



**Champaign County Board for Care and Treatment of Persons with a
Developmental Disability, referred to as Champaign County
Developmental Disabilities Board (CCDDB)**

Meeting Agenda

Wednesday, June 24, 2026, 9:00 AM

This meeting will be held in person in the Shields-Carter Room of the Scott M. Bennett Administrative Center, 102 E. Main St., Urbana, IL 61801. Members of the public may attend in person or virtually: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81559124557> Meeting ID: 815 5912 4557

I. Call to order

II. Roll call

III. Approval of Agenda*

IV. Schedules and Timelines

For information only are the CCDDB Meeting Schedule and Allocation Timeline [posted here](https://ccmhddbrds.org/ords/f?p=189:8:::) (<https://ccmhddbrds.org/ords/f?p=189:8:::>).

And Champaign County Mental Health Board (CCMHB) 2026 Meeting Schedule and Timeline [posted here](https://ccmhddbrds.org/ords/f?p=189:9:::) (<https://ccmhddbrds.org/ords/f?p=189:9:::>).

V. Acronyms and Glossary

For information only, an updated glossary of terms is [posted here](https://ccmhddbrds.org/ords/f?p=189:12:::) (<https://ccmhddbrds.org/ords/f?p=189:12:::>).

VI. Citizen Input/Public Participation - See below for details.**

VII. Chairperson's Comments – Dr. Anne Robin

VIII. Executive Director's Comments – Lynn Canfield

IX. Approval of CCDDB Board Meeting Minutes (pages 3-10)*

Action is requested to approve the minutes of the CCDDB's May 27, 2026 meeting.

X. Vendor Invoice Lists (page 11)*

Action is requested to accept the "Vendor Invoice Lists" and place them on file.

XI. Staff Reports (pages 13-22)

Reports from Leon Bryson and Lynn Canfield are included in the packet for information only.

XII. New Business

- a) **Evaluation Capacity Building Project Update** (pages 23-42)

The project’s Year Three Report is included. An overview will be provided.

See <https://www.familyresiliency.illinois.edu/resources/microlearning-videos>.

XIII. Old Business

- a) **Emerging Threats** - The Board may discuss threats to the safety and stability of people with I/DD and other vulnerable residents.
- b) **Input from People with I/DD** - People with I/DD may choose to offer input to the Board and public at this time.
- c) **Engage Illinois** - An oral update will be provided.
- d) **disAbility Resource Expo and AIR** - Oral updates will be provided. See <https://disabilityresourceexpo.org> and <https://champaigncountyair.com>

XIV. Successes and Other Agency Information

The Chair reserves the authority to limit individual agency representative participation to 5 minutes and/or total time to 20 minutes. See below for details.**

XV. County Board Input

XVI. Champaign County Mental Health Board Input

XVII. Board Announcements and Input

XVIII. Adjournment

Next Meeting: July 22, 2026

* Board action is requested.

**Public input may be given virtually or in person. If the time of the meeting is not convenient, you may communicate with the Board by emailing stephanie@ccmhb.org or kim@ccmhb.org any comments for us to read aloud during the meeting. The Chair reserves the right to limit individual time to five minutes and total time to twenty minutes. All feedback is welcome. The Board does not respond directly but may use input to inform future actions. Agency representatives and others providing input which might impact Board actions should be aware of the [Illinois Lobbyist Registration Act, 25 ILCS 170/1](#), and take appropriate [steps to be in compliance with the Act](#).

For accessible documents or assistance with any portion of this packet, please [contact us](#) (kim@ccmhb.org).

**CHAMPAIGN COUNTY BOARD FOR CARE AND
TREATMENT OF PERSONS WITH A DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITY (CCDDDB) MEETING MINUTES**

May 27, 2026

This meeting was held at the Scott Bennett Administrative Center

102 E. Main St., Urbana, IL 61801

and with remote access via Zoom.

9:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kim Fisher, Anne Robin, Dianne Husby-Gordon, Susan Fowler, Neil Sharma

STAFF PRESENT:

Kim Bowdry, Lynn Canfield, Stephanie Howard-Gallo, Shandra Summerville, Chris Wilson

OTHERS PRESENT:

Ryan LaCosse, Heather Bouchez, Adam Wilt, Jill Frank, Best Buddies; Danielle Matthews, Patty Walters, Kelli Martin, AJ Zwettler, Heather Levingston, Sarah Perry, Laura Bennett, Jodie Harmon, DSC; Hannah Sheets, Becca Obuchowski, Community Choices; Paula Vanier, Mel Liong, Eric Enger, Michelle Ingram, PACE; Jacinda Dariotis, Family Resiliency Center UIUC; Angela Yost, Jessica Heckenmueller, CCRPC; Annie Bruno, ARC of Illinois; Jenny Lokshin, Champaign County Board; Jennifer Buoy, Citizen; Amanda Barrett, Citizen.

CALL TO ORDER:

Dr. Robin called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

ROLL CALL:

Roll call was taken, and a quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

An agenda was approved. The Evaluation Capacity Building Project report will be deferred until the June meeting.

CCDDB and CCMHB SCHEDULES/TIMELINES:

Draft CCDDB and CCMHB meeting schedules and CCDDB allocation timeline were posted online and linked in the agenda.

ACRONYMS and GLOSSARY:

A list of commonly used acronyms was posted publicly and linked in the agenda.

CITIZEN INPUT/PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

None.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS:

Dr. Robin commented that she appreciated everyone's hard work leading up to this meeting.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS:

Director Canfield had no comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Minutes from the April 22, 2026 meeting were included in the packet.

MOTION: Dr. Fowler moved to approve the 4/22/26 CCDDB meeting minutes as presented. Dr. Fisher seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed.

VENDOR INVOICE LISTS:

The Vendor Invoice List was included in the packet.

MOTION: Dr. Sharma moved to approve the Vendor Invoice List as presented. Dr. Fisher seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

STAFF REPORTS:

Staff reports from Kim Bowdry, Leon Bryson, Stephanie Howard-Gallo, and Shandra Summerville were included in the packet.

NEW BUSINESS:

Agency Responses to Questions About Funding Requests:

A briefing memorandum included agency responses to Board questions raised at the April Board meeting.

Program Year 2027 Allocations:

For consideration by the CCDDDB, a decision memorandum presented staff suggestions related to funding for the Program Year 2027 (July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027.) Decision authority rests with the CCDDDB and their sole discretion concerning appropriate use of available dollars based on assessment of community needs, best value, alignment with decision support criteria, pricing, affordability, and distribution across service intensity.

CCRPC-Community Services – Decision Support PCP \$505,565 Requested

MOTION: Dr. Robin moved to approve partial CCDDDB funding of \$425,042 for CCRPC-Community Services – Decision Support PCP, subject to the caveats as presented in the memorandum, and to authorize the CCDDDB Executive Director and Board Officer to execute the agreement. Dr. Sharma seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

DSC – Service Coordination \$538,500 Requested

MOTION: Dr. Fisher moved to approve partial CCDDDB funding of \$500,000 for DSC-Service Coordination, subject to the caveats as presented in the memorandum, and to authorize the CCDDDB Executive Director and Board Officer to execute the agreement. Dr. Sharma seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Community Choices, Inc. – Inclusive Community Support \$246,000 Requested

MOTION: Dr. Sharma moved to approve CCDDDB funding of \$246,000 for Community Choices, Inc. – Inclusive Community Support, subject to the caveats as presented in the memorandum, and to authorize the CCDDDB Executive Director and Board Officer to execute the agreement. Dr. Fisher seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

DSC – Community Living \$646,000 Requested

MOTION: Ms. Gordon moved to approve CCDDDB funding of \$646,000 for DSC – Community Living, subject to the caveats as presented in the memorandum, and to authorize the CCDDDB Executive Director and Board Officer to execute the agreement. Dr. Fowler seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Community Choices, Inc. – Transportation Support \$261,000 Requested

MOTION: Dr. Fisher moved to approve CCDDDB funding of \$261,000 for Community Choices, Inc. – Transportation Support, subject to the caveats as presented in the memorandum, and to authorize the CCDDDB Executive Director and Board Officer to execute the agreement. Dr. Sharma seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

DSC – Clinical Services \$264,700 Requested

MOTION: Dr. Sharma moved to approve CCDDDB funding of \$264,700 for DSC – Clinical Services, subject to the caveats as presented in the memorandum, and to authorize the CCDDDB Executive Director and Board Officer to execute the agreement. Dr. Fisher seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

