



Family Link

FALL 2011

<http://McClellandInstitute.arizona.edu>

The Kids' Court School

Victim. Witness. Accused. Dependency case participant.



Whatever the reason, a courtroom experience can be traumatizing for children and teens. Evidence suggests that Kids' Court School can decrease their court-related stress and increase their credibility as witnesses—helping youth be effective when they take the stand.

may participate in the Kids' Court School. The program is free-of-charge and conducted at the James E. Rogers College of Law at the University of Arizona, 1201 E. Speedway Blvd. For more information about weekly dates and times, go to <http://mcclellandinstitute.arizona.edu/kids-court-school>

“I just think it’s a great program, and it’s important to let more people know about it.”

— Parent Kim Lewis-McClellan, who signed up her eight-year-old son for the program

Professionals and parents who refer youth to this unique program can be confident that the curriculum is not only evidence-based and effective, it is standardized so that parties on all sides of a case know exactly what youth participants are hearing and learning.

The program has gained national attention as a model for child witness education. Kids' Court School is the only program of its kind in Arizona. The first of two one-hour sessions addresses the pretrial and trial processes; Kids' Court students are then introduced to the roles and functions of the courtroom participants. Stress reduction is the focus of the second session; youth learn breathing techniques and positive self-talk as coping skills to reduce anxiety while testifying. The ideas and concepts presented throughout the curriculum are then reviewed and the program concludes with a mock trial.

Any young person age 4 to 17 years old who is scheduled to appear in court



Rebecca Nathanson, Ph.D., established Kids' Court School in 2003 in the Boyd School of Law at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas, and the program is now

part of the McClelland Institute as well. A research professor with the McClelland Institute, Dr. Nathanson is collaborating with professionals and faculty at the McClelland Institute. She also is the James E. Rogers Professor of Education and Law at the University of Nevada.

Young program participants learn about the judicial process.



THE UNIVERSITY
OF ARIZONA.

From the Director

Early Childhood: A New Initiative



Since we re-dedicated the Institute in honor of Frances McClelland, we have been working toward the development of a core area of strength in early childhood. In the spring we introduced the initiative on Early Childhood: Typical and Atypical Development.

Two stories in this issue highlight our work in early childhood. The Kids' Court School is off the ground and running, as are evaluation efforts for some of the First Things First programs in Arizona. Also, Dr. Ann Mastergeorge will speak about "what parents need to know" about autism for the alumni lecture at homecoming. And we plan a series of talks for early 2012 from internationally known scholars in the field of early childhood: stay tuned for those announcements.

Meanwhile, we share some of the training opportunities we've worked on this summer: primate studies in Rwanda, grandparents raising grandchildren in Coconino County, and international studies of adolescence.

Finally, watch for more updates on our website and check out the next issue of Family Link for the latest news on several major grants that begin this fall.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Stephen T. Russell

Stephen T. Russell, Ph.D.
Professor, Fitch Nesbitt Endowed Chair
Director, Frances McClelland Institute

Internship Insights:

Shirley Jo Taylor Externship

by Danielle Burr, Coconino County Cooperative Extension

I am a Junior at the University of Arizona majoring in Family Studies and Human Development. For my externship I worked with the University of Arizona Coconino County Cooperative Extension in Flagstaff, Arizona. I worked with grandparents who are raising their grandchildren mostly due to incarceration or substance abuse. It was such a positive experience and I have grown to have so much respect and admiration for what these wonderful grandparents do. They truly put their lives on hold to make sure that their grandchildren are cared for.



One of my main responsibilities was to put together a weekend long camp for the grand families to relax and get away from the stress and demands of everyday life. We had wonderful workshops aimed at helping the grandparents have lots of fun and relaxation! We also had discussion groups for the grandparents. The kids ages 7-12, were able to do challenge courses, canoe, learn about the surrounding environment, and play lots of games. The camp was a great success!

The Cooperative Extension serves so many needs in the community and I am extremely grateful I was able to be a part of it for the summer and see what my college does throughout the state. This experience reinforced so much of what I have learned in class and it was amazing to put that into practice to help serve a need in the community.

First Things First: Data to Support Youngest Arizonans

A Norton School research team will provide data that will inform important decisions about future programs for Arizona families with children five and younger.

The Norton team was selected to work with nine First Things First regional partnership councils in their efforts to better understand the character, strengths, and needs of their regions. First Things First is a citizen's initiative formed by the 2006 passage of Proposition 203 that is committed to funding quality early childhood development and health to help the youngest Arizonans receive the education, healthcare, and family support they need to arrive at school ready to succeed.



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Ready for School. Set for Life.

For more information about First Things First please visit www.azftf.gov

“Communities need solid, regionally specific data to make informed decisions about how to prioritize their resources for supporting young children and their families,” says Michele Walsh, Ph.D, who, together with Ann Mastergeorge, Ph.D., and Lynne Borden, Ph.D., is leading the Norton research team.

Walsh added, “These data are often hard to come by, particularly in sparsely populated rural areas. However, our team has experience in a number of qualitative methods, including interview and focus group methodology, and expertise in sophisticated quantitative analysis techniques. This will help us examine and report on the information in an accessible way.”

The Norton team will develop needs and assets reports for four tribal and five county-based regional partnership councils across the First Things First goal areas:



- Quality and access to early care and education
- Health
- Professional development of early care teachers and workers
- Family support
- Communication
- Coordination among early childhood programs and services

Walsh notes, “We know that strengthening communities requires not only identifying their needs, but also recognizing their particular strengths, in order to leverage those to creatively address challenges. We are committed to documenting both the needs and the considerable strengths of the regions we are partnering with.”

