Save the Dates

March 2-5, 2014
27th Annual Children’s Mental Health Research & Policy Conference
The 27th annual Tampa conference will be held at the Hilton Tampa Downtown.
http://www.cmhconference.com

April 23-25, 2014
11th Annual National Training Institute on Effective Practices: Supporting Young Children's Social Emotional Development
National Training Institute will hold its 11th Annual Conference at the Vinoy Renaissance Hotel in St. Petersburg, FL.
http://www.challengingbehavior.org/

April 25, 2014
9th Annual Fiesta by the Bay
CARD’s 9th Annual Fiesta by the Bay celebration will be held at the Ybor City Museum with special Honorary Chair Gayle Guyardo, co-anchor News Channel 8 Today.

April 28, 2014
7th Community Applications of Behavior Analysis (CABA)
Celebrating the different applications of Behavior Analysis in our community by the Graduate Students in the Applied Behavior Analysis Program at USF.

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PBS: A Proven Approach in Schools Results in Fewer Referrals and Suspensions

One of the primary initiatives of the Florida Center for Inclusive Communities (FCIC), housed within the Department of Child and Family Studies, is the area of Positive Behavior Support (PBS). The PBS framework, designed to enhance academic and social behavior outcomes for all students, has transformed states, early childhood programs, professional development approaches, and the use of data for decision-making within schools and early childhood programs.

Through diverse federal, state and local funding streams, faculty from FCIC have been engaged in three decades of leadership research, training, and implementation of PBS within early childhood and K-12 settings. Now implemented in over 20,000 schools nationwide, notable outcomes of the program include a reduction in office discipline referrals, school suspension and expulsions and increases in school ratings of excellence. The framework is also being implemented within early care and education programs by 18 states that have statewide initiatives that are focused on addressing challenging behavior in very young children with an emphasis on promoting the social and emotional development and preventing challenging behavior.

Florida’s Positive Behavior Support

Florida’s statewide initiative of Positive Behavior Support Project (FLPBS), funded by the State of Florida through federal assistance under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), provided training and support to school personnel in over 1500 Florida schools in 2013. Across 9 years of fidelity and outcome data collected, high Implementing schools in Florida realized 27% fewer office discipline referrals, 37% fewer in-school suspensions and 42% fewer out-of-school suspensions.

In 2013, the FLPBS website served nearly 300,000 visitors (with over 11 million hits!) and offered a variety of supports including online chats, skill-building webinars and web training, practical guides, videos and a variety of materials available for download. The website also offers specific areas for FLPBS District Coordinators, a coaching corner for current FLPBS Coaches, and a Model Schools section, which showcases exemplar FLPBS schools in the state of Florida. For more information about PBS and related interventions, please visit http://flpbs.fmhi.usf.edu.

CFS Welcomes 2014 with New and Renewed Grants

For over thirty years, CFS faculty and staff have collaborated with communities across the nation to assess and improve the quality and effectiveness of services in real world settings and to ensure the dissemination and translation of research findings into practice. As CFS welcomed the new year of 2014, we welcomed exciting new grants awarded to the department, as well as grant renewals that allow us to continue much important work for children, youth and their families. The following pages will outline some of our current work.
As 2013 Departed, New Projects Entered!

2013 went out with a bang for CFS as numerous grants were awarded or renewed within the department.

CFS Selected as a Partner of the New Technical Assistance Network for Children’s Behavioral Health (TA Network)

CFS has been selected as a member of the Technical Assistance Network for Children’s Behavioral Health (TA Network), the new national center for states and communities funded by the Comprehensive Community Mental Health Services for Children and Their Families Program (Children’s Mental Health Initiative or CMHI).

The CMHI program is an initiative of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), Child, Adolescent and Family Branch (CAFB) that supports communities in their efforts to expand and sustain community-based systems of care for children, youth and young adults (birth-21) with behavioral health needs and their families.

Under the lead of the Institute for Innovation and Implementation (The Institute) at the University of Maryland, School of Social Work, CFS faculty and staff including Project Director/Co-PI Katherine Lazear and PI Mario Hernandez will support the CMHI grantees as they work to ensure the hallmarks of systems of care – a coordinated network of services and supports that is family-driven, youth-guided, culturally and linguistically competent, and data-driven – are in place.

