Florida Programs Show Ray of Light for At-Risk Mothers and Babies

A ray of positive light is shining on Florida as fewer babies are being born to teen girls and young women, yet there is still much that needs to be done to reduce the rate of unintended and unwanted pregnancies and increase the number of babies born into healthy environments.

Florida KIDS COUNT, which disseminates national, statewide and county-level data on key indicators for Florida’s children, reached out to Children’s Services Councils and various state partners to find out what is being done in their communities to continue the downward trend of teen pregnancies and increase the number of babies born with opportunities for a bright future. Responses revealed a variety of prevention and early intervention programs focused on teen pregnancy, prenatal care, child abuse and neglect, and substance abuse.

“Evidence-based and comprehensive approaches to prevention and intervention are keys to reducing the numbers of babies born at risk of unhealthy beginnings. Children’s Services Councils and agencies throughout the state are implementing approaches that are showing positive outcomes, said Susan Weitzel, director of Florida KIDS COUNT. “We are pleased to share this information so that other communities can learn what is working and tailor approaches specific to their needs.”

The programs highlighted are showing improvements in areas of infant mortality, low birth weight babies and births among teenagers, and are seeing positive impacts for pregnant and parenting women with substance abuse issues.
Congratulations to the 2010 Recipients of CFS Faculty and Staff Awards

Outstanding Individual Achievement Awards
Professors Hewitt B. “Rusty” Clark and Paul Greenbaum were honored for their years of service to CFS. Research Support Specialist Frank Reyes and Web Content Administrator Ron Menard also received awards.

Financial Snap-shot of Fiscal Year 2010

For Fiscal Year 2010, 53 active federal and non-federal grants totaled $11,275,250 in funding for CFS.

Federal $8,491,686
New $2,718,716
Renewal $5,772,970
Non-Federal $2,783,564
New $1,455,875
Renewal $1,327,689
All Awards $11,275,250

New Funding for Fiscal Year 2010
$1,003,689 from the Florida Department of Education to focus on individuals with autism and related disabilities.

$528,000 from the University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Service to improving the quality of life for persons with disabilities and their families in Florida and throughout the nation.

$200,000 from the State of Alaska to help prepare youth and young adults (ages 14-29) with emotional/behavioral difficulties transition to adulthood.

$102,373 from Sam Houston State University (federal flowthrough) to analyze substance abuse interventions for minority and female teens.

Team Awards

Connect Familias Project Team
Funded by the Children’s Trust and the Annie E. Casey Foundation, ConnectFamilias is a neighborhood based and family focused partnership in the Little Havana community of Miami that is successfully reducing violence and responding to serious social needs in their community. In the past year, 300 families were served, many receiving intensive services for multiple needs. The CFS team has helped guide this positive change through evaluation and training activities, beginning with an evaluation in 1999 of the Abriendo Puertas Family Resource Center, now a partner of ConnectFamilias.

Program-Wide Positive Behavior Support (PBS) Team
Funded by the Children’s Board of Hillsborough County, this project provides assistance to selected early childhood programs in Hillsborough County to build their capacity to effectively promote young children’s social and emotional competence and address challenging behavior. In 2010, the team hosted 32 community trainings to 662 providers in the community. Participating programs showed improvements in their development efforts, partnerships with their families, fidelity of implementation in classrooms, and in child behavior.
Supporting Parents Data Collection Team

Federally funded by the Institute of Education Sciences, the project is pilot testing and researching the effectiveness of the “Parent Connector” intervention aimed at increasing the engagement of families as partners with school and mental health providers. Through a peer-to-peer support program, the intervention supports parents of middle-school students who have serious emotional disturbances and are in special education settings. The connections are meant to support parents emotionally, supply information on community resources, and encourage active parent engagement in their child’s education and mental health services. The team has supported 40 parents through their weekly phone calls. (Update on page 4.)

