



MARYLAND PYRAMID MODEL ANNUAL REPORT

2022



UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

THE INSTITUTE FOR INNOVATION & IMPLEMENTATION

PREPARED BY THE PIEC TEAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS & ACRONYMS

STATE LEADERSHIP TEAM (SLT) A team of cross-agency representatives responsible for planning and supervising all aspects of the PM including funding, policy initiatives, data-based decision making, training and coaching.

PYRAMID MODEL (PM) The PM is a framework of evidence-based practices for promoting young children's healthy social and emotional development.

BENCHMARKS OF QUALITY (BOQ) BOQ is used by a Leadership Team to assess progress and plan future actions so that PM practices are available for providers and families.

PART C Part C of IDEA—the Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities—is a federal grant program that assists states in operating a comprehensive statewide program of early intervention services for infants and toddlers ages birth–2 with disabilities, and their families.

EIPPF The Early Intervention Pyramid Practice Fidelity Instrument (EIPPF) is used to assess the implementation of PM practices by early interventionists in the coaching of families.

NCPMI The National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI) is funded by the Office of Special Education Programs to improve and support the capacity of state systems and local programs to implement the PM.

NATIONAL PYRAMID MODEL CONSORTIUM the Pyramid Model Consortium promotes equity and inclusion through the dissemination, sustainability, scale-up and high-fidelity use of the PM for Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children.

Infant Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC) A prevention-based approach that pairs a mental health consultant with adults who work with infants and young children in the different settings where they learn and grow, such as child care, preschool, home visiting, early intervention and their home.





THE PYRAMID MODEL IN MARYLAND

The Pyramid Model for Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children (formerly known as SEFEL - the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning) is an **evidence-based framework** for promoting and supporting healthy social emotional development for all children. The PM takes a **tiered public health approach** to providing **universal** supports to all children to promote wellness, **targeted** supports to those at risk and **intensive interventions** for those who need them, all supported by an **effective workforce**. The PM supports adults within a range of settings and a range of disciplines (including early intervention providers, early educators, families and other professionals).

- Maryland has a long history with, and commitment to, the PM. Maryland was among the first states to implement the model in 2006 (back when it was known as CSEFEL) starting with just a few county-wide sites. In the years since, the spread of the model has consistently grown, and today, there is some level of PM engagement statewide, with trainers and coaches serving all jurisdictions.
- This work has been supported through dedicated funding by the Division of Early Childhood within Maryland's State Department of Education and dependent on the many committed professionals working within local public school PreK and K programs, special education and family advocacy organizations, the state's Department of Behavioral Health, institutes of higher learning, and most recently within the Part C early intervention sector.
- The Parent Infant Early Childhood (PIEC) team at the University of Maryland School of Social Work has served as the hub of this work, supporting the SLT, the state's trainers, maintaining the MD PM social media (Facebook, Instagram & twitter) accounts, as well as a newsletter reaching up to 2,000 people per month, and a PM website (mdpyramidmodelsefel.org).

THE STATE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD IN 2022

“Coming out of COVID”

Throughout the year 2022, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to impact early child care and education settings across the state of Maryland. Consistent with stories heard nationally, programs and providers were dealing with strained staffing issues and a workforce that was at significant risk of burnout. Children were entering full-time care for the first time in over two years, and program staff were noticing increases in persistent disruptive behaviors needing attention. The impact of this was demonstrated in anecdotal reports of exclusionary discipline practices often resulting in increased suspensions and expulsions (including “soft” expulsions). This manifested in an escalated need for social emotional supports for the workforce, for children, and for families. Many states, Maryland included, responded to this call by allocating portions of federal funds to interventions like the PM and IECMHC.



2022 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPAND THE WORK

One such example is Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) allocating American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars to support deepening high fidelity implementation of the Pyramid Model in child care and education programs as a measure to address the social and emotional needs of the workforce, of children in their care, and families served, and prevent the need for further behavioral intervention and punitive discipline practices.