DSC – Individual and Family Support \$329,000 Requested

MOTION: Dr. Fisher moved to approve partial CCDDDB funding of \$320,000 for DSC- Individual and Family Support, subject to the caveats as presented in the memorandum, and to authorize the CCDDDB Executive Director and Board Officer to execute the agreement. Ms. Gordon seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Persons Assuming Control of Their Environment (PACE) – Consumer Control in Personal Support \$45,972 Requested

MOTION: Dr. Fowler moved to approve CCDDDB funding of up to \$45,972 for Persons Assuming Control of Their Environment (PACE) – Consumer Control in Personal Support, subject to the caveats as presented in the memorandum, and to authorize the CCDDDB Executive Director and Board Officer to execute the agreement. The contract maximum will be reduced if audit issues are not resolved before July 1, with adjustment based on a later start date which will follow resolution. Dr. Fisher seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Best Buddies, International – Best Buddies Jobs - NEW \$100,000 Requested

MOTION: Dr. Sharma moved to deny CCDDDB funding of \$100,000 for Best Buddies International – Best Buddies Jobs. Dr. Fisher seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Community Choices, Inc. – Customized Employment \$267,500 Requested

MOTION: Dr. Fisher moved to approve CCDDDB funding of \$267,500 for Community Choices, Inc. – Customized Employment, subject to the caveats as presented in the memorandum, and to authorize the CCDDDB Executive Director and Board Officer to execute the agreement. Dr. Fowler seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

DSC – Community Employment \$540,200 Requested

MOTION: Dr. Fowler moved to approve CCDDDB funding of \$540,200 for DSC – Community Employment, subject to the caveats as presented in the memorandum, and to authorize the CCDDDB Executive Director and Board Officer to execute the agreement. Ms. Gordon seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

DSC/Community Choices – Employment First \$106,000 Requested

MOTION: Dr. Fisher moved to approve CCDDDB funding of \$106,000 for DSC/Community Choices – Employment First, subject to the caveats as presented in the memorandum, and to authorize the CCDDDB Executive Director and Board Officer to execute the agreement. Dr. Sharma seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Community Choices, Inc. – Self-Determination Support \$239,000 Requested

MOTION: Dr. Sharma moved to approve CCDDDB funding of \$239,000 for Community Choices, Inc. – Self-Determination Support, subject to the caveats as presented in the memorandum, and to authorize the CCDDDB Executive Director and Board Officer to execute the agreement. Dr. Fisher seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

DSC – Community First \$1,035,000 Requested

MOTION: Ms. Gordon moved to approve CCDDDB funding of \$1,035,000 for DSC – Community First, subject to the caveats as presented in the memorandum, and to authorize the CCDDDB Executive Director and Board Officer to execute the agreement. Dr. Sharma seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

DSC – Connections \$125,500 Requested

MOTION: Dr. Sharma moved to approve CCDDDB funding of \$125,500 for DSC – Connections, subject to the caveats as presented in the memorandum, and to authorize the CCDDDB Executive Director and Board Officer to execute the agreement. Ms. Gordon seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

DSC – Workforce Development and Retention \$287,310 Requested

MOTION: Dr. Fisher moved to approve CCDDDB funding of \$287,310 for DSC – Workforce Development and Retention, subject to the caveats as presented in the memorandum, and to authorize the CCDDDB Executive Director and Board Officer to execute the agreement. Dr. Sharma seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Dr. Fisher moved to approve a 2 year contract for DSC Workforce Development and Retention program, subject to the caveats as presented in the memorandum, and to authorize the CCDDDB Executive Director to execute the agreement. Dr. Fowler seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed.

Champaign County Head Start – Early Childhood MH Services \$411,062 Requested

MOTION: Dr. Sharma moved to advise the Champaign County Mental Health Board to use I/DD set-aside funds for a two-year term for Champaign County Head Start – Early Childhood MH Services. Dr. Fisher seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

CU Early – CU Early \$86,701 Requested

MOTION: Dr. Robin moved to advise the Champaign County Mental Health Board to use I/DD set-aside funds for a two-year term for CU Early – CU Early. Dr. Fowler seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Dr. Robin moved to authorize the Executive Director to conduct contract negotiations as specified in the memorandum. Dr. Sharma seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Dr. Robin moved to authorize the Executive Director to implement contract maximum reductions as described in the memorandum. Dr. Fisher seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously.

Evaluation Capacity Building Project Update:

The 3 Year Report for the Evaluation Capacity Building Project was included in the packet. See resources developed by the team at

<https://www.familyresiliency.illinois.edu/resources/microlearning-videos>

OLD BUSINESS:

Emerging Threats:

Dr. Fisher provided an update.

Input from People with I/DD:

Jennifer Buoy spoke regarding programs that she found helpful to her in our community.

Engage Illinois:

Dr. Fowler provided an update.

disAbility Resource Expo and AIR Updates:

See also <https://disabilityresourceexpo.org> and <https://champaigncountyair.com>. Updates were provided by Director Canfield.

Program Year 2026 Third Quarter Reports:

Third Quarter reports for Program Year 2026 were included in the Board packet for information and review.

SUCSESSES AND AGENCY INFORMATION:

Successes and agency information was provided by Patty Walters from DSC; Paula Vanier from PACE; and Becca Obuchowski from Community Choices.

COUNTY BOARD INPUT:

Jenny Lokshin from the Champaign County Board thanked everyone for their work during the funding cycle.

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY MENTAL HEALTH BOARD (CCMHB) INPUT:

The CCMHB will meet later today to make their funding decisions.

BOARD ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INPUT:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 10:23 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Stephanie Howard-Gallo

CCMHB/CCDDB Compliance and Operations Coordinator

**Minutes are in draft form and subject to approval by the CCDDB.*

VENDOR INVOICE LIST

Champaign County, IL FUND = DDB MONTH = May 2026

Vendor Number	Vendor Name	Invoice	Date	Run	Net	Invoice Description
10170	DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES CENTER	Apr'26 DD26-082	4/1/2026	050826A	82,500.00	DD26-082 Community First

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Leon Bryson, Associate Director for Mental Health & Substance Use Disorders

Staff Report-June 2026

Each agency that was approved for PY27 funding received an email following the conclusion of the May Board meetings. The Boards' decisions and any revisions and/or pre-contract requirements that needed to be completed before issuing contracts were communicated to agencies through these emails. The deadline for agency applications and contract revisions is June 16th. The Online Reporting System was utilized to access the PY2027 application forms that necessitated revisions. Draft PY2027-28 contracts were created and included in the agency award communications, along with the Pre-Contract Checklist. Upon completion, the application revisions were reviewed to ensure that the requirements were satisfied. I then utilized Adobe Sign to send contracts for signatures in June. Contract folders were maintained by printing and archiving completed contracts. Pre-Contracts checklists, letters of engagement, certificates of liability, insurance policies, and agency audits were stored in contract files.

Contract Amendment:

The Board authorized Immigrant Services' contract revision, which revises spending categories for Program Year 2026 and some for Program Year 2027. Another contract change may be required owing to more revisions for PY27.

ACMHAI Committee Meetings:

The next Legislative Committee meeting is scheduled for June 16th.

CCMHDDAC Meeting:

On May 26th, members provided updates. The Evaluation Capacity Team will hold a workshop titled "What's the plan? A hands-on evaluation plan workshop for local agencies." On June 23rd at the Champaign Public Library from 9am-12pm.

CIT Steering Committee:

Executive Director Canfield covered the June 3rd meeting at the Bennett Administration Building as I took some time off.

Continuum of Service Providers to the Homeless (CSPH):

I took time off during the June 2nd meeting.

Evaluation Capacity Committee Team:

I took part in the monthly meetings with the Evaluation Capacity project team.

Rantoul Service Provider's Meeting:

The May meeting was cancelled due to an absent facilitator. Cindy Crawford from CSCNCC and Tasha Brasher from the RPD are discussing how to move the group forward, as the facilitator will be departing the RPD later this month as a result to the role being terminated. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 15th.

SOFTT/LANS Meeting:

The second annual Fatherhood Forum: Protecting the Legacy was held on June 10th at the Champaign Public Library, from 11 am-3 pm. Although parent turnout was fewer than planned,

our community service providers (I believe around 19) stepped up to support the few that attended and heard from the panel of fathers, which is positive input for the agencies. The breakout sessions centered on Advocacy, Resiliency, and Finances. Participants were treated to food and raffle prizes.

