



New “Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Resource Directory” is Published by the Duluth-Proctor-Hermantown Thrive Initiative

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The Northland Foundation and the Duluth-Proctor-Hermantown Thrive Initiative (DPH Thrive) are pleased to announce the publication of the *Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Resource Directory*.

This new, 120-page directory offers an easy-to-use reference for service providers such as physicians, psychologists, counselors, social workers, early childhood specialists, and others to better understand what is available locally in terms of infant and early childhood mental health support. It includes an index of services available for young children and their families in Duluth, Proctor, and Hermantown.

“Educating people about early childhood mental health—what it is, what to watch for, and how to refer families—is an important need in this community,” said Heather Winesett, M.D., a pediatrician and DPH Thrive member.

“The directory provides everyone, including medical practitioners, with concrete information about where to turn if a child is showing signs of social/emotional development issues,” added family physician and DPH Thrive member Julie Reichhoff, M.D.

Infant and early childhood mental health is synonymous with healthy social and emotional development. It may be defined as the developing capacity of children, from birth to age five, to experience, regulate, and express emotions; form close, secure interpersonal relationships; and explore their environment and learn. Infant mental health refers to how these issues affect development in the first three years of life (*Zero to Three*).

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There are more than 50 agencies and organizations included in the directory. Each listing includes a checklist of services offered within the mental health continuum of care and specifics such as number of staff, geographic area, insurance and fee information, and more. Participating agencies and organizations submitted their data using a survey tool developed by DPH Thrive.

“It’s exciting to see the community rally around this issue and be able to connect the dots in terms of local early childhood mental health services. Now we have a more comprehensive picture of who is doing what, and where there are service gaps to be filled,” said Brenda Bergman, Ph.D., a Duluth-area Licensed Psychologist.

The publication is one result of the ongoing work of the DPH Thrive Initiative, one of six pilot sites of the Minnesota Thrive Initiative. This statewide effort was initiated by the Northland Foundation and five other Minnesota Initiative Foundations in response to growing concerns being voiced all across rural Minnesota regarding the social and emotional development of young children and the general lack of knowledge or resources for families to turn to.

“We are so proud of the inroads the Duluth-Proctor-Hermantown Thrive team is making to support the healthy development of our most precious resource,” said Lynn Haglin, Northland Foundation Vice President/KIDS PLUS Director. “We hope the directory will be a helpful tool for everyone who works with young children and families.”

A downloadable pdf of the Directory is available through the Foundation’s web site at www.northlandfdn.org/KidsPlus/MinnesotaThriveInitiative.shtml. A hard copy may be requested by contacting Northland Foundation at (218)723-4040.

About the Duluth-Proctor-Hermantown Thrive Initiative

The Minnesota Thrive Initiative’s mission is to promote the healthy social and emotional development of young children, ages 0-5, by strengthening local resources and support networks. More than 60 people representing a wide array of community sectors are members of the DPH Action Team. Together, these individuals have created a vision and strategic action plan to build a stronger, more connected network of education, prevention, and intervention resources for early care and education providers, K-12 educators, mental health and medical professionals, social service providers, and – most importantly – young children and their families.

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