

ABCD II *Healthy Beginnings* Lessons Learned #2 June, 2005

Executive Summary

ABCD II in Illinois is periodically interviewing subcommittee co-chairs. The goal of these interviews is to capture lessons learned in the development and implementation of ABCD II in Illinois. In a phone interview, each co-chair is asked to reflect on general lessons learned, specific challenges, easy wins, surprising moments, and feedback/advice for the leadership team. Notes from each interview are analyzed for core themes, which we present in this document. To date, we have conducted two sets of lesson learned interviews: the first in October, 2004 (10/04) and the second in April and May, 2005 (5/05).

What are the strengths of ABCD II in Illinois?

- Multiple individuals and organizations committed to and skilled in social/emotional development
- Subcommittee structure (responsibility for specific project components)
- Core leadership structure for meta-decisions, communication among subcommittees

What have been some of the challenges and how have they been addressed?

- Involvement in ABCD II has demanded significant amounts of co-chairs' time with relatively little financial resources
 - Hiring consultants to assist in development and implementation has provide some respite
- Specifying the conceptual model after the grant and in working with pilot communities was challenging
 - Writing documents identified gaps in model; conversations with pilot communities identified "on the ground" concerns to address
- Communicating across subcommittees and with pilot communities was not always seamless
 - Created core leadership team; identified an ABCD II liaison to each pilot community
- Creating feasible, sensitive evaluations of all project components remains a concern
 - Continued conversations about obtaining feedback from families

What are we learning from pilots?

- One of ABCD II's lasting impact will be the coordination of previously uncoordinated entities
- Need to more clearly articulate the uniqueness of ABCD II, why providers should be involved in promoting SE development, and how to constructively address liability concerns
- Including maternal depression screenings has created concerns with appropriateness and liability

What do we need to address for statewide rollout?

- Assess resource capacity for the extant model to support rollout communities (fiscal and support). Is the "ABCD II system" fiscally sustainable?
- Make early contact with rollout communities to allow time to address unique implementation dilemmas, foster buy-in and allow adequate time for relationship building among entities in community
- Prepare for cultural and geographical diversity of rollout communities
- Create a process (and selection criteria) for identifying rollout communities
- Clearly communicate what (and how) is reimbursable through Medicaid
- Think critically about how state and community can build local resources for mental health services