FCIC/UCEDD Core Leadership Team

The Florida Center for Inclusive Communities/University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (FCIC-UCEDD) team provides both pre-service and in-service training programs for professionals and community members who provide supports and services to individuals with developmental disabilities. Among 2010 accomplishments, FCIC-UCEDD provided 800 hours of technical assistance, 2,800 hours of training, 109 products, 838 activities affecting the lives of 34,000 individuals. The FCIC Medical Clerkship project (collaboration with USF College of Medicine) trained 245 medical students in health issues of persons with disabilities.

CFS Dissemination Group

The CFS Dissemination Group, formally known as CFS Communications, develops and implements strategies for creating, communicating, and disseminating CFS products and activities to colleagues, clients, and partners. The Dissemination Group serves as the primary source for updates and information sharing on CFS activities and accomplishments both internally and externally.
CFS Announces New Academic Offerings

Certificate Program in Positive Behavior Support
Beginning Spring 2011, a fully online Graduate Certificate in Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is now being offered through CFS and the College of Behavioral & Community Sciences, as a part of the interdisciplinary program the Florida Center for Inclusive Communities’ (FCIC, a University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities). This on-line certificate program offers a 15 credit hour course of study to prepare individuals working in mental health, school psychology, school administration, education, early education, and social work to implement PBS with individuals, in schools, and early childhood settings. The certificate program includes classes focused on providing consultation and guiding collaboration, implementing school wide positive behavior support, addressing behavior challenges in young children, and intensive individualized interventions. For more information, visit http://pbs.cbsc.usf.edu.

Required Courses
- Intensive Individualized Positive Behavior Support
- Behavior Consultation & Collaboration
- School-wide Positive Behavior Support
- Addressing Behavior Challenges in Young Children

See USF listing at http://www.gradcerts.usf.edu, or contact Associate Professor Bobbie Vaughn, PhD at 813-974-6104 or bvaughn@usf.edu.

New Course: Issues & Trends in Developmental Disabilities

This interdisciplinary course on disability issues and trends provides students with a background in the history of disabilities, an overview of the impact of disabilities across the life span, and the implications for policy, legislation, education and services. This course is taught by interdisciplinary faculty, including families and persons with disabilities and meets face-to-face three times monthly with the fourth week devoted to a project of practical application. Students have the opportunity to apply for stipends to enroll in this course and complete the requirements. Contact Training Director, Bobbie Vaughn at bvaughn@usf.edu.

CFS Efforts Support At-Risk Children and Youth

SAMHSA Grant in Jacksonville to Include Work of CFS

CFS was recently subcontracted to work with the Jacksonville, FL community on a project that aims to transform mental health services into a system of care that will better meet the needs of children and youth with emotional and behavioral disorders and their families. The Kids 'N Care project is funded through a $9 million grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and will focus initially on children in foster care and the juvenile justice system, homeless children, as well as young, high-risk children in challenged neighborhoods.

CFS, having a long track record of assisting other communities with similar projects, will be involved with activities related to ensuring the system of care is sustainable, replicable, values family and youth participation, and provides culturally competent services. Drs. Mary Armstrong and Norin Dollard, along with youth consultant Richard Chapman will work with team members and families to document the number of children and families served and how their home, school and community functioning and satisfaction were affected by participation in Kids 'N Care. For additional information, visit the CFS news website at http://cfs.fmhi.usf.edu/.

Parent Connector Phase II is Underway!

A new phase of the “Parent Connector” support intervention is now underway! Three new Parent Connectors have been hired and trained to provide 22 more families with support, bringing a current total of 62 families receiving services through the study!

The Research Team is also happy to announce the successful completion of participant recruitment. Interviews ended on Friday, January 21st and 128 families were successfully enrolled into the study. Now that recruitment is complete, the team will begin working on the next phase of data collection: parent evaluations of the program. It is expected that state and local organizations can adopt this program for their communities and help improve the quality of life of children and their families. For additional information, contact Krista Kutash, PhD at kutash@usf.edu.

Bookmark our new web address!
http://cfs.cbsc.usf.edu
CFS's Dr. Krista Kutash Steps Down from IRB after 12 Years

Dr. Krista Kutash, Professor in the Department of Child and Family Studies, has stepped down as Chair of the USF Social and Behavioral Institutional Review Board (IRB). Dr. Kutash has been a member of the IRB for 12 years, and Chair of the IRB for the last two years. Asked why, Dr. Kutash is quick to point out, “It’s time for new blood. New IRB members bring new insights and perspectives to assist the IRB administration.”

