<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table of Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prevention Science and Neurobiology .......... 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harvard Connection .................................. 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSI in Portland ..................................... 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSI Scoreboard ...................................... 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Training at PSI ......................... 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant-Funded Research at PSI ...................... 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UO Faculty at PSI .................................... 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Faculty at PSI ................................... 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Outreach at PSI ............................ 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSI 2015 Trainees .................................... 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSI Publications ..................................... 24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Welcome to Our Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2015

The Prevention Science Institute (PSI) at the University of Oregon is a multidisciplinary research institute where scientists seek to understand human development, prevent behavioral health problems, and implement effective interventions in community settings. The past year has been filled with many changes and growth opportunities for the PSI. With 18 affiliated research scientists, our grants portfolio has nearly doubled in the past year. With growth comes many opportunities. For example, we recently launched a Center for Translational Neuroscience within the PSI, which will begin in Fiscal Year 2016 and will expand our research focus to include this rapidly growing area of knowledge and intervention.

PSI builds on more than two decades of prevention research at the University of Oregon across multiple units, including the College of Education, the Department of Psychology, and the Child and Family Center. An integrated model of health and human development has guided the expansion of prevention research in several ways. First, we are studying both behavioral and biological processes in our research and interventions to better understand the interplay between neuroscience and intervention science. Second, we know that human problems often spill over into many domains of life. We are therefore focused on multiple risk outcomes and their effects on long-term health, such as substance abuse and obesity throughout the lifespan. Third, we have expanded our portfolio of population-based research to include both children and adults with a range of potential risk outcomes, such as autism and disrupted relationships across the lifespan.

Our commitment to graduate training, education, and science is integrated into our organizational structure and model for research. This annual report provides information about our grants, contracts, and community partnerships and highlights our activities during the past year. As is evident from our report, we could not conduct the research and community collaborations without the support of our many local, state, and federal partners. We hope you enjoy reading about our activities from last year as we look forward to our continued success!
Research conducted by PSI scientist Dr. Elizabeth Skowron suggests that parents struggling with child maltreatment often experience high levels of physiological stress when they attempt to use more positive methods of parenting, which leads them to resort to negative, aversive strategies. A PSI study called CAPS extends this research by examining the neurobiological bases of changes that occur as parents work to strengthen their parenting skills and change parent–child interaction patterns that lead to abuse.

The focal point of the new study, which is funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, is Parent–Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT), a parenting intervention that effectively reduces child maltreatment recidivism. PCIT is an evidence-based parenting program that helps empower parents to make changes that lead to more nurturing, positive, and secure relationships with their children. As such, it improves the parenting experience and effectively interrupts the intergenerational transmission of child abuse. Dr. Skowron and her PSI co-investigator, Dr. Phil Fisher, convened an interdisciplinary team of clinical and counseling psychologists, social workers, neuroscientists, and prevention scientists, along with UO graduate and undergraduate students, to conduct biobehavioral family assessments and a parenting intervention that is free to eligible families.

In the parenting intervention, parents wear a tiny earpiece while they play with their child in a clinical setting. From the other side of a one-way mirror a therapist “coaches” the parent via a headset, providing positive feedback, support, and guidance during the playtime. Skowron theorizes that over time this real-time support for improving the quality of the parent–child relationship and changing negative interaction patterns may interrupt the negative physiological patterns revealed in her earlier studies. New insights gained from this work may help better tailor approaches to families on the basis of their individual concerns and needs and deliver resources more efficiently and effectively to more families who come to the attention of child welfare services.

Parent–Child Interaction Therapy is one of a few parenting programs with documented success among families who struggle with child maltreatment.
In collaboration with the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, PSI scientist Dr. Philip Fisher and his research team have been working on a project to accelerate the ways in which scientific knowledge about promoting healthy child development is used to create effective programs and policy in community settings.

The Frontiers of Innovation (FOI) project is using innovative approaches to improve family well-being and deliver high-quality services at low cost. FOI scientists are striving to determine how interventions work and for whom they are most effective, while simultaneously identifying ways to increase reach and impact, particularly in communities characterized by high levels of poverty, discrimination, and economic disadvantage. In the FOI learning community, researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and philanthropic funders collaborate to create new models to promote healthy child development. Its emphasis on rapid-cycle learning expedites the timeline for conducting research projects, and knowledge gleaned from a cycle of research is used to inform subsequent iterations and continuously generate new ideas and knowledge.

