

### Fellowship Overview and Expectations

*The 2023-2024 Fellowship will be held virtually with the exception of three in-person Saturday sessions. Please see the details below.*

#### Program Overview

The DMH + UCLA Early Childhood Fellowship is designed to support the growth and wellbeing of professionals working with young children and families in Los Angeles County. For ten months, Fellows come together to learn, practice, and reflect on the application of key knowledge and skills that promote resilience in young children and their families. Fellows learn from national and local experts and collaborate with colleagues to create and implement innovative approaches that address the challenges faced by families with young children in their communities. [Visit our website](#) to see examples of presenters and presentation topics from past years of the Fellowship.

#### Program Description

The Early Childhood Fellowship provides a model of professional development that connects knowledge and application through a curriculum that integrates seminal theoretical models with best practices in prevention and early intervention. The Fellowship infuses an emphasis on relationship building and workforce wellbeing in order to build a collaborative learning community that will provide sustained support for Fellows' professional and personal growth both during and following the completion of the program. The Fellowship integrates a sociocultural lens throughout the training to create a learning environment that honors the strengths and challenges that characterize the diverse communities of Los Angeles County.

The Early Childhood Fellowship will span a range of topics such as:

- Culturally informed approaches to prevention and early intervention
- Principles of reflective practice
- Prenatal risk
- Early experience and brain development
- Perinatal mental health
- Promoting self-regulation in at-risk children
- Relationship-based approaches to supporting healthy neurodevelopment
- Importance of fathers
- Diverse family constellations
- School readiness
- Brain-based classrooms
- Environmental health and community wellbeing

## Program Objectives

Upon completion of the program, the Fellows will:

- Have a strong foundation in seminal theoretical perspectives relevant to early childhood development.
- Be able to flexibly integrate and apply trauma, resilience, and culturally informed perspectives to their early childhood work.
- Understand the impact of early experiences on children's brain development and family functioning.
- Be able to identify strengths in young children and their families and utilize approaches that leverage and promote such strengths.
- Have a repertoire of best practices in prevention and early intervention that they regularly implement in their settings.
- Understand the relevance of and apply reflective practice principles in their work with young children and families, as well as their interactions with colleagues, supervisors, and supervisees.
- Be able to share and disseminate critical knowledge and skills with parents, caregivers, families, and other early childhood professionals.

## Program Participants

The Early Childhood Fellowship aims to bring together individuals with a diversity of backgrounds and experiences to create a learning environment in which a broad range of perspectives can be shared. The Fellowship welcomes applicants from a variety of sectors, including mental health, early childhood education and childcare, child welfare, home visiting, healthcare, juvenile justice, and advocacy and public policy. Individuals from disciplines including child development, marriage and family therapy, medicine, occupational therapy, physical therapy, psychology, recreational therapy, social work, and speech and language therapy are invited to apply. Preference will be given to applicants whose work impacts under-resourced communities.

Multiple participants within an organization are invited to apply. *Some* preference will be given to applicants who apply with another colleague from their organization; however, individuals who apply as the sole representative of their organization will still be considered competitive. Please note that it is not guaranteed that every applicant from the same organization will be accepted.

## Eligibility

The Early Childhood Fellowship is open to professionals and paraprofessionals whose current work impacts young children from birth to age six and/or their families within Los Angeles County.

- Applicants may work in a variety of organizational settings, including county or community agencies, early education or childcare settings, academic or research institutions, hospitals or clinics, or advocacy organizations.
- Applicants' work may impact young children and/or their families through a variety of mechanisms, including:
  - Direct or indirect service provision, training, and/or supervision
  - Advocacy or public policy
  - Consultation
  - Research or program evaluation

## Program Structure

### Live Sessions:

- The Live Sessions include didactic presentations and trainings with national and local leaders, experiential activities, Collaborative Learning Groups, and Reflective Practice Groups.
- The Fellowship meets for 19 Live Sessions over the course of ten months (September – June). Live Sessions occur two days (Friday-Saturday) *per month*, with the exception of September, the first month of the Fellowship when there is only a Friday session.
- Friday and Saturday Sessions typically run from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, but exact starting and ending times may vary slightly. Live Sessions will be divided into morning and afternoon sessions, with about an hour break in between and shorter breaks scheduled throughout the day.
- All Friday Live Sessions will be held virtually (10 dates). Most Saturday Live Sessions will be held virtually (6 dates). **Three Saturday Live sessions are being planned to be held in-person on the UCLA Campus: October 7, 2023, February 3, 2024, and May 4, 2024. Fellows should be prepared to attend these three sessions in person, as attendance will be required and there will not be a virtual option.**