As Chair of the IRB during the last two years, Dr. Kutash has helped orient an entire new leadership team within the IRB office and helped facilitate faculty conversion to the new electronic application process. “I’ve enjoyed helping researchers assure the safety of their subjects while simultaneously facilitating their research efforts. I encourage all researchers on campus to become involved with the IRB.”

All universities, hospitals, and other institutions that conduct or support human subject research must have that research reviewed by an IRB. The USF Social and Behavioral IRB holds authority for the review, approval and continuing oversight of human subjects research that involves procedures or data collection that are non-invasive in nature.

Glen Dunlap Receives Mary McEvoy Service Award

Congratulations to Glen Dunlap, PhD, the 2010 recipient of the Division for Early Childhood's Mary McEvoy Service to the Field Award. Dr. Dunlap was recognized for his “significant and lasting contributions to the fields of early intervention and early childhood special education.”

Since joining the CFS faculty in 1988, Dr. Dunlap’s prominent research has greatly contributed to the areas of positive behavior support, family support, emotional and behavioral disorders, and autism and other developmental disabilities. He was instrumental in the establishment of Florida’s Center for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD) at USF, and in founding the Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions.

The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) is one of seventeen divisions of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) — the largest international professional organizations dedicated to improving educational outcomes for individuals with exceptionalities, students with disabilities, and/or the gifted. For more information, visit DEC’s web page at www.dec-sped.org.

CFS Chair Mario Hernandez is Guest Speaker for the Department of Homeland Security

In recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month, CFS Department Chair Dr. Mario Hernandez served as guest speaker at a celebration held at the Tampa Port Authority, and hosted by the U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP) within the Department of Homeland Security. During National Hispanic Heritage Month, CBP promotes awareness about the history, culture, and contributions of Hispanic Americans.

Dr. Hernandez provided a brief overview of the Hispanic population in the Tampa Bay area. According to the figures provided to him by Florida KIDS COUNT — housed within CFS — the largest Hispanic groups in Florida are from Cuba, Puerto Rico and Mexico in Central America, and Colombia in South America. Florida is expected to see an “explosive growth” of greater than 20 percent in the overall number of Hispanic high school graduates through 2022. In addition, Florida ranks in the top 3 of states with the largest unauthorized immigrant populations.

Much of Dr. Hernandez’s research efforts have been on improving the accessibility of culturally competent mental health services for diverse children and their families.

Transition to Retirement

Dr. Hewitt B. “Rusty” Clark, nationally recognized for his work with youth and young adults with emotional or behavioral difficulties (SED/SMI), has retired from USF. Dr. Clark began working at USF in 1983, was tenured in 1986, and has conducted extensive research and developed promising practices related to planning, implementing, and sustaining community transition systems for youth and youth adults with SED/SMI. He has contributed to the field greatly through his many professional affiliations and membership in associations & committees.

Dr. Clark contributed to the department and Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute through such things as: presiding over the meeting in which the department “CFS” was named in 1984; serving on the strategic planning committee which established the CFS mission and the division platform that has proven to be so helpful in promoting productivity across the entire department; and assisting in establishing and nurturing the Applied Behavior Analysis Master’s Degree program.

“M y research, grant funding, and scholarly efforts and productivity would not have been possible without the culture of innovation and collaboration that CFS has provided its staff and faculty,” said Dr. Clark.

Having been granted the distinguished Emeritus Professorship by USF, we look forward to seeing Dr. Clark as he continues his research efforts.

Congratulations, Mario!

