



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Oct. 19, 2020

CONTACT:

Jeremy Coleman
Marketing and Communications Manager
Jcoleman@sunbeamfamilyservices.org
Office: (405) 609-1947 Cell: (405) 202-5140

[Download a photo of Infant Mental Health in action.](#)

Celebrate Babies Week Kicks Off Oct. 19
Join Sunbeam in Supporting Infants, Toddlers and Families

(OKLAHOMA CITY) – This week, Sunbeam Family Services is asking the community to join the nonprofit in celebrating babies in order to raise awareness on the importance of relationships in the earliest years.

Each year, the Oklahoma Association for Infant Mental Health (OK-AIMH) joins associations around the globe to dedicate one week to celebrate infants, toddlers, families and early childhood professionals. As a collaborative partner, Sunbeam is also participating in Celebrate Babies week with the theme “Ready...Set...RELATIONSHIPS!”

One way the community can join in the celebration is to post a photo or video of babies or toddlers with caregivers in their lives that emphasize connections with the hashtag #CelebrateBabies. Examples of connections include a parent posting cuddle time with a child, grandparents holding their grandchildren or a partner rolling a ball with his or her toddler.

“An infant’s earliest relationships has a profound impact on their overall health and development,” said Sunbeam Early Childhood Services Director Amy Chlouber, LPC-D. “The ways in which caregivers nurture and connect with infants and toddlers matters. Meeting their emotional needs is just as important as meeting physical needs and prepares them for school and life readiness.”

Infant Mental Health (IMH) is the developing capacity of the child from birth to age 3 to experience, regulate, and express emotions; form close and secure relationships; and explore the environment and learn-all in the context of family, community and cultural expectations for young children.

Caregivers include birth parent, foster parents, grandparents and child care and education providers. In Oklahoma, 65 percent of infants and young children have at least one risk factor known to impact healthy development. Relationships with caregivers can buffer the impact of early adversity. Brains develop 90 percent of all neural connections by age 6. The experiences of infants and toddlers, positive or negative, have a long-lasting impact on health and well-being into adulthood. Chronic stress and trauma can have a devastating impact on the developing brain of an infant or toddler. If warning signs arise, intervention now can have a greater impact than those provided later.

Sunbeam is committed to supporting the mental health and well-being of Oklahoma’s youngest children and their caregivers. The nonprofit’s Infant Mental Health services strengthen family relationships and help infants and toddlers grow and thrive.

For more information about Sunbeam's Infant Mental Health services, and how to join the nonprofit in Celebrate Babies Week, visit sunbeamfamilyservices.org/IMH.

###

About Sunbeam Family Services

Founded in 1907, Sunbeam Family Services is one of Oklahoma's longest serving nonprofits. The nonprofit helps children, families and seniors learn, grow and thrive. To learn more, call (405) 528-7721, visit sunbeamfamilyservices.org, or join the conversation on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.