With knowledge gained from his Stress Neurobiology and Prevention Laboratory at UO, Dr. Fisher is helping design programs based on new understanding of how early adversity affects the developing brain. He is also overseeing development of a Prevention Science Institute database that houses information across all the FOI projects. This aggregated knowledge is enabling FOI personnel and policymakers in the states where the work is being conducted to collaborate and learn from experience much more effectively than in the past. The complementary strengths of PSI and Harvard’s Center on the Developing Child are an example of how problems such as poverty and adversity may be dramatically and more rapidly addressed.

Among the activities in the FOI project is Dr. Fisher’s Filming Interactions to Nurture Development (FIND) program. In collaboration with providers in Washington state, his group tested FIND with families enrolled in an Early Head Start program, in a home-based childcare setting, and in a program serving low-income fathers. Because FIND rapidly gained statewide attention among policymakers, an implementation of FIND was soon funded through the Washington State Quality Rating and Improvement System for childcare providers. The FIND program’s start in a small setting and its rapid expansion to statewide implementation and continuous rigorous evaluation exemplifies the kind of work envisioned in the FOI project.
In July 2014 the Portland PSI team began work on a study funded by the Institute of Education Sciences, awarded to PSI director Dr. Elizabeth Stormshak. The study, Testing the Efficacy of an Ecological Approach to Family Intervention and Treatment During Early Elementary School to Prevent Problem Behavior and Improve Academic Outcomes, will evaluate the efficacy of implementing the Family Check-Up (FCU), a school-based, ecological approach to family intervention, during the transition into elementary school. PSI researchers Dr. Laura Lee McIntyre and Dr. Andy Garbacz are co-investigators on this project.

The transition to elementary school is a critical time for the development of key skills that are necessary for school success, including sustained attention, self-regulation, initiating and sustaining successful peer relationships, and academic competence. Parent support at home, such as positive parenting and support for learning, is associated with school readiness indicators that predict successful adaptation to the school context. For many children at risk for poor developmental outcomes, this transition can be difficult and may lead to early academic problems, which in turn may culminate in more severe forms of problem behavior and learning difficulties.

This randomized intervention trial is designed to link families and children with cost-effective, efficient, and scientifically supported interventions that will improve student behavior and academic outcomes. It is anticipated that children and families who receive the support provided through this intervention will show improvement in academic skills through the early elementary school years. This project, known in the community as The Kindergarten Study, is managed through the PSI Portland office.

As the project began, staff developed consent and assessment materials, trained assessors, and built relationships with school personnel. Cohort 1 (n = 160) was recruited in fall 2014 from...
Five ethnically and economically diverse elementary schools in the North Clackamas School District. Families were randomly assigned to either the intervention or a school-as-usual condition. The assessment includes parent and teacher screeners collected within the first few weeks of kindergarten and again at the end of the school year. It also includes a more in-depth parent survey of family stress and support, children's health and behavior, family management skills, and the home–school connection.

These parent surveys, along with videotaped family observations, will be collected annually. Data will be collected for three years from teachers, parents, and children, from kindergarten through second grade. PSI intervention staff are partnering with school-based therapists from Trillium Family Services to provide the FCU and support services to families assigned to the intervention condition.

As with other FCU studies, the main targets of the intervention include family management skills, children's self-regulation and social competency skills, and problem behavior, such as aggression and oppositional behavior at home and at school. Additional intervention targets unique to this study include academic learning skills, such as early literacy skills and identification of learning disability.

Recruitment of Cohort 2 began in September 2015.

The PSI Scoreboard

Prevention Science Institute studies are logging impressive statistics. These are some data from Fiscal Year 2015.

- **5,068** Participants across studies
- **45** States represented by participants in PSI studies
- **35** Countries represented by participants in PSI studies
- **80,062** Pages of surveys that study participants responded to
- **461** Hours of videotaped observation collected
- **76** Articles published in peer-reviewed journals, reporting findings from PSI studies
- **65** Employees who collected data directly from individuals and families participating in studies
- **77,955** Text messages received from study participants in studies using text-messaging
- **28,291** Miles traveled across the state of Oregon
- **19** Community agency partnerships in Oregon (including Early Childhood CARES; Trillium Family Services; Child Development & Rehabilitation Center; Oregon Health & Science University; Oregon Research Institute; 4J, Bethel, Springfield, and North Clackamas School Districts; Lane County Prevention; Department of Human Services; Department of Youth Services; Ophelia's Place; Boys & Girls Club; Head Start; Developmental Disability Services; Brattain House; Relief Nursery; and Oregon Social Learning Center)
Research Training at PSI
Supporting Future Researchers

