



The Virginia Association for Infant Mental Health (VAIMH)

Code of Ethics

The VAIMH Endorsement for Culturally Sensitive, Relationship-focused Practice Promoting Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health® (IECMH-E®) is intended to recognize experiences that lead to competency in the infant, early childhood, and family field. It does not replace licensure or certification but instead is meant as evidence of a specialization in this field. The VAIMH Endorsement is cross-sector and multidisciplinary including professionals from psychology, education, social work, psychiatry, child and/or human development, nursing, and others. Endorsement indicates an individual's efforts to specialize in the promotion/practice of infant and early childhood mental health within their own chosen discipline. Each endorsed professional is bound by their own discipline's ethical standards, as well of those defined here.

Value: Importance of Relationships

- A VAIMH endorsed professional understands the importance of relationship, the primary instrument for growth and change.
- A VAIMH endorsed professional uses knowledge and skills to promote, support, restore, and sustain nurturing relationships for all infants, young children, and families.
- A VAIMH endorsed professional works to establish strong, collaborative relationships with community professionals to enhance services to all infants, young children, and families.
- A VAIMH endorsed professional understands the importance of past relationship experiences to the development of current relationships.

Value: Respect for Ethnicity, Race, Culture, Individuality, and Diversity

- A VAIMH endorsed professional understands and respects the uniqueness of each individual with respect for ethnicity, culture, individuality, and diversity in all aspects of infant, early childhood, and family practice.
- A VAIMH endorsed professional upholds the values of the families they serve by being a curious and responsible learner. This includes proactively engaging in consultation and formal training to learn about the cultures of the families they serve, so as not to burden families with the task of educating the professional.

Value: Commitment to Dismantling Inequities through Social & Racial Justice Work

- A VAIMH endorsed professional honors and respects all of the identities that individuals hold including and not limited to race, ethnicity, gender identities, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, immigration status, and others.
- A VAIMH endorsed professional engages in ongoing deep personal and critical reflection, and participates in anti-racist, anti-bias professional development that commits them to the practice of infant mental health with a social and racial justice stance.
- A VAIMH endorsed professional is committed to dismantling structural inequities through advocacy by identifying and upholding policies and practices from within to create systems that advance social justice and work to dismantle racial and social inequities.

Value: Integrity

- A VAIMH endorsed professional works in ways that are ethical, trustworthy, honest, responsible, and reliable.

Value: Confidentiality

- A VAIMH endorsed professional abides by the ethical standards of the agency or place of work and is guided by the legal and practice standards in human services as well as those of their discipline.

Value: Knowledge and Skill Building

- A VAIMH endorsed professional works continuously to acquire new knowledge and skills to enhance the understanding and application of IECMH principles.

Value: Reflective Practice

- A VAIMH endorsed professional seeks out and uses supervision and consultation, as appropriate, to reflect on professional development and personal growth related to work with or on behalf of infants, young children, and families.

I commit to upholding these values in my professional work or on behalf of infants, young children, and their families.