



Early  
Childhood  
Mental  
Health  
Program

# The Dyad

Quarterly Newsletter  
Winter/Spring 2024 Issue

With a goal of \$100,000.00, \$89,704.01 has been donated as of 3/15/24 from the annual campaign.

*We thank you!*



If you have not had a chance to participate in our annual campaign, even a gift of \$100 will help a child be able to receive the mental health support they need.



## Family Enrichment Nights have returned!



FREE and open to the community. We provide dinner, a fun family activity, and will connect families with children 0-5 with local resources. Family Enrichment Activities provide a safe place for parents to participate in organized play with their children to develop trust, emotional regulation, and supports parents to experience joy in connection with their children. These events are funded by Everyday Moments and Mental Health Services Act. We hope to see you at our next event.

3/26 4pm - 6pm

4/23 4pm - 6pm

5/28 4pm - 6pm

Dear friends,

2024 holds special significance to ECMHP. This year our agency celebrates 50 years of serving the children and families of Richmond and West Contra Costa County. It is a time to reflect on the growing importance of early childhood mental health services, to remember the many lives that found hope and healing through our support over the years, and to honor those who have helped us evolve and grow along the way. This year also gives us a lot to look forward to as Family Nights have returned, grant funding allows new programs to grow and serve more families, our upcoming launch of a clinical trainee program, and new expansive partnerships emerging.

In the coming months we will be sharing exciting details about anniversary events we want you to be a part of. I invite all of you to join us this year in celebrating ECMHP's 50 Years of Service to the children and families of Richmond and Contra Costa County.

In Community,  
Jeff Sloan, Executive Director

## In Memory of Bill Frank

Bill, Carol Frank's husband, and jack of all trades kind of man had a very central role in helping us purchase our agency building at 200 24th St. He spent thousands of hours making sure that everything in our building was custom and met the needs of the clients and staff and never asked for a penny for his service. He did it because he loved Carol, this agency, and the people who did this work. His memory will live on and "Bill's Office" where all of his tools he donated to the agency are located, will be a working memorial of his legacy. We're going to miss you Bill! We still feel all the love you put into these walls.  
Thank you!



# What's New

We are excited to be launching a Trainee Development Program in partnership with the Wright Institute. This program will bring in graduate level students who are pursuing their LPCC or LMFT license. We will be their practicum site and support their training and development in early childhood mental health practices. We are excited to share more as this program develops. Our first round of trainees will start in August 2024.

As some may already know, the Greater Richmond Interfaith Program (GRIP) in collaboration with ECMHP was awarded a grant by the Richmond Department of Youth and Children last year to build up GRIP's mental health and early education services on site. In the last couple months, we have offered a 10 week parenting class, have the GRIP children's room operating 5x/week, and are providing mental health consultation to their staff. The families residing in the shelter are so happy and we are excited to deepen our partnership with GRIP.

The Perinatal Circle of Care Program (PCOC) has been busy in its implementation phase of the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative (CYBHI) funding. The team is working to update brochures and share how PCOC can now work with birthers and their infants across Contra Costa County. PCOC was also awarded the Community Defined Practices (CDP) grant through Contra Costa County which will help the program grow more. The CDP grant allows PCOC to develop and offer perinatal groups in English and Spanish. PCOC is excited to partner with several First5 centers across the county to begin offering groups in April.



Since we moved to our building at 200 24th Street in the fall of 2016, we have worked diligently to beautify the space inside and out. Our most recent project is spearheaded by CTP garden teacher, Mary Lynn Sasso. In coordination with the City of Richmond, 6 tree saplings were planted in the empty gravel beds on the sidewalk along the building and parking lot. Two flowering plum trees and two maple trees were supplied by the city, and two jacaranda trees were donated by ECMHP supervisor and therapist Cecilia De Rubira. The trees, which were chosen for their deciduous nature, highlighting seasonal changes, were planted by Groundwork Richmond, and ECMHP will be responsible for their care and maintenance. We look forward to see them brighten our corner of the neighborhood even more. Learn more about [Groundwork Richmond](#), a nonprofit committed to increasing the green canopy on the city.



Before

During

After

# Agency & Staff Highlights



As PCOC is expanding, so is the program's staff. **Jeanette Williams and Luisa Orozco**, current ECMHP clinicians, **are internally transitioning into PCOC**. We are thrilled to have them join this team. We are still seeking a full-time Bilingual Perinatal Mental Health Therapist. Have a colleague or friend who might be interested in this job opportunity? Learn more about the role [here](#) or apply today by sending your resume to [employment@ecmhp.org](mailto:employment@ecmhp.org)

Over the last few months, the Administration department **promoted Nancy Ruiz to Billing Manager**. The Billing Manager position oversees all billing processes and supports the overall administrative aspects of clinical programs. **LaReisha Trapps was promoted to Quality Assurance Manager**. In this vital role, LaReisha oversees UR tracking, service authorization, progress notes, getting our charts up to date, and she plays a key role with the county audit processes. **Vanice Robinson was promoted to the Operations and Communications Manager**. In this role, she is responsible for the essential ongoing operations of ECMHP, such as office management, information technology, event management and coordination, communications and marketing management, and Board/Committee coordination. Lastly, **the administration department hired a new billing clerk, Jessica Ayala**. She comes to ECMHP with a Bachelor's in Math and a wide range of administrative experience. We are excited she's a part of the ECMHP family.



**The Child & Family Bond program welcomed a new therapist, Maria (M) Figueroa**, to its ranks in March.



M brings rich perspectives and experience supporting children of all ages and their families in a wide variety of settings and locations, including Illinois and Japan. We're thrilled to have them on board!

# CONGRATULATIONS

We strive to support our clinicians' professional development and have had many staff attend outside training opportunities to enhance their clinical skills. **We are so proud of Alicia Sanchez-Sanz, Faryn Hart and Susan Basanjav** for being chosen from a competitive application pool to be a part of this year's Irving B. Harris Early Childhood Mental Health Training Program. Congratulations!

# Did you know?

1. Since 2003, 131 children have attended our Therapeutic Preschool program. Of those 131 children, we collected transition information from 103 of them. Of those 103 children, 98% of them were successful in Kindergarten and First grade.
2. While we were established in 1974, our first brochures were created in 2003, thanks to a grant from the Taproot Foundation.



## Workversaries

**We are grateful for our staff's dedication to serving the children and families of West Contra Costa County. We appreciate you.**

### February

Lawrence- 7 years  
Sally- 4 years

### March

Deia- 3 years  
LaReisha- 3 years

### April

Angelica - 21 years  
Maria - 2 years

### May

Cecilia- 15 years  
Maca - 2 years  
Aaron - 1 year

## Mindful Minute

### Gratitude Practice

Take a few moments to think of one or two things you are grateful for right now. Close your eyes, take a big breath through your nose, hold for 5 seconds, and breath out of your mouth. As you hold your breath allow yourself to feel gratitude. As you breath out, imagine your negative thoughts blowing away. When we focus on positive emotions associated with gratitude, our brain reduces the production of stress hormones like cortisol. This may help to calm the nervous system, which could reduce feelings of anxiety or promote a sense of wellbeing (UCSF, 2023).



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change a child's life.



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