



Early Connections/Conexiones Tempranas Groundbreaking Breakfast  
Attended by Waltham Mayor Jeannette A. McCarthy

For Immediate Release: May 8, 2017

On Tuesday, March 30, JF&CS hosted the Early Connections/Conexiones Tempranas (EC/CT) Groundbreaking breakfast and the first Waltham Early Childhood Resilience Network meeting. In addition to the 30 individuals who attended the event, we were honored that Waltham Mayor Jeannette A. McCarthy, and Maria Mossaides, the Massachusetts Child Advocate tasked with monitoring services provided to children in the state, were both able to attend.



EC/CT, a program of the JF&CS Center for Early Relationship Support<sup>®</sup>, provides culturally attuned therapeutic interventions focused on supporting the relationships of young children and their parents. EC/CT clinicians are trained in perinatal and early childhood mental health and offer treatment in the home or office with a goal of fostering nurturing and resilient parent-child relationships. EC/CT offers parent and parent-child therapy to address postpartum depression or anxiety, perinatal mood disorders, and related stressors; child-parent psychotherapy (CPP) to help families heal from traumatic stress and build resilience; and Circle of Security parenting groups to support parents' understanding of their child's emotional needs.

EC/CT arose out the agency's desire to bring our expertise from decades of work with infants and parents to the Waltham community. Pre-existing relationships highlighted there was an increased need for these types of services, specifically for families with young children with mental health challenges or a history of trauma. The ultimate goal of the program is to bolster the health of the Waltham community as a whole – its providers and families – through a combination of direct service, trainings and learning communities, and bringing resources from across the nation and world to Waltham, including building the competence of other Waltham agencies by sharing our expertise in trauma-informed, culturally attuned treatment.

Karen Garber, Project Director, Early Connections/Conexiones Tempranas, shared, “By creating the Waltham Early Childhood Resilience Network and expanding our services to address the specific needs of young children, the Center for Early Relationship Support and JF&CS will help reduce the disparity in access to services that exist among marginalized populations, particularly the Latino immigrant community. EC/CT's social justice approach will address mental health through interventions directed not only to families but to the community and the larger system as well”

EC/CT is partnering with Boston University School of Social Work, Charles River Community Health, Communities United, Inc., Family ACCESS of Newton, Reach, South Middlesex Opportunity Council - SMOC - Waltham WIC, Thom Early Intervention, Waltham Family School, and Waltham Public School to support families with young children in Waltham.

Early Connections/Conexiones Tempranas is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) through their National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative.

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**About Jewish Family & Children's Service**

EC/CT is part of the JF&CS Center for Early Relationship Support<sup>®</sup> (CERS). CERS focuses on promoting the best possible infant-parent relationship. Services are designed to meet the many complex needs of families in the first years of their child's life, grounded in the knowledge that nurturing parental strengths within a caring community promotes secure infant-parent attachments.

For 150 years, Jewish Family & Children's Service has provided exceptional human service and health care programs, guided by Jewish traditions of social responsibility, compassion, and respect for all members of the community. With an integrated network of more than 40 programs serving communities throughout Central and Eastern Massachusetts, JF&CS helps people of all faiths and backgrounds meet life's challenges. JF&CS programs focus on serving particularly vulnerable populations including children and adults with disabilities or mental illness, new mothers and their infants, seniors living with chronic conditions, and people experiencing financial crisis, hunger, or domestic abuse. Visit [www.jfcsboston.org](http://www.jfcsboston.org) for more information.

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