

# EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATION

## Learning Activity

Support social/emotional  
development

### MIND JARS

Teaching our children how to calm their bodies and slow the swirl of thoughts and emotions in their minds.

### How it works

A mind jar can be shaken and it is filled with glitter. The glitter represents how busy our mind and body can be with thoughts and physical sensations such as anxiety and worry. For kids shaking up the jar is a way of expressing how they feel. Watching the glitter slowly settle and noticing their breath while doing so teaches kids a way of self-regulating their emotions and allowing thoughts or reactive tendencies to settle just as the glitter settles. Eventually we can see more clearly through the jar. In this way we teach ourselves to allow the mind to settle and we pause and learn how to respond to a situation more skillfully rather than reacting impulsively.

### Recipe

Choose your container(s) and heat enough water to fill the container almost to the top (quite hot water, but not boiling). When water is heated, ideally in a large measuring cup, add a pinch of glitter for each emotion, thought, memory. Add a few drops of clear dishwashing soap (like dove) and a fair amount of glycerin to fill 1/4 to 1/2 of your container. This thickens the water and makes the glitter drop more slowly. If you can't find glycerin at your local craft store, light colored corn syrup also works well. Enjoy.



**Jennifer Mundy** is the program manager for the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Team. She has worked at CALM for over 5 years. Jennifer taught preschool for 20 years before going back to school to become a therapist. She lives in Newbury Park with her husband and 2 of her 3 kids. She loves being part of this team, especially collaborating with teachers and administrators to come up with creative solutions to the challenges of working in early childhood programs.

**Marisol Murillo** is a bilingual mental health consultant and therapist, who has worked at CALM for 6 years. She completed a Master's degree from Pacifica Graduate Institute. Marisol is a Santa Barbara native and enjoys dancing, painting, beach time, yoga, & meditation. She has received many benefits from her personal mindfulness practices and loves bringing these tools to share them with anyone and everyone. She also recently started a part-time private practice to see clients for ongoing therapy services. Marisol is working with SBUSD, Girls Inc. and UCSB Children's Center.

**Sierra Smargon** has been working at CALM for 3 years. She is a bilingual consultant who works at Storyteller preschool as well as Isla Vista Youth Projects Children's Center. Sierra also works on the Child Trauma Treatment Team at CALM providing counseling to children, teens and their families who have experienced trauma and abuse. She has experience working at preschools, as well as a background in Applied Behavior Analysis working with children who have a variety of developmental disabilities and challenging behavior. Sierra grew up in Santa Barbara, and is excited to be a part of this team giving back to the community where she grew up.

**Jaime Bregante** has been working at CALM for a little over a year and has loved joining the Consultation Team. She earned her Master's degree and became a licensed therapist with the hope of working in an early intervention program. Jaime has experience working in preschools in a teaching role in addition to working in the mental health field providing behavioral and therapeutic services to the children and families in the Santa Barbara community for the last 5 years. Jaime loves working alongside teachers to promote the wellbeing of children and supporting families build their resilience. Jaime works at IVYP, Cottage Hospital Children's Center and St. Mark Preschool.

**Ella D.M. Lauser** is the newest member of the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Team at CALM and serves the Goleta Unified School District as a mental health consultant. She recently graduated with honors from Pepperdine University receiving her Masters in Clinical Psychology with an Emphasis in Marriage Family Therapy. Ella is earning her hours towards double licensure as a Marriage Family Intern (MFI) and Professional Clinical Counselor Intern (PCCI) and joined the CALM team this fall. Ella has worked with children and families for the past fifteen years in a variety of ways: birth and postpartum doula, tutor, health educator and clinical therapy trainee for teens. Ella was also a preschool ESL teacher before going back to school to become a therapist. She is a California native, born and raised in Northern California, received her B.A. in Sociology at UCLA and traveled as an educator, volunteer and yoga health advocate to over 45 cities and 20 countries. Ella is grateful to be serving in Santa Barbara, offering a holistic approach to her new career in mental health.

**Andrew Smyth** is a consultant for our Early Childhood Mental Health Team. He is currently pursuing his masters in Clinical Psychology at Antioch University. A native to Santa Barbara, Andrew has spent the last several years in Utah working as an adventure therapy guide with troubled teens and adults. A true lover of the outdoors, you will often find him running trails in the morning and diving into the ocean for a surf or paddle in the evenings. Andrew is a newer member to the team, and he is excited to bring his fresh perspective and helpful nature to these early childhood programs. Andrew works at SBUSD and UCSB Children's Centers.

**Dr. Mabel Vasquez** received her Doctorate in Clinical Psychology from Pacifica Graduate Institute. Her Doctoral research project focused on Intergenerational Transmission of Resilience in Latina Mother-Daughter Dyads and completed several additional trainings, which include a year of Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) training. Dr. Vasquez is also a trained facilitator of MotherRead/FamilyRead with which she has led creative and inspirational workshops at over 20 elementary schools and community centers throughout the greater Los Angeles County area. She completed an internship at a nonprofit organization dedicated to ending violence and promoting modes of empowerment to children and families. Dr. Vasquez is passionate about providing psycho-educational workshops on family literacy as a way of engaging and guiding families. She has completed a yearlong training as a parent group facilitator in UCLA Strategies for Early Education Development Skills (SEEDS), an intensive group treatment program designed for children 3-5 years old with prenatal alcohol exposure. Mabel is at Storyteller Preschool and IVYP.