Our graduate program in prevention science, which debuted in fall 2013, is a one-year, 45-credit master’s program that provides training in psychological foundations, research competencies, and design, evaluation, and implementation of effective interventions to reduce risk and enhance protective factors in children, youths, and families. Students in the program take graduate courses alongside graduate students in counseling psychology and couples and family therapy. They gain experience conducting research with PSI scientists (collecting and analyzing data, conducting psychological assessments, coding behavioral data, and conducting statistical analyses). They also have opportunities to train directly with practitioners and service providers in our local community. For example, students have partnered with leaders at Lane County Prevention, the University of Oregon’s Office of Student Life, and the Prevention Science Institute to help identify, implement, and evaluate evidence-based prevention programs.

At the PSI we embrace UO’s membership in the Association of American Universities by training and supporting graduate education at many levels. First, graduate students across campus work with PSI’s multiple research data sets to develop research studies that not only meet the requirements of the master’s program, but also prepare them for future research careers. Numerous master’s and doctoral students in the College of Education and Department of Psychology have used these data to develop independent research projects that both exert a positive impact on the world of science, and also enhance their future as they complete their degree and move on to professional research careers at other universities. Examples of some of the current graduate students’ research projects include Margaret Rosencrans’s (doctoral student in school psychology) project on the role of co-parenting support in promoting positive mental health outcomes for caregivers of young children with developmental delays and Kathryn Beauchamp’s (doctoral candidate in clinical psychology) project on the neural effects of self-control training in a sample of adolescents who are at increased risk for drug use and other behavioral problems.

We also received additional funding on two PSI grants to support underrepresented doctoral
students to receive training in the conduct of research. Aleksandria Perez (doctoral student in counseling psychology) was awarded a diversity supplement research grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse. She has been working at the PSI under the direction of Dr. Leslie Leve on the Early Growth and Development Study and is interested in the developmental and contextual predictors of problem behaviors in children and adolescents and long-term outcomes. Elisa DeVargas (doctoral student in counseling psychology) was awarded a diversity supplement grant from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and has been working on Project Alliance 2 with Dr. Elizabeth Stormshak to study substance use prevention with ethnically diverse youths and young adults.

Undergraduate Fellowship

In summer 2015 PSI’s work was enhanced by a NIDA-funded summer fellowship to Stanford University undergraduate Arielle Handforth, one of only 70 award recipients nationwide. The paid fellowship is designed to enable undergraduate students to intern alongside well-established scientists in the field of substance abuse and addiction to learn about research on risk behaviors and their consequences. Handforth participated in PSI scientist Dr. Leslie Leve’s study of the impact of family dynamics and parenting on a child’s risk for substance use. Findings from some of Leve’s studies, which include elementary school youths and adolescents involved in the juvenile justice system, will eventually inform intervention and prevention programs. In fall 2015 Handforth enrolled as a sophomore at Stanford University, where she is pursuing her interest in social psychology and international relations.
Grant-Funded Research in 2015 at PSI

**ADAPT Online: After Deployment Adaptive Parenting Tools**
Funding period: November 7, 2013–October 31, 2015
Principal Investigators: Dr. David DeGarmo, University of Oregon; Brion Marquez, IRIS Media; Dr. Abigail Gewirtz, University of Minnesota
Funded by: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
Grant number: R44 HD066896

This project’s goal is to strengthen family functioning and improve child outcomes in reintegrated military families. The After Deployment Adaptive Parenting Tools Online intervention addresses the parenting needs of military families potentially at risk for depression, anxiety, substance abuse, mental illness, and posttraumatic stress.

**Behavioral Effects of Teen Exposure to Multiple Risk Behaviors in Media**
Funding period: December 18, 2014–November 30, 2016
Principal Investigators: Dr. Atika Khurana, University of Oregon; Dr. Amy Bleakley, University of Pennsylvania
Funded by: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
Grant number: R21 HD079615

This project is examining the influence of exposure to multiple risk portrayals in popular movies and TV shows on adolescent health risk behaviors.

