



## **Current Projects and Partnerships**

### **Building a Fair Recommender System for Foster Care Services within the Constraints of a Sociotechnical System**

- This study seeks to develop methods to assist caseworkers in identifying youth in need of services before crises occur, and to allocate those services in a fair and just way. The methods developed will free resources for foster care agencies that are chronically underfunded and understaffed, increase procedural transparency and accountability in decision-making, and provide a critical tool to identify youth who need services before crises occur. Methods will be developed to help domain experts identify and better understand patterns in how services are currently being allocated. Informed by this analysis, a method will be developed to recommend service allocation strategies for foster youth in ways that balance the goal of ensuring fair distribution, according to multiple perspectives on fairness, and the goal of increasing the odds of positive life outcomes of all youth. **Primary Investigator:** Kenneth Joseph, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Computer Science and Engineering Department, University at Buffalo

### **Implementation and Evaluation of a Research based Model for Residential Care**

- This study seeks to scientifically evaluate the effectiveness of the CARE Organizational Model designed to improve the wellbeing of youth in residential care by improving the quality of care they receive at the agencies in which they reside. The intervention involves educating leadership and staff throughout the organization about how to orient services around several key principles that reflect empirically supported best practices. The intervention also involves providing post-training technical support and consultation to help agencies incorporate principles into daily practice. The current project will document the outcomes that result from the intervention at the agency-level, and among individual children and staff. **Primary Investigator:** Martha Holden, Ph.D., Senior Extension Associate, Project Director, Residential Child Care Project, Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research, Cornell University.

## Completed Projects and Partnerships

### Implementing and Evaluating an Evidence-Informed Suicide Prevention Framework and Training in Youth and Family Services

- The purpose of this program evaluation is to examine the effects of an evidence-informed suicide prevention framework and training on self-efficacy, knowledge, and learning transfer. The evaluation will examine the impact by staff role, type of role (clinical v. non-clinical), program, and type of program (clinical v. non-clinical). The program evaluation will be expanded to include behavioral indicators of process and outcome success drawn from health records. **Primary Investigator(s):** Laura Maggiulli, Ph.D., Director of Research, Hillside; Sarah Donovan, Psy.D., SafeSide Prevention; Anthony Pisani, Ph.D., University of Rochester, Psychiatry (Psychology) and Pediatrics and SafeSide Prevention; Joan Aiello, MS, Senior Business Intelligence Analyst, Hillside.

### Evaluation of the Family Driven Planning Pilot

- The purpose of this study is to evaluate a new model developed by Hillside called Family Driven Planning (FDP). The goal of FDP is to help create a supportive network for individuals with developmental disabilities and their caregivers — networks that can help a person achieve their goals and improve their quality of life. This study will examine outcomes for individuals with developmental/intellectual disabilities in the FDP intervention with a comparison group of individuals. Outcomes that will be examined include measures of social support of caring adults, overall quality of life, and a cost comparison analysis of Medicaid service utilization. This study is funded by the Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) and the New York State Balancing Incentive Program (BIP) Transformation Fund, and the Tower Foundation. **Primary Investigator:** Annette Semanchin Jones, Ph.D., University at Buffalo, School of Social Work.

### Evaluation of the Family Driven Planning Pilot: Qualitative Study

- This goal of this additional qualitative component is to evaluate the process and outcome of the Family Driven Planning model. The purpose of the qualitative component is to investigate the challenges and benefits of the program as well as any adaptations made during implementation. The purpose is also to collect data on recommendations to improve the program. The aim of this current study is to further evaluate the impact of the Family-Driven Planning model, which will be implemented with individuals who are eligible for Office for

People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). **Primary Investigator:** Annette Semanchin Jones, Ph.D., University at Buffalo, School of Social Work.

### **An Examination of the Intersection of Domestic Human Trafficking with Child Welfare and Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs**

- This study will pretest both a short and long form of a tool intended to identify youth who are victims of human trafficking within child welfare (CW) and runaway and homeless youth (RHY) populations, across three states. This exploratory work is an early step in the development of a screening tool and will allow the research team to test the screening tool's feasibility, reliability, and internal validity with a purposive sample of youth in a variety of CW and RHY settings. This study is being conducted by the Urban Institute under contract with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). **Primary Investigator:** Meredith Dank, Ph.D., Senior Research Associate, Urban Institute; **Co-Investigator:** Michael Pergamit, Ph.D., Senior Fellow, Urban Institute.

