

# Mindful Families, Schools & Communities: Research-to-Practice Promoting Child Well-being



## Presentation Abstracts

### Key Note Addresses:

**Robert Roeser, Ph.D.**

#### **The Emerging Study of Mindfulness in Education and Child Development**

In this talk, I introduce the audience to the study of mindfulness in education and child development, and situate this study within the broader umbrella of nascent field of scientific inquiry called "Developmental Contemplative Science (DCS)." DCS aims to describe and explain the effects of contemplative practices on the body, the brain, the mind and interpersonal relationships during different phases of human development, and to use the knowledge so-gained to optimize human development for children, adolescents, and the adults who care for them. An overview of "big questions," "big ideas" and active areas of research within this nascent field, as well as the implications for enhancing children's well-being, will be discussed.

**Mark Greenberg, Ph.D.**

#### **Next Steps in Promoting the Science and Practice of Mindfulness for Children, Their Families, and Schools**

Mindfulness for children is a new, emerging field of study. This talk will summarize what is currently known, what are key next steps in improving the science and practice of this field. In addition, I will discuss the need for expert training of scientists and practitioners to move the field to the next level of development.

### Symposium 1:

#### **Mindful Parenting and Family-Focused Mindfulness Interventions**

**Larissa G. Duncan, Ph.D.**, UCSF School of Medicine

#### ***Mindfulness skills training during pregnancy and the early postpartum period***

This presentation will cover several applications of mindfulness training for expectant and new parents using stress and coping theory as a framework. Preliminary evidence of the benefits of offering mindfulness training as a stand-alone program (*Mindfulness-Based Childbirth and Parenting*; Bardacke, 2012) and as an add-on to prenatal group healthcare (*Centering Pregnancy with Mindfulness Skills*) will be presented, along with next steps for mindful parenting interventions to be delivered in the child's first year.

**J. Douglas Coatsworth, Ph.D.**, Penn State University

#### ***Brief mindfulness activities to enhance parenting skills: Test of a randomized trial***

This presentation will review the theory, application and empirical evidence for a theoretical model of mindfulness in parenting. The model was used to develop mindful parenting activities that were integrated into an evidence-based family intervention (mindfulness-enhanced *Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth 10 -14*). The intervention is being tested in a large randomized trial and results from this trial will be presented.

**Maureen Zalewski, Ph.D.**, Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic

#### ***Parent-Child Dialectical Behavior Therapy***

Parent-child Dialectical Behavior Therapy (PC-DBT; PI: Stepp) is an intervention being developed and piloted for mothers with borderline personality disorder (BPD). In PC-DBT, we use the skills learned in the mindfulness module in DBT to enhance the promotion of effective parenting behaviors. This presentation

will focus on describing the treatment and presenting preliminary results, with particular emphasis on describing on how mindfulness is incorporated into parenting in a DBT framework.

**Jennifer Crawford, MPA**, Washington State University Extension

***Mindful Parenting and Yoga for Parents in Correctional and Inpatient Substance Abuse Treatment Facilities***

The Fit Fathers, Successful Families, Inside & Out (FFSFIO) program incorporates mindful parenting (Placone, 2011) and mindfulness-based yoga training into the existing Fit2BFathers program. This presentation will cover the FFSFIO curriculum and intervention approach as delivered in a regional jail and an inpatient drug and alcohol treatment facility. The FFSFIO program is undergoing evaluation using a risk and protective factor framework. Outcome evaluation results will be presented that suggest the FFSFIO program is improving parental resilience. Potential for the FFSFIO program to serve as a child abuse prevention program will be discussed.

**Symposium 2:**  
**Mindful Classrooms**

**Patricia Jennings, M.Ed., Ph.D. & Christa Turksma**, Penn State University, CARE

***Mindfulness-based Interventions for Promoting Well-being among Teachers and Students***

Mindfulness-based interventions have demonstrated effectiveness in reducing stress and promoting well-being among adult populations. Research is beginning to apply mindfulness-based approaches to improving classroom environments. This symposium presents research examining the efficacy of three mindfulness-based programs designed for educational settings: one for teachers and two for students. The Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE for Teachers) professional development program involves the integration of awareness and reflection practices with emotion skills techniques drawn from psychological science designed to reduce teachers' stress and promote well-being, efficacy and mindfulness. MindUp is mindfulness-based education program designed to promote students' self-regulation and social and emotional competence. Finally, we report on a mindfulness-based yoga program designed to enhance emotional and cognitive functioning among disadvantaged urban middle school students.

**Kimberly Schonert-Reichl, Ph.D.**, University of British Columbia, MindUp

***Promoting Cognitive and Social-Emotional Development Through a Mindfulness-Based Education Program for Elementary-School Children***

In the present study, we examined the effects of a mindfulness-based education program – MindUp – on children's self-regulation and social and emotional competence. MindUp is a simple-to-administer mindfulness-based education program that consists of 15 lessons taught approximately once a week, with each lesson lasting 40 – 50 minutes. The core mindfulness practices in the program (done every day for 3 minutes 3 times a day) consist of focusing on one's breathing and attentive listening to a single resonant sound. Each component of the program moves children from sensory experiences (e.g., mindful smelling and tasting) to cognitive experiences (e.g., learning optimism), ending with students reflecting on what they are grateful for in their own lives, and enacting random acts of kindness and community service. Participants (N = 99) were drawn from four 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms in four schools in a large school district in Western Canada. We found that children who received the MindUp curriculum, (a) showed greater improvements in self-regulation, emotional control, optimism, and empathy, (b) showed greater decreases in depression and aggression, and (c) were rated by their peers as more trustworthy, kind, and helpful. These results suggest that children's positive development can be fostered and their negative behaviors deterred via an inexpensive and relatively easy-to-use curriculum delivered by teachers in regular elementary school classrooms.

