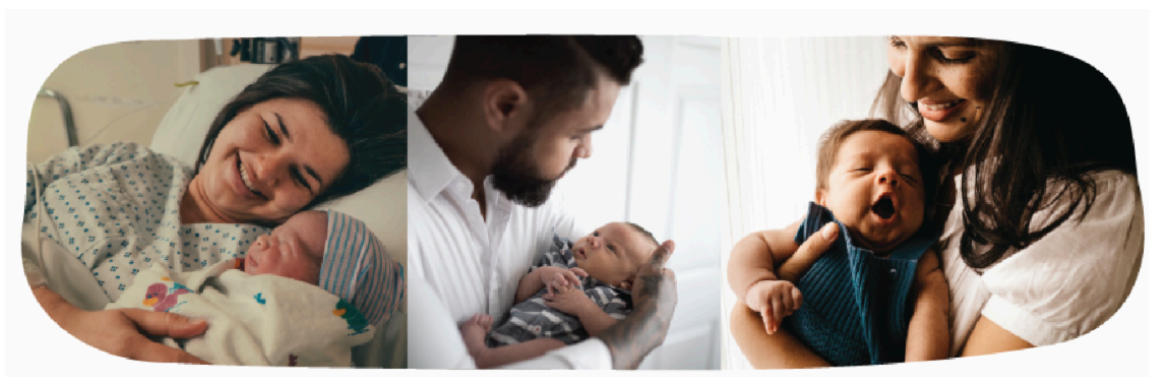


Connections Matter

Early Relational
Health Newsletter



[“The Shock and Beauty of Early Parenthood”](#) [Early Relational Health Experts Reflect on](#) [Caregiving Journeys, Including Their Own](#)

Nurture Connection is excited to share a new and exclusive series on Early Relational Health with you – *“The Shock and Beauty of Early Parenthood”*: *Early Relational Health Experts Reflect on Caregiving Journeys, Including Their Own*.

The stories [in this series](#) are written by Thelma Ramirez, Ed.M, and Dr. Junlei Li, PhD of Harvard University, both of whom are Caregiving Ambassadors for Nurture Connection, at Georgetown University’s Thrive Center for Children, Families and Communities. These narratives offer an intimate glimpse into how skilled ERH practitioners help families navigate the challenges of parenting, sharing their own obstacles along the way. [Read the full series here](#).

“Our hope is that these reflections will resonate with parents and caregivers, with home visitors and providers, with researchers, funders, and leaders across the Early Relational Health ecosystem.

We hope they will help humanize the science behind ERH, ease some of the quiet guilt so many people carry, and reinforce the heart of an Early Relational Health message:

None of us is meant to do this alone.”

—Junlei Li & Thelma Ramirez,



The Shock and Beauty of Early Parenthood

Early Relational Health Experts Reflect on Caregiving Journeys, Including Their Own

[Read More Here](#)

Recognizing National Home Visiting Week



This National Home Visiting Week (April 20th-24th), we honor the positive impact of home visiting professionals who support early relational health, through their relationships with children and families.

We encourage you to explore how home-visiting intervention models like Child First [help support practice transformation](#), as well as reflections from Thelma Ramirez, Ed.M on her [experiences as a home visitor](#) in supporting new parents in their parenting journeys.

- [Learn more about Child First with Darcy Lowell](#)
- [Read reflections from Thelma Ramirez](#)

National Home Visiting Summit September 29-30, 2026

The National Home Visiting Summit is a multi-day in-person conference that integrates policy, practice, and research to influence systems change, with the goal of advancing available, high-quality home visiting services, structures, and systems. The Summit provides a platform to advance home visiting as a critical component of the early childhood system. Registration is now open! [Learn more here](#).





Parents Under Pressure: Parent Leaders Reflect

April is National Stress Awareness Month, and an opportunity to reflect on how we can better support parents and caregivers, who are trying to do their best for their children.

Parents face many sources of stress in their everyday lives — from economic barriers, dependable childcare access, and career challenges to societal dynamics of racism; keeping their kids safe, including their online safety; mental health; [and more](#). Despite the compounding stressors that families face, parents continue to seek out ways to cope and often look to their children as a grounding force in their lives.

[Hear more reflections](#) from Nurture Connection's ERH Family Network Collaborative (FNC) on how stress impacts the mental health and well-being of parents and caregivers, in response to the U.S. Surgeon General's "Parents Under Pressure" advisory report.

[Read More](#)

Explore More:

**["The Public Health Crisis of Parental Stress:
Listening to Parents Promotes Early Relational Health"](#)**
Reflecting Forward by Claudia M. Gold, MD (Pediatrician,
Early Relational Health Specialist), and David W. Willis, MD

[*Registration Now Open!* 2026 HOPE Virtual Summit](#)



Building HOPE That Lasts!

When: May 19th and 20th | Virtual

Tuesday, 11:00 am – 5:00pm EST

Wednesday, 11:00 am – 5:00pm EST

The HOPE Framework has transformed the way we are able to support children's growth into healthy, resilient adults.