**Coaching Alternative Parenting Strategies (CAPS)**
Funding period: April 15, 2015–December 31, 2019
Principal Investigators: Dr. Elizabeth Skowron, Dr. Phil Fisher
Funded by: National Institute on Drug Abuse
Grant number: R01 DA036533

This clinical trial is (a) testing the effects of Parent–Child Interaction Therapy for maltreating families, and (b) identifying biobehavioral pathways to positive change in parenting practices and child outcomes. Participating families with children ages 3 to 8 years are assessed at three time points for psychological/physical health, behavior, heart rate, brain activity, and reductions in child abuse/neglect.

**Comparing Web, Group, and Telehealth Formats of a Military Parenting Program**
Funding period: June 1, 2014–May 31, 2019
Principal Investigators: Dr. David DeGarmo, University of Oregon; Dr. Abigail Gewirtz, University of Minnesota
Funded by: US Department of Defense
Grant number: W81XWH-14-1-0143

This research is testing e-technology approaches to increase access and portability of a family-based substance use intervention for reintegrated military reserve personnel and their families. The web-enhanced, group-based After Deployment Adaptive Parenting Tools intervention is being evaluated as an individualized web-facilitated/telehealth intervention.

**Early Family Prevention of Adolescent Alcohol, Drug Use, and Psychopathology**
Funding period: May 1, 2014–June 30, 2015
Principal Investigators: Dr. Leslie Leve, University of Oregon; Dr. Daniel Shaw, University of Pittsburgh; Dr. Thomas Dishion, Arizona State University; Dr. Melvin Wilson, University of Virginia
Funded by: National Institute on Drug Abuse
Grant number: R01 DA036832

This randomized prevention trial is testing the long-term effects of the Family Check-Up on parenting practices from toddlerhood through adolescence on adolescent problem behavior. The sample, recruited in three geographically, socioeconomically, and ethnically diverse U.S. communities, was originally assessed at child age 2 and then yearly through age 10.5. This follow-up study is assessing families at child age 13.5 and 15.5, and DNA samples are being collected from the youths.

**Early Onset vs. Pre-Existing Vulnerabilities in Adolescent Drug Use**
Funding period: July 15, 2012–May 31, 2016
Principal Investigator: Dr. Atika Khurana, University of Oregon; Dr. Daniel Romer, University of Pennsylvania
The central goal of this project is to identify the neurocognitive precursors underlying dysfunctional forms of drug use and symptoms of substance use disorders during the late-adolescence years.

Ecological Approach to Family Intervention and Treatment (EcoFIT) Integrated with PBS: An Effectiveness Trial in Middle School

Funding period: March 1, 2009–February 28, 2015

Principal Investigators: Dr. Thomas Dishion, Arizona State University; Dr. John Seeley, Oregon Research Institute; Dr. Elizabeth Stormshak, University of Oregon

Funded by: Institute of Education Sciences/US Department of Education

Grant number: R324A090111

This study scaled up the Family Check-Up in Oregon middle schools to test primary outcomes and measure implementation constructs. The FCU was adapted as the three-level Positive Family Support program: family resource center, home-to-school partnership, and use of the FCU for skill enhancement and home-to-school coordination.

Effectiveness of a Web-Enhanced Parenting Program for Military Families

Funding period: July 1, 2014–June 30, 2016

Principal Investigator: Dr. David DeGarmo, University of Oregon; Dr. Abigail Gewirtz, University of Minnesota

Funded by: National Institute on Drug Abuse

Grant number: R01 DA030114

The goal of this study is to advance research on family-based substance use prevention for reintegrated military personnel by examining whether an Oregon Parent Management Training prevention intervention, enhanced with e-technology and adapted for combat-deployed families' needs, will reduce risk behaviors associated with youth substance use by improving parenting, child, and parent adjustment.

Endogenous Opioids in Meditation Pain Relief

Funding period: January 1, 2014–December 31, 2015

Principal Investigators: Dr. Elliot Berkman, Lisa May

Funded by: Mind and Life Institute

Grant number: 2013-VARELA-MAY

This double-blind experiment, which introduces novel pharmacological methods to contemplative research, is using the opioid antagonist Naloxone in a two by two within-subjects design to...
research meditation-based pain relief to determine if (a) opioid receptors are activated and (b) endogenous opioids interact with trait factors in meditation pain relief.