**Tamar Mendelson, Ph.D.**, Johns Hopkins University, Holistic Life Institute Yoga

***Promoting Well-Being among Urban Youth with School-Based Yoga***

This study assessed a mindfulness and yoga program to enhance emotional and cognitive functioning among disadvantaged urban middle school students. Fifth and sixth grade students (n = 251) were recruited from six Baltimore City K-8 schools. The schools were randomly assigned either to receive the

intervention or to serve as controls. The intervention was developed and implemented by the founders of the Holistic Life Foundation, a Baltimore-based non-profit organization dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of urban youth through mindfulness-based practices. Students participating in the intervention youth twice weekly during the school day for 45 minutes per session over a period of approximately 15 weeks. Sessions included yoga-based movements and stretching, breathing techniques, and guided attentional training. Youth social-emotional, cognitive, and academic outcomes were assessed at baseline and post-intervention with follow-up assessments at 6 and 12 months (in progress). Assessments included youth self-report measures, neurocognitive tests, and teacher reports. This presentation will report selected post-intervention findings and will discuss the challenges and opportunities of implementing yoga and mindfulness in school settings.

### **Practice Workshop:**

**Christa Turksma**, Educational consultant, Mindfulness teacher and co-developer/author of the CARE program

#### ***Mindfulness for a Caring Classroom Teacher***

This workshop will introduce the participants to the CARE program. The participants will have the opportunity to engage in some mindfulness exercises, will learn the importance of using their breath in times when they need to calm down, to set a daily intention to guide their day and an awareness of the physical aspect of their emotions.

### **Symposium 3:**

#### **Application of Mindfulness Practices with High-risk Youth**

**Liza Mermelstein, M.S.**, Ohio University

#### ***Using Mindfulness-Based Strategies to Reduce Binge Drinking among College Students***

The current study examined the effectiveness of a brief mindfulness intervention among college students who reported engaging in patterns of binge drinking. Participants were 76 undergraduate college students who were randomly assigned to a Mindfulness Group or to an assessment only Control Group. The Mindfulness Group received information about mindfulness and engaged in a series of mindfulness meditation experiential exercises during and following the initial intervention. Assessments were administered to both groups at the initial intervention session and weekly for four weeks. Results offer preliminary evidence for the feasibility and effectiveness of brief mindfulness intervention as a treatment strategy for college students who are binge drinkers. Compared to the Control Group, the Mindfulness Group reported significantly fewer binge episodes and consequences of alcohol use in the four weeks following the initial intervention. Further, compared to the Control Group, the Mindfulness Group reported significant increases in dispositional mindfulness and alcohol refusal self-efficacy. Participant reactions, future directions and suggestions for implementation will be discussed.

**Andrew Fleming, MA.**, University of Washington

#### ***Randomized Controlled Trial of Group CBT Skills and Mindfulness Training for ADHD Among College Students***

College students with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) are at higher risk for academic, psychological, and social impairment. Effective interventions for ADHD among college students are urgently needed; however, very few studies and no randomized controlled trials (RCTs) have been published in this area. In this study, a pilot RCT with 33 undergraduate students, a group CBT skills and mindfulness training intervention showed strong initial evidence of efficacy, acceptability, and feasibility for treating ADHD among college students. Participants receiving the intervention showed significant improvements in self-reported mindfulness, and mindfulness training was rated most highly among all intervention components.

**David S. Black, Ph.D., M.P.H.**, Cousins Center for Psychoneuroimmunology, UCLA Semel Institute for Neuroscience & Human Behavior

#### ***Mindfulness training for youth: The state of science***

Agencies delivering mindfulness training to children and adolescents are spreading around the globe; however, there remains limited empirical support for such efforts. This talk briefly reviews the current

state of the evidence in mindfulness training for youth by highlighting results from 39 research studies conducted over the past 10 years. This research base is then integrated within a research model describing target outcomes. The past ten years of research suggests that mindfulness training shows evidence for feasibility and promise for efficacy among some specific populations of youth. Major limitations of the current state of research are noted and future research directions are discussed.

**Marsha Linehan, Ph.D.,** University of Washington

***Translating Zen into Mindfulness Skills***

Mindfulness skills have emerged as an important focus of several empirically supported treatments. Dialectical behavior therapy disorder, mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, mindfulness-based stress reduction and mindfulness-based relapse prevention are but a few examples. The roots of mindfulness practice are in the contemplative practices common to both eastern and western spiritual disciplines and to the emerging scientific knowledge about the benefits of “allowing” experiences rather than suppressing or avoiding them. Both eastern and western psychologies as well as spiritual practices, therefore, are converging on the same insights.

Mindfulness skills are the core skills in Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), the first psychotherapy to incorporate mindfulness as a core component. DBT and DBT skills have been shown to be effective for treatment for individuals with severe and complex mental disorders, including those at high risk of suicide and substance abuse as well as for a range of other disorders such as depression, general anxiety, eating disorders.

Mindfulness skills as formulated in DBT are a translation of Zen mindfulness practices into a behavioral language. As a set of skills, mindfulness practice is the intentional process of observing, describing, and participating fully in reality non-judgmentally, in the moment, and with effectiveness (i.e., using skillful means). The practice of mindfulness in everyday life also includes the skills of radical acceptance, willingness, and turning-the-mind (over and over). This talk will outline these specific DBT mindfulness skills.