Join us at the 2026 HOPE Summit to explore the data and stories that show how HOPE creates lasting change and how you can identify and measure what matters most in your own work. [Learn more here.](#)

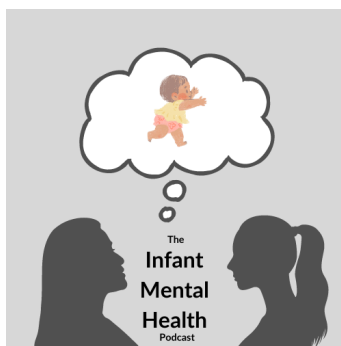
[Register Here](#)

Explore More



[The Neuroscience of Kindness: How a conversation across disciplines helped illuminate the future of meaningful interventions for this emergent field](#)

In March 2026, the New York Academy of Sciences (NYAS) held its first conference exploring how prosocial behaviors can shape lifelong well-being. Co-sponsored by Nurture Connection, [The Neuroscience of Kindness](#) brought together leading researchers, clinicians, and public health experts in a timely exploration of the current state of this burgeoning science, and where it's going next. [Read More.](#)




[The Infant Mental Health Podcast: Revisiting Early Relational Health \(Episode 42\)](#)


The Infant Mental Health Podcast, hosted by Amy Zuniga, discusses infants, toddlers, their caregivers, and the relationships that shape their worlds. [Episode 42](#) is a continuation of [Episode 41](#) (*Same Baby, New Name?*), and reflects on how our understanding of Early Relational Health continues to grow. [Listen Here](#)

OUT OF MANY, ONE:
ESSAYS IN COMMON GOOD PLURALISM

"When mental health care is framed primarily as an individual struggle to be overcome through personal resilience or compliance with treatment, the role of families and caregivers is easily overlooked."



JAY CHAUDHARY
Visiting Fellow
Capita



MATTHEW BIEL
Director
Thrive Center for
Children, Families
and Communities,
Georgetown University

capita

[What Would a Common Good-Focused Mental Health Care System Look Like? \(Capita\)](#)

In this essay from Capita's series *Out of Many, One: Essays in Common Good Pluralism*, Jay Chaudhary and Matthew Biel explore what it would mean to reimagine mental health care through a common good framework, which recognizes that human flourishing is shaped not only by individual choice or clinical intervention, but also by the shared conditions we create together. [Read More.](#)



Investing in Our Future: Critical Ways Philanthropy Can Help Every Young Child and Family Thrive

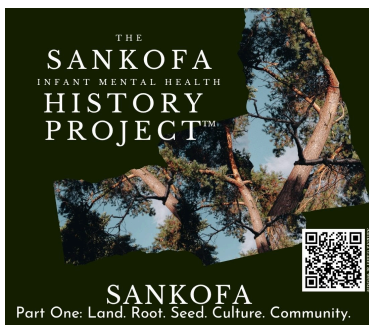
By Katherine Auerbach, Maggie Davies and Rebecca Goodfield

Collaborating to accelerate social impact | January 2024

The Bridgespan Group

[Investing in Our Future: Critical Ways Philanthropy Can Help Every Young Child and Family Thrive \(The Bridgespan Group\)](#)

By investing in young children and their families, funders can help lay the foundation for those children to thrive for the rest of their lives—with benefits for all communities across the United States. This guide identifies four critical areas for philanthropic investment by individual donors and foundations that build on the progress of the last decade and address key needs of children and families. [Read More](#)



THE SANKOFA
INFANT MENTAL HEALTH
HISTORY PROJECT™

SANKOFA
Part One: Land. Root. Seed. Culture. Community.

***New* Sankofa Screening Dates**

[Tuesday, April 28, 12pm PST / 3pm ET / 7pm UTC](#)
[Wednesday, July 8, 9am PST / 12pm ET / 4pm UTC](#)

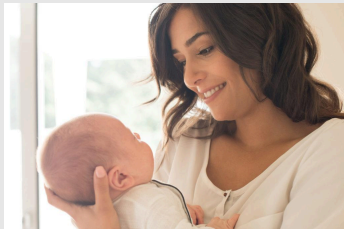
These virtual, 2-hour events include a screening of the film *Sankofa Part One: Land. Root. Seed. Culture. Community.* and robust opportunities for engagement and reflection with colleagues and the Sankofa Steering Collective.

The Sankofa Infant Mental Health History Project™ is a multi-year effort focused on retrieving the healing and relational wisdom from our pasts, cultures, and communities and telling a fuller history of IMH – including contributions of professionals and communities of color and the role of power and privilege in the field's development. [Learn More Here](#)

What We're Reading . . .

- "Immigration enforcement is affecting California's and the nation's immigrant and non-immigrant children and their families." Stanford Center on Early Childhood. P. Fisher, PhD; J. Lombardi, PhD; N. Kendall-Taylor, PhD. (April 16, 2026). RAPID Survey Project, Stanford University. [Read here.](#)

- "Designing AI to Help Children Flourish: A Global Task Force to Ensure Chatbots Support Youth Well-being." R. M. Ivey; J. D. Teubner; N. J. Fast; R. Iyer. (April 25, 2025). Global Solutions Journal, Issue 11. [Read here.](#)
- "Connecting Early Childhood Development to Climate Change: Insights for Communicators." D. Lyew; J. Moyer; B. Sanderson; E. Cohen; R. Jereza. (Sept. 15, 2025). FrameWorks Institute; Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University. [Read here.](#)
- "Flourishing Children, Healthy Communities, and a Stronger Nation: The U.S. Early Years Climate Action Plan." (July 2024). U.S. Early Years Climate Action Task Force. [Read here.](#)
- "Why Making Music Matters Now: How Music Nurtures Children, Supports Caregivers, and Helps Communities Thrive." D. Palmer Wolf; H. Moon; V. Li; A. Mohan; in partnership with Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute (Nov. 2025). [Read here.](#)
- *FAN: Relational Practice Through Attunement and Self-Reflection.* American Academy of Pediatrics (April 17, 2026). Course ID 62484. [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.](#)



and you would like to subscribe, please click [here](#).

Contact
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