

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

The great divide between research and practice is an ongoing challenge that all of us who work with children and families likely encounter, regardless of whether we are a social worker working directly with families, an administrator running an agency, a researcher trying to determine how to measure and impact outcomes, or an instructor teaching new human service workers. We know that research can offer important guidance for providing the most effective, evidence-based care, but the strategies and interventions that emerge from research are often not feasible in actual practice settings or are not widely disseminated so practitioners can learn about them.



The CCF strives to "disseminate prevention and intervention strategies for at-risk children and families," "improve statewide capacity and practices," and be a "vital community resource." As such, we are constantly looking for ways to keep our work grounded in the needs of agencies and communities and to keep an open communication and feedback loop in which we are not only responding to the work of practitioners but also feeding our findings and insights back to practitioners to apply in their direct work with families. The articles in this newsletter provide examples of the diverse ways in which CCF is trying to meet this commitment, including hosting CEU presentations and webinars, highlighting recently published research findings, and working with agencies to use data to change practices and improve outcomes. We hope that these efforts help to lessen that ever-present gap between research and practice, and we are always looking for new ways of making practice connections and disseminating our work.

—Amy Mendenhall,
Director of CCF



CENTER *for*
CHILDREN
& FAMILIES

UNIVERSITY OF KANSAS
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WELFARE

Cyberbullying Among Elementary School Children

Cyberbullying is a growing problem among today's youth. Defined as a negative and aggressive act through electronic media, such as text messaging, Facebook, or online games, those targeted typically find it difficult to defend themselves. Recent studies have found that youth exposed to cyberbullying can experience a range of negative outcomes, including increased mental health, physical health, and academic problems. In response, cyberbullying has garnered increased attention from parents, policymakers, and researchers alike. Despite this growing concern, few studies have examined this issue among elementary school children. As a result, little is known about cyberbullying involvement among younger children, particularly those under 10 years old.

To that end, CCF researchers recently published results of a study that investigated the prevalence and nature of cyber victimization among elementary school students. As part of the study, 660 3rd – 5th grade students from six schools in Kansas completed an online survey measuring traditional (e.g., physical, relational, verbal) and cyberbullying and victimization. Study findings reveal that almost 20% of participants reported being cyber victimized in some way, with the majority (67%) stating it occurred through the medium of online games. To date, online games have received little attention in the cyberbullying literature; however, these results suggest that online games may be an important mechanism for understanding cyber victimization, especially for younger children. Furthermore, the majority (83%) of children reported that the cyber victimization had taken place outside of school, suggesting the home may be a critical location where cyber incidents take place. Thus, the role of parents/guardians in prevention and intervention is important. Accordingly, these results suggest that schools and families must work together to prevent cyberbullying involvement among youth.

Of concern, almost half of the participants who had been cyberbullied reported they had not told *anyone* about the incident. Consequently, it is important to create on-going communication with youth about their experiences with technology to encourage them to report any potential incidents of cyberbullying involvement. If schools and parents/guardians are unaware of youths' involvement, prevention and intervention efforts will not reach every youth affected.

Participants who were cyber victimized also reported significantly higher rates of traditional bullying involvement as well as higher rates of pro-bullying attitudes and lower levels of attitudes supportive of defending others. These results suggest that children who are cyber victimized might be at risk for engaging in behaviors that increase their risk for being targeted by classmates. Consequently, children who are cyber victimized may need additional support in building positive peer relationships.

The results of the study highlight the need for all social service professionals who work with children to have an understanding of cyberbullying and the potential negative outcomes and risk factors associated with this issue. Accordingly, professionals working with children and their families can incorporate this knowledge into their work and implement measures to prevent bullying involvement and offset negative consequences.

For full text of the article see: DePaolis, K. J., & Williford, A. (2015). The nature and prevalence of cyber victimization among elementary school children. *Child and Youth Care Forum*, 44(3), 377-393. doi: 10.1007/s10566-014-9292-8

For additional information, email Kathy DePaolis (kdku91@hotmail.com) or Anne Williford (awilliford@ku.edu).

In This Issue

CEUs & Coffee Series P. 2

PRTF ROM System Project P. 3

Promoting Positive Child Development Webinar P. 4

First Time Fathers Study P. 4

RECENT PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS

Akin, B., Blase, K., Bryson, S., McArthur, V., & Bass, L. (2015, May). *Scaling-up an evidence-based intervention: Successes and setbacks in developing and sustaining an implementation infrastructure*. Presentation at the Global Implementation Conference, Dublin, Ireland.