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## Presenter Biographies

### Key Note Speakers:

#### **Robert Roeser, Ph.D.**

Robert W. Roeser is a Professor of Psychology and Human Development in the Department of Applied Psychology at Portland State University and the Senior Program Coordinator for the Mind and Life Institute. He received his BA with honors in Psychology from Cornell University and his Ph.D. from the Combined Program in Education and Psychology at the University of Michigan. He holds master's degrees in religion and psychology, developmental psychology and clinical social work. In 2005 he was a United States Fulbright Scholar in India, and from 1999-2004 he was a William T. Grant Foundation Faculty Scholar. Dr. Roeser's research focuses on school as a primary cultural context of adolescent development, and on the professional development of public school teachers. His current research is focused on how mindfulness training can be used to cultivate the positive development of adolescents and teachers alike.

#### **Mark Greenberg, Ph.D.**

Mark Greenberg, Ph.D. holds The Bennett Endowed Chair in Prevention Research in Penn State's College of Health and Human Development where he has taught since 1997. He is the Founding Director of the Prevention Research Center for the Promotion of Human Development. Previous to his work at Penn State, He was a Professor at the University of Washington for 20 years. He is the author of more than 300 journal articles and book chapters on developmental psychopathology, well-being, and the effects of prevention efforts on children and families. He is a senior investigator on a series of large-scale multi-site studies that focus on both the prevention of substance abuse and serious conduct disorder, the promotion of social and emotional well-being and the implementation and sustainability of community-based prevention, and the promotion of mindfulness. One of his current interests is how to help nurture awareness and compassion in our society.

### Symposia Chairs:

#### **Larissa G. Duncan, Ph.D.**

Larissa G. Duncan, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Family and Community Medicine and the Osher Center for Integrative Medicine at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) School of Medicine. Her program of research focuses on studying mindful parenting and testing the impact of mindfulness interventions delivered to families during two key developmental transitions: pregnancy and early adolescence. She has received funding from NIH/NCCAM to investigate the effects of mindfulness training on birth outcomes and biological and psychological aspects of maternal stress in the perinatal period. Dr. Duncan developed a self-report measure of mindful parenting now in use in parenting studies in eight countries.

#### **Patricia Jennings, M.Ed.**

Dr. Jennings is a Research Assistant Professor in Human Development and Family Studies (HD FS) and the Prevention Research Center at Penn State University. Dr. Jennings received her doctorate in human development from the University of California, Davis and completed postdoctoral training at the Health Psychology Program at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF). She led the faculty team that developed the Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE for Teachers), a mindfulness-based program for teachers. In her current role at Penn State she has conducted federally-funded research on CARE and has found that the program improves teachers' general well-being, health, emotion regulation, efficacy and mindfulness. In addition to psychological research, Dr. Jennings has over 22 years of research and teaching experience in the field of early childhood education.

**Liliana Lengua, Ph.D.**

Liliana Lengua studies children's individual differences in response to the experience of sociodemographic, psychosocial, family, and parenting risk factors. Children's temperament, or individual differences in emotionality and self-regulation, differentiates children who are likely to develop problems in the face of risk from those who are resilient to those experiences. Dr. Lengua's most recent work examines the development of children's self-regulation, a core aspect of their social and emotional competence, in preschool children growing up in poverty and low income homes. Stress, family functioning, parenting and physiology are studied as potential mechanisms in children's developing self-regulation. The information gained from this study will be used to develop an intervention that will give parents the tools they need to help their children develop this critical skill.

**Presenters:****J. Douglas Coatsworth, Ph.D.**

Doug Coatsworth is professor of Human Development and Family studies at the Pennsylvania State University and an affiliate of the Penn State Research Center for the Promotion of Human Development. He is trained as a clinical psychologist and has been working for the past 20 years to develop and test novel family-focused interventions to build family strengths and prevent adolescent problem behaviors.

**Maureen Zalewski, Ph.D.**

Maureen Zalewski, Ph.D. is a post doctoral fellow at Western Psychiatric Institute & Clinic and will start as an assistant professor at the University of Oregon in Fall 2013. Dr. Zalewski studies emotion regulation in children with mothers with Borderline Personality Disorder. Dr. Zalewski is interested in combining parenting principles into Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). Dr. Zalewski is intensively trained in DBT.

**Jennifer Crawford, MPA**

Jenn Crawford, Extension Educator with Washington State University, manages parent and family education programs in Chelan and Douglas counties. Jenn received her MPA from Monterey Institute of International Studies, and her BA in Anthropology from Whitman College. She is also mother of two daughters ages five and eight.

**Kimberly Schonert-Reichl, Ph.D.**

Dr. Kimberly Schonert-Reichl is an Applied Developmental Psychologist and a Professor in the Department of Educational and Counseling Psychology and Special Education at the University of British Columbia. For more than 20 years, Dr. Schonert-Reichl's research has focused on the social and emotional development of children and adolescents with a particular emphasis on identifying the processes and mechanisms that foster children's positive human traits including empathy, altruism, compassion, and resiliency. Dr. Schonert-Reichl is an award-winning teacher and has been internationally recognized for her collaborative work that translates research into practice. In 2009, the Confederation of University Faculty Association awarded her with its highest Distinguished Academic Award: the Paz Buttedahl Career Achievement Award. In 2006, Dr. Schonert-Reichl chaired a dialogue between the Dalai Lama and leading educators, researchers, and policy makers on the themes of cultivating compassion and educating the heart.

**Tamar Mendelson, Ph.D.**

Tamar Mendelson, PhD, is an associate professor in the Department of Mental Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Trained as a clinical psychologist, Dr. Mendelson studies the development and adaptation of interventions to promote positive mental health among underserved populations. She has a particular interest in the use of mindfulness-based interventions with urban youth.

