

Positive Notes

The Early Relational Health Movement Newsletter



[Celebrating ERH, Community, and Connection at the 2025 National Summit](#)

Over 300 Early Relational Health (ERH) champions and advocates from many sectors and backgrounds gathered this month in Washington, D.C., for two days of listening, learning, and reimagining Early Childhood systems that center the needs and dreams of children and families.

“It was wonderful to be part of the summit and to connect with so many colleagues advancing Early Relational Health. I left deeply inspired by the collective commitment to centering family voice and community wisdom in shaping systems of care.”

—J. Corey A. Williams, MD, Early Childhood Innovation Network (ECIN), Washington, D.C.

Cosponsored by Nurture Connection and Reach Out and Read in partnership with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the 2025 National Summit was a landmark opportunity for pediatricians, researchers, policymakers, funders, systems leaders, and parent leaders — including teams from 23 communities, across 18 states — to connect and reflect together, on the work ahead.

[Read More About the 2025 National Summit](#)



“We as a network are committed — at every level — to the idea that relationships matter.”

—David W. Willis, MD, FAAP,



Parent Leadership Spotlight: Nurture Connection FNC Parent Leaders Reflect at the 2025 National Summit



The 2025 National Summit in Washington, D.C. was an opportunity for four of the parent leaders from the Nurture Connection Family Network Collaborative (FNC) to gather in person and connect with other early childhood practitioners, advocates, and parent leaders.

[In this short video](#), they shared their experiences and reflections from the summit, including what they are most excited to bring back to their communities as they continue to work to advance Early Relational Health for children and families.

"The thing that I'm most excited to bring back to my community is being able to tell all of the parents that I work with, your voice was present . . . the word 'parent' has been represented in every circle that I have sat with, today and hopefully tomorrow."

—**Claudia Aristy**, Parent Leader,
Nurture Connection Family Network Collaborative



[Discover More FNC Parent Leader Reflections](#)

Explore More

Strengthening Connections to Promote Early Relational Health



Hear insights from the Upstream Initiative Delegation's visit to Washington D.C. for Nurture Connection's National Summit

Webinar • December 4, 2025 • Noon - 1pm

[*Upcoming Webinar* Strengthening Connections to Promote Early Relational Health](#)

Join members from Oregon's Upstream Initiative on Thursday, December 4th, 2025 from 12:00pm–1:00 p.m. PST for a special webinar as they share their insights from the 2025 National Summit. Whether you are a practitioner, policymaker, parent leader, or partner in this work, this interactive webinar offers a chance to stay connected to the national movement and help shape what comes next for Oregon. [Register at this link.](#)



[NASEM Early Relational Health Report Webinar: Insights for Change](#)

In a webinar on October 22, 2025, authors of NASEM's recent [consensus study report](#) on Early Relational Health shared key insights and addressed participants' questions. This blog highlights some main takeaways from the webinar. [Read More Here](#)

Presented by Nurture Connection

The Power of Codesign in Research

Centering Parent Voices to Learn About Parent-Child Relationships

DATE: Tuesday, October 21st
TIME: 2:00-3:30 PM ET



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

On Tuesday, October 21, 2025, Nurture Connection hosted a conversation about the power of codesign in ERH research, where parent leaders are partners in exploring emergent ERH constructs and play a crucial role in building trust — and workforce opportunities — with families and communities in the process. [Learn More Here](#)

What We're Listening To . . .



[Reach Out and Read Podcast](#)

An award-winning podcast centered on the belief that children's books build better brains, better family relationships, and happier, healthier children and societies. Join host Dr. Dipesh Navsaria, a pediatrician with a children's librarianship degree, as he dives into a wealth of varied early childhood health and literacy topics with expert guests examining the many facets of supporting the parent-child relationship as key to early success. [Listen Here](#)



[Building a System That Values Everyone, with Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky \(Thrive Dispatches\)](#)

In this episode, Dr. Matt Biel speaks with Secretary Elizabeth Groginsky, who leads New Mexico's Early Childhood Education and Care Department, the first cabinet-level department of its kind in the country. When Groginsky arrived in New Mexico in 2019, the state ranked 50th in many national measures of child wellbeing. Now they're the [first state in the nation to offer universal child care](#) to families, and building what many see as a

What We're Reading . . .

- "Mattering in Early Childhood: Building a Strong Foundation for Life." Harvard Center on the Developing Child (2025). [Read here.](#)
- "The rise of relational health in early childhood care." Mantel, B. (2025, September 25). *Monitor on Psychology* 56(8). [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. 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 (2025). [Read here.](#)
- "The Fifth Vital Sign in the First 1000 Days: Early Relational Health." Ayrancı Sucaklı İ, Yalçın SS. *Turk Arch Pediatr.* 2025;60(5):453-461. DOI:10.5152/TurkArchPediatr.2025.24317. [Read here.](#)



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:

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. [Early Relational Health: Building Foundations for Child, Family, and Community Well-Being.](#) Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. 2025.

Willis D, Bethell, C. [Child Flourishing: A Critical Indicator for Early Relational Health.](#) Nurture Connection. 2024.

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.

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

Learn more about the [science of ERH](#) and find additional resources on our [website.](#)

If this newsletter was forwarded to you by a colleague and you would like to subscribe, please click [here.](#)

Contact

nurtureconnection@georgetown.edu