Other Activities:

- May 27th, I participated in the FRC campus interviews for Visiting Research Scientist position via zoom.

Executive Director's Report

Lynn Canfield, June 2026

Activities of Staff and Board Members:

(Supporting each Board's Three Year Plan Purposes 1-5)

Much attention has been on the allocation of funds through contracts with agencies providing services and supports. Using allocation priorities approved in late 2025 by each Board, we updated application forms and opened the online application system from late December through early February. Then through May, staff and board members reviewed each request for funding and weighed the many options presented. While each board has not denied so much funding in many years, neither has ever approved so much funding either. Although the decision process was very difficult, it was heartening to read so many offers to do great things for other people. Since May, we have developed and finalized contracts as awarded by the Boards.

These agency allocations appear in each Board's budget as Contributions & Grants, the largest expense category and the clearest expression of each Board's mission. Some smaller costs for non-agency activities also support individuals, families, agencies, and community. These have included our annual disability Resource Expo, anti-stigma film and art sponsorship, educational opportunities, evaluation support, and training activities, with costs rolled into Personnel, Professional Services, Public Relations, Advertising, Books, Printing, Rental, Non-Employee Training, Food, and non-Food Supply expense lines. Determining what will be affordable for 2027 depends on projections of property tax revenues and operational costs. Input from stakeholders, staff, and board members will shape future community awareness efforts. In July, the Boards will be asked to review and approve initial 2027 budgets, based on the information available at that time. Initial approved 2027 budgets will be shared during the County's review of all funds. If there are updated projections or items related to our organizational assessment, each Board will be asked to consider subsequent budget revisions.

Although we haven't done so yet, this can be a great season for discussing any aspects of the application-to-award process which could and should be improved for the next time around. Time permitting, it could be a topic for July Board meeting discussions.

Anti-Stigma and Community Awareness:

(Supporting each Board's Three Year Plan Purposes 3 and 4)

Alliance for Inclusion and Respect (AIR):

AIR social media and website feature anti-stigma messaging and promotion of organizational members and local artists/entrepreneurs with lived experience. AIR sponsored an ‘anti-stigma’ film, “Charliebird” and art shows during Roger Ebert’s final Film Festival. Since the festival, we have focused on updating the website for ADA compliance, and I’ve gotten feedback that some AIR members would like us to continue supporting art shows and film screenings. I will talk with the organizers of newer festivals about possibilities.

Resource Information:

211 offers call-based information services. United Way, CCMHB, and CCDDDB co-fund this service. The Boards pay \$2,000 (total) annually from 2026 - 2029. This service aspires to be comprehensive, which depends on reliable information from providers, who can become overwhelmed with such updates. The state has launched BEACON, web-based resource information specific to children’s services. We maintain the Expo online searchable directory and paper resource book. Many agencies develop resource lists specific to the needs and experiences of the people they serve.

disABILITY Resource Expo:

A large in person event will not be held during 2026. For now, we are participating in other community resource fairs and distributing the resource book as opportunities arise. Allison and Dylan Boot, who coordinated the annual events for several years, were sent formal recognitions. We are planning a similar acknowledgement for the family of Barbara Bressner, the original coordinator. After her passing, our planning group lost momentum despite several initial ideas.

I/DD Special Initiatives Fund:

(Supports each Board’s Three Year Plan Goals 2.3 and 2.4)

This fund has focused on individuals with I/DD and complex support needs. In recent years, its only revenue has come from interest income and fund balance. A small amount is held in trust for one person who lives in a CILA home so that his parents may purchase items to help him stabilize and thrive there. For 2027, the remaining fund balance could be split and transferred back to each Board, as they continue to prioritize funding for services for people with I/DD.

Support for Agency Programs:

(Supports each Board’s Three Year Plan Goals 2.3, 3.1, 3.3, 4.2, 4.5, 5.3, and 5.4)

Activities described in staff reports:

- Cultural and Linguistic Competence training and assistance (Shandra Summerville).
- Collaborations: Community Coalition Race Relations and Goal Teams, Community Health Plan Priority Workgroups, Continuum of Service Providers to the Homeless, Crisis Intervention Team Steering Committee, Problem Solving Court Steering Committee, Local Funders Group, Local Interagency Council, MH and DD Agencies Council, SOFFT/LANS, Transition Planning Committee, Youth Assessment Center Advisory Committee (Kim Bowdry, Leon Bryson, Shandra Summerville, or myself).
- Provider Learning Opportunities, free of charge and offering CEUs, for case managers and other interested parties. Several of the 2026 opportunities are co-sponsored by UIUC School of Social Work and Leadership Center (Kim Bowdry).
- Meetings with Family Resiliency Center team monthly for updates and planning on the Evaluation Capacity Project. Researchers offered suggestions for how we might improve the Performance Outcome Report (Kim Bowdry, Leon Bryson, and myself).

Independent Contractors:

- EMK maintains the online application and reporting system, developing enhancements upon request, and offering technical support for users.
- ChrispMedia maintains our Expo and AIR websites. Updates are still in progress.
- Falling Leaf Productions reviews our public-facing sites for accessibility. All of these contractors have provided additional services during 2026 to improve ADA compliance and ease of use. New webpages have been added to the [EMK system \(https://ccmhddbrds.org\)](https://ccmhddbrds.org) to replace various PDFs. One of these is the year-end agency Performance Outcome Report, which was also revised with input from the Evaluation Capacity Building research team.
- John Brusveen, CPA, reviews agency annual audits, compilations, and financial reviews, summarizing any findings and supporting our understanding of processes.

Executive Director Activities:

It is easy to lose track of the many meetings and activities we engage with or convene. In addition to collaborations described above and below, many of my own activities lead to Board packet materials. Others are day to day such as reviewing and directing reports and other information, maintaining systems, considering unique questions raised by agencies and partners, preparing and posting information for public access, planning meetings, reevaluating processes, following up on audits, etc. These regular activities typically involve other team members as well. As noted during Board meetings, we have been determined to improve the accessibility of

documents and websites. I attend many webinars and discussions about ADA compliance and try to apply what I am learning, even though there seems to be so much more to learn.

Intergovernmental/Interagency Collaborations:

(Supports each Board's Three Year Plan Goals 1.2, 1.3, 1.5, 2.5, 3.4, and 5.3)

Beyond Borders: Global Mental Health Research and Services Conference:

Under the direction of Dr. Flora Cohen, university and community partners are planning the second annual conference for early October. This year's event will be virtual. Eight proposals for sessions have been submitted, and the deadline extended to June 30. In July, the group will select presentations for up to six sessions, most of which will offer CEUs. (Shandra Summerville has joined this planning effort.)

Metropolitan Intergovernmental Council:

Local government representatives meet on topics of interest. In October, I presented to the group on the 988 Crisis and Suicide Lifeline; another member of the group offered important cautions about these and other crisis response services, which I have shared with other planning groups since then. In February, the Cunningham Township Supervisor and City of Champaign Township Supervisor presented data on emergency shelter needs, housing instability, and the launch of county-wide assessment activities toward a new strategic plan to end homelessness. Our July meeting will include the new Chancellor, to discuss the work of various partners in relation to the University.

Student Mental Health Community of Practice at the University of Illinois:

MHB President McLay and I attend monthly meetings. We are taking a break for the season.

Illinois Leads Strategic Plan Development:

On April 7, I attended a planning session of the Chancellor's Illinois Leads Strategic Plan. Roundtable discussions among familiar stakeholders actually did lead to some new insights. Many of us raised concerns about persistent or urgent community threats such as violence, limited housing options, funding for safety net systems, the unmet needs of young residents, prevalence of mental health and substance use, and barriers to access.

UIUC Student Projects:

Through Family Resiliency Center and Community Learning Lab meetings and emails, I have heard and shared ideas for student projects which could be meaningful to both the students and

the community. Although the summer is a fine time for us to host a project directly, ours were not chosen. I am hopeful for support during the fall, especially on work related to non-profit accounting and audits and on planning for new anti-stigma activities.

Partnerships Related to Underrepresented Populations or Justice System:

(Supports each Board's Three Year Plan Goals 1.2, 2.5, and 3.4)

Alternative Response Task Force:

I have attended all scheduled discussions of this stakeholder group, to support the City of Urbana's co-response system. These tend to be monthly meetings and occasional listening sessions. The comments of others have helped me understand what people are looking for as well as what's working and not working. A majority of the City's crisis calls are for conflict resolution or lift assist, both important but not necessarily requiring immediate police or mental health professional responses.