### **Adapting the Youth Connections Scale for Younger Children: Pilot Study**

- This study aims to develop and pilot test an adapted version of the Youth Connections Scale (YCS). The YCS was initially developed as an assessment tool for older youth in foster care ages 15 to 21 to assess the number and strength of their connections to caring adults. This current pilot study adapts the YCS for use with children ages 9 to 14 and will test the validity and reliability of this tool in partnership with Hillside. This study is funded by the Les Brun Research Endowment Fund through the Buffalo Center for Social Research. **Primary Investigator:** Annette Semanchin Jones, PhD, Assistant Professor, University at Buffalo, School of Social Work.

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Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) and the New York State Balancing Incentive Program (BIP) Transformation Fund, and the Tower Foundation. **Primary Investigator:** Annette Semanchin Jones, PhD, Assistant Professor, University at Buffalo, School of Social Work.

### **Advancing Research on Youth Settings by Exploring Program Quality and Outcomes for Runaway/Homeless Youth**

- This study will examine transitional living programs and drop-in centers that are designed to help runaway and homeless youth. The study aims to describe settings that service Runaway/Homeless Youth, with respect to their organizational-level and offering-level characteristics. Additionally, the association between the setting (program) quality on outcomes will be examined. Outcomes include education/occupation, mental health, substance use, and stable housing. The study will also examine perceived facilitators and barriers to program quality and effectiveness. **Primary Investigator:** Marya Viorst Gwadz, PhD, Senior Research Scientist; NYU College of Nursing; **Co-Investigator:** James Bolas; Executive Director, Coalition for Homeless Youth.

### **A Single Group Pre/Post-test Study on the Impact of Attentional/Cognitive Retraining on Individualized Education and Learning Outcomes including Cognitive Skills and Abilities for Youth in a Day Treatment Program**

- The purpose of the study is to test the effectiveness of attentional/cognitive retraining, utilizing the Cognifit School product, within a day treatment setting on both time out of classroom and education and learning variables including cognitive skills and abilities. The intervention will be implemented with adolescents ages 13 and above who have a diagnosis of either ADHD or Anxiety, and have the highest time out of classroom as recorded by Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports data (PBIS). **Primary Investigator:** Laura R. Maggiulli, PhD, Senior Research Analyst, Hillside.

### **A Quasi-Experimental Study of a Health and Wellness Group Intervention for Adolescents in Residential Treatment Facilities (RTFs) and Examination of Risk Factors as Treatment Success Predictors**

- The purpose of the quasi-experimental study was to examine the effectiveness of a health and wellness group intervention on BMI and treatment outcomes including success at discharge and discharge level of care for youth who received services in two RTFs. The secondary purpose of the study was to test whether demographic and risk factors predicted

treatment success at discharge. **Primary Investigator:** Laura R. Maggiulli, PhD, Senior Research Analyst, Hillside.

### **Predicting Emotional Dysregulation: Internal Consistency and Predictive Validity of Emotional Dysregulation Scale in 18-to-24-Year-Old Youths**

- The purpose of this study is to create a questionnaire that can help providers determine if someone has experienced a particular emotional state. The questionnaire is called the Emotional Dysregulation Scale (EDS). To see if the EDS questionnaire is good at measuring this emotional state and to see if this state has something to do with emotional dysregulation, we are evaluating the tool in an outpatient setting at Hillside. We hope to develop a questionnaire that can be used in the office setting and that will improve our understanding of people's emotional responses. **Primary Investigator:** Igor Galynker, MD, PhD, Associate Chairman, Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences; Professor of Clinical Psychiatry, AECOM; Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences, Beth Israel; **Co-Investigators:** Zimri Yaseen, MD (Co-Investigator), Attending Psychiatrist, Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences, Beth Israel, Irina Kopeykina (Research Coordinator), Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences, Beth Israel; **Hillside - Investigator:** Laura R. Greyber (Maggiulli), LMSW, Research Coordinator, Hillside.