CFS, in partnership with the Center for Community Learning, Inc. in Miami, will be the Cultural and Linguistic Hub of the TA Network. Working with the diverse selection of systems of care communities throughout the United States, including urban, rural, Tribal and non-English speaking communities, they will provide information, training and technical assistance, and evaluation consultation about cultural and linguistic competence. In addition, Branch staff and partners across the TA Network will also receive the training and technical assistance.

“This is an incredible opportunity for USF to become part of improving the nation’s child & behavioral health service system,” said Dr. Mario Hernandez. “This couldn’t have happened at a more timely moment in our country’s history with the implementation of the Affordable Health Care Act. We look forward to helping communities align their service delivery strategies to system of care values and principles and connecting those in need to additional resources that can enhance their efforts.”

Nearly $1.4 million in funds has been allocated to CFS over a period of five years. The first year will be funded at this point in time. Visit the CFS website to view complete article.

HIPPY Education Advancement Project Evaluation

Drs. Sharon Hodges and Teresa Nesman and Ms. Amy Green in CFS are providing an independent assessment of the HIPPY Education Advancement Project that includes updated curricula for both the Ages 3 and 4 school readiness and HIPPY’s new Leading to Educational Advancement Pathway (LEAP) professional development program. These HIPPY USA initiatives are supported through funding from the Kellogg Foundation. The new curricula aim to help children enter school better prepared to learn, while LEAP helps home visitors who teach the curriculum, most of whom are HIPPY mothers, increase their educational credentials and employment opportunities. The 18-month evaluation will provide data related to project success, contributions of the project to improvement in the lives of vulnerable children, and racial equity. Data will also be provided on processes and relationships, including cultural considerations that are essential for success in implementing the HIPPY program in diverse communities.

Evaluation of Pine Hills Wellness Project

Under the direction of PI Sharon Hodges, PhD, CFS and CBCS faculty including Drs. Wei Wang, John Robst, Teresa Nesman, Mario Hernandez, and Ms. Ruby Joseph will be evaluating a one-year pilot conducted through the Children’s Home Society of Florida, Inc. and in collaboration with WellCare, a Medicaid managed care provider. The pilot is aimed at improving access to healthcare in the community of Pine Hills, FL, which has experienced service gaps and high rates of emergency room use. As part of the project, community health workers will visit parents of 2-6 year old children who have had a recent visit to the emergency room to help them access their primary care physician, offer support and referral on other needs related to health access (e.g. transportation) as well as general guidance on healthy living. CFS faculty recently participated in the first community meeting, where community members discussed what “closing the gaps” should look like. The photo to the right was taken from ideas presented at the meeting. More details will be made available soon.
New CFS Projects

Dr. Tom Massey Receives over $400,000 Grant from the National Institutes of Health

Dr. Oliver “Tom” Massey has secured over $400,000 in funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to conduct a pilot study in the Hillsborough County Middle School System. The two-year study will help to gain an understanding of how mental health services may be effectively implemented, integrated and sustained in school settings.

“Although schools are primarily organized to provide instruction, evidence has shown that increasing the integration of school-based mental health services improves academic outcomes,” said Dr. Massey. “Despite this evidence, the field knows little about how to effectively integrate those services into school systems.”

The project, Using Network Analysis to Assess School Mental Health Organizational Structure, is funded as part of the NIH Exploratory/Developmental Grant (R21) and intended to encourage exploratory and developmental research projects by providing support for the early and conceptual stages of projects. The pilot study, coordinated by an advisory team composed of the research team, school district student service leaders, and nationally recognized experts in school based mental health services and implementation science, will assess and understand the nature of communication and role structures among school based mental health professionals and teachers. A social network analysis will be used to identify the structure of communications and roles among all professional groups within schools. Differences within communication and role structures across service intensity will be compared, and the contribution these structures make to the quality of mental health integration will be assessed.

“Working with the Hillsborough County School District will allow us to develop new knowledge that will lay a solid foundation for future research that will strengthen critical communication networks that are activated when children display mental health problems,” added Dr. Massey.

Dr. Massey has extensive research, evaluation, training, and work experience in school mental health. He has worked with the School District of Hillsborough County directly on a grant focused on school mental health integration. He has also led the evaluation of the Gear-Up project for improving academic success and currently serves as Chair of the Hillsborough County Anti-bullying Advisory Committee.

Additional members of the USF research team are Dr. Donna Burton, who has worked on school mental health research and program evaluation and has expertise in the implementation of mental health services for children and adolescents in community settings, and Dr. John Skvoretz, Professor in the USF Department of Sociology.