Champaign County Community Coalition:

The Executive Committee convened in April to discuss summer programming for children and youth, in light of rising gun violence. The group maintains its interest in improving housing stability across the community as well. Goal Teams meetings are held monthly, with broad public participation, but I am often unable to attend.

Community Emergency Supports and Services Act (CESSA) Region 6 Advisory Committee:

At these monthly public meetings, the focus has been on learning from the pilot communities, developing subregional advisory groups, implementing a dispatch protocol, and clarifying the roles of first responders from law enforcement and behavioral health in advance of full implementation of CESSA by July 1, 2027. Our region's committee has only one co-chair and often struggles to achieve quorum. During the spring, Urbana Police Deputy Chief Mikalik presented to the group, impressing the State's consultant, Dr. Brenda Hampton, so much that he was then asked to present at the Statewide Advisory Committee Conference. I am certain Dr. Hampton will also appreciate behavioral health crisis response efforts of the City of Champaign, which we are scheduled to learn about at our August meeting, from Dr. Regina Parnell.

Continuum of Care:

The Champaign County Continuum of Care, also known as the Continuum of Providers of Services to the Homeless, has been conducting a new strategic planning process. I have attended many related meetings, including the large public launch, LGBTQIA+ subcommittee, and

steering committee. People with behavioral health or disability related support needs are heavily overrepresented among those with housing instability, and many agencies funded by the DDB or MHB are present in these discussions.

Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Steering Committee:

Representatives of law enforcement, EMS, hospital, behavioral health, providers of service to people in crisis or with housing insecurity, peer supporters, and other interested parties meet in even numbered months to promote CIT training and share updates. Other useful information is shared before and after the meetings. Most recently, with encouragement to look into the state's work on fitness and related standards, and thanks to guidance from the Mental Health Summit's Chair, I have attended another statewide public meeting (see below).

Problem Solving Court Steering Committee:

The group meets (infrequently) for collaboration across services and funders. The County has a Redeploy Illinois grant and continues to pursue other funding for Problem Solving Courts. I have been involved with planning conversations with this group as well as with state officials aware of our community's needs and assets. We recently restarted discussion of viability of a Mental Health Court. I attend Drug Court Graduation ceremonies, though sometimes virtually.

State and National Associations and Advocacy:

(Supports each Board's Three Year Plan Purpose 4)

Various Statewide Groups:

I attend monthly meetings of the They Deserve More Coalition (I/DD), Mental Health Summit, and the Department of Behavioral Health and Recovery and Trade Associations. Some content overlaps, and all of it is relevant to our work. Legislators have praised They Deserve More Coalition for their sustained advocacy to increase the wages of Direct Support Professionals, which legislation passed. Despite significant budget concerns of the state, behavioral health legislative accomplishments include improved reimbursement for Assertive Community Treatment and Community Support Team services and greater transparency in managed care payment practices. Some promising bills which did not pass may be taken up again during the veto session. The Chair of our Mental Health Summit meetings also serves on the State of Illinois' Fitness to Stand Trial Task Force, so I am now tuning in to their monthly meetings; the June meeting was chaired by Representative LaPointe and featured a presentation from Elgin Mental Health Center's Dr. James Corcoran, echoing many familiar concerns.

Association of Community Mental Health Authorities of Illinois (ACMHAI):

I participate in Executive Committee and I/DD Committee meetings and am a Legislative Committee Co-Chair. Legislative liaisons update us on Illinois General Assembly and Governor's Office activity likely to impact our communities and help us advance the membership's advocacy priorities. Despite numerous introduced bills of benefit to people with behavioral health or developmental disability related needs, our focus was once again pulled to protecting the Community Mental Health Act (CMHA); happily no similar threats have presented to the Act governing DD Boards. For several years, revisions are proposed to the CMHA which would have mixed effects on Mental Health Boards operating across the state. Balancing the needs of various members has dominated our committee work enough to warrant significant changes to ACMHAI's by-laws, along with the introduction of a Code of Conduct for Legislative Committee participants.

Our April Membership meeting was held in person and virtually. I was able to be in Springfield for both days, for presentations by legislative lobbyists and legislators and for regular association business. I also attend meetings and webinars of the I/DD Committee and webinars hosted by the Membership and Children's Behavioral Health Committees. We are restarting the Medicaid Committee soon and wrapping up the ad hoc ByLaws group.

National Association of County Behavioral Health and Developmental Disability Directors (NACBHDD):

As Vice Chair, I attend Executive Committee meetings to review positions and finances and to plan upcoming events. I attended the February Legislative and Policy Conference in DC and shared lengthy notes which can be found on pages 19-66 of the [DDB packet posted here \(https://www.champaigncountyil.gov/mhbddb/agendas/ddb/2026/260325_Meeting/260325_Full_Board_Packet.pdf\)](https://www.champaigncountyil.gov/mhbddb/agendas/ddb/2026/260325_Meeting/260325_Full_Board_Packet.pdf). I plan to attend our summer board meeting virtually.

Regular meetings of the Directors of State Associations, I/DD, Behavioral Health and Justice, Membership, and (brand new) Rural Committees focus on actual and proposed changes to federal policies, such as the recently released interim final rule Medicaid Work and Community Engagement Requirements, with [fact sheet linked here \(https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/fact-sheets/medicaid-community-engagement-requirement-certain-individuals-interim-final-rule-comment-period-cms\)](https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/fact-sheets/medicaid-community-engagement-requirement-certain-individuals-interim-final-rule-comment-period-cms), Housing and Urban Development's Continuum of Care Notification of Funding Opportunity, with [National Alliance to End Homelessness' analysis linked here \(https://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/FY2026-Continuum-of-Care-Competition-NOFO-Analysis.pdf\)](https://endhomelessness.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/FY2026-Continuum-of-Care-Competition-NOFO-Analysis.pdf), and the [proposed Regulation for Federal Financial Assistance \(https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2026/05/29/2026-10817/regulation-for-federal-](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2026/05/29/2026-10817/regulation-for-federal-)

[financial-assistance#addresses](#)). Each of these is expected to have profound impacts on service systems and communities across the country.

On June 17, a small group of NACBHDD members will meet with US Senators to discuss long-term care. We are specifically concerned with community based care for people with developmental disabilities and will learn the current positions of the Senate Finance Committee.

National Association of Counties (NACO):

I participate in Healthy Counties and Resilient Counties Advisory Board meetings when they're not held at the same time. The former has a focus on equity and social determinants of health, the latter disaster preparedness. I have served on the Health Steering Committee (HSC) for many years as Vice Chair of its Behavioral Health Subcommittee. Some proposed policy resolutions supported by the larger committee run counter to the aspirations of community-based care, so I am working with colleagues to push back. As NACBHDD Vice Chair, I am on NACO's Board of Directors through 2026. Some votes require in person attendance, and I have not traveled since the L& P Conference (notes are along with the NACBHDD conference notes, linked above). I do join virtual meetings during which positions are determined and plans finalized. Last year the membership was fairly divided regarding policy changes, but there growing shared concern over the cost shift caused by newer federal policy positions and budget reductions.

Empowerment and Participatory Approaches to Building Agency Evaluation Capacity Project

**Year 3 Annual Report:
Equipping Programs
Through In-Person and
On-Demand Supports**



**April 30, 2026
Family Resiliency Center
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign**

Year 3 Annual Report prepared for the Champaign County Mental Health and Developmental Disability Boards by the Family Resiliency Center; Department of Human Development and Family Studies; College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences; University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

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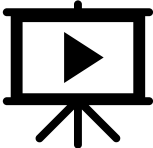
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Executive Summary

In Year 3 of the *Empowerment and Participatory Approaches to Building Agency Evaluation Capacity Project*, the evaluation team responded to needs identified in Year 1, continued successful and relevant initiatives from Year 2, and implemented new activities to meet evolving needs that emerged in real-time during the year. The evaluation team provided impactful technical assistance; hosted a collaborative working group; developed engaging workshops and trainings (storytelling and evaluation plan fundamentals); created video microlearnings and accompanying one-page resources; and facilitated open communication and an informal support network (Table 1).