Brook, J. (2015, April). *Substance exposed newborns: Understanding the risk, protection, and pathways for intervention*. Presentation at the 10th Kansas Governor's Public Health Conference, Wichita, KS.

Brook, J., Akin, B. A., Lloyd, M. H., & Yuenqi, Y. (2015) Family drug court, targeted parent training and child reunification: Did this enhanced service strategy make a difference? *Juvenile and Family Court Journal*, 66(2), 35-52.

Enyart, M., Matthews, K., & Freeman, R. (2014, March). *Qualitative study exploring perspectives of stakeholders implementing center-wide PBS in mental health*. Paper presented at the 12th International Conference on Positive Behavior Support (APBS), Boston, MA.

Holmes, C., Levy, M., Smith, A., Pinne, S., & Neese, P. (2015). A model for creating a supportive trauma-informed culture for children in preschool settings. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 24(6), 1650-1659. doi: 10.1007/s10826-014-9968-6

Holmes, C., & Moore, W. (2015, April). *A health foundation's journey to explore rural culture*. Presentation at the National Rural Health Association 20th Rural Multiracial and Multicultural Health Conference, Philadelphia, PA.

Kapp, S. A., & Damman, J. L. (2015, March). *What strengths do youth bring to psychiatric residential treatment? Converging and diverging perspectives among youth, parent, and workers*. Paper presented at the 28th Annual Research & Policy Conference on Child, Adolescent, and Young Adult Behavioral Health, Tampa, FL.

(Continued on page 3)

CCF CEUs & Coffee Series: Bridging Research and Practice for At-Risk Children and Families

In an effort to promote connections in the social work community and disseminate research and evaluation findings which can be applied to work with at-risk children and families, the Center for Children & Families is hosting a series of CEU-eligible presentations for practitioners across all types of social welfare settings, agencies, and systems. Each presentation is short and will be early enough in the day that participants can still make it to work after earning one hour of continuing education credit for free!

The first event, *Prenatal Substance Exposure and Its Impact on Children*, will be hosted at the University of Kansas' Edwards Campus in Overland Park on September 18. It is an interactive presentation focusing on increasing participant knowledge of the impact of prenatal substance exposure and recent practice innovations. The presenter, Dr. Jody Book, is an Assistant Professor at the University of Kansas. She has served as a National Research/Doctoral Fellow for the Administration for Children and Families in the area of substance abuse in child welfare. She also serves as Principal or Co-Principal Investigator for three externally funded programs, all in the area of community responsiveness to substance abuse and child welfare.

Bullying and Its Implications for Social Work Practice will be delivered by Dr. Anne Williford at the Kansas Union on the University of Kansas's Lawrence campus on January 29, 2016. This workshop will define bullying, including its forms and functions, and propose assessment and interven-

tion strategies that practitioners can use to offset the negative developmental outcomes that often result for the youth involved. Dr. Williford received her doctorate in Social Work from the University of Denver. Her research interests include understanding characteristics associated with bullying and peer victimization among children and adolescents, and identifying strategies to prevent such behaviors in school settings.

On May 20, 2016, Sarah Davis will present *Parent Support and Training (PST)* at the University of Kansas' Edwards Campus. PST services are offered to caregivers who have children with special needs. The goal of PST services is to help families successfully navigate the various health care systems and services required to help their children. Participants will hear about techniques and strategies PST providers use to effectively engage families and to mobilize resources to address the families' stated needs and priorities. Sarah is a Project Manager for the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare. She has worked in many capacities throughout her social work career as program evaluator, consultant/trainer, and home visitor. For the past seven years, her development efforts in the CCF have focused on evaluating and expanding effective Parent Support and Training Services.

To register and obtain additional information about the courses and presenters, visit <http://bit.ly/CCFCnC>. Registration questions can be directed to Erica Parkinson-Arnold, 913-897-8497 or eparkinson@ku.edu.