“This work completely represents the mission of our department to develop innovative programs for the state and nation’s social services, criminal justice, and education systems,” said Department Chair Dr. Mario Hernandez.

“Contingent on our findings, we hope the research will be expanded to more thoroughly assess how communication and role structures contribute to individualized mental health outcomes for children, how organizational structures contribute to efficiency and sustainability of school based mental health services, and how schools may better encourage and facilitate the communication and role structures that are most conducive to effective services through training and professional development practices,” said Dr. Massey.

CFS to Evaluate Florida Children’s Mental Health System of Care System of Care Expansion Planning Grant

CFS has been selected as the evaluator of a federally funded program that is intended to help Florida’s children diagnosed with serious emotional disturbance live at home, do well in school, and successfully live in the community. The Florida Children’s Mental Health System of Care (CMHSOC) project, awarded to the Florida Department of Children and Families, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Program Office, is funded by the System Of Care (SOC) expansion grant through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

According to SAMHSA, “accumulating research and evaluation results from the Children’s Mental Health Institute over the last 15 years have demonstrated that, when a SOC approach is implemented and sustained, children, youth and families experience both short and long-term benefits.”

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**New CFS Projects**

The SOC expansion grant supports a comprehensive strategic plan for improving, expanding and sustaining services provided through a SOC approach. Florida's CMHSOC project will involve collaboration across government and private agencies, providers, families, and youth for the purpose of improving access and expanding the array of coordinated community-based, culturally and linguistically competent services and supports for children and youth with a serious emotional disturbance and their families. Each Florida region will determine their unique strengths and needs based on diverse cultures, ethnicities, languages, geography and socio-economic characteristics. A total of 4000 unduplicated children and youth are expected to be served during the four-year project.

The grant also calls for a provider to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the project. The CFS team was selected due to their advanced training and extensive experience in conducting research and evaluating data necessary for the evaluation opportunity. As CMHSOC project evaluator, CFS faculty and staff, under the direction of Mary Armstrong, PhD, will utilize grant-mandated instruments that include culturally and linguistically competent data collection methods for establishing baseline measurement of performance indicators and family outcomes at the beginning of service provision, at follow-up after six (6) months of service, and at discharge from service. CFS will collaborate with a family organization (contracted to provide CMHSOC services) in the evaluation process and on all data collection instruments. Their continuous feedback to the project leadership and management team will help to enhance and improve the Florida CMHSOC Expansion Project during its implementation.

“We are delighted to be chosen as the evaluator for the CMHSOC project. It is an opportunity to partner closely with Florida Department of Children and Families in the expansion of an effective system of care that will offer quality services and supports to Florida’s children with mental health problems and their families,” said Dr. Mary Armstrong. “One of our goals is to offer timely and useful feedback to the Department on implementation facilitators and challenges. We also will examine changes in the quality of care that children and their families receive, as well as improvements in child functioning.”

**SAMHSA Grant to Enhance Suicide Prevention Efforts on USF Campus**

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has awarded a three-year, $306,000 grant to the University of South Florida (USF) as part of their Campus Suicide Prevention Grant program. Under the direction of Marc Karver, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Psychology at USF, CFS's Stephen Roggenbaum will serve as Training Coordinator & Co-Principal Investigator. The USF Team will build upon university and state level resources and programs to enhance the existing university infrastructure and capacity to deliver and sustain effective mental health and substance abuse prevention, treatment, and recovery support services.

The funding, including an additional $306,000 match from USF and the community, will enable USF to better identify at-risk students through gatekeeper trainings, refer and link students to services through the Students of Concern Assistance Team, and train mental health professionals to assess and manage suicidal risk in students.

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**National Leaders to Speak at CFS Conference**

The 27th Annual Children’s Mental Health Research & Policy Conference will be held March 2 – 5 in Tampa. This year’s speakers include national leaders who have been dedicated to shaping national policy.

Appointed by President Bill Clinton in 1998 as the 16th Surgeon General of the United States, Dr. David Satcher will be the featured speaker for the opening plenary session for the conference on Monday, March 3rd. Dr. Satcher’s presentation will discuss the history, mission, and programs of the Satcher Health Leadership Institute and their relevance to promoting and protecting mental health, especially of children.

Dr. Thomas H. Bornemann has been confirmed as the Monday afternoon speaker for the conference on Monday, March 3rd. His presentation will profile the work of the Carter Center, with a special focus on important issues facing children’s mental health policy.

