

In my current position as an early childhood mental health therapist, and program coordinator at The Achievement Centers for Children, I have found incorporating the principles of infant massage continuing to be significant in supporting the parent-child relationship. Among the families I have worked with these are some that are especially memorable in providing infant massage education:

- A baby who would not let herself be touched in outpatient therapies was able to participate after a few session of infant massage training with her mother and a “surrogate” doll, with the toddler watching, then giving her mother “permission” to touch her as well.
- Parents of a blind baby gained confidence that they could communicate better through the use of touch and were able to help other family members interact better to the baby as well.
- A mother of a 3 year old child with cerebral palsy was receptive to learning parent led massage to comfort her son and expressed gratitude to being doing something *with* him rather than watching others work with her son.
- A referral from Hospice brought me to a family that wanted massage for their son with a rare genetic disorder, who was touch sensitive, and also their new baby. After the first session the parents shared that he had never let them touch him like this before.

It is these types of profound experiences that make me want infant massage to be available to all parents. Having several co-workers become certified infant massage educators has been a great support as we create opportunities for more families learn to attune to their child’s needs and nurture them through touch .