CEUs & Coffee Series Dates

Prenatal Substance Exposure and Its Impact on Children

Presented by Jody Brook, PhD
September 18, 2015, 8:30-9:30 am
University of Kansas—Edwards Campus, Regnier 265

Bullying and Its Implications for Social Work Practice

Presented by Anne Williford, PhD
January 29, 2016, 8:30-9:30 am
University of Kansas—Lawrence Campus, Student Union, Alderson Room

Parent Support and Training (PST)

Presented by Sarah Davis, LMSW
May 20, 2016, 8:30-9:30 am
University of Kansas—Edwards Campus

To register: <http://bit.ly/CCFCnC>



PRTF ROM System Project: Using Data to Drive Service Improvements

Identifying data needs and developing systems are only the first steps to achieving a data-informed approach. With the support of the Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities' (PRTF) ROM System Project funded by the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services, Kansas-contracted PRTFs are taking their data informed approach to the next level.

The PRTF ROM System Project led by Dr. Steve Kapp with the support of Jeri Damman, Graduate Research Assistant, was launched in 2007 to develop a statewide performance information system and to implement outcome measurement across PRTFs. A web-based data entry and reporting system (PRTF ROM) was developed, which is a version of KU's ROM system used by community mental health centers in Kansas and child welfare services nationally. The PRTF ROM system captures statewide information on youth receiving PRTF services, including standardized clinical outcome measures.

Since implementation, the project has focused on achieving high-quality system data and strengthening data use to inform service delivery as part of its technical and research support. PRTFs have embraced this work and, as a direct result of their efforts, have achieved high standards of data quality and a marked increase in system use.

In addition to working together to develop statewide knowledge, PRTFs are now launching individualized plans for the use of ROM System data. Implemented in March 2015, these plans evidence the important contributions that a data-informed approach can make to improve the lives of some of the most vulnerable children and their families.

- **Florence Crittenton** is examining differences in youth, parent, and worker clinical scores to better understand why differences exist and how they can be best used in treatment.

- **Kids TLC** is using the parent hopefulness measure in its program evaluation of C.A.R.E.S. and anticipates that parent hopefulness will increase from admission to discharge.
- **KVC Prairie Ridge** is developing a system of formal review of PRTF ROM System data by integrating it into performance improvement initiatives that focus on service improvements.
- **KVC Wheatland** is analyzing differences in clinical scores across youth, parents, and workers to better understand how differences influence treatment outcomes and family involvement.
- **Lakemary Center** is analyzing change in clinical measures from admission to discharge to develop knowledge in factors that might influence levels of change, including length of stay.
- **Marillac** is using system data to evaluate success in goal completion and reduction in trauma by examining change from admission to discharge on a range of clinical measures.
- **Pathway Family Services** is examining specific clinical measures to promote a more holistic approach to family-driven care and will use statewide averages to benchmark improvements.
- **Saint Francis** is evaluating the relationship between clinical outcomes and length of stay and is particularly interested in the differences among youth with longer stays.
- **Turning Point, Prairie View** is strengthening its use of individual behavior items at admission to develop targeted plans and will use change levels at discharge to evaluate treatment effect.

For additional information, email Steve Kapp and Jeri Damman at prtf@ku.edu.

Klem, A., Moore, W., & Holmes, C. (2015, April). *The implementer's guide to using Theory of Change with rural health initiatives*. Presentation at the National Rural Health Association Rural Medical Education Conference, Philadelphia, PA.

Levy, M., & Palmer, A. (2015, March). *A targeted recruitment initiative for developing resource homes in children's mental health*. Poster presented at the 28th Annual Research & Policy Conference on Child, Adolescent, and Young Adult Behavioral Health, Tampa, FL.

Lloyd, M. H. (2015, June). *Deconstructing the pathway from alcohol use to risky parenting behaviors: A structural equation model analysis of mediators*. Poster presentation at the 38th Research Society on Alcoholism Scientific Meeting, San Antonio, TX.

Maguire-Jack, K., Lanier, P., Johnson-Motoyama, M., Welch, H., & Dineen, M. (2015). Geographic variation in racial disparities in child maltreatment: The influence of country poverty and population density. *Child Abuse & Neglect*. doi:10.1016/j.chiabu.2015.05.020

Mariscal, E. S., Akin, B. A., Lieberman, A. A., & Washington, D. (in press). Exploring the path from foster care to stable and lasting adoption: Perceptions of foster care alumni. *Children and Youth Services Review*. doi:10.1016/j.chilyouth.2015.05.017

Mathews, K., & Enyart, M. (2015, March). *Wraparound meets positive behavior support: Enhancing wraparound through integration of PBS in Kansas*. Paper presented at the 28th Annual Research & Policy Conference on Child, Adolescent, and Young Adult Behavioral Health, Tampa, FL.

