

# 3

# REASONS

## WE CARE ABOUT CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH



### BRAIN ARCHITECTURE

Children are born ready to learn. Early experiences shape the brain. As families and caregivers, we have a shared stake to make sure babies and toddlers develop a strong foundation that supports healthy emotional development and the ability to bounce back in the face of hardship.



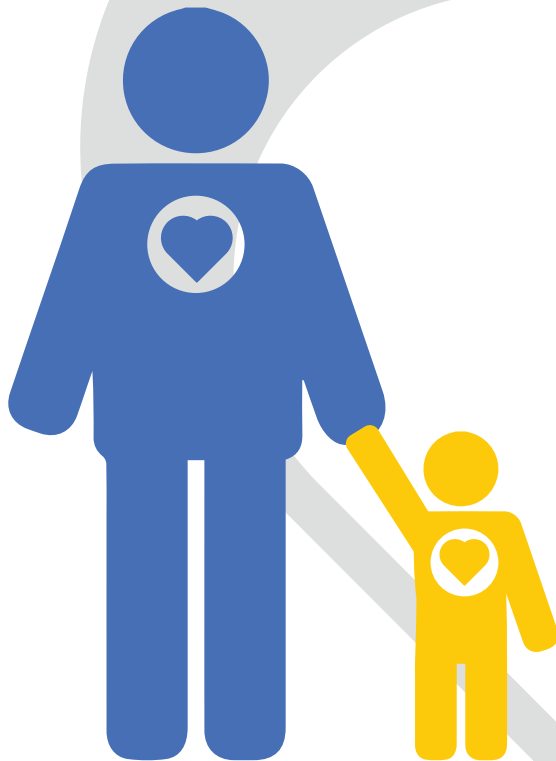
### BODY & HEALTH

Infants and toddlers thrive when their world feels loving, safe and predictable. Nurturing relationships and communities help support a young child's well-being. Without supportive environments, unrelenting stresses – known as "toxic stress" – can take a toll and have a negative effect on a child's developing brain. Responsive caregiving and a supportive community tip the scale toward resilience and healing from traumatic experiences.



### BEHAVIOR & RELATIONSHIPS

A caregiver who is attentive to a baby's needs is the basis for secure attachment. Attachment is built through a process of observing and tuning into a child's cues, thinking about what the behavior might mean, and responding in a developmentally appropriate, nurturing way. When young children have experienced relationships with responsive caregivers, they develop the ability to self-regulate, get along with others, solve problems, and ultimately be successful and productive – the basis for social and economic prosperity.



## INFANT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH

is the foundation of all future development. Everyone who touches the life of a child can promote social and emotional well-being. This happens in the context of the family, community and culture.

Developed for BBF Early Childhood and Family Mental Wellness Task Force with inspiration from Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health document 2016

