



MI-AIMH Endorsement Receives National Award

MI-AIMH has received a national award from The Annapolis Coalition on Behavioral Health Workforce Education for innovative educational practice in the area of Child and Adolescent workforce education. The Annapolis Coalition is a collective endeavor of diverse organizations and individuals committed to improving workforce recruitment, retention, training, and education. This initiative spans the treatment and prevention of mental health problems and illnesses, substance use disorders, and co-occurring mental and addictive disorders. In recognizing the *Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health (MI-AIMH) Endorsement for Culturally Sensitive, Relationship-Based Practice Promoting Infant Mental Health* as a promising strategy for improving workforce development, the Coalition is promoting systems change and workforce reform at the national level.

As reported in *From Neurons to Neighborhoods (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000)*, there is a critical shortage of well-trained professionals who have the knowledge, skills and supervised work experiences to promote healthy social and emotional development, intervene and treat serious early childhood mental health problems. This award recognizes that the *MI-AIMH Endorsement* is one of the first and most comprehensive efforts to identify best practice competencies at multiple levels and across disciplines and to offer a pathway for professional development in the infant and family field.

Scores of MI-AIMH members and committees supported the work of competency-based endorsement promoting infant mental health practice for over 10 years. Many sayings come to mind as I announce this...“it takes a village (Marion Wright Edelman)” or “we are all connected – even the trees (Arthur Miller) ” or “What about the baby? (Selma Fraiberg)”. At times, the work seemed overwhelming. How could we get this finished? Sheryl Goldberg chaired the MI-AIMH Endorsement Committee, shepherding this ambitious project through most of the 10 years. Valerie Brown brought her excellent organizational skills to the process at all 4 levels. Melissa Kaplan-Estrin and Bill Schafer co-chaired the Endorsement Test Development Committee. Members at all levels put themselves “on the line” and field tested the test questions. Generous support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation enabled MI-AIMH to complete some of the most important tasks. The offices of Dykema, Gossett Inc. provided “pro bono” legal counsel for copyright of all materials and a “license to use”. Over 70 members stepped up to the plate and have earned Endorsement to date. Three state affiliates have joined MI-AIMH through a “license to use”. ZERO TO THREE has recognized the importance of the competencies for workforce development at the national level. It has been an amazing process and an honor to work with you around this important MI-AIMH project.