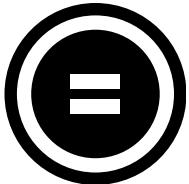
The Parent, Infant, and Early Childhood (PIEC) Team at the University of Maryland School of Social Work has coordinated PM work in the state and has supported the following initiatives using ARPA funding provided by MSDE:

- Development of a new Equity Coordinator position.
- Closing the year with open listings for a PM Program Manager, a Lead Trainer & Coach, adding a Program Specialist as well as increasing roles on our IECMHC Team to support coordination of efforts.
- Contracting with 9 PM Program Coaches to support the PM Implementation Pilot Site Program, slated to initiate in 2023.
- Initiation of the search for diverse early child care programs to participate in Maryland's first ever PM Implementation Pilot Program which will utilize resources from the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations and the National Pyramid Model Consortium to ensure high fidelity program wide implementation of the PM at selected sites.



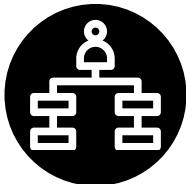
PRIORITIES

The work detailed in this report was guided and facilitated by our PM SLT, and focused on the three priorities detailed below. Activities are intentionally aligned across the many spaces where this work is happening, including: state and jurisdiction and program levels, within Part B & Part C and general education services, as well as child care and IECMHC, as you will see detailed in the pages that follow.



No. 01 – *Elevating Equity*

- The SLT held the second annual Equity Retreat focusing on White Supremacy Culture Characteristics in early childhood education and care
- The Elevating Equity subcommittee continued the work of reviewing all White Supremacy Culture Characteristics (see [website](#) for more information) and how these show up in our work as an SLT.
- The PIEC Team's Trainers worked with a group of local experts to review current PM curriculum to identify areas where equity considerations could be infused into the curriculum



No. 02 – *Alignment of IECMHC and Pyramid Model*

- Regular meetings with Maryland's Child Care Resource Centers (CCRC)
- IECMHC 1st Onboarding Training Series including PM related trainings such as:
 - The PM Modules
 - The Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social Emotional
 - Practice Based Coaching
 - TPOT and TPITOS Certification



No. 03 – *Preparing for Initial Cohort of PM Implementation Sites*

- Information gathering from other states (NY and NJ) to learn about their process for supporting implementation sites
- Developing program application and readiness checklist
- Selecting and training the PM Program Coaches to support implementation sites

THE PYRAMID MODEL IN MARYLAND IN 2022



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

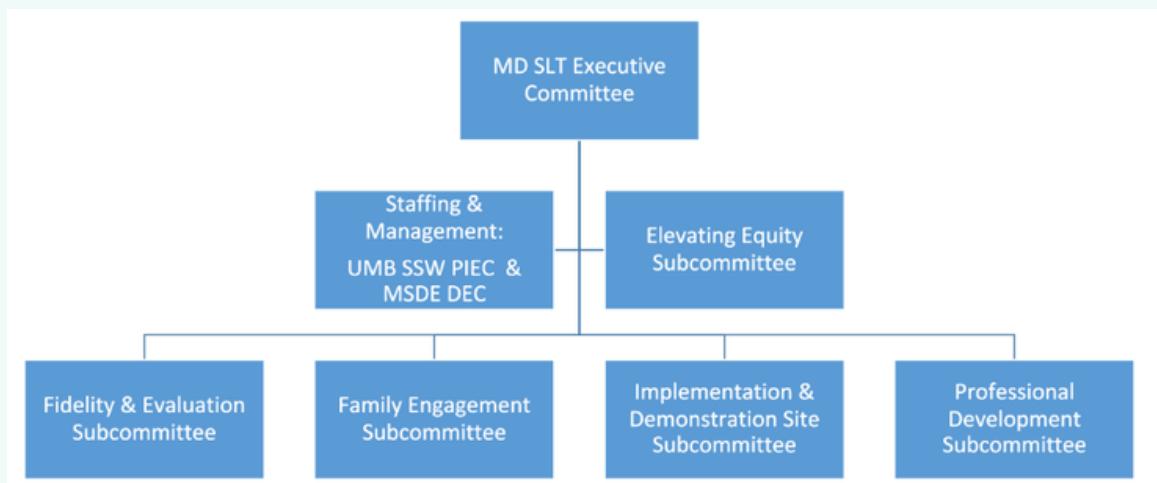
- 5,940 PEOPLE COMPLETED PM RELATED TRAININGS (I&T, PRESCHOOL, TRAUMA, LEADERSHIP, ETC.)
- 440 PEOPLE COMPLETED PART C PM TRAINING
- 75 TRAINED IN PRACTICE BASED COACHING AND STARTED YEAR-LONG COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE
- 50 TPOT & TPITOS ASSESSORS CERTIFIED
- 41 ASQ-3 & ASQ-SE ASSESSORS CERTIFIED

