionals to develop the competencies needed to effectively work with young children, their families and caregivers. This is relationship-focused work that seeks to understand the emotional experience of the child while remaining curious and attuned to the parent/caregiver and works to strengthen the relationship between them. If you work with, or on behalf of young children and their families, it is important that you are part of this effort, because babies, toddlers and preschool-age children need you and other professionals to have the education, specialty training, work experience, and reflective opportunities that demonstrate your ability to meet their social-emotional and general development needs.





Board of Directors



Candida Cucharo, MSW, MBA,
Board Co-President



Sarah Fitzgibbons, LMHC,
MT-BC, IMH-E®,
Board Co-President



Robert G. Frawley, MA,
Board Treasurer



Stephanie David, JD, MPH,
IMH-E®, Board Secretary



Evelyn J. Blanck, LCSW



Gilbert Foley, Ed.D. IMH-E®



Richard Honigman, MD, FAAP



Rochelle Macer, LCSW-R,
ACSW, IMH-E®



Esther Piper, M.A. ED, IMH-E®



Susan Rabinowicz, PhD



Constantina Spiropoulos, MD, FAAP

NYS-AIMH Staff



Wendy Bender, LCSW-R, IMH-E®
Executive Director



Zahra Khalfan, MA
Endorsement Coordinator



Pam Balmer, BA
Program Director



Judy Frolish, BA
Administrative Assistant



2021 programming

All events are aligned with the NYS-AIMH Endorsement for Culturally Sensitive, Relationship-Focused Practice Promoting Infant Mental Health® Competencies, with attention to promoting knowledge, building skill and strengthening a way of being with children and families.



Grief and Loss for Young Children

with Deborah Rivlin
and Colleen Shannon
- 69 registrants

Launch of the Listening Sessions

Pete Hill, with The Native
American Community Services of
Erie & Niagara Counties
- 34 registrants

Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Basics

- 13 events, 316 registrants

Breakfast for Babies

A collaborative venture
with
New York Zero To Three
- self-awareness and
Liberating IMH, Megan
Smith, Erick Stephens
and an introduction to
The Diversity-Informed
Tenets for Work with
Infants, Children, and
their Families. And -The
birth of a child with a
disability with Gil Foley
- 200+ registrants

Keep A-Pluggin' Away

Wade S. Norwood, CEO
Common Ground Health
- 126 registrants

Reflective Supervision Symposium

- 2 days - 62 registrants

Reflective Consultation,
14 year-long small groups
- 76 participants



NYS-AIMH strives to provide quality programming to meet the professional development needs of New York State's multidisciplinary early childhood workforce.



Participants were from more than 165 agencies, across all child and family serving systems

More than 80% of participants serve vulnerable populations of children and their families.



"This training was wonderful. In addition to the amazing presenters, I had great conversations in the breakout rooms where I got to talk with and learn from people from other parts of the state."
- a participant



Bringing together EVERYONE who works with or on behalf of young children, their families and their caregivers.

Follow us on social media -facebook.com/nysaimh.org
and instagram [@nysaimh.org](https://instagram.com/nysaimh.org)



NYS-AIMH is proud to have an active and growing individual and organizational membership base.

Members participate in committees and work to support and enhance the association.

A member survey was conducted and a membership drive was launched. A new member orientation kit, a referral-a-friend campaign and additional member benefits were created.

Members indicated that access to the NYS-AIMH Endorsement and quality professional development were the most important benefits.



Your membership works to assure that NYS's Early Childhood workforce demonstrates expertise.