Table 1. Summary of Year 3 Evaluation Activities, Descriptions, and Results

Activity	Description	Results: Reach, Skills, & Effect
 <p>Technical Assistance</p>	<p>Tailored support for specific program evaluation needs identified by selected programs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach & skills: 3 programs with identified evaluation support needs improved their understanding of survey development, logic models, and survey administration. • Effect: Evaluation survey respondents (n=3) reported future skills use would improve services and program quality assessment, and they would recommend evaluation TA to others. Given these 3 programs collectively reached over 5,700 treatment and non-treatment clients in program year 2025 (per utilization report results), the evaluation capacity building project has significant potential impact.
 <p>Working Group</p>	<p>Cross-agency mentoring and rapid feedback on evaluation topics/training directions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach & skills: 4 agency partners joined a cross-agency working group with core members meeting regularly (2x/ mo.) to offer collaborative feedback, troubleshoot, and learn about evaluation concepts (e.g., how to program surveys using low-cost online tools, the difference between quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods evaluation). Participation reinforced the importance of evaluation. • Effect: Members provided rapid feedback on evaluation products and trainings.
 <p>Trainings & Resources</p>	<p>Capacity-building materials developed based on agency-driven needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach & skills: 12 agencies (14 attendees) participated in a storytelling workshop. Related microlearnings (e.g., Avoiding the Data Dump and Avoiding Under- and Overreporting) were created as workshop precursors and on-demand trainings. A third video microlearning (Getting Started with Inexpensive Survey Tools) was also launched late April 2026. In total 9 video microlearnings exist and have garnered nearly 5,000 player impressions. • Effect: Resources are broadly shared across funded agencies and to other agencies by other funders.

Activity	Description	Results: Reach, Skills, & Effect
 <p data-bbox="219 682 446 787">Open Communication & Informal Support</p>	<p data-bbox="482 520 673 766">Consistent communication about progress and planned activities and availability for questions</p>	<ul data-bbox="722 235 1421 1050" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="722 235 1421 661">• Reach & skills: Monthly updates at Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Board meetings and monthly progress meetings with board staff informed responses to specific agency concerns and questions in real-time. Additional presence at monthly Champaign County Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Agency Council meetings promoted engagement with agencies and awareness of services and activities offered throughout the county. Participation in Disability Expo planning meetings for future annual offerings provides an independent lens and suggestions. <li data-bbox="722 667 1421 871">• Office hours offered: In Year 3 the evaluation team offered office hours for any funded program or agency to ask specific questions about evaluation topics to meet their needs. This resource is designed to meet agencies and programs where they are at and on their schedule. <li data-bbox="722 877 1421 1050">• Effect: Open communication led to increasing sentiment that agencies and boards are moving in the same direction, while the annual report offers public accountability and clear understanding of evaluation team activities.

Introduction – Why This Work Matters

Programs funded by the Champaign County Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Boards (CCMHDDDB) aim to improve mental health, job placements and community integration, ability to advocate for oneself, and many other outcomes that help individuals and families thrive, and ultimately, enrich our community. The ability to conduct high-quality program evaluations and interpret, use, and communicate evaluation findings are crucial for improving or sustaining the work of these programs. Program evaluation helps determine what components of a program are working, for whom, and in what contexts.

The Family Resiliency Center’s (FRC) Evaluation Capacity Building Team (“evaluation team” hereafter) is working with the CCMHDDDB and local agencies (c.f. Appendix A) to address evaluation capacity needs for answering these questions. This report describes work completed by the evaluation team in Year 3 of the capacity-building project as well as next steps. The evaluation team’s work expands upon needs identified in Year 1 (link at right), offers successful and relevant Year 2 and 3 activities, and incorporates feedback throughout the process.

In short, Year 1 activities included a needs assessment conducted with agencies, boards, and evaluators (n = 76) showing that (a) agency and board member familiarity with evaluation varies; (b) trainings need to meet agencies where they are; (c) evaluation efficiencies are needed to “give back time”; (d) agencies desire to learn how to use evaluation for storytelling; and (e) alignment across agencies, boards, and the evaluation team is needed.

In response to Year 1 findings and as a continuation of successful Year 2 initiatives, in Year 3 the evaluation team (c.f. Appendix B):

- Provided evaluation **technical assistance** to three programs (one developmental disability [DD], two mental health [MH]);
- Facilitated a **working group** of agency representatives to increase the relevance of evaluation capacity-building activities;
- Conducted a **training** related to storytelling in outcomes reporting;
- Developed three video microlearnings and supplemental one-page **resources** freely accessible on the FRC website; and
- Fostered **open communication** through regular availability to agencies and monthly updates on project progress at board meetings and meetings with staff.

Resources Quick Links:

Year 1 and 2 Reports:

<https://go.illinois.edu/Evaluation-Capacity-Building-Y1>

<https://go.illinois.edu/Evaluation-Capacity-Building-Y2>

Microlearning Trainings and Supplementary Resources:

<https://www.familyresiliency.illinois.edu/resources/microlearning-videos>

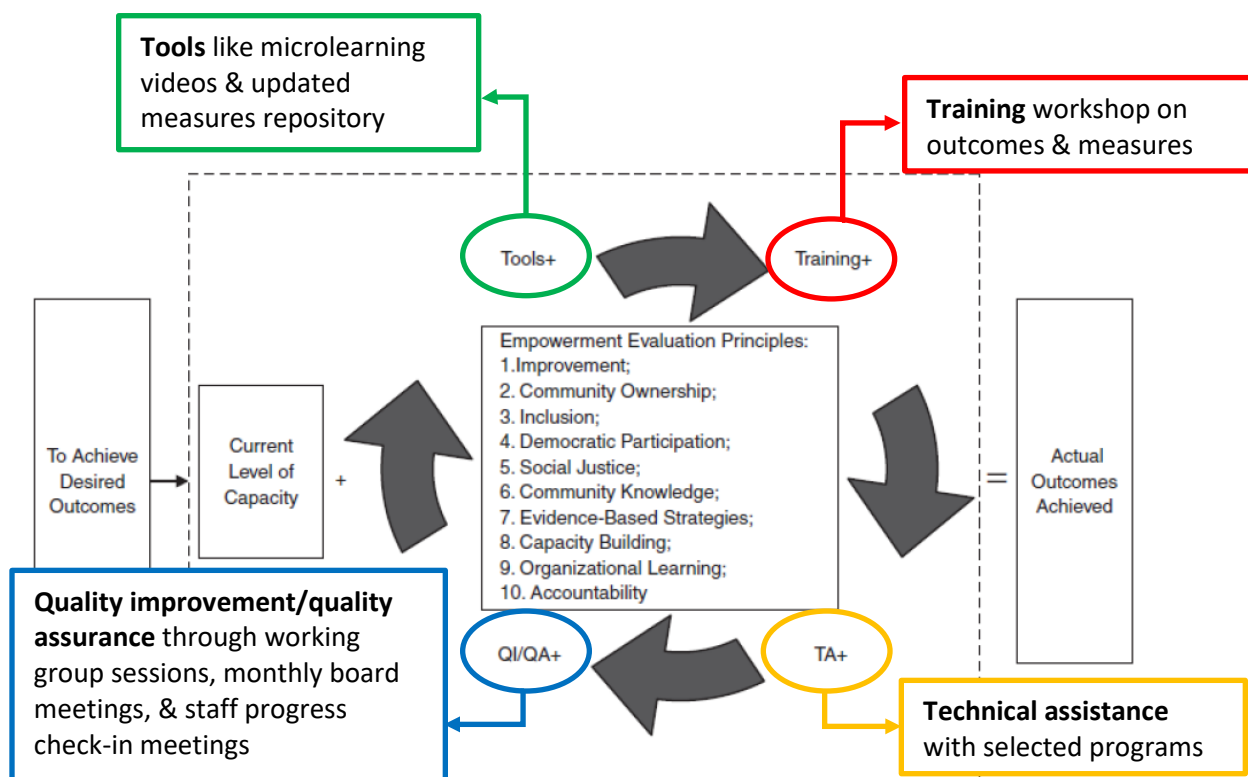
Evaluation Office Hours:

<https://go.illinois.edu/eval-office-hours>

Further, the evaluation team engaged in community- and service-based activities to gain additional insights into agencies and programs. This enabled the evaluation team to gain first-hand insights into the great work being conducted. Examples include attending the Disability Expo, agency open-houses (e.g., Crisis Nursery), and art events at the Crow and Boneyard Festival.

As depicted in Figure 1, these evaluation capacity building activities spanned all four components of the empowerment model: tools, training, technical assistance (TA), and quality improvement/quality assurance (Fetterman & Wandersman, 2007). Tools include three microlearning educational videos and related supplemental one-page resources as well as a measures repository where agencies can find possible survey measures. We delivered an in-person training to agencies on how to use storytelling to create compelling narratives about program outcomes and impacts. At the program level, we provided tailored TA to three programs. Finally, in support of the quality improvement/quality assurance component, we facilitated a cross-agency working group and communicated progress updates at monthly board and board staff meetings.

