

Presenter Biographies

Sherri L. Alderman, MD, MPH, IMHM-E®, FAAP



Sherri L. Alderman, MD, MPH, IMHM-E®, FAAP, is a board certified Developmental Behavioral Pediatrician with over 10 years of experience in clinical and policy work in infant mental health. Dr. Alderman is Chair of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Council on Early Childhood and teaches at Portland State University. She directed the development and operations of the statewide New Mexico Developmental Screening Initiative prior to moving to Oregon, and has served as the AAP state chapter, Oregon Pediatric Society, Medical Director of the Screening Tools and Referral Training (START) program promoting practice change in medical clinics. She currently serves on the OPS Board of Directors and is an AAP Early Childhood Champion in Oregon, CDC Act Early Ambassador to Oregon, and is a recipient of the first National Help Me Grow Physician Champion distinction. She serves on the Oregon state government advisory council to the Oregon Health Authority Behavioral Health Division and is principal investigator on the Act Early Oregon COVID Parent Mentor Project focused on empowering migrant and seasonal farm-working communities.

Julia Abercrombie, MPH

Julia Abercrombie, MPH is a Behavioral Scientist with the *Learn the Signs. Act Early.* program in the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). She supports *Learn the Signs. Act Early.* partnerships with early childhood programs to promote early identification of children with developmental delays and disabilities so that they and their families can access services as early possible. Julia earned a BA in Psychology from Emory University and was awarded her MPH in Behavioral Science and Health Education from the Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University.



Leatha Chun, MPA, MPH



Leatha Chun is a Child Care Program Specialist and Federal Project Officer (FPO) for the Administration for Children and Families' Office of Child Care's National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance Center (NCECQA). As the lead for child care quality in the Office of Child Care technical assistance division, Ms. Chun works in partnership with the Office of Head Start and manages a collaboration with the Maternal and Child Health Bureau that promotes ECE system alignment and best practices to support the infrastructure and development of an ECE quality improvement framework. Ms. Chun's NCECQA FPO portfolio includes providing guidance and technical direction on the development of training, technical assistance, and resources supporting the implementation of the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG), law and regulations within states, territories, and Tribes to help meet rigorous licensing regulations, health, safety and wellness, quality improvement activities, consumer education, tailored supports, and outreach addressing the decline in the number of Family Child Care providers and improving provider access to quality supports. Ms. Chun has 30 years of combined experience working at national, state, and community levels to improve the quality of and access to ECE programs, managing social service programs, and providing outreach and parent

engagement to address the overall well-being of families and children living in poverty and underserved communities of color.

Paul Dworkin, MD, FAAP

Paul Dworkin is the Executive Vice President for Community Child Health at Connecticut Children’s Medical Center, Founding Director of the Help Me Grow National Center, and professor of pediatrics at the University of Connecticut (UConn) School of Medicine. For 15 years, he previously served as physician-in-chief at Connecticut Children’s and chair of the Department of Pediatrics of the UConn School of Medicine. His vision led to the creation of Help Me Grow, a Connecticut statewide initiative to promote the early detection of children at risk for developmental and behavioral problems and their linkage to programs and services that is currently being replicated in over 20 states.



Marian Earls, MD, MTS, FAAP



Marian Earls, a developmental and behavioral pediatrician, is the medical director of Guilford Child Health (GCH), Inc., a large, non-profit, private pediatric practice in Greensboro, North Carolina that serves families at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Dr. Earls has a developmental consult clinic within GCH, Inc. and is medical director of the Neonatal Follow-up Clinic (multidisciplinary) for the Level III Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Women’s Hospital in Greensboro. GCH was the pilot site for the Commonwealth Fund–supported Better Child Health and Development (ABCD) Project, and Dr. Earls is the clinical director of that project, which is now state-wide. The Commonwealth Fund has an ABCD II project in several new states, and Dr. Earls has done training and consulting on early childhood mental health for this initiative. Dr. Earls serves on a number of professional boards and committees. She is secretary of the North

Carolina Pediatric Society, a member of its executive board, and chair of its Mental Health/School Health Committee. She was recently appointed to the Committee on the Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health of the American Academy of Pediatrics. She was chair of the Guilford County Board of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse 1993-1995, and she was a member of the state Interagency Coordinating Council for four years. Dr. Earls received her A.B. in Biology in 1976 from the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, her Master of Theological Studies in 1978 from Harvard Divinity School, Harvard University, and her M.D. from the University of Massachusetts in 1984. She completed her pediatric residency at Moses Cone Hospital in Greensboro in 1987, and her fellowship in developmental and behavioral pediatrics in 1988.

Dina Lieser, MD, FAAP



Dina Lieser is Program Director and Team Lead of [Early Childhood Systems](#) at Health Resources and Services Administration’s (HRSA) Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) in the Division of Home Visiting and Early Childhood Systems. There, she oversees a portfolio of programs promoting the development of coordinated early childhood systems in support of MCHB’s vision of an America where all mothers, children, and families are thriving and reach their full potential. Prior to joining HRSA in January 2017, Dr. Lieser served as Co-Director of Docs for Tots, a nonprofit working to promote practices, policies, and investments that will enable young children to thrive. She was Chair of the American Academy of Pediatrics’ National Council on Early Childhood and held clinical leadership positions and state systems leadership positions focused on practice, policy change, and building bridges between the health and broader early childhood system to achieve population impact in health, well-being, and education outcomes.

Florence Rivera, MPH, CAE

Florence Rivera, MPH, CAE, serves as the Director of Early Childhood Initiatives at the American Academy of Pediatrics. Ms. Rivera brings significant leadership and experience in community programs as a nutritionist in a Women, Infants, and Children clinic and Head Start Health Manager. She has also served as a home visitor with a behavioral health organization to Chicago homeless shelters. At the AAP, she manages multi-organizational collaborative initiatives centered around birth to age 8 including safe infant sleep and injury prevention campaigns, developmental screening and surveillance, early relational health, and early brain development.



Jeanne VanOrsdal, MEd



Jeanne VanOrsdal is a Quality Assurance Specialist with the National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance. She has more than 30 years in the field of Early Childhood Education, including having been a Family Child Care provider, a Child Care Center Teacher and Administrator, a Resource and Referral Professional Development Coordinator, and a Training Specialist. In her current role as a Quality Assurance Specialist, she provides technical assistance to states on an array of topics that fall under health, social-emotional and safety topics as well as early childhood system's best practices. Ms. VanOrsdal was an Infant/Toddler Specialist at the national level for 5 years and the Healthy Child Care America Project Director at the American Academy of Pediatrics for over 6 years. She has presented at local, regional, and national conferences and has been an early childhood adjunct faculty in higher education for the past 15 years.

The National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance (ECQA Center) supports state and community leaders and their partners in the planning and implementation of rigorous approaches to quality in all early care and education settings for children from birth through age 12. The ECQA Center is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.

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