Alliance for the Advancement of
Infant Mental Health

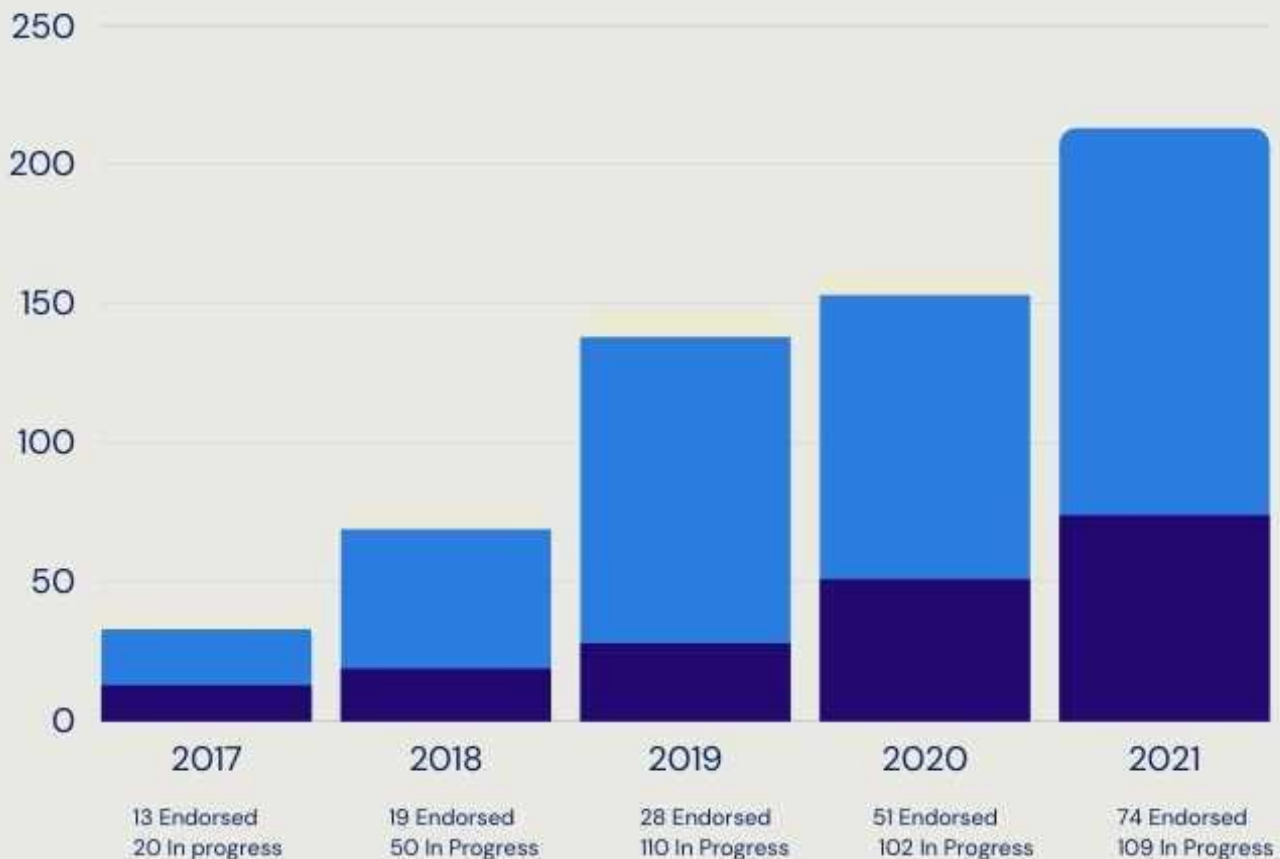
NYS-AIMH is proud to be a member of The Alliance for the Advancement of Infant Mental Health, and one of 33 states and several countries licensed the use of the Competency Guidelines (MI-AIMH Copyright © 2017) and Endorsement for Culturally Sensitive, Relationship-Focused Practice Promoting Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health®

Working toward the vision that all NYS professional who work with or on behalf of very young children, families and caregivers will be NYS-AIMH Endorsed®

Offering
Endorsement
Office Hours
and Open Houses

Developing relationships with colleges and universities to align coursework with NYS-AIMH Competencies.

NYS-AIMH Endorsement totals



To see all 2021 Alliance Endorsement totals:
<https://www.allianceaimh.org/presentations>

Nominations
Begin on
March
13th

Project Bright Lights!

Coming Soon - the start of Daylight Savings Time and the days will be getting brighter! It is also time for more people who are **bright lights** in the lives of young children to being recognized through **Project Bright Lights**.

If you know someone who is making a difference in the life of a young child, regarding their mental or physical health, self-esteem or overall care and well-being, please nominate them for **Project Bright Lights**.

Nominations are being collected from March 13th through June 21st, which is the first day of summer. Ah summer... doesn't that sound good!



2021 Nominees and Nominators:

Your actions and words
inspired the custom
NYS-AIMH Coloring Book
"Everyday Magic"!