Figure 1. Alignment of Evaluation Capacity Building Activities with the Empowerment Evaluation Model



Note: Figure adopted from Fetterman, D., & Wandersman, A. (2007). Empowerment evaluation: Yesterday, today, and tomorrow. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 28(2), 179-198.

Both boards have positively recognized the value of the evaluation approach and activities. At the October 2025 Champaign County Developmental Disabilities Board (CCDDB) meeting, board member Susan Fowler lauded the evaluation capacity-building project:

I just love what you're doing. I taught research methodology for years at the university, and I would have very much benefited from some of these short micro-lessons. People get so distracted by how and what to report, and you have really distilled it into a humorous as well as very cogent summary.

Supplementing that sentiment was the chairperson of the Champaign County Mental Health Board (CCMHB), Molly McLay, who noted during the January 2026 meeting how much work the evaluation team has performed, even during times of expected lulls, as well as the impact of inclusive resources that can reach people through different learning modalities:

That [monthly report] was actually a lot... I was thinking there wouldn't be much update, because it's January. But a lot of cool things [are] happening. I think that how to make your own survey using low-cost tools is really, really important and will be valuable as well as having the handout and video, just different methods of learning for everybody.

Core Activities in Year 3

Technical Assistance

Goal

Technical assistance (TA) consisted of meeting with agency program staff and working together to identify pathways to improve program evaluation strategies. Capacity building was one goal, and the evaluation team worked with program representatives to improve evaluation practices. The ultimate goal of capacity building is the development of sustainable, high-quality, in-house evaluation practices. Programs for TA are identified by the Champaign County Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Boards.

Alignment with Year 1 Needs Assessment

This year's TA addressed multiple needs that were identified in the Year 1 needs assessment: building evaluation capacity broadly through tailored support, developing infrastructure through the co-creation of surveys that improve data collection to evaluate programs, and aligning evaluation practices with agency priorities. By co-designing surveys, the TA responds to Year 1 finding that agencies need more time to engage in quality evaluation work.

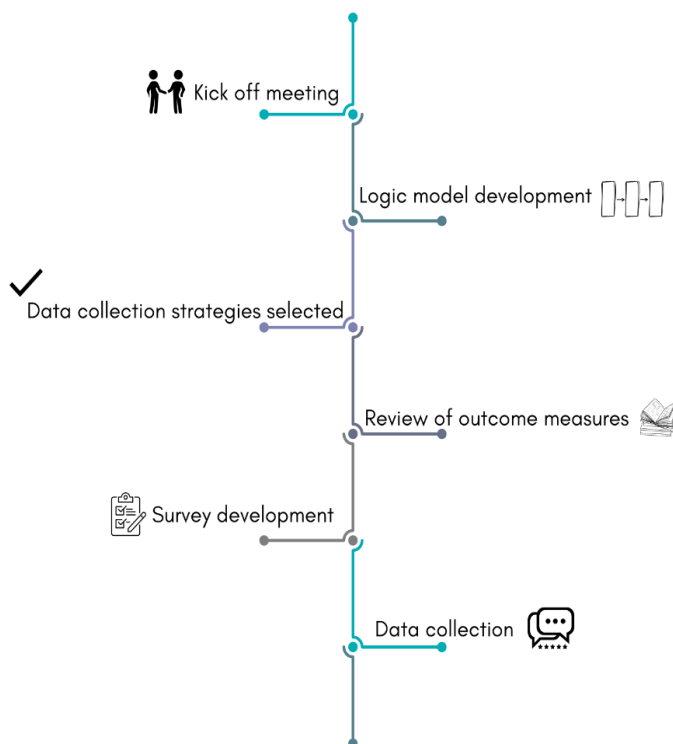
Participating programs demonstrated differing levels of evaluation readiness and existing data practices. Some programs had not yet collected participant-level data for the specific programs. Accordingly, TA this year prioritized foundational capacity building, with a focus on using logic models, considering appropriate outcome measures, and developing effective surveys.

Year 3 Actions

Figure 2 visually displays a typical timeline for the TA process in Year 3. From June 2025 to April 2026, the evaluation team provided evaluation TA to three agency programs: Champaign County Christian Health Center (CCCHC); PACE, Inc. Center for Independent Living; and Promise Healthcare. As of April 30, 2026, TA included formal in-person and virtual meetings as well as numerous informal touchpoints and product sharing (e.g., sharing survey files).

TA topic areas included evaluation conceptualization and logic modeling; survey development; recommendations for data collection training and recruitment; and other related activities.

Figure 2. Year 3 Technical Assistance Process



Technical Assistance Evaluation Results

To evaluate the utility of our TA work, we developed a short survey (7 questions) about outcomes and processes administered to those who participated in the technical assistance process. Survey topics encompassed skills development, long-term usefulness and application of TA, evaluation team responsiveness, and suggestions for improvements. Three participants representing two programs completed the TA post-survey.

Respondents expressed **positive TA experiences**. They used “strongly agree” ratings for the following experiences: the evaluation team was responsive, communicated in a timely manner, demonstrated flexibility in scheduling, and brought strong expertise in program evaluation. They also indicated that the team showed genuine care for their programs and fully met expectations. In the words of one respondent:

I am very appreciative of RJG and the FRC in general for helping us improve our services. I have nothing but positive things to say, and I will happily recommend you to others. THANK YOU.”

With respect to **skills development**, TA participants reported a high likelihood of applying the skills and products developed through TA in the future. Specifically, they reported that survey development was the most useful form of assistance and would help enhance future services. As one respondent explained, it involved “drilling down and developing a survey that met our needs.” TA participants reported improvements in skills related to developing logic models, identifying program outcomes, survey design, and collecting and analyzing quantitative data

(range: “somewhat agree” to “strongly agree”).

Areas for **future skills development and use** include interpreting and reporting results, as well as qualitative data collection. Overall, TA recipients reported that the skills they gained would be useful when reporting results to funders and for improving services and assessing program quality via ongoing program monitoring. Given the three programs receiving TA collectively reached over 5,700 treatment and non-treatment clients in program year 2025 per utilization report results ([260422 Full Board Packet.pdf](#)), the evaluation capacity building project has significant potential impact.

One participant described how agency staff often do not perceive evaluation TA as valuable amid competing demands and busy schedules. They acknowledged that the program or agency needs to find ways to increase team member participation. They suggested that agencies could emphasize how TA promotes service quality improvement to increase buy-in for TA among program staff.

This individualized TA represents an important element of participatory and empowerment approaches: showing up for partners and the evaluation team, listening to feedback, and providing knowledge and tools to proceed independently.

Working Group

Goal

The overarching goal of the working group is to facilitate a group of agency representatives that can provide input on evaluation team trainings, tools, and resources and develop evaluation capacity infrastructure that can extend beyond the evaluation team partnership. Ultimately, the intent is to have a cross-agency mentoring program to facilitate knowledge, skills transfer, and sustainability.



Alignment with Year 1 Needs Assessment

The working group provides voice and support as the evaluation team addresses multiple findings from the needs assessment: (a) meeting agencies where they are with trainings and (b) collaboration and shared goal setting. The working group members have varying levels of evaluation experience and bring diverse substantive backgrounds to inform our work and goals.

Year 3 Actions

A working group was developed in Spring 2024 (Year 2). In Year 3, the group typically met 2 times per month and consisted of four interested agency partners: three who consistently attended meetings and one who joined part way through the year, attending several sessions. As of April 2026, the working group includes one developmental disabilities- and three mental health-funded agency representatives, each from different agencies. Working group members provided

feedback on all trainings and related materials developed by the evaluation team in Year 3 before launching those resources. One member, Brenda Eakens of GROW in Illinois, noted:

I have learned a lot from the working group. I wish I would have had it when I first started! I have worked on some different surveys, and I have learned a lot about how to make them. I'm not a data person; I'm a people person. But I have learned a lot from the data I've collected. They have helped me look at a program and understand what to change or fix. That makes a big difference. You guys have made it easier for me to understand my job.

During Year 3, working group members also began to share their own work and form networks related to evaluation and service delivery. The group is currently working to co-design the next workshop, planned for June 2026.

Working Group Evaluation Results

The working group consisted of four members, three of whom attended regularly, nearly every other week. All regular attendees completed a survey of five open-ended items: what worked well, what was most beneficial, future growth areas, future topics or formats, and anything else to share. When asked **what worked well**, respondents noted that reviewing and providing feedback on surveys, as well as having a diverse group of agencies, produced valuable resources that will benefit agencies.

