Reversing the Odds
Improving Outcomes for Babies in the Child Welfare System

By Sheryl Dicker, J.D.

"Draws on the latest research, rich case studies, and Dicker’s years of experience to show the field how it can meet the health care needs of young children who have suffered in systems that are supposed to help them." —Robert G. Schwartz, Executive Director, Juvenile Law Center, Philadelphia, PA

“A powerful statement on why we must take much better care of our most vulnerable children … Using true stories that demonstrate successful and unsuccessful community responses … Ms. Dicker points the way to better outcomes for these children.” —Judge Leonard Edwards, Judge-in-Residence, California Administrative Office of the Courts, Center for Families, Children & the Courts, San Francisco, CA

Babies and young children are involved in an increasing number of cases in family and juvenile courts. Many of these children are at high risk for physical, cognitive, and social-emotional delays—and often don’t have access to the services and supports that could make all the difference. This is the book that will help attorneys, judges, and other professionals ensure comprehensive healthy development of these vulnerable children from birth to age 3. Readers will

• discover what new brain research says about the importance of effective early intervention and consistent caregiving in the earliest years of life

• see how the current system works by tracing several children’s journeys through the juvenile and family court process

• learn about the powerful tools in the newest child welfare legislation—The Fostering Connections and Adoption Assistance Act of 2008

• help fulfill the promise of new laws related to health care, early intervention and early childhood education

• understand the juvenile court’s powerful potential to ensure young children’s healthy development

• help improve access to coordinated, consistent health care for young children

• work to make early intervention screening universal and services readily available to young children and families

• promote early childhood education as a portal to school readiness, social-emotional development, and overall well-being

Essential reading for a broad range of professionals and decision-makers working with young children, this book will help readers reverse the odds for young children involved in the court system—and set the stage for lifelong physical, developmental, and emotional health.
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