

Positive Notes

The Early Relational Health Movement Newsletter



POSTPARTUM SUPPORT
INTERNATIONAL

ERH in Action: Postpartum Support International (PSI) Makes Peer Connections Core to Perinatal Mental Health

Postpartum Support International (PSI) was established in 1987 and works to promote awareness, prevention, and treatment of mental health issues related to childbearing in every country worldwide. It serves as a bridge to mental health support and resources for pregnant and postpartum parents, including providing peer support groups, peer mentors, 24/7 helplines, and the National Maternal Mental Health Hotline, in addition to a perinatal mental health (PMH) provider directory and other services.

“We like to think of ourselves as a hub — a connection point — for support during the perinatal period of mental health.”

—PSI Deputy CEO Andrea Clark, JD, MDiv

Supporting parents' perinatal mental health gives professionals in the ERH field additional ways to promote healthy parent-child relationships. PSI isn't just a hub for parents and therapists — the organization serves professionals from across disciplines who work with families and birthing people. Thanks to a strong network of volunteers, PSI and the professionals who work with PSI benefit from the input of individuals with lived experience and expertise.

“Many people who have sought help from PSI come back and volunteer, work here, and come to our conferences. Coming full circle seems to continue the healing process for former help seekers as they help others. Their contributions and drive to give back keep all of us learning and feeling rewarded in this work.”

—PSI President and CEO Wendy Davis, PhD, PMH-C

[Read More About PSI](#)



Braiding Impact and Opportunity Through ERH: Reflections from Nurture Connection 2025 Survey



In July 2025, Nurture Connection surveyed our national network of Early Relational Health (ERH) champions and partners to help guide our efforts to advance ERH and promote strong, positive, and nurturing early relationships. Through this survey, we hoped to better understand the evolution of awareness, policy, and practice related to ERH, and to identify new opportunities for advancing ERH in the early childhood field.

“More and more, we’re seeing that Early Relational Health can be a unifying foundation for different early childhood systems to come together in support of children and families.”

**—Patsy Hampton
Deputy Director, Nurture Connection**

We saw great survey engagement, with high-quality insights and suggestions from survey participants. The survey successfully captured a wide range of roles and organizational types, with 360 respondents across 46 states and territories — reflecting both the impact of Nurture’s efforts to date as well as a path forward to continuing this important work.

“We really got a broad, cross-sector sweep of the early childhood ecosystem, especially early care and education, mental and behavioral health, pediatric family health, home visiting, and early intervention, which is in keeping with who we are and how we want to continue reaching out.”

**—David Willis, MD, FAAP,
Founder & Director, Nurture Connection**

[Explore More Reflections from the 2025 Survey](#)

**Parent Leadership Spotlight:
Celebrating Culture and Connection with Claudia Aristy**



Nurture Connection is proud to honor Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15 – October 15, 2025). This month, Claudia Aristy, a Nurture Connection Family Network Collaborative Parent Leader, reflects on her experience promoting Early Relational Health and supporting the health and well-being of children and families in her Spanish-speaking community.

For 25 years, Claudia has served a diverse group of families from all over the world through her work at Bellevue Hospital in New York City, one of the oldest public hospitals in the world. The vast majority of the families she sees, especially in pediatrics, are Spanish-speaking much like hers. Many are new moms and migrants who come to her clinic for support and guidance.

“I always tell my moms, You are becoming the champions for this (ERH) work in your communities by spreading the word and showing, by example, the way you relate with your children, other family members, and the people in your community.”

—Claudia Aristy, Parent Leader, Nurture Connection Family Network Collaborative; Reach Out and Read

[Hear More From Claudia](#)

Upcoming Webinars

Join Us!

The Power of Codesign in Research



Centering Parent Voices to Learn About Parent-Child Relationships

Presented by:



DATE

Tuesday, October 21st

TIME

2:00-3:30 PM ET

[The Power of Codesign in Research: Centering Parent Voices to Learn About Parent-Child Relationships](#)

Join Nurture Connection on Tuesday, October 21st, 2025 from 2:00 - 3:30 pm EST / 11:00 am - 12:30 pm PST for an exciting conversation about the power of codesign in Early Relational Health (ERH) research by centering parent voices.

Attendees are invited to look behind the curtain at an exciting new large-scale co-design study and its preliminary findings. Join us for a dynamic conversation between Dr. Dani Dumitriu (Director of the Center for Early Relational Health) and parent leaders Deepa Srinivasavaradan, Steven Thibert, and Tiffany Solomon; moderated by Dr. Nikki Shearman, Chief of Research & Innovation at Reach Out and Read. [Register at this link.](#)



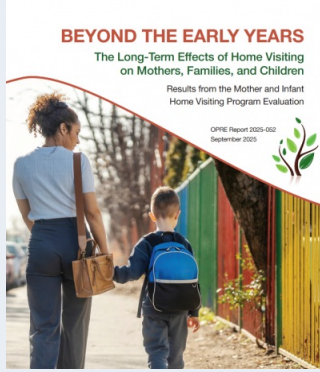
[2025 Prenatal-to-3 Research to Policy Summit](#)

Registration is now open for the annual Prenatal-to-3 Research to Policy Summit on Tuesday, September 30 from 1:00-2:30 PM CT, organized by PN-3 Policy Impact Center and Vanderbilt University.

