



Family Link

SUMMER 2012

<http://McClellandInstitute.arizona.edu>

Reducing Young Adults' Financial Stress, Debt Levels at Heart of New Research

How do financial stress and compromised parent-adolescent relationships during adolescence affect financial health and substance abuse in young adults? A new four-year \$876,801 grant from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) helps researchers answer the question.



The new research will contribute to an understanding of alcohol-related problems, prevention and treatment, and to programs and policies that can reduce financial stress and debt levels during young adulthood.

"An important predictor of alcohol problems in both adolescence and young adulthood is compromised parent-adolescent relationships. Another predictor is financial stress, which may be particularly relevant during times of economic downturn. But very little is known about the dynamics of financial stress and its association with alcohol problems in adolescence and into young adulthood," says McClelland Director Stephen Russell, Ph.D., the principal investigator on the grant.

Adolescent Health—called Add Health—will be used to examine the potential long-term effects of family financial stress and parent-child relationship quality in adolescence on young adult family relationships, financial stress, and alcohol problems.

"...Very little is known about the dynamics of financial stress and its association with alcohol problems in adolescence and into young adulthood."

— Stephen T. Russell, Ph.D.,
Director

This project is a new collaboration with the Take Charge America Institute (TCAI), also in the Norton School at the UA. Russell is joined in the research by co-principal investigators Joyce Serido, Ph.D., an assistant research professor with TCAI; and Katherine Conger, an associate professor in the Human and Community Development Department at UC Davis in California. Serido's research expertise includes financial stress and well-being and the financial coping behaviors of young adults. Conger is an expert on effects of economic hardship on families and individuals.



Joyce Serido



Katherine Conger

Four waves of data from the ongoing National Longitudinal Study of



From the Director

In this issue of *FamilyLink* we highlight a number of projects in the Frances McClelland Institute – studies that cover the family age-range from early childhood to young adults! The *Strengthening Families Project* will help us understand how a program to strengthen families can improve the well-being of families with young children. We give an update from the *Crossroads Collaborative* about ongoing research with local high school youth. And a new grant will help us better understand the dynamics of young adults' relationships with their parents and financial stress, and how those factors affect alcohol abuse.

All of those projects are underway – so it is good to also celebrate work completed: The new book featured here by Ann Mastergeorge and her colleagues will be an important guide for supporting children with autism in schools.

This is the time of year that we say good-bye to graduating seniors. In the last issue we featured *Moving Research into*



Practice, or *MRP*, our honorary student association. They have done a lot this year to raise awareness for suicide prevention. We'll miss the seniors from *MRP* – congratulations on your graduation and good luck!

Finally, we have exciting plans to feature the Institute at homecoming this fall, including awarding the *Frances McClelland Vision Award*. Stay tuned this summer and fall for information about how to nominate someone who has made a difference in the lives of Arizona's children, youth, and families.

We look forward to a productive summer of new and ongoing research projects in the Institute that continue to support our mission of improving the lives of children, youth, and families in our community. Thank you for your ongoing support.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen T. Russell". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Stephen T. Russell, Ph.D., Director
Distinguished Professor, Fitch Nesbitt Endowed Chair

NIFA/USDA Grant to Strengthen Families, Improve Lives of Low-Income Families Across Arizona

Almost half of Arizona children (47%) live in low-income families – a rate that is even higher for children under age 6 (53%), Hispanic children (69%), and American Indian children (71%). Arizona parents and families who are at risk due to poverty do not have the support and opportunities necessary to develop skills they need to help their children succeed in life. However, research has shown that parent and family education programs can contribute to positive changes in both parenting and child outcomes, particularly during the early childhood years.

Ann Mastergeorge, Ph.D. received funding from National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)/United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to support the development, implementation, and evaluation of the Strengthening Families Program (SFP), a training program for high risk

families designed to improve family relationships, parenting skills, and children's social and life skills.

The research component of this project is an evaluation to determine the SFP program's ability to improve family management and parenting skills, children's school readiness, and participants' healthy behaviors in the areas of nutrition and physical activity.

The evaluation component of the project will provide documentation of the impact of the program on the promotion of positive family environments and healthy development and will ensure the ability to deliver a meaningful and results-driven program that can serve as a prototype for other programs in the State of Arizona.

Educational Interventions for Students with Autism

Two acclaimed experts in the field of autism have collaborated with the UC Davis M.I.N.D. Institute to publish a book that offers educators a vital resource for understanding and working with students with autism. *Educational Interventions for Students with Autism* was written by Peter Mundy, Ph.D., the Lisa Capps Professor of Neurodevelopmental Disorders and Education at UC Davis and Ann Mastergeorge, Ph.D., a developmental and educational psychologist at the University of Arizona, to best address the practical needs of teachers, school administrators, and parents who regularly deal with the challenges of autism.