**Evaluation of the Efficacy of Conjoint Behavioral Consultation for Middle School Students with Disruptive Behaviors**

**Funding period:** July 1, 2014–June 30, 2016

**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Andy Garbacz

**Funded by:** Society for the Study of School Psychology Early Career Research Awards Program

The purpose of this study is to examine the efficacy of Conjoint Behavioral Consultation (CBC) on parent and teacher positive behavior support strategies and middle school student disruptive behavior. In addition, CBC’s ability to positively influence the parent-teacher relationship is examined.

**Family Check-Up for Early Childhood**

**Funding period:** December 1, 2013–December 31, 2015

**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Elizabeth Stormshak

**Funded by:** Ford Family Foundation

Grant number: 20130431

This project is partnering with rural Oregon communities to increase the number of children who enter kindergarten ready for school. Outcomes of interest to families receiving the Family Check-Up include reductions in child problem behavior, increased attention and self-regulation skills at school, increased positive parenting skills, and increased language development and early literacy skills.

**Family and Peer Processes and Gene–Environment Interplay in Early Adolescence: An Adoption Study**

**Funding period:** September 1, 2014–August 31, 2016

**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Leslie Leve

**Funded by:** National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

**Grant number:** R56 HD042608

This longitudinal adoption study aims to disentangle inherited influences from social–environmental influences on youth behavior problems and competencies during the transition to middle school. It is examining how children change and develop over time, how inherited risks can be overcome by positive family environments, and how inherited strengths help children develop to their fullest potential.

**Fathering Through Change: Online Parent Training for Divorced Fathers (FTC)**

**Funding period:** September 18, 2014–July 31, 2016

**Principal Investigator:** Dr. David DeGarmo, University of Oregon; Neil Caraway, IRIS Media

**Funded by:** National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

**Grant number:** R44 HD075499

This project seeks to provide divorced fathers with skills necessary to be effective parents and coparents following divorce, by testing effectiveness of the FTC on fathers’ parenting skills, coparenting conflict reduction, and cooperation. A blended approach is used to engage participants in group-based learning and in individualized interactive instruction online.

**Gene–Environment Interplay and Childhood Obesity: An Adoption Study**

**Funding period:** September 1, 2011–May 31, 2016

**Principal Investigators:** Dr. Leslie Leve, University of Oregon; Dr. Jody Ganiban, George Washington University

**Funded by:** National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disease

**Grant number:** R01 DK090264

This study is exploring the eating habits and behaviors of adoptive children, adoptive parents, and birth parents from birth to middle childhood. Family dietary habits, food preferences, physical activities, and child growth patterns are examined when children are age 7–9 years. A particular study focus is the identification of environmental and genetic factors that promote physical growth and healthy weight.
Gene–Environment Interplay and the Development of Psychiatric Symptoms in Children
Funding period: September 28, 2010–June 30, 2016
Principal Investigators: Dr. Leslie Leve, University of Oregon; Dr. Jenae Neiderhiser, Penn State University
Funded by: National Institute of Mental Health
Grant number: R01 MH092118

This study is examining the interplay between genetic, prenatal, and postnatal environmental influences on early pathways to various behaviors, including anxiety and depression, by interviewing adoptive parents about child behavior and symptoms between ages 6 and 8 years. The adoptive parents are also interviewed about their own mental health.

Harvard Frontiers of Innovation
Funding period: July 1, 2014–January 14, 2016
Principal Investigator: Dr. Philip Fisher
Funded by: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Annie E. Casey Foundation, Buffett Early Childhood Fund
Subcontract with: Harvard University

Frontiers of Innovation (FOI), designed to improve child outcomes by building caregiver capacities, brings together researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to codevelop creative prevention and intervention programs for families. Each project team collects pre- and postdata on the interventions being tested. In tandem with Dr. Fisher’s SNAP Lab, a centralized database and data management protocol are being created that will be used across FOI sites.