**Christa Turksma**

Christa Turksma, DRS is a child-clinical psychologist who received her training in The Netherlands. Before becoming a psychologist, she was a Kindergarten Teacher and Principal. Christa has worked on various research and intervention projects including the Fast Track Project in Seattle. Christa began providing PATHS Trainings in 1988 and has trained thousands of teachers in the US, Canada, The Netherlands,

Northern Ireland, England, and Australia. In the US, she has trained teachers throughout the country. The PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) program is an evidence-based social emotional learning curriculum, which gives children in grades Preschool - 6 the skills they need to find positive, nonviolent solutions to social problems. The PATHS program focuses on teaching children how to express emotions, how to appropriately control their emotions, develop effective conflict-resolution strategies, increase social competency, and become more empathic and compassionate in their interactions with others. Christa is also an author of the CARE (Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education) program for nurturing mindfulness in teachers. Christa is a certified trainer for the Mindful Parenting Program developed by Larissa Duncan and Doug Coatsworth at Penn State University. She now provides training in CARE as well as in The PATHS Curriculum. Christa is very interested in further developing mindfulness based programs for people in other stressful occupations.

**Liza Mermelstein, M.S.**

Liza is a graduate student in Clinical Psychology at Ohio University. She is currently completing her pre-doctoral internship at the Charles George VA Medical Center in Asheville, NC. She is very interested in the application of mindfulness based strategies to reduce alcohol use and the examination of the efficacy of brief mindfulness interventions.

**Andrew Fleming, M.A.**

Andrew Fleming is currently a pre-doctoral intern in child and adolescent psychology at the UCLA Medical Center. He received his undergraduate training at Harvard University and graduate study in child clinical psychology at the University of Washington. Andrew has five years of experience delivering mindfulness-based interventions for youth and adults.

**David S. Black, Ph.D., M.P.H.**

Dr. Black is a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of California Los Angeles Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior, specializing in the psychoneuroimmunology of mindfulness meditation and other mind-body integrative medicine interventions. He is the author of more than 25 peer-reviewed publications, including articles in JAMA Pediatrics, Journal of Adolescent Health, Pediatrics, and other leading journals. He is the Editor of Mindfulness Research Monthly, a bulletin providing the forefront of research on mindfulness. He is currently principal investigator on a randomized controlled trial examining the effects of mindfulness training on sleep and pro-inflammatory markers in older adults with insomnia.

**Marsha Linehan, Ph.D.**

Marsha Linehan is a Professor of Psychology and of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Washington and is Director of the Behavioral Research and Therapy Clinics. She is the developer of Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) a skills based treatment that is effective in reducing suicidal behavior as well as other mental disorders and is cost-effective compared to community treatments delivered by expert therapists. It is currently the gold-standard treatment for borderline personality disorder.

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## Poster Abstracts

**Bethell, Christina**, Oregon Health & Science University, The Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative; **Vohra, Sunita**, University of Alberta, Canada; **Warren-Brown, Kirk**, Virginia Commonwealth University; **Hassink, Sandra**, Nemours Children's Hospital and Medical Center; **McFlaherty, Hilary**, American Academy of Pediatrics; **Dahlborg, Tom**, National Initiative for Children's Health Care Quality; **Abetamarco, Diane**, Thomas Jefferson University; **Kulthau, Karen**, Harvard Medical School; **Kurtin, Paul**, Former Chief Quality Officer, Rady Children's Hospital

### ***Leveraging Mind-Body Neuroscience and Mindfulness to Improve Pediatrics: A national effort to promote the translation of research into pediatrics training, practice and policy***

Against the backdrop of growing calls for transformation of the US health care system toward one focused on proactive production of health versus the reactive treatment of disease, a critical mass of research evidence and a growing consensus regarding the relevance of "mind-body" and mindfulness-based methods to healthy child development and lifelong health is beginning to emerge. This includes evidence on topics related to the impact of maternal stress during pregnancy and a parent's own integrated sense of self on healthy attachment. Additional focus areas include the potential of mind-body and mindfulness-related methods to:

- (1) ameliorate the negative psychological, social and biologic impacts of toxic stress, adverse childhood events and trauma;
- (2) promote strengths, resilience, self-regulation and positive lifelong health behaviors among all children
- (3) reduce burden of illness and improve health outcomes for the nation's 20% of children who experience chronic conditions and special health care needs (CSHCN)

Complementing clinical applications are mindfulness-based health care quality improvement models (MCQI), such as The Joint Commission's High Reliability Organization's model (HRO) as well as mindfulness-based medical and health professional training to promote physician and clinician well-being and effectiveness in delivering high quality, patient-centered care.

Despite progress, substantial gaps exist in the translation of emerging evidence and the identification of best practice models for integration into pediatric practice, program design and child health policies. The purpose of the Mindfulness In Pediatrics working group has been to promote advancement of such translation through the exploration and integration of information regarding:

- (1) the degree to which evidence is sufficient to support proactive efforts related to the translation of mind-body and mindfulness-based methods into pediatric training, including into existing national practice guidelines and protocols;
- (2) to assess and monitor interest of key stakeholders and identify high-priority opportunities to leverage mind-body neuroscience and mindfulness to improve the quality of pediatric health care;
- (3) to identify key barriers and both training and practice-based resource needs and gaps; and
- (4) begin a dialogue to specify research and development priorities, including data and methods priorities to monitor population-based needs, uptake and impact of mind-body and mindfulness-based methods to improve pediatric health care and health outcomes.