### Pre-work (prior to Live Sessions):

- Fellows are expected to complete pre-work each month (reviewing slides, reading articles, and/or watching videos). Pre-work is assigned so Fellows are prepared to contribute to group discussions and derive the most benefit from the sessions.

### Collaborative Learning Groups:

- Fellows will participate in small Collaborative Learning Groups as part of the Live Sessions to share how they applied their learning from the previous month.
- Each Fellow will facilitate a Collaborative Learning Group during the Fellowship by reviewing their group members' written reflections from the previous month in advance, identifying important themes, and preparing questions to guide a group discussion.

### Reflective Practice Groups:

- Fellows will participate in Reflective Practice Groups each month as part of the Live Sessions to explore the parallel process in the relationships they navigate in their professional lives and explore the impact of their work on their own professional growth and personal wellbeing.
- Each group will consist of a maximum of eight Fellows and will be led by an endorsed Reflective Practice Facilitator.

### Online Learning Community:

- Fellows will connect and collaborate with one another and the Fellowship Team using an online Learning Community. Fellows will use this community to view a Fellowship Directory, contribute to discussion posts, and access a library of resources (including presentation slides, handouts, and pre-session work).

### Monthly Written Reflections:

- Fellows are expected to reflect upon, apply, and refine key knowledge and skills in their work settings following each month's Live Sessions.
- Fellows will submit written reflections to the Learning Community describing their experiences applying their learning from the previous Live Sessions.

### Culminating Projects:

- Fellows will participate in a project of their choosing that helps build their knowledge base or skills in their home organization or community. Fellows will share lessons learned from the implementation of their project during the Fellowship year. Fellows should anticipate that the project will take approximately 8 – 12 hours to complete their project outside of the Live Sessions.
- Projects can take various shapes: a presentation, a proposal, or even a creative endeavor. For example, Fellows can give an oral presentation on an early childhood topic to staff members at their organization, identify a challenge faced by young children and families in their community and develop a proposal to address the challenge or develop a social media campaign or video public service announcement related to an early childhood topic.

## Program Requirements

One of the primary goals of this Fellowship is to create a positive, supportive, and respectful learning environment in which Fellows, Presenters, Reflective Practice Facilitators, and Fellowship Team can share and exchange expertise and experiences in working with young children and their families. Consistent attendance and robust engagement in the Live Sessions, online Learning Community, and all other Fellowship activities are key to building relationships that will support such a learning environment.

*Fellows must satisfy all of the following requirements to receive a Certificate of Completion:*

### Fellowship Attendance and Participation in Live Sessions

- Fellows may not miss more than 16 hours of the Live Sessions held via Zoom or in-person.
  - As part of these 16 hours, Fellows may not miss more than one of the three in-person sessions.
  - Fellows who miss part or all of a session must email a plan to the Program Coordinator for obtaining the information that they missed in the session.
- Fellows must participate **by video** in the virtual Live Sessions. Fellows should make arrangements in advance to have access to a computer or tablet equipped with a camera.
- Fellows must participate **in person** in Live Sessions on Saturday, October 7, February 3, and May 4 if those sessions are held on the UCLA campus.
- Fellows are expected to complete assigned pre-work prior to each session.

### Participation in and Facilitation of Collaborative Learning Groups

- Fellows are expected to actively participate in Collaborative Learning Groups each month by coming prepared to share their experiences integrating new concepts and/or skills they have learned during the Live Sessions into their work.
- Fellows are required to facilitate Collaborative Learning Groups during the Live Sessions of the Fellowship.

### Monthly Written Reflections

- Fellows must complete all Monthly Written Reflections and submit them on time, even if they were absent from a Live Session. Late and non-submissions will count as missed hours.