## Reflection Activity

### Reflect on the Quote

*"We do not really see through our eyes or hear through our ears, but through our beliefs. To put our beliefs on hold is to cease to exist as ourselves for a moment."*

When learning to observe, we have to begin by examining our own experiences and perspectives. Read the Lisa Delpit quote above and think about these questions:

1. What does "seeing through our beliefs" mean to you?
2. What experiences does it remind you of?
3. How do you think this idea relates to your work with children?

*The Art Of Awareness How Observation Can Transform Your Teaching*

Deb Cutis and Margie Carter

# CENTER SPOTLIGHT |

## GIRLS INC.

**Kristina Webster**  
Director of Programs

### **What population of children and families does your program serve?**

Girls Inc. of Greater Santa Barbara served close to 1500 girls in 2016 in the Santa Barbara and Goleta areas. Through afterschool, summer, and gymnastics programs, Girls Inc. inspires girls to be strong, smart, and bold and to reach their full potential. 61% of the girls in our afterschool and summer programs are of Hispanic origin and 45% are from households earning under \$30,000 a year. 70% of our girls are 5-8 years old.

### **What is one thing you wish people knew about your program?**

I would like people in the community to know more about the breadth of programs that we offer at Girls Inc. Our comprehensive approach to whole girl development equips girls to navigate gender, economic, and social barriers to grow up healthy, educated, and independent. Girls

have the choice of programs they want to participate in and girls could be taking a STEM class focused on engineering, have surf lessons another day, be learning about healthy cooking, have a social justice art lesson, and participate in a leadership program all in one week.

### **Please share the benefits of your partnership with CALM highlighting one way you have been able to use consultation services.**

We are so grateful for the CALM partnership and for the tools and techniques Marisol, Jaime, and Jen have provided our staff on how to work with the girls we serve in the most effective ways possible. We appreciate the opportunity to reflect on how we approach various situations that arise and work as a team to find new solutions for meeting our girls' needs. This has been done through staff trainings and at our staff meetings when we have time to work with the consultants on specific behaviors we are seeing. Because of our partnership with CALM, staff feel more confident in their approach to facilitation and have more tools in their tool box to use when behavioral issues arise.

### **Finish the sentence, "If I could do one thing to make kids' lives better, I would...."**

Ensure that every child and family are connected to the resources that they need by continuing to build community partnerships like the one between Girls Inc. and CALM.

### **Please add anything else you think you would like to share about your program, the work you do or the collaboration with CALM.**

I want to thank the funders who have made this collaboration possible! We are a better organization today than we were a year ago in how we work with girls and together as staff because of the collaboration with CALM. We are thrilled to be able to expand the collaboration this year to include the Goleta Center and we look forward to continuing to improve ourselves as staff so we can be our strongest, smartest, and boldest selves for the girls we serve.



# CENTER SPOTLIGHT

## ORFALEA CHILDREN'S CENTER

### Keyo Russell

Director, Child Care  
Services | Cottage Health

#### What population of children and families does your program serve?

Only the children of Cottage Health Employees (although not Doctors because they contract their services!) We serve children aged 3 months to 5 years

#### What is one thing you wish people knew about your program?

That we are both an NAEYC Accredited high quality “educational program” with a professional staff and a creative learning environment, as well as a warm, nurturing “home away from home” meeting all the attendant custodial and nurturing needs of the children who often spend up to 11 hours per day here.

#### Please share the benefits of your partnership with CALM highlighting one way you have

#### been able to use consultation services.

We are so lucky to have CALM on-site here. I think the biggest benefit has been the support that the teachers feel in being able to participate in and learn about reflective practice. It is a time once a week when they have total permission to speak freely and to process what can be difficult emotions and issues. It helps them to feel both safe and listened to and able to connect with each other in a different and supportive way. Our Administrative team has also been able to participate in our own regular RP which has been tremendously helpful. The other big benefit has been the “educational forums” that CALM has provided for our families. They have been wonderfully received and well attended.



#### Finish the sentence, “If I could do one thing to make kids’ lives better, I would....”

Take the pressure off and allow them more free and open ended

time as well as more relaxed time with family.

#### Please add anything else you think you would like to share about your program, the work you do or the collaboration with CALM.

I believe that, over the years, as families struggle to make ends meet and provide for their children, child care has become a second home for many children. Yet, it is still not affordable and it is still not optimal. Society/government needs to step up and create realistic funding to provide more and better care. Young children should not be grouped with 20 other children in a classroom. They should not have to spend so many hours away from their families. Teachers should be paid a decent wage. They should have dedicated spacious areas in which to grow and learn and flourish and it should not be available to just those who can afford it.

Much of my work and, I believe much of the work that CALM does and the support they provide, is trying to mitigate the effect of the pressures that children and parents feel as they struggle to make good lives for themselves and their families. In this world, it seems to become harder and harder.