New data from the 2011-12 National Survey of Children's Health for the first time allow a picture of need related to adverse childhood events, gaps in child resilience and family connectedness and stress. Other national data summarize national findings on mind-body methods for children and suggest potential underuse of these methods to promote child, youth and family well-being and to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of conventional medical care. In this poster we will (1) set forth results from the 2011-12 NSCH and related national findings; (2) summarize the national appreciative inquiry and dialogue



process and outcomes; (3) specify priority educational, resource development and community engagement efforts identified; and (4) discuss emerging priorities for leveraging the current policy environment to promote training, research and improvements in pediatric care through the strategic advancement of mind-body and mindfulness methods in pediatrics.

**Burns, Barbara**, Santa Clara University; **Bauer, Ariel**, Santa Clara University; **Arellano, Brenda**, Santa Clara University; **Fregoso, Felicia**, Santa Clara University; **Lau, Matt Lau**, Santa Clara University; **Mendoza, Joanna**, Santa Clara University; **Shetty, Amala**, Santa Clara University; **Strong, Katherine**, Santa Clara University

***RESILIENT FAMILIES PROJECT: Promoting Resilience in Families Experiencing Homelessness***

The Resilient Families Project (RFP) is a program aimed to support child and parent well-being in families experiencing homelessness. The science of mindfulness underlies the core goals of our program as we are working to enhance parents' resilience and self regulation, responsiveness and compassion for their children. We have directed our efforts at creating this program as there are few evidence-based programs (EBP) designed for homeless families, and the available research studies and EBPs have been collected under circumstances which are highly divergent from the typical community circumstances.

The RFP centers on six themes of resilience presented in a set of six-week workshops and employs discussion and role playing, brief mindfulness exercises, music, arts and crafts, dance (the resilient family rumba!), and children's books. Building a more mindful and compassionate community at our sites is a central goal for each workshop. The design and implementation of the RFP has been informed by the literature on promoting positive parenting strengths, programs designed to support children and families experiencing homelessness, and trauma-informed practice. Each RFP workshop allows parents to: hear about and discuss a core idea about resilience in a positive and interactive environment; connect these themes to their often challenging lives and to parenting; and complete theme-related arts and crafts in a community. At the completion of the RFP workshop, parents are reunited with their children, and learn how that week's theme of resilience was put into practice during play in order to promote their child's well-being. Parents also receive handouts to promote that week's theme of resilience through games, songs, and other activities.

To date, RFP has employed a descriptive design. Our program has been informed based on detailed observations, verbal information in a range of settings including community centers at shelters, transitional housing, and permanent housing for families who experienced homelessness. At each of our sites we have piloted novel and interactive ways to measure what is learned in each workshop. Our participants have typically been homeless youth (ages 18-24 years) and their young children. We will soon have available a detailed RFP manual with information about each parent workshop and materials needed at each of our sites. The RFP parent manual is differentiated by site as we have found that families who are living at a shelter, transitional or permanent housing are differentially engaged by our process and activities. Our experiences with community collaborations and pre-pilot activities have informed our selection of specific ways to tailor the RFP program in order to engage our families and effectively address the same core themes of resilience. This individualization is an area of great interest and importance to us as one of our longer term goals is to establish more flexible programs that can be implemented by a range of professionals and volunteers and still demonstrate significant impact on child and family well-being.

Beginning in Spring 2013, we will employ a quasi-experimental design and collect information from parents and children at the beginning and end of each six-week set of RFP workshops. We are interested in changes in self report of stress and resilience, parenting strategies, self regulation and mindfulness, as well changes in parent-child interactions based on videotaped analysis using the Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale (KIPS). We will also finalize the child RFP manual which will show the components of the children's workshops which center on these six resilient themes with an aim to increase children's self regulation skills, mastery motivation, and social-emotional well-being.

**Burns, Monica P.**, University of Washington Center for Child & Family Well-being; **Sommerville, Jessica A.**, University of Washington Center for Child & Family Well-being

***The impact of mindfulness training on parental empathy, parent-infant interactions, and the development of fairness concerns in infancy***

Central to social harmony and cohesion are individual and collective concerns about the fair and equal treatment of oneself and others; such concerns underlie our experience and evaluations of a range of interpersonal interactions and societal events. Of critical importance, then, is when and how such concerns arise in the course of development, and how considerations of fairness issues can be promoted during development. Research from our laboratory suggests that concerns about fairness can be traced back to infancy, emerging between roughly 9 and 15 months of age. Critically, there are considerable individual differences in infants' sensitivity to fairness during this age range. Moreover, such individual differences are linked to individual differences in parental dispositional empathy.

The goal of the current project is to investigate the impact of a Mindfulness-based Intervention (MBI) on parental empathy, parent-infant interactions, and infants' developing sense of fairness and prosocial behavior. Past work provides evidence that MBIs exert a range of positive effects on psychological well-being generally, and empathy, in particular, and that such positive effects also extend to parent-child interactions.

The current project has 3 specific aims: (1) to investigate the impact of a MBI on parental empathy, (2) to investigate the impact of a MBI on the development of fairness concerns and prosocial behavior in infancy, and (3) to investigate the effect of a MBI on parent-infant interactions. Parents and infants will participate in two laboratory visits, when infants are 9 months of age and when infants are 12 months of age. During the intervening period, parents will participate in a MBI. Laboratory visits will assess a) parental empathy, b) infants' sensitivity to fairness, c) infant prosocial behavior and d) parent-infant interactions, to investigate changes in these measures as a function of MBI. Parents' and infants' performance on these measures will be compared to those of an age-matched control sample that previously took part in a highly similar procedure (with no intervening MBI). The central hypothesis is that the MBI (in comparison to no such training) will increase parental empathy, facilitate infants' developing sensitivity to fairness and prosocial behavior, and lead to changes in parent-infant interactions.