A special thank you to our
2021 "Every Day Magic" sponsors:



a celebration of the bright lights
who spread magic in the lives of children

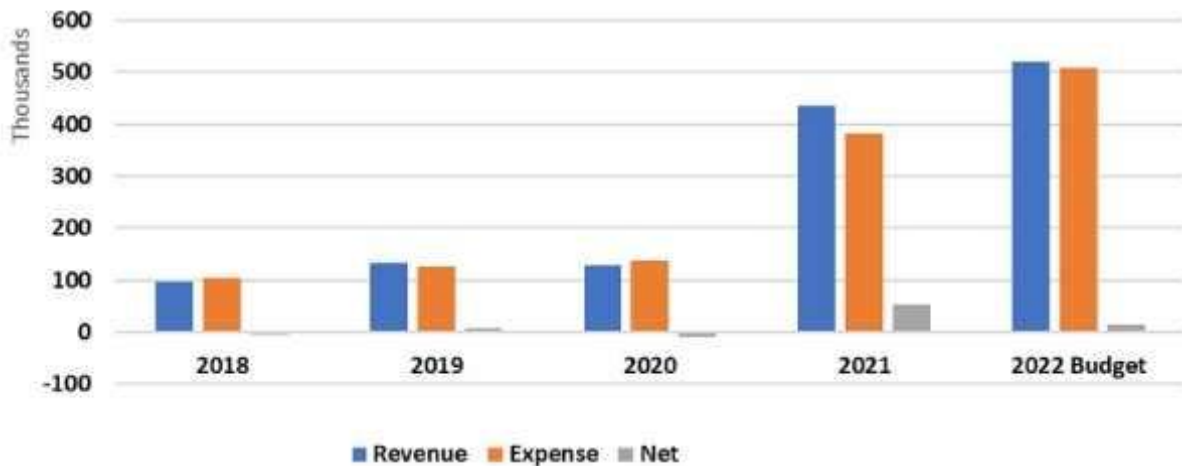




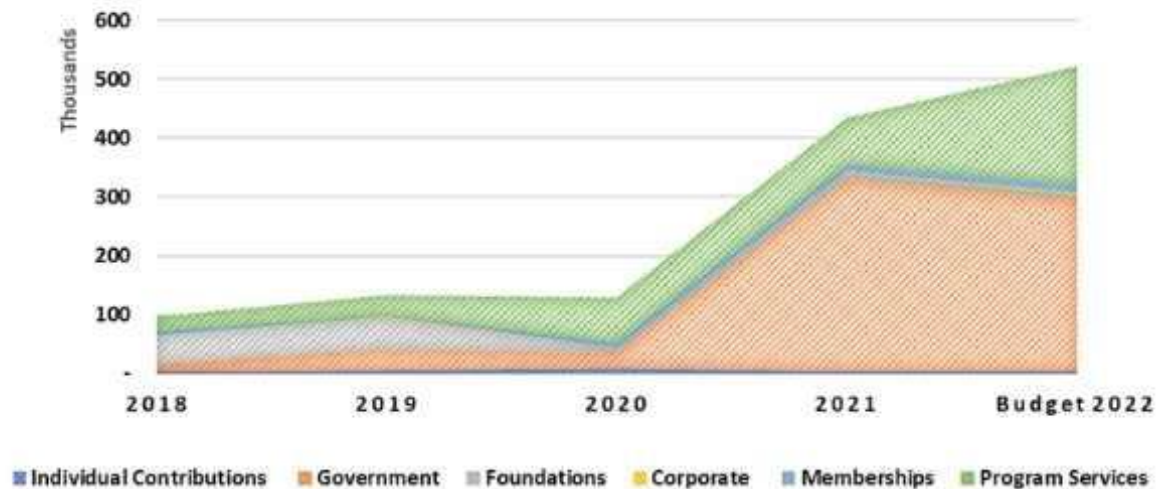
Financial Operations Report

For the year ending December 31, 2021

Revenue & Expense 2018 -2021 Comparison and Budget 2022



Revenue 2018 - 2021 with 2022 Budget





What's next?

Continue to provide quality professional development aligned with the NYS-AIMH Competencies.

NYS-AIMH is strengthening partnerships and collaborations with organizations and systems to expand membership and assure the use of the Endorsement® Competencies to serve as a guide for professional development and a demonstration of staff expertise.

Support colleges and universities so professors can align coursework with NYS-AIMH Competencies.



Build the network of trained and experienced providers of Reflective Supervision

Launch the Early Childhood Mental Health Endorsement®, for professionals who work with 3 - 6 year old's.



Expand Bright Lights to honor more people who are bright lights in the life of a child.

Convene the first state-wide Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Conference.



**We invite you to work with us to build strong foundations
for this generation and for generations to come!**

New York State Association for Infant Mental Health PO Box 5056 Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
www.nysaimh.org