During Tuesday morning’s plenary, national leaders will describe new research and implementation efforts that are helping Wraparound “go to scale” nationally. Wraparound is a method of engaging with individuals with complex needs (most typically children, youth, and their families) so that they can live in their homes and communities and realize their hopes and dreams.

In Tuesday afternoon’s plenary, leading experts will present the current research regarding the unique needs of young adults with serious mental health conditions as they set out on their path to more mature adulthood. Knowledge from research and lived experience about interventions that support education, training, and work goals of young adults, and the system context of those interventions will be described. View additional details at the conference website at http://cmhconference.com/
Florida’s Center for Child Welfare Granted a 4 year, $2.5 Million Continuation after Competitive Procurement

After a competitive application process with Florida’s Department of Children and Families, Don Policella and Center staff will continue their efforts to provide information, collaboration, and program support to Florida’s professional child welfare stakeholders.

Since its establishment in 2007, the Center has grown to serve more than 6400 registered users who access the site regularly. Center services include a fully searchable on-line knowledge library categorized by program area, a comprehensive credentialed video training component for professionals, statewide and local live web events hosted and supported by staff, responding and posting of Frequently Asked Questions submitted by professionals, and a collaboration component that serves as an interactive on-line information-sharing portal where peers and experts can interact with each other and develop on-line learning communities. www.centerforchildwelfare.com

Casey Family Programs Sponsors Project To Safely Reduce the Number of Children In Foster Care

Florida’s Center for Child Welfare is also working on a special project supported by Casey Family Programs to reduce the number of children in foster care and their lengths of stay. Casey Family Programs is the nation’s largest operating foundation focused entirely on foster care and improving the child welfare system.

Don Policella and Center staff will work with members in Hillsborough County (District 13) to develop a toolkit based on successful strategies developed by the judicially led team comprised of Thirteenth Judicial Circuit Court Judge Katherine G. Essrig, Linda Jewell Morgan, Casey Family Programs, a judicial consultant, court administration, child protective investigations and child welfare services leaders and specialists among others. The toolkit will feature documentary and instructional videos, produced by The Center, designed to assist in replicating the process statewide and nationally.

“Collaboration between courts and child welfare agencies along with other community stakeholders has long been recognized as a requirement for the protection and well-being of children,” said retired Judge Patricia A. Macías, a judicial engagement consultant at Casey Family Programs. “Assisting courts in using data to inform what needs to be done to achieve the best outcomes for children will be a critical step in changing and improving practice.”
Dr. Lise Fox Honored

Dr. Lise Fox – a leading contributor to the field of early education intervention for several decades – has received the Mary McEvoy Service to the Field Award. The award was established by the Division for Early Childhood (DEC), the largest international professional organization dedicated to improving educational outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities, students with disabilities, and/or the gifted.

Given annually to a parent, community member, or professional who has made notable and significant national or international contributions to the field of early childhood special education, the award was named in honor of Mary McEvoy, former director of the Center for Early Education and Development at the University of Minnesota and a nationally respected researcher and advocate in early childhood studies. She was one of seven passengers who died with Minnesota Senator Paul Wellstone in a 2002 plane crash.

“While I am so pleased for this recognition, the work I have achieved only happened because of the collective talents and synergy of the teams that I have worked with through the Center on Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning and the Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children,” said Dr. Lise Fox.

Visit the CFS website to view complete article.

Association for University Centers on Disabilities Honors FCIC at Awards Gala

Each year during the Association for University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD) Annual Conference, an Awards Gala is held to honor individuals, groups or programs for their exemplary work and service. The FCIC/UCEDD is the proud winner of this year’s AUCD Council on Community Advocacy Award! It is given to the UCEDD that has exhibited the strongest commitment to support the full and active participation of self-advocates and family members on its consumer advisory council.

“We are forever indebted to the altruism, dedication, and determination of our Community Advisory Council members to truly make a difference,” said FCIC Associate Director Elizabeth Perkins. Dr. Perkins and CAC Chair Damian Gregory both traveled to Washington DC to receive the award on behalf of FCIC. The award was presented at AUCD’s National Conference in Washington, DC in November!

Eric Biel, CBCS Graduate Profiled by USF Office of Student Success

Eric Biel, who graduated with distinction from the USF College of Behavioral & Community Sciences in May 2013, has been profiled in the USF Provost Office publication, Fulfilling Hopes and Dreams: Stories of Student Success.