The proposed experiment is innovative because it seeks both to test the underlying mechanisms by which infants acquire socio-moral norms such as fairness expectations, as well as to design interventions to promote the acquisition of such norms. The proposed work is also innovative because it investigates the impact of MBI on multiple levels: parental attitudes, values and beliefs, parental-infant behavior, and infant representations and behavior. In addition to promoting positive development and well-being in typically developing children, the proposed work may have import in the diagnosis and remediation of developmental disorders, such as autism or conduct disorders, that are characterized by social deficits including a recognition and understanding of socio-moral norms.

**Cevasco, Molly**, University of Washington Department of School Psychology

***Investigating Mindfulness as Child Abuse Prevention for Very Low-SES Mothers***

Mindfulness-based parenting interventions are growing in popularity, with increasing empirical evidence to support their efficacy. Successful outcomes have been found for parents in high-stress situations such as raising a disabled child (e.g. Benn, Akiva, Arel & Roeser, 2012), parents with mental illness (e.g. Ballie, Kuyken & Sonnenberg, 2012), and children with externalizing behaviors (e.g. Bogels, et al 2008;).

Additional research has examined the effect of mindfulness practices on low-SES children (e.g. Mendelson, et al 2010). To date, limited research has examined the effects of mindfulness-based interventions for very low-income parents. This study is in the initial phases of examining the effects of an additive mindfulness intervention for mothers who are homeless or in transitional housing. Specific emphasis is on improving parenting self-efficacy and reducing symptoms of depression and anxiety in an effort to decrease the risk of parental child abuse. Initial study plans, measurement scales, and research timeframe will be presented and feedback is invited.

**Crawford, Jennifer**, Washington State University Extension; **Shreetha, Gitanjali**, Washington State University Department of Human Development, College of Human and Agricultural and Natural Resources  
***Outcomes-based Evaluation Comparison of Mindful Parenting Education Intervention***

This presentation aims to demonstrate and compare outcomes of an intervention that combines parent education with yoga and mindfulness instruction among two populations: incarcerated fathers and parents who are in treatment for drugs and alcohol. Classes meet on location 2-3/times a week for 8-12 hours each of parenting curriculum and yoga instruction each series. The research-based social and parenting skills educational curriculum incorporates mindfulness in 6 core parenting topic areas and aims to improve participants' emotional balance; ability to tolerate feelings of distress; and sense of connection to family members. Participants complete pre tests and post tests. Four surveys used to measure effects of the program are: two validated scales (the Self Compassion Scale (SCS) (Neff, 2003) and the Distress Tolerance Scale (DTS) (Simons & Gaher, 2005), the Whole Person Survey short form based on yoga therapy to assess expected physical and emotion effects related to the practice of yoga, and the Fit 2B Fathers (F2bF) program scale (Maiorano, 2001), created by the Fit2Bfprogram developer, which assesses beliefs and attitudes about parenting. Paired t-tests of pretest to posttest change of 100 participants (June 2011-December 2012) for all subscales provide evidence of positive changes across all four measurement tools. The data suggests that program content and delivery is helping participants be more resilient, better able to positively respond to their children's needs. T-test comparisons between the two populations will reveal whether there are significant differences in outcomes.

**Frye, Megan**, University of Washington; **DeCano, Polo**, University of Washington; **Cook, Clayton R.**, University of Washington; **Brennan, Carrie**, University of Washington; **Boyd, Soleil**, University of Washington; **Keller, West**, University of Washington; **Joseph, Gail**, University of Washington  
***Achiever Adult Resiliency Curriculum – Awareness and Empowerment through Mindfulness***

There has been burgeoning emphasis in the field of early care and education programs for the implementation of evidence-based practices. While many current early childhood initiatives and policies set high standards for the implementation of evidence-based practices, they do not address factors that affect early childcare providers' ability to implement said practices with fidelity. One of the factors that has been shown to negatively impact the fidelity with which educators implement evidence-based practices, as well as their overall professional effectiveness, is the amount of stress they experience. In fact, over 30% of early childcare providers leave the field each year, citing stress as the primary cause. Of those who remain in the profession, a significant proportion experience high levels of stress that interfere with the delivery of evidence-based practices. In addition, stress has been continuously linked to lower job commitment, diminished life satisfaction, and increased likelihood for physical illness.

Although the evidence-based practice movement has identified effective practices for use early care and education programs, it has been somewhat narrow-sighted in its approach. It has fallen short in considering the wellbeing of implementers as an important aspect of the adoption and implementation of evidence-based practices. The main thesis of this poster presentation states that by equipping early childcare providers with the skills necessary to manage the stress inherent in the job and promote overall wellbeing they will be able to more effectively adopt and ultimately implement evidence-based practices that target improving child outcomes.

In line with above thesis, the ACHIEVER Adult Resilience Curriculum (AARC) was developed as part of the Early Achievers Program, Washington's quality rating and improvement system for early childcare learning environments. AARC was designed to teach providers a range of skills to promote their overall wellbeing and human effectiveness, with the hope of producing significantly greater adoption and implementation of evidence-based practices. AARC is a strength-based program that was predicated upon cognitive behavior therapy, mindfulness-based practices, and positive psychology principles. ACHIEVER represents an acronym that outlines 8 standalone skills.

The 'A' in ACHIEVER stands for awareness and empowerment through mindfulness, which is one of the keystone skills taught as part of the AARC. Informal and formal mindfulness-based practices are taught to increase early childcare providers' awareness and expand their willingness to experience each moment with an element of curiosity and non-judgment. Through mindful awareness, educators will be able to

distance themselves from stressful situations, think more clearly in the moment, and develop a sense of empowerment as to how to create and implement positive solutions in response to difficult situations.

