

## Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in dramatic, rapid changes to the provision of infant/early childhood mental health services, loss of concrete and psychological resources for families, and disruptions to parenting and family relationships. Given the unprecedented nature of the pandemic, little is known about the lived experiences at this time and the impacts of the virus on the mental health of infants, young children, their families, and the professionals who serve them.

In response to this unique challenge, the *Infant Mental Health Journal (IMHJ)* and *Perspectives in Infant Mental Health*, are seeking contributions to three platforms to meet **shorter term** and **longer term** needs for dissemination of research. *IMHJ*, the official journal of the World Association for Infant Mental Health (WAIMH), is a peer reviewed, scholarly journal published by Wiley. *Perspectives in Infant Mental Health* is the professional, open-source publication of WAIMH. General topics of interest for these publication venues include:

- Virtual delivery of infant and early childhood mental health services
- Supporting practitioners' mental health
- Effects of the pandemic (e.g., loss of resources, isolation, racial discrimination, etc.) on:
  - Parental mental health
  - Parent-child relationships
  - Pregnancy, birthing experiences, and/or neonatal experiences
  - Family relationships
  - Infant, toddler, or early childhood social-emotional health

### Dissemination Platforms

1. The Voices of COVID-19 special issue in ***WAIMH Perspectives*** will feature case studies and qualitative studies that capture the voices and lived experiences of infants, young children, families, and practitioners. ***The goals of this platform are to describe individuals' and families' experiences, impacts on practices, and other effects of the pandemic and to make information immediately available that may inform future, empirical COVID-19 infant and early childhood mental health research.*** Journal editors will provide peer review for these submissions in an abbreviated review process. Submissions should be 1,000-3,000 words, inclusive of text and references. Although no specific format style is required at the time of submission, use headings/subheadings to organize report content. Submit manuscripts to Maree Foley at [maree.foley@xtra.co.nz](mailto:maree.foley@xtra.co.nz) between July 1, 2020 and October 1, 2020 with the online issue available by December 2020.
2. We are calling for proposals for a **special section** (generally 3-5 papers and a brief introduction) in the ***Infant Mental Health Journal*** on completed COVID-19 infant and early childhood mental health research. ***The goal of the special section is to contribute to an early literature base that can inform and support additional research.*** Innovative, well-implemented pilot studies may be included. Proposals should include a brief description (~ 250 words) description of the COVID-19 related them of the papers, working titles and an abbreviated abstract (~250 words) for each included paper. Proposals are due by December 1, 2020. Invitations will be issued by January 15, 2021. Manuscripts are due by May 1, 2021 with expected publication in Fall 2021, following a streamlined peer review. Submit proposals to Holly Brophy-Herb, [hbrophy@msu.edu](mailto:hbrophy@msu.edu).
3. We will also be issuing a call for manuscript submissions to a **full special *Infant Mental Health Journal* issue** on 'Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic'. **The special issue will be devoted to rigorous research investigating some of the topics described previously focusing on the prenatal-age 5 developmental period, including how the infant and early childhood mental health field can respond most efficiently and effectively in the face of crisis in the future.** Dates and additional information will be forthcoming later in the year.