



## ABC Training & Certification Requirements and Details

**What is ABC?** Attachment and Bio-behavioral Catch-up (ABC) is a family focused, evidence-based home visiting intervention for infants ages 6 months to 2 years of age and their primary caregivers who are at high risk for toxic stress and/or have early trauma histories. The intervention is ten weeks in length and focuses on coaching the primary caregiver to build attachment and nurturance which is reaffirmed through reviewing videos showcasing the primary caregiver and their infant engaged in active play and specific activities. Families also receive a video montage of the primary caregiver and the infant demonstrating the specific targets shown to have positive impacts on toxic stress level and attachment between the primary caregiver and infant.

This targeted, manualized program is delivered in the home over ten weeks, with two additional assessment sessions (pre- and post-intervention). During each of the ten visits, parent coaches engage the parents and review very specific information with them focused on the four target areas below. The goal is NOT to “cover the required materials” but to engage the parents and to frequently reinforce their positive behaviors consistent with the 4 main targets of the ABC program:

1. Nurturance – attending to a child who has expressed a need;
2. Synchrony/following the Lead – interactions follow the child’s lead in play, neither passive nor intrusive;
3. Delight – words or expressions from the parent to the child expressing positive emotion;
4. Avoiding frightening behavior – rough handling, menacing or throwing, threatening behaviors.

ABC was initially developed by the University of Delaware, through several randomized, controlled trials, to address toxic stress in young children living in adverse environments. It has been in development there for more than 18 years. During that time, the program has evolved and developed to the point where it is one of the highest rated interventions (and one of the only truly preventive programs) on the California Clearinghouse for Child Welfare.

Research shows that the toxic stress caused by Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in early childhood has a major impact on the child’s overall development—on school readiness and the ability to learn, on physical and mental health, and on other factors including the ability to exercise self-control. These deficits negatively affect a child’s success both in the school setting and throughout adult life.

As an intervention to address adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), ABC has been shown to lead to increased parental sensitivity and responsiveness to child needs. Children who participated in ABC as toddlers were shown to have better receptive vocabulary than comparison children who did not participate.

Preschool children who receive ABC show more normal levels of cortisol and improved executive function, meaning they have improved their ability to regulate behavior and emotion. Science indicates that vulnerable children who have well-developed executive functioning and emotional regulation are able to do well in school despite experiences of adversity. Executive functioning predicts literacy and math scores, and many teachers contend that competence in terms of executive functioning “is more important at school entry than knowledge of letters and numbers.”

**About this opportunity to become ABC trained and certified:** United Methodist Health Ministry Fund is offering Kansas home visitors the opportunity to become trained and rostered in the provision of Attachment and Bio-Behavioral Catch-Up (ABC).

The ABC certification is a 12-month process that includes a combination of face-to-face training and weekly supervision. It is expected that all home visitors accepted will complete three full ABC cases and participate in weekly supervision over the course of the 12 months. *Supervisors are strongly encouraged to participate in the face-to-face training component if they have not previously attended or been rostered.*

**Dates:** The training schedules are as follows:

Dates	Activities/Location
December 15, 2023	Applicant will schedule and complete a virtual interview with the University of Delaware (UD) ABC and receive assurance from UD that the applicant is a good candidate for training/certification
TBD 2024	Virtual training with the University of Delaware
TBD	Participate in weekly one hour group video supervision with certified ABC supervisors and weekly 30 minutes of video coding supervision with the University of Delaware coding experts.

**Agencies will be responsible for:**

- *equipment needed to video record ABC sessions with families (a video camera and tripod),*
- *a computer to show the primary caregiver ABC videos and videos of the primary caregiver and the infant engaged in the therapeutic activities targeted by ABC,*
- *developmentally appropriate toys, including supplies to make instant pudding,*
- *equipment to create a video montage of the primary caregiver and their infant for the primary caregiver to keep,*
- *and equipment to participate in the video calls (a computer with a camera).*

**Application Procedures:**

Those interested in becoming certified in ABC must complete and send in their application by the **December 15 2023 (5 pm CST)**. Only electronic submissions will be accepted.

