



## Foundations for Success

*Improving early childhood mental health  
to support successful families and communities in Ramsey County*

### Service update from participating agencies March – June 2007

Foundations for Success is a five-year initiative designed to develop and implement a county-wide system for early childhood mental health services in Ramsey County. Funded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and coordinated by the Community Action Partnership of Ramsey and Washington Counties, the initiative promotes culturally competent and family friendly services. Services are developed and implemented by a collaboration of more than 100 community agencies, representing local foundations, government, parents, school districts, health, mental health, early childhood professionals, and the University of Minnesota.

Wilder Research evaluates the initiative and collects quarterly service records from the funded service providers. This report summarizes services provided by four programs (Beginning's Infant/Toddler Mental Health Home Visiting Program, Incredible Years Dina Curriculum, Incredible Years Parent Group, and Project KEEP) from March 16, 2007 through June 15, 2007.

#### **Demographic characteristics of participants served**

A total of 98 adults and 93 children have been served by the reporting programs since the beginning of the grant. During this quarter:

- A total of 13 new adults and 21 new children were admitted to the programs.
- About three-quarters of the adults (76%) served were ages 20 to 39.
- The ages of children served by the programs ranged from 13 to 61+ months, with 70 percent of children between 37 and 60 months.

- Adult and child participants represented a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds, including African American (41%), White (34%), Multi-racial (16%), Hispanic (3%), Native American (3%), and African-born (2%).
- Seventy-one percent of families had annual incomes of \$30,000 or less.
- The majority of adult and child participants (63%) were male.
- About two-thirds of parents (68%) had a high school degree or less; one-quarter of parents (26%) completed a two-year degree or higher, while 5 percent had attended some college.
- About two-thirds of all households (63%) had only one adult and 80 percent of households had between 2 and 4 children.

#### **Demographic characteristics of program staff**

- Most staff (93%) ranged in age from 25 to 54 years old.
- Although staff were primarily White (85%), they also represented other ethnic groups, including African American (11%) and Asian-Pacific Islander (4%).
- Staff were predominantly female (93%).
- Over three-quarters of staff (81%) had annual incomes of \$40,000 or less.
- Most staff had a college degree, including associate's (33%), bachelor's (19%), and master's degrees (19%). Twenty-nine percent of staff did not have a college degree.
- Types of professional licenses held by staff included LSW (14%) and other licenses (86%).

### Referrals and waiting lists

- A total of 15 referrals were made to the funded agencies from 7 different agencies.
- Programs made a total of 24 referrals from their agency to 15 different agencies.
- One program currently had a waiting list, reporting that 18 children had spent an average of 110 days on the waiting list.

### Funding sources

- One program reported billing for services for 7 children during the quarter.
- One program reported funding strategies for supplementing Knight grant funds including billing health insurance companies and Children's Therapeutic Support Services (CTSS) for services.
- One program anticipated more funding sources through billing health insurance and CTSS while another is exploring additional funding options.

### Training and consultation

Under the Knight Foundation grant, Incredible Years Dina Curriculum and Project KEEP conduct trainings or consultation sessions with other agencies. During this quarter, Project KEEP provided training at 11 agencies.

Of the agencies that have received Incredible Years Dina curriculum training at any time during the grant period, 13 agencies provided service this quarter, serving a total of 601 children. Project KEEP staff

have consulted with 60 agencies. Seven of these agencies have provided service serving a total of 70 children since the beginning of the grant period, including 10 children this quarter.

### Conclusions and recommendations

The data continue to suggest that the gender and ethnicity of staff is not entirely reflective of the clients being served. Whites comprise over three-quarters of the staff (85%), but only 34 percent of clients. Conversely, although more than a third (41%) of the programs' clients identify as African American, only 11 percent of program staff are African American. With regard to gender, nearly all (93%) of the program staff were female, while more than half (63%) of clients were male.

Program managers should continue to explore new ways to recruit persons of color and men. As 81 percent of staff earn less than \$40,000 annually, one strategy may be to identify ways to increase staff salaries, allowing agencies to offer competitive salaries to professionals from underrepresented demographic groups.

Programs should continue to identify additional strategies for funding. In order to continue services beyond the period of the grant, program managers might explore possible options such as billing and grant opportunities.

**Note:** Some quarterly reporting forms provided incomplete data about programs. The results presented are based upon available data from programs.

#### For more information

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