This poster presentation will focus specifically on the awareness and empowerment of mindfulness component of the AARC, including examples of activities for use in educational settings and research projects currently being designed to evaluate its effectiveness. Attendees will learn about a specific approach to promoting resilience in early childcare providers. The ultimate outcome is to improve care for children within early childcare learning environments by cultivating mindfulness and other resiliency skills among those who serve them.

**Gold, Eluned**, Bangor University UK; **Gilder, Thandiwe**, Bangor University UK; **Dorjee, Dusana**, Bangor University UK; **Yadev, Vikram**, Betsi Cadwallader Health Board NHS UK

#### ***Mindfulness-based Well-being for Foster Parents***

This longitudinal feasibility pilot study aims to investigate whether a Mindfulness-based Wellbeing for foster-parents programme has a positive impact on the mental health and stress of foster carers and their perceived ability to care for and make positive relationships with their fostered children. The intervention is being delivered as a 9-session Mindfulness-based Wellbeing for foster-Parents Programme comprising eight training sessions and one final session of feedback and qualitative research. The programme is based on Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction (MBSR) (Kabat-Zinn 1990) and also draws from Mindfulness based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) (Segal et al 2002), and Compassion Focused Therapy (Gilbert. 2010). The programme is adapted to be accessible to parents. Adaptations include appropriate written materials relevant to parents and appropriate, manageable home practices.

This pilot study follows a pre-post design with waiting list control group. The participants are 30 foster carers (16 in the training group) drawn from local authority and independent fostering agencies in the UK, who are currently fostering a child between the ages of 4-16 years. The training group is receiving the 9-week programme while the control group will not receive any intervention until all the measurements are completed. Both groups will be assessed at the same time, within one week before the start of the programme and within one week after completion of the programme.

The effectiveness of the programme is being evaluated using the following self-report measures: Changes in mindfulness are assessed using the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ; Baer et al., 2006), and a short version of Interpersonal Mindfulness in Parenting scale (IM-P; Duncan, 2007), which specifically focuses on mindfulness in the parenting context. World Health Organization Quality of Life questionnaire (WHOQoL-Bref; WHOQoL Group, 1998) is used to assess modifications in four dimensions of quality of life (physical, psychological, social and environmental) and we are also measuring the psychological stress in foster carers via DASS, (Lovibond et al.1995).

In addition, the measures include demographics for foster carer and identified child, placement history, age/ duration of placement, reason for placement (abuse/ relationship breakdown etc), socio/ economic/ educational attainment of foster carers, birth children at home and measurement of parent's perception of fostered child difficulties through Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (Goodman 2001).

**King, Kevin**, University of Washington; **Bowen, Sarah**, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, University of Washington; **Nurius, Paula**, School of Social Work, University of Washington; **McLaughlin, Kate A.**, Department of Psychology, University of Washington

#### ***Mindfulness and Emotional and Behavioral Self-Regulation among Incarcerated Youth***

The current project aims to adapt and explore the feasibility and efficacy of a mindfulness-based intervention to improve self-regulation in a sample of adolescents in a juvenile incarceration and treatment setting. This study represents a partnership between University of Washington faculty with Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration facility staff to provide brief, sustainable evidence-based interventions to strengthen self-regulation skills among traumatized and dysregulated youth inmates. Youth involved in juvenile justice settings have among the highest exposure to adverse childhood experiences with resultant psychological and physiological impairment that disrupt self-regulation and lead to poor psychological health. Mindfulness training is an established intervention with stressed adult populations that has been shown to boost self-regulation, with promising evidence of effectiveness among both adolescent and corrections-involved populations.

The goals of the proposed study are to adapt and explore the feasibility and efficacy of Mindfulness Based Relapse Prevention (MBRP) to treat impulsive and delinquent behavior in a small ( $n = 45$ ) sample of adolescents in a juvenile justice setting, and to map the course and correlates of changes in regulation over time. We propose to complete four sequential six week MBRP treatment groups, comprising of 10-12 adolescents each, and to capture weekly assessments of meditation practice and skill level and self-regulation ability.

Specifically, the current proposal has two central aims:

1. Test the feasibility of adapting and implementing a mindfulness-based relapse prevention program to target self-regulation in a juvenile justice setting.
2. Examine the effects of learning and practicing mindfulness-based skills on multiple aspects of self-regulation.
  - a. Test the effects of childhood exposure to ACEs as a moderator of the effects of treatment on self-regulation over time. H.1. Adolescents with the greatest exposure to ACEs (and the most dysregulation at baseline) will benefit the most from treatment.
  - b. Test the effects of treatment components (such as awareness of triggering stimuli, perceived stress, and weekly meditation practice) on weekly changes in self-regulation. H.2. Adolescents who report greater utilization of treatment components will exhibit greater weekly changes in self-regulation.

The study approach is oriented towards implementation feasibility rather than controlled design, working with staff to recruit and retain youth participants, and field test assessment and intervention components. Findings will be used to support larger scale controlled-design testing.

**Laurent, Heidemarie**, University of Wyoming; **Laurent, Sean**, University of Wyoming; **Hertz, Robin**, University of Wyoming

***The mindful couple: How dispositional mindfulness impacts neuroendocrine response to romantic conflict***

The way a romantic couple negotiates conflict has far-reaching implications not only for their own well-being, but also for the health and happiness of their children (e.g., Davies, Cicchetti, & Martin, 2012). Harmful patterns of conflict developed during emerging adulthood tend to perpetuate over time, increasing partners' risk for depression and relationship dissatisfaction or dissolution (Laurent, Kim, & Capaldi, 2008; 2009). In part, these links may be mediated by partners' physiological stress reactions to conflict; previous work has related partners' cortisol response to a conflict discussion to depression symptoms and diagnoses (Powers, Laurent, Gunlicks, Balaban, & Bent, under review). A promising antidote to such problematic patterns is mindfulness, or the capacity for present-moment, nonjudgmental awareness. Dispositional mindfulness has been shown to relate to healthier couples conflict and superior relationship quality (Barnes, Brown, Krusemark, Campbell, & Rogge, 2007). In the current study, we set out to clarify paths by which dispositional mindfulness may influence young romantic partners' cortisol responses to conflict, and how these responses relate to symptoms of depression.