KEEP-P, a Preventive Intervention for Foster Preschoolers
Funding period: July 1, 2013–April 30, 2018
Principal Investigator: Dr. Philip Fisher
Funded by: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
Grant number: R01 HD075716

This randomized clinical trial of a low-cost, group-based intervention for foster preschoolers and their caregivers aims to improve parenting, reduce rates of disrupted placements, and improve child outcomes among this population. Foster/kinship caregivers attend weekly support group sessions; some families complete a video coaching program to reinforce and strengthen supportive caregiver–child interactions.
Oregon Parent Project (OPP)
An RCT of Parent Training for Preschoolers with Delays
Funding period: June 1, 2011–February 29, 2016
Principal Investigator: Dr. Laura Lee McIntyre
Funded by: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
Grant number: R01 HD059838
This study is examining effects of early childhood interventions on children's adaptive behavior, problem behavior, and family well-being among 200 families with preschool children with developmental delays or disabilities. Six assessments occur during a two-year period; half of the sample attend parent education classes based on a modified version of the Incredible Years parent training program.

Prevention of Substance Use in At-risk Students: A Family-centered Web Program
Funding period: March 1, 2015–January 31, 2020
Principal Investigator: Dr. Elizabeth Stormshak, Dr. John Seeley
Funded by: National Institute on Drug Abuse
Grant number: R01 DA037628
This study is examining the hypothesis that a brief, tailored, web-based family-centered intervention provided to families of middle school youths can reduce behavioral risk, enhance parenting skills, improve family climate, and improve child outcomes.

Project Alliance 1: Genetics Development, Ecology, and Prevention of Early Adult Addictive Behavior
Funding period: September 15, 2011–May 31, 2016
Principal Investigators: Dr. Allison Caruthers, University of Oregon; Dr. Thomas Dishion, Arizona State University
Funded by: National Institute on Drug Abuse
Grant number: R01 DA070301
This research is testing genetically informed ecological models of the development of alcohol and other drug use and dependence, antisocial behavior, and high-risk sexual behavior in adulthood. Participant DNA is being used to test models of adaptation and maladaptation from early adolescence to adulthood.

Project Alliance 1: Relationship Dynamics and Young Adult Drug Use and Abuse
Funding period: September 20, 2012–August 31, 2017
Principal Investigators: Dr. Allison Caruthers, University of Oregon; Dr. Thomas Dishion, Arizona State University
Funded by: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism
Grant number: R01 AA022071
This study of the covariation between alcohol and other drug (AOD) use trajectories, lifestyle activities, and intimate partner adjustment in early adulthood uses longitudinal modeling of dynamic changes in relationships, AOD use, and lifestyle at ages 27–29. Gender-specific longitudinal models of adult AOD use are being examined as a dynamic adaptation to activity and relationship contexts.

Project Alliance 2 Parenting to Prevent Substance Use in Late Adolescence
Funding period: August 15, 2012–May 31, 2017
Principal Investigator: Dr. Elizabeth Stormshak
Funded by: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development
Grant number: R01 HD075150
Researchers are examining how parent–youth relationships in late adolescence may be protective or may contribute to escalating risk behavior and abuse during the transition to adulthood. Targets are (a) reduced substance use, (b) parent–youth relationships that foster independent living, (c) decreased peer relationships and activities that promote drug use, and (d) adaptive behavior and healthy adult outcomes.

Siblings Reared Apart: A Naturalistic Cross-Fostering Study of Young Children
Funding period: September 30, 2013–May 31, 2017
Principal Investigator: Dr. Leslie Leve
Funded by: National Institute on Drug Abuse
Grant number: R01 DA035062
A naturalistic human cross-fostering design is being used to
examine childhood pathways to development by identifying nuances in the rearing environment associated with specific child risk behaviors and competencies. To isolate effects of the rearing environment from effects of genes shared between parent and child, researchers are assessing 7-year-old sibling pairs in which one sibling was reared from birth by an adoptive family and the other was reared from birth by their biological mother.

**Testing the Efficacy of an Ecological Approach to Family Intervention and Treatment During Early Elementary School to Prevent Problem Behavior and Improve Academic Outcomes**

Funding period: July 1, 2014–June 30, 2018  
Principal Investigator: Dr. Elizabeth Stormshak  
Funded by: Institute of Education Sciences/US Department of Education  
Grant number: R305A140189

This study is evaluating the efficacy of implementing the Family Check-Up during the transition into elementary school. Target domains include (a) family contextual risks, (b) family management skills, (c) self-regulation skills, (d) academic learning skills, (e) social competence skills, and (f) problem behavior.

