

Philadelphia Health Partnership Awards Three-Year Grant for the Expansion of Attachment Biobehavioral Catch-Up Program in Philadelphia

The Path to Lifelong Health and Well-being Starts in Early Childhood

September 1, 2020 - Philadelphia Health Partnership has awarded a three-year grant of \$660,300 to the University of Delaware for a collaborative initiative with the Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services (DBHIDS) to expand the evidence-based [Attachment Biobehavioral Catch-Up](#) (ABC) program in the Philadelphia Infant Toddler Early Intervention system.¹ Philadelphia Health Partnership and the William Penn Foundation have partnered to co-fund this initiative over the next three years.

Since 2017, the Philadelphia Infant Toddler Early Intervention system has lifted up the powerful role that parents and caregivers play in promoting young children's social-emotional development. From birth, children learn how to manage and communicate their attention, impulses, and emotions in the context of secure attachments with their parents and caregivers. These skills establish a foundation for early learning and health while combatting adverse childhood experiences that have been linked with disparities across the lifespan. ABC is a home-based, ten-week program that supports parents and caregivers to foster responsive and nurturing relationships with their infants (6 to 24 months) and toddlers (24 to 48 months).

This three-year initiative will build upon a pilot that began in 2017 to train and certify Infant Toddler Early Intervention professionals to deliver ABC as parent coaches. In addition to training and certifying parent coaches, the initiative will strengthen the Early Intervention referral system to connect children with social-emotional concerns to ABC and to provide professional development opportunities and peer supports for both new and experienced ABC parent coaches.

The evidence-based model for ABC was established in Philadelphia through a randomized control trial focused on children in Philadelphia's child welfare system. ABC has since been disseminated in 21 states in the United States and eight countries internationally to support children and families experiencing many different forms of early adversity. Philadelphia Health Partnership Board Chair Estelle B. Richman shared the foundation's enthusiasm for expanding ABC in the home city where it was developed:

"At Philadelphia Health Partnership, we are committed to working with public systems to expand access to quality services for families with young children, including social-emotional supports that recognize the role of positive developmental experiences from birth in promoting lifelong health and well-being."

¹ Early Intervention provides services to children with developmental delays or special needs.