### Culminating Projects

- Fellows must complete a Culminating Project.
- If working on a team, Fellows are expected to work collaboratively with the other members of their team to complete all project-related tasks in a timely manner. Late submissions and non-submissions will count as missed hours.

### Professional Conduct

To maintain a respectful environment and mutually supportive learning community for all participants, the following code of conduct has been established for the Fellowship:

- Fellows are expected to come prepared and ready to actively engage in discussions, small group work, and experiential activities. The Live Sessions will consist of a combination of didactic instruction, discussion, and hands-on activities, and Fellows are encouraged to participate in a variety of learning experiences.
- Fellows are expected to join on time and stay engaged for the full duration of each session. Active participation and engagement are required (including attending with cameras on and contributing to large group discussions and breakout room activities in small groups).
- Fellows are expected to notify the Fellowship Program Coordinator by email at least ten days in advance of any anticipated absences and within two days following any unanticipated absences.

- Fellows who are repeatedly late, leave early, go off camera for extended periods without communication, have multiple absences, do not communicate with the Fellowship Team about their absences, do not submit written reflections (or repeatedly submit them late), or engage in other behaviors that detract from the learning environment may be dismissed from the Fellowship.
- Fellows are asked to be open to diverse perspectives on work in the early childhood landscape and are expected to express any difference of opinions with one another in a respectful manner.

## Program Details

### When

- September 2023 – June 2024
- **Live Sessions** will occur one **Friday-Saturday of each month** (September will only have a Friday session).
  - **Friday** and **Saturday** sessions will typically run from **9:00 AM to 5:00 PM**
  - Please note that end times may vary slightly for some days. Fellows will have advance notice of any modifications to the daily schedule.

### Where

- All Friday Live Sessions will be held virtually via Zoom (10 dates). Most Saturday Live Sessions will be held virtually (6 dates).
- **Three (3) Saturday Live sessions are being planned to be held in-person on the UCLA Campus: October 7, 2023, February 3, 2024, and May 4, 2024. Fellows should be prepared to attend these three sessions in person, as attendance will be required and there will not be a virtual option available. Fellows will have advance notice if plans for these sessions need to be modified.**

| <b>Live Sessions</b><br>16 dates will be held <i>via Zoom</i><br>3 dates are planned to be held <i>in-person at UCLA</i> |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| <b>Friday</b>  | <b>Saturday</b>               |
| 09/29/23   | N/A                           |
| 10/06/23   | 10/07/23 ( <i>in-person</i> ) |
| 11/03/23   | 11/04/23                      |
| 12/08/23   | 12/09/23                      |
| 01/12/24   | 01/13/24                      |
| 02/02/24   | 02/03/24 ( <i>in-person</i> ) |
| 03/01/24   | 03/02/24                      |
| 04/05/24   | 04/06/24                      |
| 05/03/24   | 05/04/24 ( <i>in-person</i> ) |
| 06/07/24   | 06/08/24                      |

## Cost

- The fee for Fellows is \$200. Participation is generously subsidized by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health. Limited scholarship spots may be available. For further information, please contact [ECFinfo@wellbeing4LA.org](mailto:ECFinfo@wellbeing4LA.org).
- Once an applicant is accepted into the Fellowship, they will be provided with instructions on how to submit payment to reserve their spot in the program.

## Continuing Education

- UCLA Division of Population Behavioral Health is an [approved sponsor](#) by the American Psychological Association to provide continuing education for psychologists. Professionals who typically request CEs include licensed psychologists, social workers, and marriage and family therapists. We suggest you check with your state licensing board to see if these CEs will meet your requirements.
  - If your license is with the California Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS), refer to this page to see which organizations are recognized by the board as approved agencies: [https://www.bbs.ca.gov/licensees/cont\\_ed.html](https://www.bbs.ca.gov/licensees/cont_ed.html)
- Fellows will receive CEs for the sessions they attend in full and for which they complete an evaluation. Typically, at least 30 CEs are available.

## Application Process

### Timeline:

- Applications will be accepted until **Monday, April 24, 2023**.
  - Supervisors must complete a recommendation form by **Monday, May 1, 2023**.
- Applicants will be notified of decisions by **Friday, June 30, 2023**.
- Applicants who are not accepted in the first round of decisions may be placed on a waitlist and contacted if a spot becomes available.

