



## ONLINE WEBINAR

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### Ethical Dilemmas in Infant Mental Health

March 21, 2023 9-10am PT (10-11am MT / 11am-12pm CT / 12-1pm ET)

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#### Overview

Several features of infant and early childhood mental health present unique challenges: the breadth of this multidisciplinary field, the relationship focus, the urgency of action when early support and intervention is needed, and the influence of social and cultural contexts of caregiving and development. Current efforts to address the clinical complexities of IECMH provide important resources to inform ethical decision-making. However, these efforts stop short of the detail of formal ethical codes, which not only provide guideposts for clinicians but also communicate expectations about the field the public can appreciate. Our goal is to stimulate a robust dialogue about the types of ethical issues unique to infant and early childhood mental health, including the challenges and best practices in recognizing and addressing ethical issues.

#### Learning Objectives

1. State 4 unique features of infancy that have important ethical implications (vulnerability, need for a competent workforce, caring for caregivers, challenge of multiple patients/clients).
2. State the 4 principles of bioethics that provide the foundation for ethical decision making for infant mental health practitioners (beneficence, non-maleficence, autonomy and justice).

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## About the Presenters



**Alison Steier, PhD**

Alison Steier, Ph.D., is a licensed psychologist and vice president of mental health services at Southwest Human Development, in Phoenix, AZ. She is director of Southwest's Harris Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Training Institute, Arizona's toll-free Birth to Five Helpline and its "Fussy Baby" home visiting service as well as Arizona's system of early childhood mental health consultation, known as Smart Support. Dr. Steier is the founder and co-chair of The RAINE Group, a think tank composed of national experts which works to advance practice, policy, and research in the specialty of early childhood mental health consultation.



**Charles H. Zeanah Jr., MD**

Dr. Zeanah is Mary Peters Sellars-Polchow Chair in Psychiatry and Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Tulane University School of Medicine in New Orleans. Throughout his career, he has studied the effects of adverse early experiences on development, including trauma, abuse and neglect. He also has studied interventions designed to enhance recovery following exposure to adverse experience and has published widely on these topics. For 27 years, he has worked in a community-based, comprehensive program for maltreated children and their families.



**Paula Zeanah, PhD,  
MSN, RN, FAAN**

Paula Zeanah, PhD, MSN, RN, FAAN, is research director at the Picard Center and the Lafayette General Medical Center/Our Lady of Lourdes Endowed Chair in Nursing at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. She developed the Foundations of Infant Mental Health educational program, aimed at home visitors and other professionals who serve vulnerable children and families. She also developed and directed an infant mental health augmentation for the state's NFP program. Along with Dr. Steier and other colleagues, she is committed to increasing awareness of ethical issues in infant mental health, a "work-in-progress."