Respondents also reported their participation in the working group **benefited their agency** and improved their confidence in program evaluation, their understanding of its value, and their facility with survey design. As described by one respondent:

I feel much more adept in my approaches to program evaluation with all of the departments I oversee and feel more confident in my reporting abilities.

The working group helped to inform trainings and resources, and participants noted that these resources will serve as assets to other programs and agencies if they choose to use them. In the words of one working group member “The content and resources that have come out of the group work would be very beneficial to the agencies who are willing to use it.” Another member noted “it [the working group] has helped me understand why evaluation is important.”

Regarding **future areas for growth**, several respondents suggested that having more agencies or programs represented would benefit the working group and the content/resources created, while acknowledging the importance of smaller, more intimate groups. Future topics mentioned included having more agencies sharing what they are doing, allowing for cross-program comparisons and how to utilize information gained. This suggestion is in keeping with the intent of the working group evolving into a community of practice over time. The working group’s hands-on and experiential format was well received by participants. One respondent expressed appreciation for the evaluation team’s patience, perspective, knowledge, and overall helpfulness, noting, “I enjoy the feedback and knowledge base of the team. It is very helpful for me with seeing it rather than saying it.”

Given sentiments about increasing the working group size and the benefits participation has had on members, we **recommend the boards and board staff** strongly encourage or include in future contracts for select programs and agencies to participate in the working group.

Trainings and Resources

Goal

Training and resource development was a substantial component of Year 3 activities. The goals of these activities were to provide user-friendly opportunities for agencies to develop in-house evaluation skillsets. Topics were informed by needs identified in Year 1 and ongoing feedback from the working group, board staff, and other board-funded agencies who offered feedback and questions.



Alignment with Year 1 Needs Assessment

Trainings and resources developed addressed the need for user-friendly evaluation training in addition to promoting familiarity with evaluation knowledge and building capacity. Each product was reviewed and revised iteratively with feedback from the working group and board staff to ensure relevance, utility, and acceptability.

Year 3 Actions

The evaluation team hosted one in-person workshop about storytelling related to program outcomes reporting. Pre-work for this event included viewing newly developed microlearning video trainings about two evaluation concepts: the importance of not overwhelming your reader with uncontextualized data and the significance of candid reporting (i.e. telling it like it is). A third microlearning on how to use Microsoft and Google forms for improved data collection and management was also created. These microlearnings are publicly available educational videos (see Resources Quick Links on page 3), and details about the training and microlearnings are provided in the following sections.

Workshop: Storytelling in Outcomes Reporting

On October 8, 2025, the evaluation team held an in-person workshop on Storytelling in Outcomes Reporting at the United Way of Champaign County. Participants included staff from over a dozen agencies funded by the boards.

The workshop was a response to findings first published in the Year 1 report. First, there was a desire to learn how to use evaluation methods to share programs' stories and improve reporting. Second, trainings should be user-friendly and meet everyone where they are. To the latter end, before the training, interested participants were asked about their current associations with "good storytelling." From those responses, the evaluation team drafted an agenda that included:

- A group-level assessment-style analysis of response data;
- A demonstration of developing exigence (“a problem marked by a sense of urgency that demands communicative action”) for various audiences depending on audience knowledge and expectations; and
- An exercise showing how information can be ordered differently depending on communication goal.

Workshop participants entered with stated motivations “to improve [their] report + outcome writing,” “to better communicate the value of our programs,” “to share more relevant and interesting info with the DDB/MHB,” and “to write reports that the CCDDDB finds valuable” (among other similar comments). By this standard, the workshop offered effective tools for improved reporting. In a post-workshop survey, 11 participants gave high marks to the afternoon’s activities in all categories. On a scale of 1-5, where “1” denoted “very effective,” 2 denoted “effective,” and 3, 4, and 5 denoted “neutral,” “not very effective,” and “not at all effective” respectively, participants on average gave the workshop a 1.22, including a 1.09 for the presentation of content that was relevant and relatable to agency work.

Finally, workshop participants valued the opportunity to step back from their busy schedules and reflect on the practices involved in reporting with other agency staff. When asked, “What did you learn today that you will take back to your agency?” one participant wrote:

It was helpful to hear how others conceptualize the prompts in outcome reports and tools/frameworks for how to think about those.

Other participants offered related remarks about the very occasion of gathering. When asked, “What was the most valuable component of this workshop?” participants replied:

*The communication with others doing this work and the puzzle activity.
Discussions with presenters and other staff.
Learning with others.*

Hosting this workshop in-person offered real value to participants. An in-person workshop not only provides new information and skills development but also generates opportunities for agencies and programs to meaningfully learn from each other, network, and collaborate on shared concerns.

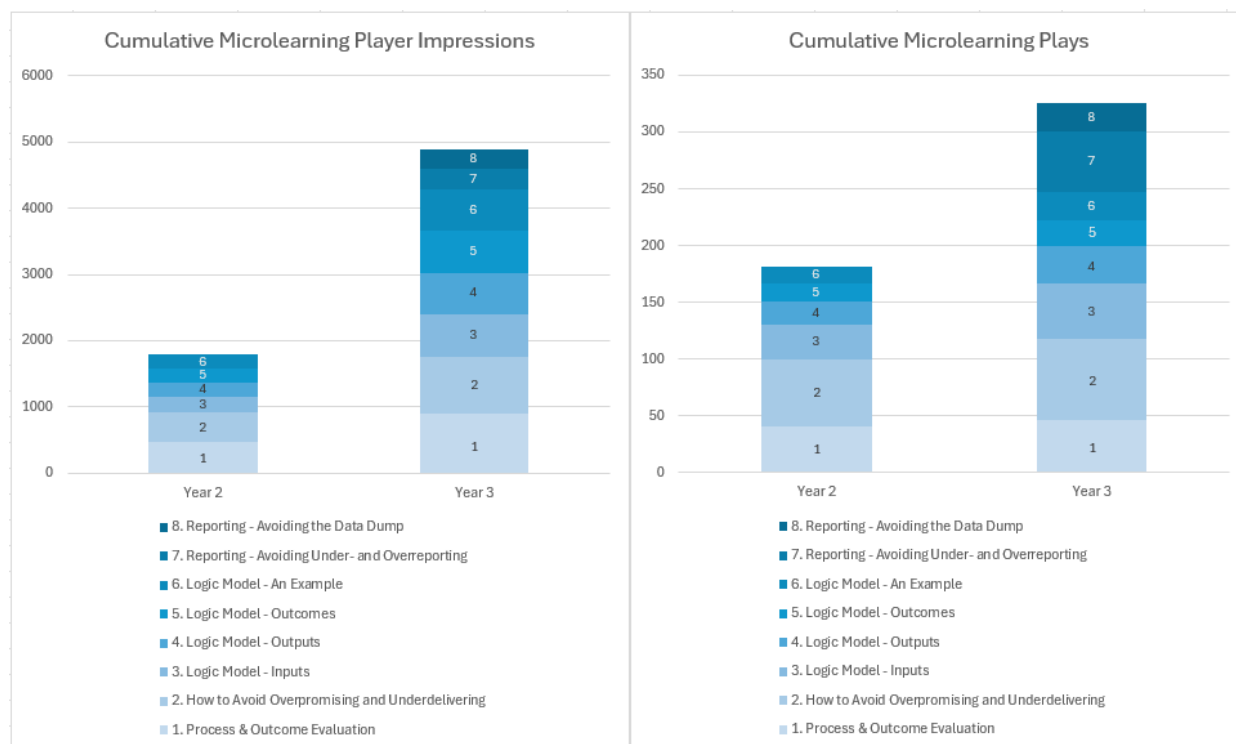
Microlearning Videos

Microlearnings are short trainings (approximately 5 minutes) that distill complex concepts into discrete, easy-to-digest individual units for improved learning.

To date, nine video microlearnings have been produced on behalf of the boards for agency staff. These have garnered hundreds of plays and thousands of video impressions (an impression is when a video is loaded in a viewer’s web browser). These videos exhibit a good click-through rate of 5.8% (according to one online marketing training firm, the click-through rate across industries for videos that are displayed on a website—rather than found algorithmically or through search—

is under 1%). Whereas microlearnings in Year 2 centered around the topic of logic models, Year 3 microlearnings focused on outcomes reporting. Prior to the Storytelling in Outcomes Reporting workshop, participants were asked to view the two microlearnings pertaining to that topic. Results are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. The Growing Reach of Video Microlearnings



Outcomes Reporting – Avoiding the Data Dump

A data dump is a large volume of facts offered without context or analysis. This microlearning discusses the importance of avoiding a data dump in reporting. The video uses a mock on-air exchange between a television weather reporter out in the field and an in-studio producer to illustrate the take-home message: individuals who report on outcomes should select data relevant to their intended message while accounting for both audience and purpose.