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

- 29 POSITIVE SOLUTIONS FOR FAMILIES (PSF) FACILITATORS TRAINED AND ENGAGED IN FOLLOW-UP COACHING
- 96 FAMILY MEMBERS COMPLETED A PSF GROUP

Maryland's PM State Leadership Team

In 2021, the SLT restructured from one body that met monthly to an executive team with four subcommittees focused on the following: Data and Evaluation, Family Engagement, Implementation & Demonstration Sites, and Professional Development. This structure continued throughout 2022 with subcommittees meeting monthly to advance PM work based on the results of their sections of the Statewide Benchmarks of Quality (BOQ). The subcommittees include members of the SLT executive committee, members of the Maryland PM Master Cadre, and other stakeholders. The structure allows regular input on PM implementation across the state while maintaining the size of the SLT executive team membership suggested by NCPMI. Each subcommittee also includes a liaison to the Elevating Equity Subcommittee to ensure equity remains a focus across each committee. Quarterly, the SLT executive committee holds a longer meeting, allowing each subcommittee to report on their progress.



Our SLT members represent the diversity of the many organizations and services across the state from fields including early intervention, public preschools, Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation, Maryland State Department of Education, and others. For details about the SLT's bylaws and membership, please see here: <https://www.mdpyramidmodelsefel.org/maryland-state-leadership-team>. The figure here shows the agencies represented on the SLT as of 2022.



Thank you to our dedicated SLT members for giving your expertise and volunteering your time. Our collective work is made better through your diverse contributions.



SLT's VISION & MISSION

The Vision of Maryland's SLT is for families in partnership with the early childhood workforce to have the ability to equitably nurture and support infants' and young children's social emotional development and well-being within their diverse family cultures and communities to foster lifelong success. This can be accomplished through integration of the Pyramid Model with other related promotion, prevention, intervention, and treatment efforts in the state.

Our Mission is to develop, evaluate and sustain a statewide collaborative effort, guided by national models, that supports the local implementation of the Pyramid Model framework. This work is rooted in fidelity within a variety of early childhood programs and settings across communities within the state. We are committed to actualizing this work with deep intentionality around addressing equity and the needs of BIPOC students, educators, families and communities as referenced in our Equity Statement.

SLT Subcommittee Accomplishments



Elevating Equity

- Began update of PM preschool modules with focus on infusing equity, cultural responsiveness, inclusivity, anti racism and anti bias throughout.
- Included a range of stakeholders to support the updates (SLT subcommittee members, trainers who have participated in Mid Atlantic Equity Consortium training, folks with special ed expertise).

Professional Development

- Supported review of updated PM preschool curriculum to be released in 2023.
- Updated trainer certification requirement to better align with the needs of state trainers.
- Provided guidance on how new material should be rolled out (separating new certifiers vs re certifiers, offering multiple dates for certification, combining synchronous/asynchronous activities).
- Identified additional resources that would be supportive of statewide trainers (Mid Atlantic Equity Consortium equity training, trainers office hours, bringing back quarterly meetings).