### **A Randomized Controlled Trial of Increased Physical Activity and Health Education for Adolescents in a Day Treatment Program: Effects on Behavior**

- The randomized controlled trial study is to test the effectiveness of a multidimensional intervention consisting of physical activity and health education components on behavioral health. In addition to behavioral health, outcome variables include mental and physical health as well as perceived overall wellness. The intervention will take place for eight weeks at a day treatment center for at-risk youth who experience school and or family-related problems. **Primary Investigators:** Laura R. Greyber (Maggiulli), LMSW, Research Coordinator, Hillside; **Co-Investigator:** Andrea Klein, Hillside.

### **Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Surveillance Project**

- The Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Surveillance Project is a collaborative agreement between the New York State Department of Health and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. The overarching goals of this project are to accurately identify youth with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and report prevalence rates in an effort to provide effective treatment methods and

improve service outcomes. Hillside will serve as a project site to assist in the collection, identification, and access to data relevant to the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Surveillance Project. **Primary Investigators:** Deborah J. Fox, MPH, New York State Department of Health, [djf03@health.state.ny.us](mailto:djf03@health.state.ny.us); Charlotte Druschel, MD, MPH, New York State Department of Health.

### **Improving Family-to-Family Services in Children’s Mental Health Phase I**

- Improving Family-to-Family Services in Children’s Mental Health, is a five-year NIMH-funded study focused on family support services (particularly the role of family peer advocates) in Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver Programs. The goal is to understand the contexts within which family peer advocates work and to help organizations more effectively integrate family support services to improve the quality of care for children and families. Twenty-one programs including Hillside were involved and the researchers examined organizational structure and components of quality practices to inform Phase II, which includes an organizational level intervention around integrating family support services in Waiver programs. **Primary Investigator:** Kimberly Hoagwood; **Co-Primary Investigator & Project Director:** Serene Olin.

### **Improving Family-to-Family Services in Children’s Mental Health Phase II**

- Phase II of the study will test the impact of a research-based organizational level intervention that will be used to identify and address barriers to effective integration of family advocate services in Waiver programs. Half of the participating programs will receive the intervention and half will not. Two of Hillside’s Waiver programs have chosen to participate and are receiving consultation and support from the intervention staff. The researchers will examine if the intervention will lead to improvement in Waiver program culture and climate, quality indicators of family support services, and family and youth outcomes. **Primary Investigator:** Kimberly Hoagwood; **Co-Primary Investigator & Project Director:** Serene Olin.

### **Wendy’s Wonderful Kids**

- Research shows child-specific recruitment model works to find adoptive families for children in foster care: A five-year control group study found children served by the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption’s Wendy’s Wonderful Kids adoption recruiters were up to three times more likely to be adopted than children not served by the program. Hillside was one of

the program sites for the Wendy's Wonderful Kids signature program. For more details on Wendy's Wonderful Kids, please visit [www.davethomasfoundation.org/research](http://www.davethomasfoundation.org/research).

### **Organizational Climate and Culture Research Project**

- This 2009 study examined the climate and culture of front-line workers at Hillside and their attitudes towards adaptation of new technologies. All participants were 'front-line' employees. Given this criterion, participants represented a number of different work roles in the agency, including but not limited to: direct care workers in residential settings, therapists, and mentors. The participation rate for this study was 82%, yielding a total sample of 1,273 participants. The Organizational Social Context Measurement Model (Glisson, 2002; Glisson et al., 2008) and the Evidence Based Practice Attitude Scale (EBPAS) (Aarons, 2004) were administered. **Primary Investigator:** Catherine N. Dulmus, PhD, University at Buffalo, School of Social Work, [cdulmus@buffalo.edu](mailto:cdulmus@buffalo.edu); **Co-Investigator:** David A. Patterson, Silver Wolf (Adelv unegv Waya), PhD, University at Buffalo, School of Social Work.

### **Hillside Children's Center: Livingston County Youth Court and Community Services**

#### **Evaluation**

- [Click here to download the Youth Court Evaluation Executive Summary Report](#)
- [Click here to download the full Youth Court Evaluation Report](#)

#### **Care Management Demonstration Descriptive Report**

- [Click here to download the Care Management Demonstration Project Executive Summary](#)
- [Click here to download the full Care Management Descriptive Report](#)