As the number of available slots are limited, applicants who are competent to provide services in the native languages of their clientele, who have expertise in serving diverse populations, and/or who provide multigenerational care to a large number of young children and families will receive precedence. For equally qualified applicants, applications received sooner will receive precedence. **Also, only applicants who are seeking certification in ABC will be considered.**

For questions or additional information about this training or the application process please contact Katie Schoenhoff at [katie@healthfund.org](mailto:katie@healthfund.org) .



## ABC Training & Certification Application

**Applicant Information:**

First Name:	Last Name:
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**Agency Executive Director (agency head) certifies that:**

YES	NO	Requirements Statement
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>1. Assurance of Employee/Agency Full Participation.</b> a. The agency will allow time for trainee(s) to participate in onsite or virtual initial training and weekly video supervision b. The agency will also secure the required reading/training materials readings for the applicant, the equipment to participate in the video consultations, and the equipment to video record the ABC sessions with families. c. The agency will also ensure timely upload of the videos weekly to the University of Delaware in order for supervision to occur. d. The agency will require the ABC trainee to participate in the UMHMF Learning Community four times during the first year (two by web and two in Hutchinson)
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>2. Assurance of Meeting Training Requirements.</b> The agency will support the time needed for the applicant and his/her supervisor to attend the ABC training (two days onsite or four half-days virtual).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>3. Assurance of Employee Participation in Consultation.</b> The agency will provide trainee(s) time to participate in twice weekly video consultation/virtual meetings. Consultation is provided via video consultation and requires that the trainee share video weekly with the supervisor and the coding supervisor. The trainee must present their cases weekly.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>4. Assurance of Agency Support.</b> The agency will provide the applicant's clinical supervisor time to fully participate in this training, and to allow the ABC trainee to provide all ABC services in the family's home.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>5. Assurance of Age-Appropriate Clients.</b> Using the Household Strength and Strain Inventory, the agency will identify and ensure an appropriate client pool for the ABC trainee to learn and practice the skills. (The ABC trainee must graduate three cases to be certified and clients must be ages 6 months to 24 months old throughout the provision of the 10 ABC sessions).

**Parent Coach Agreement to Complete Certification and Signature:**

I, _____, have read the requirements for training listed in the ABC Training Announcement above. If selected for ABC Training, I agree to complete the listed requirements.	
Signature:	Date:

### PROPOSAL AUTHORIZATION

Name of Applicant's Executive Director:	
Signature:	Date:
Name of Applicant's Clinical Supervisor:	
Signature:	Date:

**BRIEF NARRATIVE RESPONSES**

Please explain why you are interested in becoming certified in ABC. (200 words)

Please indicate the referral sources you have to serve infants ages 6 months to two years, including the region/location where you provide services, and provide a detailed explanation about how you anticipate receiving referrals and families that you anticipate serving. (200 words)

Please describe your training and experience in providing services to infants and children up to age six, parents, especially those with trauma histories. (200 words)

Please describe your training and experience in using evidence-based practices in your current or previous work. (100 words)

Please describe how you plan to utilize ABC to serve families after you complete the certification process. (Will this be part of your overall work and used with your existing families? Will you expand your services and extend to others? Etc.) (100 words)

Briefly describe the range of diversity in the children (0-6) and families you serve and how your work reflects an awareness of cultural differences. Diversity may encompass age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, race, class, country of origin, religious or spiritual beliefs, physical characteristics, motor or cognitive abilities, family constellation, or other differences for purposes of this application. (Limit 200 words)

Briefly explain how your organization plans to support your use of this intervention after completion of the certification. (Will this be included as part of your existing work? Is your organization exploring billing services to support sustaining this work? Etc.)

Please describe any other experiences, training, or factors that may help prepare you for this Attachment and Bio-Behavioral Catch-up cohort.

**Please email a PDF of your completed and signed application to:**

Katie Schoenhoff  
[katie@healthfund.org](mailto:katie@healthfund.org)

**Application deadline is December 15, 2023 by 5:00pm (CST).**

**Questions? Contact Katie Schoenhoff ([katie@healthfund.org](mailto:katie@healthfund.org))**