Implementation Sites

- Supported the development of application materials for implementation sites.
- Began working on implementation process handbook to support implementation sites.

Family Engagement

- Formed to increase the presence and role of families in PM efforts statewide and across programs.
- Explored funding mechanisms to provide stipends for family input.
- Began work on a family engagement guidebook for early child care programs to use across the state.

Fidelity & Evaluation

- Formed to review data collection and evaluation across PM efforts.
- Created first annual report of PM activities.
- Began developing data plans for future implementation sites.



Equity is at the heart of our work.

In addition to our Mission & Vision statements, our SLT felt it important to craft and ratify a specific **Equity Statement**, and the text is below:

In recognition of the historical, systemic and current racial inequities that exist throughout all levels and layers of our society, we acknowledge that our youngest citizens are too often exposed and harmed. We know this delivers a lasting impact on their social and academic trajectories, the most detrimental of which are higher rates of suspension and expulsion among young black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) before they enter kindergarten, which begins the preschool to prison pipeline. We believe that practices that promote social and emotional awareness and skills in both children and adults, like the PM, can serve to significantly correct and address these realities. Recognizing this, the Maryland PM SLT commits to implementing the PM through a culturally responsive and anti-racist lens. In an effort to move this work forward, we are currently focusing on the following action items, and articulate them here to hold ourselves accountable:

- Implementation of a subcommittee dedicated to elevating equity that meets regularly and supports activities of the full SLT, with specific review of goals and accomplishments during the annual review of the Benchmark of Quality (BOQ).
- Ongoing review and adaptation of training and coaching curriculum to increase the equity lens within Maryland PM efforts.
- Adding diversity, equity and inclusion measures into the BOQ fidelity items.
- Ongoing intention of adding and elevating the voices and perspectives of BIPOC partners involved in PM efforts across the state.



Elevating Equity in our PM Work



In Maryland, we have intentionally elevated our equity and anti-racism efforts throughout all of our Pyramid Model work at the state, program, classroom, and individual levels.



Supporting Trainers & Coaches

Survey on how often equity comes up, and their confidence with the topic

Office Hours to increase their knowledge in the topic

Part C Early Intervention

Coaching to increase confidence in working with diverse families and parenting practices

Updated PM Curriculum for Direct Parent Coaching

State Leadership Team

Elevating Equity Subcommittee

Exploring the Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture

Annual Equity Retreat

Integrated Equity Items into State BOQ

Implementation Sites

Equitable selection process, including region, type of program, children served

Equity Re-Write of Curriculum

Development of working group to review and make recommendations

Dissemination of drafts to get inclusive feedback

Spanish Language Translation

IECMHC Consultant & PM Coach Coordination

A Case Study: The PM Coach is conducting a TPOT observation within a 4-year-old classroom and notices a child displaying atypical behaviors. After the observation, the PM coach meets with the child care provider to complete the interview, to share her initial reflections on her observation and to check in about the child's behavior (she wonders if this is typical behavior for the child and what they have tried/implemented to support the child). The child care provider informs the PM coach that everyone is concerned and no referrals or any additional support was initiated. The PM coach uses this opportunity to share information about the available IECMHC services and offers to make a connection. The PM coach shares that IEMCHC services partners with the family and the child care provider to understand and to develop child specific and classroom specific strategies to collaboratively address the child's needs and the overall classroom needs. The PM coach further clarifies that IECMH consultation and PM coaching are complementary services supporting the environment, promoting professional development, and coaching for classroom wide support and individualized services to the child and family. The child care provider shares that she is trying hard to make changes in her classroom while also struggling to come up with creative ways to support the child and agrees that receiving services from a team will help her to address the classroom environmental needs and individual needs of the children. In Maryland, our vision is to make this connection seamless and readily available to all child care providers across the state to improve outcomes for children, their families, and Maryland's early childhood workforce!