Narendorf, S., & Palmer, A. (2015, March). *Perception of need and receipt of treatment: A three-group comparison of young adults with mental health need*. Paper presented at the 28th Annual Research & Policy Conference on Child, Adolescent, and Young Adult Behavioral Health, Tampa, FL.

CCF MISSION

The Center's mission is to positively impact the lives of children and families through empirically-driven local, national, and international research, training, and policy initiatives. By utilizing a collaborative, strengths-oriented, child and family-driven approach, we strive to improve child and family well-being across settings and systems.

CCF GOALS

Overall, the CCF has a goal of improving child and family well-being and outcomes. We strive to meet this primary goal through several specific goals:

1. Improvement of systems and service delivery for children and families through: research, policy development, program evaluation, community development, and technical assistance and education.
2. The development, identification, evaluation, and dissemination of prevention and intervention strategies for at-risk children and families.
3. Improvement of statewide capacity and practices for addressing child and family issues.
4. Establish the CCF as a vital community resource and a nationally recognized research team with expertise in child and family well-being.

Promoting Positive Child Development in Young Latino Children of Immigrants Involved with Child Protective Services

On February 27, 2015, the Center hosted a national webinar focused on promoting positive development in young Latino children of immigrants, the fastest growing ethnic group involved in the child welfare system. Maltreated infants and toddlers are at the greatest risk of developmental delay and the single largest age group entering foster care. Early intervention services can mitigate the negative effects of abuse and neglect and support children in healthy development. The webinar discussed these topics and highlighted promising practices that seek to effectively serve vulnerable young children by working collaboratively across child welfare and early intervention systems. The webinar was sponsored by the Lois and Samuel Silberman Fund in the New York Community Trust. It was recorded and is freely available along with additional resources at <https://childrenandfamilies.ku.edu/prof-dev/webinars/positive-child-dev>.

Webinar Agenda — 1.5 CEUs available!*

- I. Child Maltreatment and the Developing Brain
- II. Young Latino Children of Immigrants: Health, Well-being, and Development
- III. Exploring the Benefits of Early Intervention
- IV. Policies Linking Child Welfare and Early Intervention Services
- V. Promising Practices from the Field

For more information please contact Michelle Johnson-Motoyama, Principal Investigator (michellejm@ku.edu).

***Please Note:** The KU School of Social Welfare is an approved CEU provider for the Kansas Behavioral Sciences and Regulatory Board. However, the final authority for approving any continuing education activity rests with each professional state licensing board. Therefore, if you have questions regarding CEUs, please check with the appropriate state licensing board.

First Time Fathers Study: Experiences of Men with Histories of Violence

First-time fatherhood research ranges from examining how new and expectant fathers experience formal supports that serve parents to evaluating how the adaptation of existent or development of new parenting programs to meet fathers' specific needs could impact the outcomes of children, mothers, and fathers. Many studies have shown domestic violence remains a barrier to the success of early childhood parent-focused interventions' effectiveness, such as home visiting. One strategy to address this barrier is to understand the experiences and uptake of formal and informal support of first-time fathers with a history of domestic violence. Dr. Juliana Carlson's new study, funded by KU's New Faculty General Research Program, aims to do just that.

To explore men's experience of formal and informal support and their help-seeking behaviors during their transition to fatherhood, Dr. Carlson will conduct in-depth interviews with men who have engaged in violence against their female partners. "Although it can never be an excuse for acts of violence, we know that many men who become fathers have experienced trauma, such as maltreatment and exposure to violence, and lack of father involvement as children. And overwhelmingly men are socialized to not seek help and to adopt other narrow masculinity norms that are linked to an increased use of violence," noted Dr. Carlson. "Becoming a father can be a time of reflection and motivation for men to make changes in their own lives that may benefit their families' outcomes. These processes may be facilitated by formal support such as parent programs that consider fathers' complex experiences and socialization."

For more information, email Juliana Carlson (jmcarlson@ku.edu).

To stay connected with the Center for Children & Families:

Email us: ccf@ku.edu

Follow us on Facebook: KU Center for Children and Families

Visit our website: childrenandfamilies.ku.edu

Join our email list by visiting the website or emailing us.

Center for Children & Families
School of Social Welfare
The University of Kansas
207 Twente Hall
1545 Lilac Lane
Lawrence, KS 66044

