

Bazelon Center Marks Health Reform's Two-Year Anniversary with New Report: *The Affordable Care Act at Year Two*

Washington -- March 22, 2012 -- The Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law celebrates the second anniversary of the healthcare reform law known as the Affordable Care Act (ACA), signed into law on March 23, 2010. To mark the occasion, Bazelon Center experts released [*The Affordable Care Act at Year Two*](#), a new report highlighting many of the law's achievements over the past two years.

"In just its first two years, the Affordable Care Act has already improved the lives of countless Americans," stated Chris Koyanagi, policy director of the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law. "Our new report outlines key parts of the law already in effect and their achievements so far," Koyanagi stated.

According to the report, the ACA provides important insurance consumer protections, such as prohibitions on pre-existing condition exclusions, lifetime limits, and annual limits on certain benefits. Thanks to the ACA's provision allowing children to remain on their parents' insurance policies until they turn 26, 2.5 million young adults now have access to insurance coverage.

The ACA also made important reforms to Medicaid options, including improvements to the section 1915(i) State Plan Option to Provide Home- and Community-Based Services, and the new option to provide health homes for individuals with chronic conditions, including mental illnesses.

While these provisions have been extremely helpful to people across the country, some of the ACA's most beneficial reforms will take effect in the next few years. These include the expansion of Medicaid, the establishment of state health insurance exchanges, and the required coverage of mental health services at parity in the essential health benefits package.

The Bazelon Center has been a leading advocate on the ACA's implementation. Recently, the Bazelon Center led a broad coalition in filing an [amicus \(friend of the court\) brief in Florida v. HHS](#), defending federal-state programs and the expansion of Medicaid. Find out more about the ACA and our work at <http://bit.ly/BazelonACA>.

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The Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law (www.bazelon.org) is the leading national legal-advocacy organization representing people with mental disabilities. It promotes laws and policies that can enable people with serious mental illnesses or intellectual disabilities to exercise their life choices and access the resources they need to participate fully in their communities.

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