Acknowledgments

We are indebted to a number of colleagues who have invested deeply in this collaborative effort. Arlene Bowers Andrews, former director of the Institute for Families in Society, urged the institute’s faculty to conceptualize and write about our collaborations with numerous community-based organizations that serve children and families. Without her vision and her confidence in our work and in us, this volume would not have been undertaken.

As coeditors and contributors, our process in developing this volume was somewhat unusual. Beginning in 2001, we met together regularly to reflect upon and conceptualize our professional work as consultants. As a group, we developed the book’s focus and organization and subsequently collaboratively reviewed and discussed chapter drafts. The willingness of the contributors to engage in this time-consuming process greatly enhanced both the theoretical and practical basis of the book and its readability. We are indebted to all of our colleagues at the Institute for Families in Society who contributed in both large and small ways to the conceptualization of this book.

Throughout this volume, vignettes and case examples from our practice illustrate the text. We are grateful to the organizations with which our consultation, technical assistance, and collaborative practice occurred for giving permission for these illustrations to be included.

We also consistently received excellent editorial and technical support from Renée Gibson, public information director at IFS. As a member of our collaborative team, Renée brought her multifaceted competencies to bear on the manuscript and assisted in final editing and formatting as well as the design of the volume’s graphic illustrations.
At critical decision points throughout the process, we also received invaluable guidance from the social work editorial staff of Columbia University Press: the late John Michel, Shelly Reinhardt, and, most recently, Lauren Dockett. We also recognize the contributions of the anonymous peer reviewers who provided insightful feedback and wise suggestions, thereby improving the final product.

And finally, we are deeply grateful to the countless professional practitioners and community professionals, service consumers, and the staff of funding organizations whose collaborations with us have shaped and informed our knowledge, our skills, and our understanding of what is needed to support and strengthen both communities and families.

Patricia Stone Motes
Peg McCartt Hess