On March 19th, NTTAC offered our first webinar ([link to webinar recording](#)) about early childhood systems of care entitled *Infusing infant and early childhood mental health into systems of care.* We offer the following take away points from our robust discussion for teams to further consider.

An Early Childhood System of Care: Taking It Wide and Deep

Keep the conversation going! An early childhood system of care is unique from other systems. These differences should be acknowledged in discussions about building, promoting, and strengthening early childhood systems of care.

How are early childhood systems of care different?

Opportunities/challenges unique to early childhood SOCs	Implications and possible approaches
Holding a developmental perspective as a central cornerstone of our work	Ensuring stakeholders understand that early childhood development unfolds in the context of relationships with adults
Conducting screening and assessment for infants, toddlers, and young children with limited dedicated tools	Framing thresholds for inclusion of services broadly in terms of family risk factors
Engaging families in proactive ways	"Meeting" families with young children where they are- even if not all the settings are clinical; recognizing the inherent strengths of families who are also at-risk.
Translating and promoting concepts from youth systems in the context of early childhood education	Determining how to collaboratively include "child voice" in service delivery involving very young children by building the capacity of adults who serve them
Addressing high turnover in the early childhood education workforce	Ensuring staff wellness supports are in place
Sustaining services without a dedicated federal funding source for infant and early childhood mental health	Examining ways states and localities are blending and braiding public and private funding sources to sustain comprehensive services for children and families in early childhood education
Engaging behavioral health partners in SOCs that work with children and families proactively, often before mental health diagnoses are made	Working with partners on universal, population-based approaches to support social-emotional development and address challenging behavior in young children (e.g., infant and early childhood mental health consultation)

Below are reflective questions that can be used as a launching-off point for agencies, program leaders, and partners to frame systems of care work with stakeholders. We have included broader questions that can frame your approach, as well as information about specific implementation strategies.

- *Workforce.* Where is the workforce for promotion and prevention? How do we support, scale, and sustain competent workforce?
- *Addressing racial and ethnic justice.* What are our culturally and linguistically competent practices and policies? How can we address disproportionality and structural racism through our SOC?
- *Evidence-informed programming.* How are we using evidence-based programs and practices to the degree possible as defined by the community?
- *Family and youth voice.* How are practices and policies family-driven and youth-guided? How are we incorporating family feedback into the way we are setting up and implementing our SOC?
- *Cross-systems partnership.* How can we think broadly about who are our partners across sectors and how to we reach them?

- Pyramid Model for support social-emotional competencies in infants, toddlers, and young children
- Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC)
- Endorsement/credentialing of infant and early childhood mental health practitioners
- Ongoing assessment of the impacts on outcomes for children and their families, as well as the community

- Facilitating referrals to more intensive treatments from ECE settings
- Dyadic Treatments are more intensive supports in which the infant or young child and parent/caregiver are treated together
- Play Therapy
- Crisis intervention