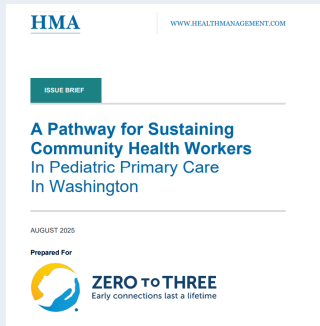
Hear from Dr. Cynthia Osborne, the Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center's state policy team, and Elisabeth Wright Burak from Georgetown University as they share the 2025 State Policy Roadmap, key state efforts to advance state-level policies, and the impact of recent federal policy changes. [Register at this link.](#)

Explore More

[New MIHOPE Report Released: Research Confirms Impacts of MIECHV When Children Enter Kindergarten](#)



The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) in partnership with the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) **just released** new findings from the Mother and Infant Home Visiting Program Evaluation (MIHOPE). The study found significant long-term positive effects of home visiting on maternal, child, and family wellbeing outcomes five to seven years after enrolling in services. [Read Here](#)



[A Pathway for Sustaining Community Health Workers in Pediatric Primary Care in Washington](#)

Pediatrics Supporting Parents (PSP) seeks to transform pediatric well-child visits to strengthen early relational health and create lasting change that helps children succeed and families to flourish. Key to PSP's work is the creation of teams of care at the medical home, and central to this -- Community Health Workers. [Read Here](#)

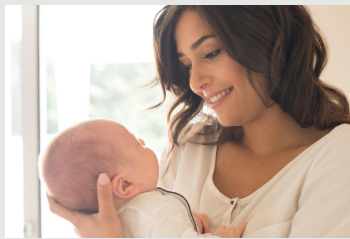


[RFP Opportunity: RAPID Survey Project Community Voices Partnership](#)

Applications are now open for the RAPID Survey Project Community Voices Partnership! The RAPID Survey Project, based in the Stanford Center on Early Childhood (SCEC), is a program of national, state, and community surveys that listens to parents and caregivers of children under age 6 across the country every month. RAPID seeks to understand and elevate the experiences and challenges facing families with young children and to provide timely, actionable data that inform policies and programs that help each and every child thrive from the start. [Learn more at this link.](#)

What We're Reading . . .

- **The need for scientific leadership and collaboration to enhance social connection: A call to action.** Holt-Lunstad, J., Cudjoe, T.K.M., Dumitriu, D., Ellison, N.B., Kotwal, A.A., Pantell, M.S., Perissinotto, C.M., & Smith, M.L. (2025). *Ann NY Acad Sci.*, 1548, 12-19. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nyas.15343>. [Read here.](#)
- **A Pathway for Sustaining Community Health Workers In Pediatric Primary Care In Washington.** Health Management Associates, prepared for Zero to Three. August 2025. [Read here.](#)
- **Beyond the Early Years: The Long-Term Effects of Home Visiting on Mothers, Families, and Children.** Results from the Mother and Infant Home Visiting Program Evaluation. Portilla, Ximena A., Kristen Faucetta, Kelly Saunders, and Amy Taub. 2025. OPRE Report 2025-052. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [Read here.](#)
- **"COMBO Helps Moms and Babies Stay Together: How Rapid Early Relational Health Research Changed Hospital Policies Across America."**



What is Early Relational Health?

Early Relational Health is the state of emotional well-being that grows from emotional connection between babies and toddlers and their parents and caregivers when they experience strong, positive, and nurturing relationships with each other.

ERH is foundational to children's healthy growth and development and parents' and caregivers' sense of competence, connection, and overall well-being. These strong and enduring relationships also help to protect the family from the harmful effects of stress.

Core ERH Resources:

Frameworks Institute. [Building Relationships: Framing Early Relational Health](#). May 2020.

Willis D, Chavez S, Lee J, Hampton P, Fine A. [Early Relational Health National Survey: What We're Learning from the Field](#). Center for the Study of Social Policy. 2020.

Willis D, Sege R, Johnson K. [Changing the Mindset: Foundational Relationships Counter Adversity with HOPE](#). (Blog) Center for the Study of Social Policy. May 2020.

Perspectives on ERH Video Series. [Perspectives on Early Relational Health Series](#). Center for the Study of Social Policy. 2022.

Center of the Study of Social Policy and Health+ Studio. [How to Communicate Effectively About Early Relational Health: What It Is and Why It Matters](#). 2022.

Find additional resources on our [website](#).

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Contact
info@nurtureconnection.org



Nurture Connection | 2115 Wisconsin Ave NW | Washington, DC 20007 US

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