Additional focus areas include developing a system for accessing local data online for the Yavapai region, describing the resources and needs of rural communities for the La Paz/Mohave region, and collecting information about the needs of and supports for grandparents parenting grandchildren for the Gila River Indian Community region.

Regional Partnership Councils Partnering with the Norton School

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Central Maricopa | Southeast Maricopa |
| Colorado River Indian Tribes | Santa Cruz |
| Gila River Indian Community | Tohono O’odham Nation |
| Hualapai Tribe | Yavapai |
| La Paz/Mohave | |

Back From Rwanda: An Inside Look at the Primate Studies Field Course

by Dieter & Netzin Steklis

On our plane ride leaving the African continent, we sat next to a large loquacious man who upon hearing of our just completed Primate Studies Field School in Rwanda immediately insisted on sharing with us the “gone viral” satire “How to write about Africa” by the Kenyan writer Binyavanga Wainaina. With his acerbic wit, Wainaina leaves no one unscathed. When writing about Africa, he recommends that:

- ✓ “Your African characters” include many stereotypes, among them “The Modern African (who) is a fat man who steals and works in the visa office, refusing to give work permits to qualified Westerners who really care about Africa.”
- ✓ Western characters, after “celebrity activists and aid workers” must include “conservationists (as) Africa’s most important people. Do not offend them. You need them to invite you to their 30,000-acre game ranch or ‘conservation area’.”
- ✓ And “Animals...must be treated as well-rounded, complex characters...(that) have names, ambitions and desires. They also have family values...Elephants are caring, and are good feminists or dignified patriarchs. So are gorillas. Never say anything negative about an elephant or a gorilla.”

After this is there anything left to write about our African experience? Well yes, lots.

Though not matching the stereotypes set forth by Wainaina, we did on arrival have difficulties getting our national park entry permits, we rubbed elbows with conservationists—careful not to offend them—and for our students we happily drew parallels between the complex lives of animals and humans, taking care to heap praise upon the noble gorilla. (Guilty as charged!)

On location in Rwanda



Wainaina’s stereotypes ring true for most of our 20+ years experience in Africa, but when it comes to Rwanda things are somewhat different.

Rwanda is the Africa you don’t hear about—the progressive, educated, business-minded country that should be the narrative of a new Africa. Though our students were signed up to learn about primate families, parenting, intelligence and conservation, they also signed-up for an international experience. What they got was a life-changing month in one of the most socially progressive countries in Africa with a bewildering diversity of primates.

What country has the highest percentage of women in parliament?

Rwanda.

What country has a zero tolerance for corruption?

Rwanda.

What country carefully regulates ecotourism?

Rwanda.

What country has implemented basic universal health care?

Rwanda..

And what country has 13 primate species protected in three national parks?

Rwanda.

As we unpack our luggage and begin to review some of the journal entries and outstanding photos taken by the students, we recall the many ways these students were transformed by this experience. This will take a bit longer to describe (for the next newsletter) but the African characters and the wildlife described in their words will surely look very different from those captured by Wainaina.



Reflections on the EARA-SRA Summer School

The Frances McClelland Institute was honored to have been selected to host the prestigious European Association for Research on Adolescence (EARA) and the Society for Research on Adolescence (SRA) summer school this past May in Tucson. The event is an intensive one-week professional and scientific training conference that brings seasoned research professionals together with promising young doctoral scholars for idea exchange and challenging group work. The conference was a big success! Here's what a couple of our attendees had to share...

by Karen Bluth

Having been back from the summer institute for almost a month, what has remained with me most of all is the overall sentiment of respect which permeated all interactions and activities. Whether through engaging in lively debates about methodology or in-depth discussions about our research agendas, the faculty always seemed sincerely interested in helping us, in offering their expertise and guidance. It was genuine. Although there was no mistaking the division between "senior scholars" and "junior scholars," the tone was informal, and no one – most notably the senior scholars themselves – seemed to give the division much importance. The general sense was that we were a team working together to problem-solve the dilemmas of designing effective methodologies to answer our research questions, or to respond effectively in an afternoon activity posed to us following a lecture.

by Jama Shelton

I was both challenged by and engaged in our summer school activities. The assignments fostered collaboration and camaraderie that will likely (and hopefully) continue throughout our careers. A key aspect of the summer school that had a profound impact on my own work was the diversity of the junior scholars. Though our unifying interest was adolescent research, the specific nature of our work – populations to be studied, methodologies, location in our programs – varied greatly. The diverse interests represented by the junior scholars provided a rich experience that allowed me to see beyond the confines of my own discipline and consider additional viewpoints. The exchange of cross-disciplinary ideas strengthened my work and will broaden its reach and applicability.



Participants of the 2011 European Association for Adolescent Research (EARA) and the Society for Research on Adolescence (SRA) Summer School

Our New Website Is Live!



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

Join Us In Congratulating...

Lynne Borden

CALS 2010 Extension Faculty of the Year Award

Andrea Romero

Honors College/Woman of the Year Hispanic Professional Action Committee

Stephen Russell

Honors College Faculty Award for Excellence in Mentoring

Ryan Watson

National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program

Henry Gonzales

National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program

In the next issue...

- Dr. Stephen T. Russell receives funding to study family economics and alcohol abuse.
- Dr. Stephen T. Russell receives funding to understand suicide risk for LGBT teens.
- Campus Health grant will be collaborating with our Moving Research into Practice (MRP) student group.
- Dr. Ann M. Mastergeorge receives funding to understand parent-child resilience and risk factors.

Upcoming colloquium speakers and events...

- Lela Williams, September 30, 2011
- I.A.R.R. Mini-Conference, October 20-22, 2011
- Homecoming, November 3-4, 2011
- Alice Schlegel, December 2, 2011
- Sally Ozonoff, January 27, 2012
- Catherine Ayoub, February 24, 2012

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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.



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