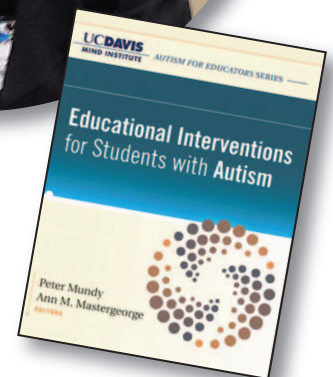
The book includes integrative summaries throughout, with recommendations for real-world classroom use. Topics covered include: how autism affects student learning, autism and its impact on schools, a teacher's view of autism and the classroom, best practices and challenges of working with students with ASD in the classroom, working with high-functioning autism (HFA) in schools, successful community-school partnerships, options for teacher training, and more.)

About the Authors

Peter Mundy, Ph.D., is the Lisa Capps Professor of Neurodevelopmental Disorders and Education at UC Davis and Director of Educational Research at the UC Davis M.I.N.D. Institute. A developmental and clinical psychologist, Mundy has been working on defining the nature of autism for the past 30 years.



Ann M. Mastergeorge at a book signing at the 2012 American Educational Research Association Conference in Vancouver, Canada.



Ann M. Mastergeorge, Ph.D., is a developmental and educational psychologist who has been working in the area of education and developmental disabilities for the past 20 years. She is an investigator on the Autism Phenome Project at the M.I.N.D. Institute studying the behavioral phenotypes of autism. Dr. Mastergeorge is currently on the faculty at the University of Arizona in the division of Family Studies and Human Development and is the Chair of the Early Childhood Initiative in risk, early intervention and prevention in the Frances McClelland Institute for Children, Youth, and Families.

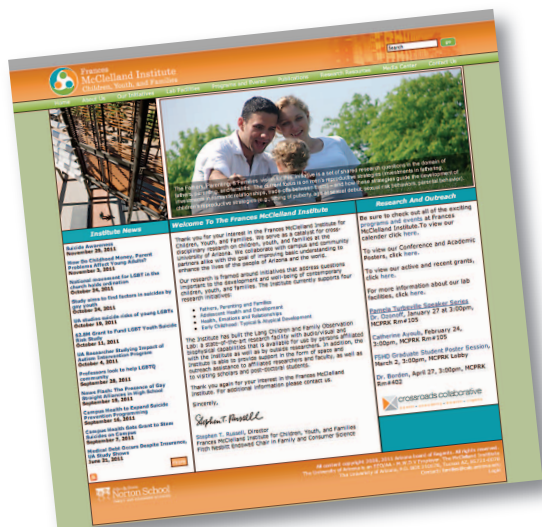


Local Tucson youth participants at the 2011 Youth, Art, Activism: Nuestra Voz Racial Justice Summer Camp

Crossroads Collaborative: Community Partner Feature

Nuestra Voz was a program of the YWCA Tucson focused on combating prejudice and intolerance with a focus on healing historical racial trauma. It was designed to support Latino/a youth to understand and to address racial injustice. Last year, Nuestra Voz organized a summer camp to educate and empower youth. Evaluation from the Crossroads Collaborative, funded by a grant from the Ford Foundation, showed that youth who attended the camp were more likely to say that they could actively speak up for social justice. In addition, they felt more informed and less confused about their rights and therefore more connected to their community. Ongoing work includes analyzing the videos, poetry, and artwork produced by youth participants of Nuestra Voz. This work will contribute to interdisciplinary research in youth studies as well as to the promotion of youth engagement, community literacy, and social justice.

Check out our website!



<http://mcclellandinstitute.arizona.edu/home>

SAVE THE DATE!



2012 Norton School "Back-to-School"
Lecture featuring Dr. Charles Raison

November 9, 2012 from 11-11:45 am

Dr. Charles Raison will present on "Compassion Training as a Pathway to Lifelong Health and Well-Being" at the 2012 Norton School Homecoming "Back-to-School" Lecture.

Join Us In Congratulating...

Angela Taylor

2012 CALS Administrator of the Year Award

Melissa Curran

2012 Shirley O'Brien Diversity Award

Diana Meter

2012 National Science Foundation

Graduate Research Program

Stephen Russell

Society for Research on Adolescence President

CONTACT US:

Frances McClelland Institute for Children, Youth, and Families
The University of Arizona
P.O. Box 210078
Tucson, AZ 85721-0078
Phone: 520.621.8067
Fax: 520.621.4979
E-mail: families@ag.arizona.edu
Website: McClellandInstitute.arizona.edu



The Frances McClelland Institute for Children, Youth, and Families is housed in The John and Doris Norton School of Family and Consumer Sciences, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at the University of Arizona. The Institute serves as a catalyst for cross-disciplinary research dealing with children, youth, and families.



P.O. Box 210078 • Tucson, AZ 85721-0078

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