### Components:

1. **Login or create a free account on the Wellbeing for LA Learning Center to access the online Application (<https://learn.wellbeing4la.org/ecf/apply>).**
2. Fill out the Application sections with general information such as education/training, organization information and field of work.
3. Respond to four short answer questions in the Professional Interests and Goals section of the Application ([preview this section](#)).
4. Provide the name and email address of your supervisor so they can complete a recommendation form ([preview this form](#)). A link to the online form will be sent directly to your supervisor after you submit your application.
5. Upload a PDF of your CV/Resume.

### Selection criteria and admission decisions:

- Current work that impacts young children and/or their families, especially those in under-resourced communities
- Clearly articulated goals for the applicant's learning experience
- Representation of a diversity of organizations, sectors, and disciplines
- Supervisor's recommendation of the applicant and organization's commitment to support the Fellow's training experience.
  - It is highly recommended that all applicants discuss participation in the Fellowship with their supervisor(s) and program managers before completing an application. *For DMH employees: Program manager and supervisor approval are required.*
- Thoughtfulness and completeness of the application
- Applications from organizations that are supporting more than one applicant will be given *some* preference (although it is not guaranteed that every applicant from the same organization will be accepted).

### Need more information?

- Contact us via email at [ECFinfo@wellbeing4LA.org](mailto:ECFinfo@wellbeing4LA.org)
- Review our FAQ (included in this packet)
- **Register on our website** to join one of our **Information Sessions** held on Zoom.
  - Information Session #1: Wednesday, April 5 9:00 to 10:00 AM PT
  - Information Session #2: Tuesday, April 11 noon to 1:00 PM PT



# Frequently Asked Questions

## Eligibility

### 1. Who is eligible to apply?

The DMH + UCLA Early Childhood Fellowship is open to professionals and paraprofessionals whose current work impacts young children aged birth to six years and/or their families within Los Angeles County.

Applicants may work in a variety of organizational settings, including county or community agencies, early education or childcare settings, academic or research institutions, hospital or clinic settings, or advocacy organizations.

Applicants' work may impact young children and/or their families through a variety of mechanisms, including:

- Direct or indirect service provision, training, and/or supervision
- Advocacy or public policy
- Consultation
- Research or program evaluation

### 2. What are the selection criteria?

- Current work that impacts young children and/or their families, especially those in under-resourced communities
- Clearly articulated goals for the applicant's learning experience
- Thoughtfulness and completeness of the application
- Representation of a diversity of organizations, sectors, and disciplines
- Supervisor's recommendation of the applicant and organization's commitment to support the Fellow's training experience.
- *Some* preference will be given to applicants who apply with another colleague from their organization; however, individuals who apply as the sole representative of their organization will still be considered competitive. Please note that it is not guaranteed that every applicant from the same organization will be accepted.

### 3. Is it a requirement to be working within Los Angeles County?

Yes, at this time the Early Childhood Fellowship is only open to professionals or paraprofessionals whose current work impacts young children aged birth to six years and/or their families within Los Angeles County.

4. No one else from my organization is applying. Should I still apply?

Yes, an applicant with a strong interest in working with this population and clear goals for how this experience will enhance their work will still be competitive.

5. Do I need to be a DMH employee to be eligible?

No, applicants are not required to be DMH employees. Applicants may work in a variety of organizational settings, including community agencies, early education, childcare, medical settings, academic or research institutions, or advocacy organizations.

6. I don't have extensive experience working with young children. Should I still apply?

Yes, individuals with a strong interest in working with this population should apply. We are looking for a group of Fellows with a diverse range of experiences. Our expectation is that some Fellows will have considerable experience working with young children and/or their families, whereas others may be relatively new to working with this population.

7. Do applicants need a supervisor's recommendation for their application?

Yes, applicants will be required to provide the name and email address of their direct supervisor in their application.

After submitting the application, an applicant's supervisor will receive a link to complete a brief online recommendation form. The recommendation form will prompt an applicant's supervisor to answer a few questions about the applicant's role within their organization, the applicant's strengths, and how their organization would benefit from and support the applicant's participation in the Fellowship. Most supervisors report this form takes approximately 15-30 minutes to complete.

