

KATHLEEN M. CONNORS, MSW, LCSW-C

2025 Paula U. Hamburger Child Advocacy Award

Kathleen (Kay) Connors is a clinical social worker specializing in working with families and young children dealing with traumatic stress. She is an instructor at the University of Maryland School of Medicine (UMSOM), executive director of the Taghi Modarressi Center for Infant Study, and a program director for the Baltimore-Network of Early Services Transformation (B-NEST), National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) Category III Center and Center of Excellence for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health, Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

Ms. Connors has over 35 years of experience working with children, families, and communities impacted by trauma and with community and state leaders to increase access to trauma-informed care and mental health resources. She has provided evidence-based mental health care to children and families in a variety of settings, including hospitals, residential treatment facilities, community clinics, school-based programs and in the home. She leads projects in infant and early childhood mental health assessment and diagnosis and directs clinical and training programs, including the UMSOM HealthySteps site. She is a co-investigator on a variety of research grants, including the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development Study, a national Child-Parent Psychotherapy trainer, and she has been a leader for Maryland's Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Certificate Program and the state's Fussy Baby Network.

Ms. Connors' leadership and advocacy have enhanced public awareness about the urgency of addressing behavioral health concerns in infancy and early childhood and promoted a better understanding of the unique needs of the early childhood population among policymakers, providers, stakeholders and the population at large.