Emerging adult couples ( $n = 54$ ) who had been in a relationship for at least 2 months were recruited for a study of romantic relationships. Partners completed the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (Baer et al., 2008) to assess key dimensions of dispositional mindfulness: nonreactivity, nonjudgment, observing, describing, and acting with awareness. They also completed a self-report depression questionnaire (the CES-D; Radloff, 1977). Each partner nominated a topic of recent unresolved debate, and the couple was given 15 minutes alone to discuss and attempt to resolve the conflict (selected by coin toss). Two saliva samples were collected before the conflict discussion, and three were collected afterward, to capture cortisol reactivity and recovery dynamics. Hierarchical linear modeling was used to test associations between partners' cortisol trajectories and both mindfulness and depression.

We found that the nonreactivity dimension of mindfulness predicted less conflict-related reactivity and lower post-conflict cortisol levels for male partners, but greater reactivity and higher post-conflict cortisol levels for female partners. Nonjudgment also predicted lower male cortisol reactivity. Gender-specific relations with depression symptoms helped to interpret these effects; whereas males with elevated depression showed greater cortisol reactivity, their female counterparts showed lower cortisol reactivity. This means that dispositional nonreactivity predicted cortisol patterns associated with lower depression

symptoms for both partners.

These findings highlight the attitudinal component of mindfulness—i.e., nonreactivity to and nonjudgment of inner experience—as an important protective factor in couples' well-being. This work underlines the importance of stress physiology during a naturalistic interpersonal stressor for mood regulation, while highlighting gender differences in paths from mindfulness to psychological adjustment.

**Robinson, JoAnn**, University of Connecticut; **Larrabee, Kim**, University of Connecticut; **Bladen, Anne**, University of Connecticut; **Galante-DeAngelis**, University of Connecticut; **Goldman, Jane**, University of Connecticut

### ***Supporting Mindfulness in a State University Teacher Training Program***

Like many early childhood faculty, we use observation and reflection as the core practices that undergird our instructional approach with student teachers. Mindfulness is a complementary concept that we use to deepen students' experience of these practices. Mindfulness also permits students to understand intentional teaching in a way that allows them to fully honor their own sensory and emotional experiences as they integrate them with their more traditional modes of learning.

In this poster we will present highlights of how we train students in a mindful, reflective approach to their skill development with children across three semesters of coursework and classroom practice.

Commentary by the students will accompany photographs of several "products" of these experiences to illustrate the benefits of this approach.

**Smith, Tracy**, University of Connecticut; **Derick, Linda**, CT Center for Massage Therapy; **Robinson, JoAnn**, University of Connecticut

### ***Implementing Nurturing Touch within Early Childhood: A Three Year Follow-Up of Children and Adults***

Peaceful Touch (PT) is professional development training for early childhood educators serving to raise awareness about the benefits of nurturing touch. It supports professionals to develop their own sensitivity and capability to teach children effectively and safely about healthy touch. PT originated in Sweden, in 1995, where the Axelsons Institute in Stockholm has since trained thousands of teachers in practical touch methods, and children, especially between the ages of three and eight, receive the many benefits.

The PT approach is based on four important principles:

- **Permission:** Asking for permission to touch, honoring the response and responding to feedback are essential to the practice of PT.
- **Presence:** Development of calm and focused attention and mindful awareness of being in the moment supports the giver of touch to be fully engaged.
- **Pressure:** Touch must be appropriate in amount of pressure, steadiness of application and responsive to the receiver's feedback.
- **Practice:** Regularity of practice helps children accustom to the normalcy of giving and receiving nurturing touch as well as develop healthy body awareness.

Since 2007, the teachers at the Child Development Labs at the University of Connecticut have enthusiastically incorporated PT practices into daily interactions with the children to explicitly support the children's learning and classroom regulation. The purpose for this research is to follow up and evaluate the PT training from the perspective of teachers after years of implementation. The goal of this study is to document teacher insights of their own growing awareness and intentional use of nurturing touch based on the following themes:

- Evolution of teacher awareness of their own intention of touch.
- Development of interactions and connections with children and the impact they have on the cultivation of a healthy classroom.
- Adult mindfulness about touch and the implications on children's development of body-ownership and awareness.

Two and a half years after the PT training, data collection and written feedback was gathered from eight teachers at the laboratory school over the course of two weeks.

Data collection focused on teachers recording PT events happening within the classroom. Special attention was given to the child's emotion prior to PT, the PT event, who initiated PT, the child's response as well as the context. Findings included: Twenty-three PT experiences in the classroom were recorded by teachers; most frequently teachers noted it during free choice play times. Results showed that 100% of teachers noted a calming transformation in either a child's behavior, emotion or both after a teacher gave PT. They noted this effect in terms of body tension and release, facial expression and verbal and non-verbal behavior. During or after giving PT, 75% of teachers noted a calming transformation in their own emotions and/or body tension and release. As teachers became increasingly insightful and sensitive to the use of PT through the day, they discovered a direct effect the touch had on the children. It would seem touch mindfulness in teachers led to touch mindfulness in children, fostering interpersonal sensitivity and prosocial behaviors among children and in turn supporting children's learning.