Outcomes Reporting – Avoiding Under- and Overreporting

This video encourages individuals who write outcomes reports to “tell it like it is.” Relaying null or unexpected outcomes might seem scary for reporters, but these outcomes actually represent an important opportunity for evaluation. Telling the full story of a program can provide important context and offer insights into programmatic changes, leading to continuous quality improvement. The video employs the same reporter-producer back-and-forth as the microlearning above to outline the different forms that avoiding under- and overreporting might take, including omissions of important information, inclusion of unnecessary information, promotion of overinflated results, and avoiding important context that might explain why outcomes differ from their projections.

Figure 4. Still from video microlearning: A weather reporter out in the field



Diving into Data – Using Microsoft and Google Forms

Data management can be tricky, especially when it comes to surveys. This microlearning helps viewers practice good data management hygiene by introducing user-friendly survey tools in Microsoft or Google. One of these tools is likely available to the viewer and their organization in some form, and they can help answer questions such as: are people satisfied with the quality of services, to what extent is a program achieving its target goals, and how do people describe their experiences with a program?

Complementary Resources

As a complement to the video microlearnings, the evaluation team developed evergreen reference guide resources to help agency staff evaluate their programs. The first is a decision tree about the kinds of data a user might manage—numbers, stories, or a combination of the two—and how to handle it—through quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods approaches. Additional resources accompany the microlearning on survey design, breaking down the processes of Microsoft and Google tools into discrete steps.

Open Communication and Informal Support and Engagement

Goal

Ensure agencies and boards have access to hearing updates from the evaluation team and maintain accessibility.

Alignment with Year 1 Needs Assessment

Communication efforts respond to the Year 1 report finding that a mindset of “we’re all in this together” is important for the success of capacity building.



Year 3 Actions

The evaluation team worked to engage in ongoing communication with agencies and boards. In Year 3, the evaluation team

- Provided monthly updates at CCMHDDDB meetings.
- Met monthly with board staff to provide updates, learn about emerging program and board needs, and gain feedback on evaluation activities like trainings and microlearning resources.
- Attended monthly meetings of the Champaign County Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Agency Council.
- Met with additional agencies to respond to questions and feedback.
- Launched on-demand office hours to meet the emerging evaluation needs of programs and agencies. The team offered 30-minute virtual sessions to speak with a member of the evaluation team about quick evaluation questions. Agencies sign up for a time slot at <https://go.illinois.edu/eval-office-hours>.

Next Steps and Conclusion

In Year 3, the evaluation team provided impactful technical assistance, fostered a collaborative working group, developed engaging workshops and trainings, and facilitated open communication about progress. We increased accessibility of knowledge and resources, and agencies see the value of this work. In their own words, participants said they would recommend the evaluation TA experience to others.

In Year 4, the evaluation team will continue to build evaluation capacity to improve the quality of care and service in Champaign County. In collaboration with board staff, we will identify funded programs that need in-depth technical assistance, develop new trainings, continue convening and growing the working group, and assess whether office hours are needed for agencies or programs to meet with a member of the evaluation team to discuss specific, quick evaluation questions.

In consultation with the working group and in alignment with the Year 1 needs assessment, we identified a need for a training series (in various formats) spanning topics in data collection, basic data analysis, and data visualization that will be part of Year 4 planning and implementation.

The evaluation team's future directions are directly informed by feedback from agency and board representatives, and as such, we continue to welcome feedback and suggestions as we work together to build sustainable evaluation capacity across CCMHDDDB-funded agencies and beyond. We are excited and hopeful that we can collectively promote the "health and well-being of residents who live with behavioral health issues or developmental disabilities."

Acknowledgements

We recognize and express gratitude to those who have partnered with us and will continue to do so through this process.

- **Agency staff and leaders** for their active engagement and thoughtful insights. We thank them for taking time to participate in technical assistance and the workshop on storytelling in outcomes reporting. We appreciate agencies making the time and space for staff to participate in evaluation capacity building activities past, present, and future.
- **Working group members** for agreeing to continue to collaborate on action planning and cross-program and cross-agency mentoring and support. This learning community is transitioning into a community of practice.
- **Board members and board staff** who highlighted the need for and value of centering staff voice in evaluation capacity building processes. We thank all board members for recognizing the importance of this work and their role in supporting evaluation capacity building.
- **Programs participating in intensive technical assistance** for being willing to work one-on-one with the FRC evaluation team to answer our questions, inform us about your programs, and for being receptive to feedback and working together to improve processes and outcomes.

Suggested report citation

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Appendix A. Participating Agencies

Thank you to the agencies that participated in workshops, working group meetings, or technical assistance: Champaign County Christian Health Center, Champaign County Regional Planning Commission, Community Choices, Cunningham Children's Home, Crisis Nursery, CU Early (a collaboration of Urbana School District #116 and Champaign Unit 4 School District), Developmental Services Center, Don Moyer Boys & Girls Club, GROW in Illinois, PACE, Promise Healthcare, Rosecrance, Uniting Pride, and WIN Recovery.



Appendix B. Summary of Findings and Action Steps

Year 1 Theme	Year 2 and 3 Actions	Future
<p>1. “We Don’t Know What We Don’t Know” – Familiarity with Evaluation Varies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Created and compiled evaluation resources for all agencies to access. ● Obtained feedback regarding resources from the working group and workshop. ● Provided technical assistance (TA) for four programs (Year 2) and three programs (Year 3). ● Continued to work with the boards to encourage ongoing engagement with evaluation team. ● Encouraged the boards to communicate with agencies about why evaluation capacity is important. ● Recommended agencies to make time and space to participate in capacity building opportunities and utilize resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue creating evaluation resources with guidance from the working group. ● Provide TA for new programs (identified with help from board staff). ● Continue encouraging agencies and programs to work with the evaluation team, including working group and office hours utilization.
<p>2. User-Friendly Evaluation Training is Needed and Staff and Boards are Receptive to Learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developed video microlearnings and continued adding to the library of offerings based on identified needs. New offerings in Year 3 include storytelling, survey development using low-cost tools, and reporting accuracy. ● Acquired feedback from the working group on all trainings and materials. ● Hosted workshops about storytelling and evaluation best practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue developing microlearnings and trainings about evaluation plans, data management and analysis, data visualization, and other emergent topics. ● Continue offering workshops on evaluation best practices.
<p>3. “Giving Back” Time via Evaluation Tools and Efficiencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Created institutionalized knowledge and procedures within agencies through TA. ● Provided training in best practices in data reporting, survey data collection, and storytelling through TA and workshops. ● Developed shared evaluation strategies and metrics. ● Created a decision tree to help evaluators determine when to use quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods approaches to demonstrate the effectiveness of their program. ● Created additional, complementary documents for microlearnings that offer different modalities for different types of learners. ● Offered “office hours” for funded agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue to offer “office hours” for funded agencies ● Create institutionalized knowledge and procedures within agencies

Year 1 Theme	Year 2 and 3 Actions	Future
<p>4. Developing Capacity for Storytelling and Effective Reporting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on Year 1 needs assessment, offered TA for effective storytelling strategies and evaluation-specific storytelling elements. • Created and delivered an in-person training on best practices in storytelling. • Developed microlearnings on how to effectively report outcomes. • Provided strategies on when and how to present quantitative and qualitative data and how to integrate these to tell impactful stories. • Obtained feedback from working group on these resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop microlearnings on effective data management, data visualization, and data analyses to tailor outcome reporting to different audiences. • Continue to provide this through TA and potentially workshops.
<p>5. Adopting a Mindset of “We are All in This Together”: Collaboration, Shared Goal Setting, and Alignment as Community Building Opportunities to Advance Program Evaluation Work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued to present regular progress updates at the monthly MHDD board meetings and at monthly meetings with board staff. • Improved communication channels for shared goal- and expectation-setting. • Met monthly with board members to discuss progress and obtain feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue regular progress reporting. • Pilot brief agency overview videos about what boards and other audiences need to know about the agencies.