Congratulations to Dr. Mario Hernandez on his reappointment to a second three-year term as Chair of the Department of Child and Family Studies. In making this decision, the Dean surveyed CFS faculty and staff, and results from that survey were overwhelmingly positive. Survey responses described Dr. Hernandez as “having an excellent understanding of both faculty and staff concerns,” “makes decisions based on the mission of the Department and of benefit to all,” and is an “approachable, communicative, fair and a strong leader.”
Plenary Sessions Announced for the 24th Annual
Children’s Mental Health Research and Policy Conference

March 20 – 23, 2011

The plenary speakers for the 2011 Tampa Conference have been selected

Geoffrey Canada, who has been everywhere in the news lately will speak at the opening plenary on March 21. Profiled as one of the standout figures in the award winning documentary film “Waiting For Superman,” and recognized for his success with Harlem Children’s Zone, Canada has successfully and consistently raised educational standards in an economically challenged New York neighborhood. In his presentation, Canada will share models for reform that combine educational, social and medical services, that start at birth and follow children to college.

The March 22 plenary will feature four researchers whose work focuses on elevating the level of overall practice within programs and systems that serve the majority of youth with mental health challenges. Among the discussions will be ideas for overcoming challenges to effective practice and in building research and policy agendas in the growing school mental health field.

On March 23, Dr. Jeffery Arnett, who has won national recognition for coining the term “emerging adulthood,” will join others to discuss the challenges faced by adolescents and young adults with serious mental health conditions and profile characteristics of programs and interventions that are—or are likely to be—effective in meeting their needs as they enter adulthood.

Following the plenary sessions each day will be a variety symposia, discussions and poster presentations on innovations in research and policy focused on children’s mental health. In addition, intensive pre-conference workshops on March 19 will offer four great sessions. To view the complete agenda, visit http://cmhtampaconference.usf.edu/home/agenda.

There has been tremendous interest this year, and we anticipate registration and rooms will fill up quickly. Please make plans to attend the Tampa Conference as soon as you can!

Addressing Challenging Behavior
Annual National Training Institute on Effective Practices/Supporting Young Children’s Social and Emotional Development

March 30 - April 2, 2011

This professional Institute is designed to provide cutting edge information on challenging behavior. Many sessions at the Institute include the Pyramid Model framework for addressing the social and emotional development and challenging behavior of young children. This Pyramid framework includes four levels of practice to address the needs of all children, including children with persistent challenging behavior. For more information, visit http://cfs.fmhi.usf.edu/news-events/
FCIC Seminar Series Offers Presentations through April

The Florida Center for Inclusive Communities (FCIC) is conducting a seminar series that will run monthly through April 2011.

The Interdisciplinary Innovations in Developmental Disabilities seminars provide speakers including family members of children with disabilities, faculty, and self-advocates with disabilities that present on the most innovative and relevant topic. The FCIC was established through a University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, and Service grant award from the Administration on Developmental Disabilities. FCIC faculty and staff develop a range of supports and services in the areas of Community Supports, Early Childhood, Transition, Education, Employment, Health, Interdisciplinary Training, Public Policy, and Cultural Competence.

**Feb 23, 2011**  
**FCIC Innovations in Developmental Disabilities**  
**Presentation: Cultural Competence**

**March 23, 2011**  
**FCIC Innovations in Developmental Disabilities**  
**Presentation: Travel Assistance Device**

**April 20, 2011**  
**FCIC Innovations in Developmental Disabilities**  
**Presentation: Use of Psychotropic Medications in Children**

http://flfcic.fmhi.usf.edu/projects/seminars.htm

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**CARD Giving Back Day**

CARD faculty and staff traded desks and computers for hammers and nails on January 25 to volunteer with Habitat for Humanity in Lakeland, FL. They assisted in building a house for a family that has two children diagnosed with autism. USF’s University Communications and Marketing taped the event for a community profile piece. Check the CFS website soon for a link to the profile.

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**CARD Volunteer Steve Toth is Winner of WEDU Be More Awards**

Congratulations to CARD volunteer and USF student, Steve Toth, winner of the WEDU Be More Entrepreneurial Rising Star Award, presented on January 13. Steve, who created and totally coordinates Project: Rock for Autism to benefit CARD, has raised over $10,000 in 3 years.

The goal of the WEDU Be More Awards™ is to recognize and applaud the outstanding and often unrecognized efforts of nonprofit organizations, and the individuals that support them, throughout west central Florida. The Rising Star Award is presented to “an individual, under the age of 30, who has distinguished themselves by using entrepreneurial skills to build a successful endeavor in the nonprofit arena that can be directly accredited to their inspiration, motivation and business acumen.”

