

# SMART START PILOT GRANTS UPDATE

## Assuring Better Child Health and Development (ABCD)

### March 2009 Evaluation Update

More children are receiving developmental screenings and being referred for follow-up services as a result of the Assuring Better Child Health and Development Initiative funded by The North Carolina Partnership for Children, Inc.

The program began in March 2008 working with 14 doctors' offices serving more than 19,000 children in Brunswick, Chatham, Martin, Pitt, Lee, Montgomery, Moore, and Richmond counties. It offers training and technical assistance to physicians and their office staff so that children receive appropriate developmental screenings and referrals in the context of the medical home.

About 70% of children with disabilities are not identified before they enter school. Early identification is critical as it can have a long-term impact on child's well-being and academic success.

A sample of 357 records were reviewed, following Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule guidelines, before ABCD program staff began working with medical practices. Nine months later, 391 records were reviewed in the same practices.

There were improvements in the use of recommended developmental screenings and in referrals to follow-up services for children with developmental concerns.

	March 2008	January 2009
<b>Percent of children</b> who receive recommended developmental screening at most-recent well-child visit	<b>80%</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>Of the children who scored at-risk for developmental concerns</b> , percent who were referred to follow-up services	<b>53%</b>	<b>65%</b>

ABCD program staff spent the first three months working to ensure medical practices use recommended screening tools with all young children. They then worked on ensuring children identified with developmental concerns are referred and linked to appropriate services. During the remainder of the program, they will continue to work on improving the referral rate for children with developmental concerns. ABCD program staff also is expanding their reach to new physician practices. Four new practices were added to the program between March 2008 and January 2009.