PREPARING FOR MARYLAND'S 1ST COHORT OF PM IMPLEMENTATION SITES

Learning from Others

- Meeting with NY & NJ's PM Teams
- What we learned:
 - Encouraging a train-coach-train as opposed to a traditional 3 days of training format.
 - Developing specific criteria for selection of our pool of program coaches.
 - Supporting program coaches with a monthly community of practice (COP).
 - Developing implementation stages to guide the work.



Selecting and Introducing our Pyramid Model Program Coaches

- 9 Program Coaches were selected to support future implementation sites.
- Coaches were selected based on their qualifications (i.e. coaching experience, PM training, and early childhood knowledge) and availability to support the project given the flexible hours required for supporting sites.
- Selected coaches participated in two COPs in 2022, which provided:
 - information on project details;
 - training in how to develop and facilitate local PM Leadership Teams;
 - and, a review of the BOQ to support coaches development of initial workplans with implementation sites.

Part C SSIP PM Support

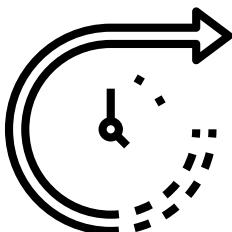


Maryland's engagement in the federal State Systemic Improvement Plan (SSIP) framework offered the MD PM an opportunity to engage PM competencies and strategies within our state's Part C early intervention efforts. This work has included:

- PIEC team completed Technical Assistance experience through the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI) focused on training and fidelity tracking for early intervention providers using the PM in their interactions with families -- and introduced the new fidelity tool, the Early Intervention Pyramid Practices Fidelity Instrument (EIPPFI), and incorporated new training content into training delivered to Part C providers across the state.
- Expanding beyond Part C into Part B619 programs within engaged jurisdictions and developing joint PM leadership teams.
- Social Emotional Screening being implemented or piloted in all SSIP counties.
- All SSIP counties launching PM Leadership Teams and completing BOQs annually.
- Five counties utilizing EIPPFI with providers.
- One county engaging in equity training for their Part C staff.

LOOKING FORWARD

2023 will be an exciting year for the Maryland PM as our first cohort of PM Implementation Sites will be selected and begin working with their program coaches to achieve full implementation of the PM. Additionally in 2023, we will see the release of new updated Maryland PM Curriculum that has an equity lens infused throughout to support the success of all young children served in Maryland's early child care system.



Part C programs

Expanding the number of MD's Part C team members engaging in PM

Statewide Support

Increasing efforts to integrate PM into MD's early childhood standards and quality rating improvement system for child care

Family Engagement

The SLT Family Engagement Subcommittee continues to outline opportunities for family participation and feedback

Integration with IEMHC

Continuing to integrate PM into IECMHC through workforce training in PM during onboarding



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**Thank you for engaging with our
Pyramid Model efforts to support the
social and emotional needs of our
state's youngest learners, as well as
their families, educators and
caregivers.**

Acknowledgements

This state-wide work has benefited from dedicated funding and support from the **Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Early Childhood**, and specifically **Donald Corbin** in his role of guiding and leading this work.

This report was written by the **PIEC Team** at the University of Maryland School of Social Work, with guidance from MD PM State Leadership Team's **Evaluation Subcommittee** (Members include: Donald Corbin, Sheila Maness, and Deborah Langer).

Report authors include: **Ashley Fehringer, Whitney Smith, Nyrobi Tyson, Kate Sweeney, Rachel Vannatta, & Elizabeth Chambers.**

The support from **Rob Corso** and his team within the **National Pyramid Model Consortium**, as well as the collective guidance from **NCPMI**, has helped our team significantly as we work to advance the implementation of the Pyramid Model within our state.

Please get involved!
Visit us at www.mdpyramidmodelfel.org to sign up for our monthly newsletter, access online trainings, and link to our social media accounts. Or email PIEC@ssw.umd.edu to learn about opportunities.

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