Purpose of document: Supporting perinatal depression for IMH Professionals

**How do I support perinatal depression?**

Given the complexity of mental health concerns, Infant Mental Health professionals multi-level training and perspective in supporting families create ideal opportunities to support patients with perinatal depression. Supporting perinatal depression involves being collaborative and identifying with parents what they may be motivated to address. Examples of motivated targets may be addressing the relationship with their child and how depression impacts the relationship, difficulties doing tasks in and outside of the house, or support in finding ways to engage in patient identified self-care. The IMH professional is in a unique position of balancing the demands and focus of the treatment, including the parent, the child, and the relationship.

Here are therapeutic modalities you may want to learn more about, and add to your therapeutic toolbox, to support people presenting with perinatal depression.

**Behavioral Activation** (<https://medicine.umich.edu/sites/default/files/content/downloads/Behavioral-Activation-for-Depression.pdf>) targets the behavioral aspects of depression and helping individuals to observe how when they engage in behavior, even when they may not feel like it, their emotions may change.

**Cognitive Behavioral Therapy** focuses on identifying negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that may be associated with, and supporting patients in identifying, and reframing these negative thoughts. <https://www.abct.org/fact-sheets/postpartum-depression-and-anxiety/>

**Interpersonal Therapy** addresses relationship patterns that may be contributing to mood symptoms, and supports patients in modifying those patterns. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4141636/>

**Perinatal Dialectic Behavioral Therapy** [**https://zerotothrive.org/strong-roots/perinatal-dbt/**](https://zerotothrive.org/strong-roots/perinatal-dbt/)is an adaptation of traditional dialectical behavior therapy (https://behavioraltech.org/) to support individuals during the perinatal period.

**Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction** [**https://bcmj.org/articles/mindfulness-based-therapy-perinatal-period-review-literature**](https://bcmj.org/articles/mindfulness-based-therapy-perinatal-period-review-literature)is an organized method of teaching patients about mindfulness and helping them to manage reactions to experiences.

**Strong Roots** https://zerotothrive.org/strong-roots/are group-based programs that support families and caregivers of young children by promoting health and resilience in families, agencies, and communities.