



EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH CONNECTION

MOVING LIVES FORWARD

THE UNSUNG HEROES IN THEIR LIVES

Have you ever stopped to count the many people who touch your child's life? How many different ways that they touch them that forever impact their future lives and what kind of person they may become? In most families there are least FIVE. In some families there are even more.

First and foremost are teachers because they are often with your child a large part of most the year. This includes pre-school and day care staff who have the little ones whose brains and bodies are developing at rapid speeds. Great teachers are warm, enthusiastic, and caring. These are the ones that students go to with a problem or concern. They have good listening skills and take extra time in the way-too-busy schedules for the kiddos they teach.

Secondly, IF children are blessed to have at least one set of grandparents in their lives, then they will have more attention and love. This role is of utmost import and; Sometimes it is hard to really tell who enjoys it the most – the grandkids or the grandparents. In some states when parents are absent or unable to parent appropriately, then grandparents can become legal guardians of their grandchildren. This "Kinship" program pays subsidies to grandparents so they have some help in providing for the care of their children's children. Other states have "informal kinship" where care arrangements are made by parents with other family members without legal or the juvenile court system being involved.

Thirdly, any kind of mentor for your child – like a favorite aunt or uncle is helpful. Mentors can also be godparents, Sunday school teachers or staff, a para at their school or maybe their coach. Research has shown for decades that when a children have one – JUST ONE –adult in their life who believes and supports them, they can become resilient even when life presents challenges

for them. Most caregivers get great joy from knowing that they did make a difference in the life of one child.

Step parents should be called "bonus parents" because children who have this benefit have two sets of parents who provide their basic needs. Too often step parents get a "bad rap" or perceived as the "other mom or dad."

This is a reality that can be better by open communication. All must understand that EACH ONE of the caregivers must keep the best interest of the children in mind. Of course this is not always easy because human emotions and past relationships are involved. Easy or not, bonus parents are there for the duration of a child's life and can make a difference in how that child perceives many aspects of healthy relationships.

Fourth arena of S/heroes are foster or adoptive parents. Of course most children do not have this experience, but thank God there are people who are willing to provide this MUCH needed care for children. They are angels here on Earth because they sacrifice MUCH to give foster children what their biological parents were not able to provide for various reasons.

Having been fortunate to have been a foster mom to teenagers I consider it one of my greater opportunities. Yes, it was a challenge, but it also was one of my most rewarding. I highly recommend that you ask for details from your local DHS. The pay is minimal; the rewards are maximum.

Quote of the Week

"To achieve greatness, start where you are, use what you have, do what you can." (Ashe)

Likewise, people who adopt children are saints. They choose to parent children who otherwise may not be parented at all. They choose to go the extra mile for children who often were unwanted and/or abandoned. Often these children have behaviors that developed around their bonding, attachment, and/or trauma. Yet each year 120,000 children are adopted in the United States. Kudos to those people who are willing to take on this challenge! (<https://adoption-options.com>)

So in summary, these “unsung s/heroes” are to be appreciated and acknowledged in every way possible. They give their love and attention each and every day to children who may need it the most. If you are fortunate to know one of people, please reach out and say, ‘Thanks for being there for children who need what you have to give.’

ALL of us from CMHC/ Early Childhood Consultants say, “THANKS!”

MEET CENTENNIAL'S EARLY CHILDHOOD CONSULTATION TEAM



AMY NATION, MA, IMH-E® INFANT FAMILY SPECIALIST

EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST

821 E Railroad Ave
Fort Morgan, CO 80701
Phone (970) 867-4924 Ext.2231
Cell (970) 571-2174
amyn@centennialmhc.org

Ages 0-5

Covers the following
counties:
Logan, Morgan

LAUNCHING ZOOM SECURE TELEHEALTH SERVICES!

Our ECMH team is excited to announce that consultation services are now available using Zoom Secure Telehealth Services. These services are available to client families, schools, childcare centers and community partners with group and individual meetings available. All services will be provided using this private, secure video platform, and can be accessed using most electronic devices. For more information or to set up a consultation appointment, please contact our ECMH team or your local Centennial Mental Health Center office.



ERIN POUNDS, MS, IMH-E® INFANT FAMILY SPECIALIST

EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST

821 E Railroad Ave
Fort Morgan, CO 80701
Phone (970) 867-4924 Ext.1152
Cell (970) 520-3320
erinp@centennialmhc.org

Ages 0-8

Covers the following
counties:
Morgan, Washington
& Yuma

For additional support during
the COVID-19 Pandemic you
can call Centennial's
**COMMUNITY
SUPPORT LINE**

You can do this by calling your
nearest Centennial office:

Akron - 970.345.2254

Burlington - 719.346.8183

Cheyenne Wells - 719.346.8183

Elizabeth - 303.646.4519

Fort Morgan - 970.867.4924

Holyoke - 970.854.2114

Julesburg - 970.474.3769

Limon - 719.775.2313

Sterling - 970.522.4392

Wray - 970.332.3133

Yuma - 970.848.5412



CHERYL BILLS, BSSW, MS EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST

211 W Main St
Sterling, CO 80751
Phone (970) 522-4549 Ext.291
Cell (970) 762-8044
cherylbi@centennialmhc.org

Ages 0-5

Covers the following counties:
Logan, Phillips, Sedgwick



DANIELLE STOREVIK, MA EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST

650 E Walnut
Elizabeth, CO 80107
Phone (303) 646-4519
Cell (970) 571-4224
danielles@centennialmhc.org

Ages 0-8

Covers the following counties:
Cheyenne, Elbert, Kit Carson,
Lincoln & Yuma

Contact your local Centennial Mental Health Center for assistance with any Early Childhood need.

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