

THE VILLAGE

TIKES Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation

A quarterly newsletter providing insight and support for the village of caregivers in Louisiana.



TIKES News

The TIKES team enjoyed a summer of conferences! We hope you were able to learn something new from our professional development trainings at the Early Childhood Conference and the Teacher Leadership Summit.



In July, Dr. Kasia Plessy, alongside other panelists at the Agenda for Children Summer Professional Development Institute, discussed trauma-informed ways to help young children prepare for and respond to unexpected situations and emergencies.



It takes a village to raise a child,
We're here to support the village.

TIKES Tips

As summertime winds down, many caregivers are looking for opportunities to hang on to those last moments of holiday fun and begin to build a school time routine. Here are some things caregivers can do to help smooth the transition to school and keep home relationships strong:

Play Together. Whether coloring pictures or pretending to be dinosaurs, playing together is a fun way to strengthen the caregiver-child relationship. Play also helps children develop language skills, express emotions, be creative, and learn social skills. Play supports adult creativity and may even help them cope with stress!

Eat Meals Together. Over the span of time, eating together has been vital to fostering relationships. For younger children, dinner time conversations can enhance vocabulary. It is also a great opportunity to teach children the importance of a healthy and balanced diet, which affects their overall mental health.

Create rituals. Scheduling one-on-one time allows caregivers to celebrate their child. Whether it's a walk around the neighborhood or just a movie at home, quality time can strengthen relationships and builds up your child's self-esteem.

Go to our [Youtube channel](#) to learn more TIKES Tips!





Consultant Spotlight

Our next consultant in the spotlight is Jacqie Johnson in the New Orleans region! Jacqie is a social worker who joined the TIKES team in 2021 soon after moving to New Orleans. Moving to a new city during a pandemic was not easy, but Jacqie quickly became integrated in local culture and community resources. Entering into centers post-Hurricane Ida presented many challenges, including supporting centers through staff shortages. Jacqie masterfully used her consultative skills to support problem-solving ways to maintain current staff, build routine for center children and adults, and increase self-care mechanisms used by teachers.

Since joining our team, Jacqie has been committed to supporting and representing TIKES. Some of Jacqie's strengths are her ability to meet early education staff "where they are" in a nonjudgemental way to build relationships and uplift the voices of children. Jacqie frequently seeks opportunities for community presentations, professional trainings, and child advocacy cross Louisiana. She also enjoys helping support new consultants gain confidence in their new roles. Our TIKES team is proud of the commitment and passion that Jacqie brings to our work



"What I enjoy most about mental health consultation is being able to support teachers in the invaluable work they do to support our future generations. It is the best of both worlds getting to support teachers and children at the same time."

More to Explore

Have you heard the myth that young children don't have mental health? In reality, mental health is an essential part of all people's lives. Research has found that 10-15% of young children experience mental health conditions. Children who have secure relationships experience more optimism, stronger self-esteem, and better problem-solving abilities. Conversely, experiences such as neglect, abuse, or trauma can have negative effects on a baby's mental health, potentially leading to issues like anxiety, depression, and behavioral problems throughout their lives. This is why early identification and intervention is key when it comes to infant and early childhood mental health consultation! Consultants are able to help caregivers understand and identify both protective and risk factors in early childhood.

Learn more about mental health in young children [here](#).

The Cozy Corner

Your time in the classroom can become busy and overwhelming quickly! In these moments, we have to remind ourselves to slow down and actively enjoy time with the little ones in your care. Child focused play strengthens relationships and can be a form of self-care! Here are a few tips on how to make the most of playtime:

Menu of activities. Work with the little ones in your classroom to develop a menu of fun activities that do not require much preparation time and that are easily accessible. This reduces the stress of play time and allows children to play an active role in shaping their classroom environment.

Follow the child's lead. While playing, it is important to allow the child to lead. Allowing the children in your class to lead play teaches them independence and allows them to develop their ability to express their needs and wants.

Individual time for each child. When you're a caregiver of multiple little ones, it is important to try spending some individual time with each child. This provides them with the opportunity to get your undivided attention. And they LOVE your attention!

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