“The undergraduate and graduate students profiled demonstrate what can be accomplished when an institution is determined to create and sustain an environment in which expectations are high and students are provided with both the opportunities and the support they need to succeed,” wrote Ralph C. Wilcox, PhD., Provost and Executive Vice President in the introduction of the publication.

CFS Fall Luncheon Highlights

The 2013 Fall Luncheon and Awards Ceremony for CFS was held November 5th at the USF Gibbons Alumni Center and honored outstanding community partners, as well as faculty and staff who play key roles in the success of CFS work.

“Community partners have our shared mission of strengthening and sustaining healthy communities through efforts in academics, research, and training,” said Dr. Mario Hernandez, Chair of the CFS Department. “I thank them, as well as our faculty and staff, for their willingness and dedication toward improving the lives of children and families throughout our state and nationally.”

Special Thanks:

Bill Herstek  Abatement Process
Teresa Nesman  Work on the Master of Science in Child & Adolescent Behavioral Health

Outstanding USF Partner Awards:

Karen Liller, PhD, USF College of Public Health
Thanks for all your assistance with Master of Science Proposal in Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health
Derek McKinney, Manger, USF Cashier’s Office
Thanks for all your assistance with Conference Registrations!

Outstanding Community Partner Awards

Jennifer Rava  Founder / CEO Engage Behavioral Health
Engage provides Applied Behavior Analysis/Applied Verbal Behavior services in clinics, homes, communities and schools.
Chris Murray  Quality Management Specialist Heartland for Children
Community Based Care Agency
Heartland for Children promotes the prevention of child abuse and oversees the provision of services for children who have been abused and/or neglected.
Donna Kimes  Supervisor, Pre-Kindergarten Exceptional Education/ Hillsborough County Public Schools
The program provides services for pre-kindergarten children with developmental delays and disabilities who receive special instructional services designed to meet each child's individual needs.

Individual Outstanding Achievement Awards

Nancy Burrus  Staff Assistant
Janet Reyes  Unit Research Administrator
Tracy-Ann Gilbert-Smith  Social and Behavioral Researcher
Cindy Shockley  Training Support Specialist

CFS Team Outstanding Achievement Awards

ITR: Institute for Translational Research in Adolescent Behavioral Health
ITR offers student scholars a one-of-a-kind education and training program in translational research in adolescent behavioral health.

Florida KIDS COUNT (FKC)
FKC is part of a Nationwide KIDS COUNT Network, a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation that is a national and state-by-state effort to track the status of children in the U.S. providing policymakers and citizens with benchmarks of child well-being.

Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) State Training and Technical Assistance (T&TA)
The Center works in collaboration with HIPPY USA’s national office in Little Rock, AR, to provide training, technical support, and guidance to all HIPPY programs in the state of Florida.

Interdisciplinary Center for Evaluation and Intervention (ICEI)
The Center, funded by the Florida Department of Education, is a specialized diagnostic and training center that serves preschool and school-aged students (ages 3-22) having autism spectrum disorders, serious behavioral/social/emotional challenges, and other complex conditions.

RUN Grant Team
The team is developing an effective intervention model focused on addressing runaway behavior in children in the child welfare system.
Giving to CFS

Please consider partnering with us to generate hope and solutions for the complex issues confronting individuals, children, and families. Donations to CFS support our commitment to enhance the development, mental health and well-being of children and families through leadership in research and evaluation, theory, policy, and practice innovation.

Donations can be made online, or by mail. For more information, visit http://cfs.cbcs.usf.edu/donations/, or contact Lisa Isenbeck at (813) 974-2327, or email at lisenbeck@usf.edu.

CFS Resource Centers & Training Programs

Visit our website http://cfs.cbcs.usf.edu to learn more about our Training Programs and Resource Centers

- Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD)
- Community Solutions
- Florida Center for Inclusive Communities (University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities FCIC-UCEDD)
- Florida KIDS COUNT
- Florida’s Center for Child Welfare
- Florida’s Positive Behavior Support Project
- Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)
- National Directory of Family-Run & Youth Guided Organizations for Children’s Behavioral Health
- National Research and Evaluation Center (NREC) HIPPY-USA at USF
- The Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI)

CFS Quarterly is produced by the Department of Child & Family Studies within the College of Behavioral & Community Sciences at the University of South Florida.

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