“While CARD-USF is thankful for the many donations and increased autism awareness generated by Steve’s hard work, we are also very appreciative of a young man who envisioned using his own talents to improve his community and the lives of those around him,” said CARD Analyst Christine Rover, who attended the luncheon with Steve.

Project: Rock for Autism began as a simple community service project and is now becoming a widely recognized annual event in the Bay area. Steve has started plans to bring the concert to the USF campus later this year.

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**Florida Programs Aimed at Improving Healthy Mothers and Babies**

**Adolescent and Specialty Services:** Stewart-Marchman-Act Behavioral Healthcare offers a variety of behavioral healthcare services aimed at recovery, prevention and intervention. http://smabehavioral.org

**ALPHA House:** Juvenile Welfare Board of Pinellas County provides housing and supportive services to homeless pregnant women. http://www.jswpinellas.org/residential-program-alpha-house

**Child Development Center:** Susan B. Anthony Recovery Center helps families with substance abuse issues restore the family to health and independence. http://www.susanbanthonycenter.org/child_developmental.html

**Gateway Connect:** Gateway Community Services provide a variety of services including parenting skills, nutrition, and housing for substance abusing pregnant and parenting women. http://www.gatewaycommunity.com/women.html

**HealthConnect:** The Children’s Trust of Miami-Dade provides home visits for all women pregnant for the first time, any mother with a baby up to age two, and for all pregnant teenagers. http://www.thechildrenstrust.org/health-connect

**Healthy Families:** Healthy Start/Healthy Families Pinellas focuses on preventing child abuse before it ever starts by working with families from pregnancy until the child is linked to the school system. http://www.pinellashealth.com/HealthyStartFamilies.asp#HF

**Healthy Families & Babies:** St. Lucie Children’s Services provide a variety of supports to ensure the health of newborns and their proper development. http://www.cscl.org/funded_programs.php

**Healthy Families Highlands:** Highlands Children’s Services equips parents and other caregivers with the knowledge and skills they need to create safe and stable home environments. http://www.hcbcc.net/HFH.html

**Momcare:** Healthy Start Coalition of Hardee, Highlands, and Polk Counties provide referrals and assistance for pregnant women covered by Medicaid. http://www.healthystarthhp.org/momcare.php

**PAR Village/COSA:** Operation PAR provides integrated addiction and mental health services for substance abusing females and their children in Broward, Pinellas, Pasco, Lee and Manatee counties. www.operationpar.org/women/village.htm

**Parent Partner Program:** Manatee Children’s Services provide in-home parenting education services for at risk parents. Visits range from 60-90 minutes to teach child development, literacy and learning, and effective parenting based on family’s individual needs. http://www.familypartnership.org

**Teen Parenting Skills and Prevention:** River Region Human Services helps young people to develop healthy lifestyles in Duval, Clay, Nassau, St. Johns, and Baker Counties. http://www.rrhs.org/prevention.htm
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. To find out more about donating to our department or specific programs, visit our website at http://cfs.fmhi.usf.edu, or contact Sandra Dwinell at 813-974-0342 or sdwinell@usf.edu.

Gifts for Tomlin: Another Successful Year of Giving

In 2004, CFS teamed up with the Homeless Coalition of Tampa to help add some holiday cheer for students at Tomlin Middle School in Plant City. The gift drive was so fulfilling to everyone who participated, the tradition has continued each year, not only supporting the students during the holidays, but also providing clothing, backpacks and school supplies throughout the year. CFS has worked with the same special teacher each year to coordinate the families in need.

CFS Santa’s Helpers

STANDING:
Dawn Khalil
Marty Kledzik
Glenda Kilpatrick
Jason Zipperer

SITTING:
Debra Mowrey
Storie Miller
Marcel Hernandez
Nancy Burrus
Sandra Dwinell

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. To find out more about donating to our department or specific programs, visit our website at http://cfs.fmhi.usf.edu, or contact Sandra Dwinell at 813-974-0342 or sdwinell@usf.edu.