Before applying, applicants should be sure to discuss their application to the Fellowship and this requirement with their supervisor.

## Program

8. How is this Fellowship different from other professional development programs that focus on early childhood?

There are a number of other excellent professional development programs that are similarly focused on early childhood. The DMH + UCLA Early Childhood Fellowship focuses on some topics that are broadly relevant to work in early childhood and other topics that are especially relevant to working with young children and families within Los Angeles County (for example, the impact of immigration policies and family separation on young children).

9. Are there any requirements for a commitment after completing the Fellowship?

There are no formal requirements for a commitment upon completion of the Fellowship. However, there is an expectation that Fellows will be applying the knowledge and skills they are learning within their own professional settings during and following the completion of the Fellowship. The program is structured to provide multiple opportunities to support Fellows' efforts to implement newly learned practices, including Collaborative Learning Groups, Reflective Practice Groups, Culminating Projects, and our online Learning Community.

10. Is there work Fellows must complete outside of the Live Sessions?

Yes, there is some work required outside of the Friday-Saturday sessions. Please note that the following times are estimates:

- Pre-work for Live Sessions: 1 - 2 hours per month
- Contributions to the online Learning Community (including written reflections): 1 hour per month
- Preparation to facilitate a Collaborative Learning Group: 2 hours total during Fellowship
- Culminating Project: 8-12 hours total during the Fellowship year.

11. Can my participation in the Fellowship count towards endorsement through the California Center for Infant-Family and Early Childhood Mental Health?

Many of the Fellowship presentations address competencies identified by the [California Center for Infant-Family and Early Childhood Mental Health](#). Upon request, a certificate will be provided after the June Live Sessions with the breakdown of hours by domain. Please note that the California Center for Infant-Family and Early Childhood Mental Health does not endorse specific Fellowship programs. The certificate the Fellowship team provides is intended to support Fellows' applications for endorsement but does not guarantee that any specific hours will meet endorsement criteria.

## Details and Logistics

12. How much does it cost to participate in the Fellowship?

The fee for Fellows is \$200. Participation is generously subsidized by the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health. Limited scholarship spots may be available. For further information, please contact [ECFinfo@wellbeing4LA.org](mailto:ECFinfo@wellbeing4LA.org).

### 13. How long is the Fellowship?

The Fellowship runs from late September through early June. Please note adjustments to this schedule may be necessary depending on circumstances related to any updates in UCLA and Los Angeles County health and safety guidelines,

### 14. When and where are the Live Sessions? Is the Fellowship held virtually?

All Friday Live Sessions will be held virtually via Zoom (10 dates). Most Saturday Live Sessions will be held virtually (6 dates). **Three (3) Saturday Live sessions are being planned to be held in-person on the UCLA Campus.** Reference the *Program Details* section of the Overview for exact dates.

Friday and Saturday sessions typically run from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, but exact starting and ending times may vary slightly. Although we may not always be in an actual session from 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, offline time can be utilized for reflecting on session content individually and/or with colleagues, exploring and contributing to the Learning Community, preparing for Collaborative Learning Groups, or working on Culminating Projects.

In an effort to provide a connected and collaborative virtual learning experience, the Fellowship has modified virtual session hours accordingly. Live Sessions are divided into morning and afternoon sessions, with about an hour break in between and shorter breaks scheduled throughout the day.

### 15. Should I still apply if I am not able to attend all the dates?

Fellows may not miss more than 16 hours of the Live Sessions. As part of these 16 hours, Fellows may not miss more than one of the planned three in-person dates. Before applying, please carefully review the dates of the Fellowship to ensure you do not already have conflicts with more than three Fellowship dates.

Consistent attendance and engagement in the Fellowship sessions and all related activities are key to building the kinds of relationships that will support a positive and respectful learning environment. Fellows are expected to reserve all Fellowship dates, attend consistently, and abide by the Fellowship the attendance and participation policies.

**More questions?** We are happy to help! Please contact our team at [ECFinfo@wellbeing4LA.org](mailto:ECFinfo@wellbeing4LA.org).