**Utilizing Adoption-Based Research Designs to Examine the Interplay Between Family Relationship Processes and Child Developmental Outcomes**

Funding period: January 1, 2015–June 30, 2016  
Principal Investigators: Dr. Leslie Leve, University of Oregon; Dr. Gordon Harold, University of Sussex  
Funded by: Economic and Social Research Council, United Kingdom

This project is using a longitudinal US adoption-at-birth sample and a UK sample of children conceived through in vitro fertilization to advance understanding of the interplay between family interaction patterns, parent mental health, and child symptoms of psychopathology.
# PSI Grants Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant Title</th>
<th>Awarding Agency</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>PSI Principal Investigator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prevention of Substance Use in At-risk Students: A Family-centered Web Program</td>
<td>NIDA</td>
<td>2015-2020</td>
<td>Stormshak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching Alternative Parenting Strategies (CAPS)</td>
<td>NIDA</td>
<td>2015-2019</td>
<td>Skowron, Fisher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing the Efficacy of an Ecological Approach to Family Intervention and Treatment During Early Elementary School to Prevent Problem Behavior and Improve Academic Outcomes</td>
<td>IES/US Dept of Education</td>
<td>2014-2018</td>
<td>Stormshak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEEP-P, a Preventive Intervention for Foster Preschoolers</td>
<td>NICHD</td>
<td>2013-2018</td>
<td>Fisher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Translational Drug Abuse Prevention Center (TDAP)</td>
<td>NIDA</td>
<td>2013-2018</td>
<td>Fisher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDAP, Project 1: Risk-taking and Social Contexts in CWS-involved Youth</td>
<td>NIDA</td>
<td>2013-2018</td>
<td>Pfeifer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDAP, Project 2: Preventing Drug Use and HIV-risk Behaviors in Adolescent Girls</td>
<td>NIDA</td>
<td>2013-2018</td>
<td>Leve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siblings Reared Apart: A Naturalistic Cross-Fostering Study of Young Children</td>
<td>NIDA</td>
<td>2013-2017</td>
<td>Leve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting to Prevent Substance Use in Late Adolescence (PAL 2)</td>
<td>NICHD</td>
<td>2012-2017</td>
<td>Stormshak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship Dynamics and Young Adult Drug Use and Abuse (PAL 1)</td>
<td>NIAAA</td>
<td>2012-2017</td>
<td>Caruthers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilizing Adoption-Based Research Designs to Examine the Interplay Between Family Relationship Processes and Child Developmental Outcomes</td>
<td>Economic and Social Research Council, UK</td>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>Leve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Effects of Teen Exposure to Multiple Risk Behaviors in Media</td>
<td>NICHD</td>
<td>2014-2016</td>
<td>Khurana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness of a Web-Enhanced Parenting Program for Military Families</td>
<td>NIDA</td>
<td>2014-2016</td>
<td>DeGarmo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of the Efficacy of Conjoint Behavioral Consultation for Middle School Students with Disruptive Behaviors</td>
<td>Society for the Study of School Psychology</td>
<td>2014-2016</td>
<td>Garbacz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family and Peer Processes and Gene–Environment Interplay in Early Adolescence: An Adoption Study</td>
<td>NICHD</td>
<td>2014-2016</td>
<td>Leve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathering Through Change: Online Parent Training for Divorced Fathers (FTC)</td>
<td>NICHD</td>
<td>2014-2016</td>
<td>DeGarmo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Title</td>
<td>Awarding Agency</td>
<td>Dates</td>
<td>PSI Principal Investigator</td>
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<td>NIA</td>
<td>2014-2016</td>
<td>Berkman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Onset vs. Pre-Existing Vulnerabilities in Adolescent Drug Use</td>
<td>NIDA</td>
<td>2012-2016</td>
<td>Khurana</td>
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<td>An RCT of Parent Training for Preschoolers with Delays (Oregon Parent Project)</td>
<td>NICHD</td>
<td>2011-2016</td>
<td>McIntyre</td>
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<td>Development, Ecology, and Prevention of Early Adult Addictive Behavior (PAL 1)</td>
<td>NIDA</td>
<td>2011-2016</td>
<td>Caruthers</td>
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<td>Gene-Environment Interplay and Childhood Obesity: An Adoption Study</td>
<td>NIDDK</td>
<td>2011-2016</td>
<td>Leve</td>
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<td>Gene-Environment Interplay and the Development of Psychiatric Symptoms in Children</td>
<td>NIMH</td>
<td>2010-2016</td>
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<td>Early Family Prevention of Adolescent Alcohol, Drug Use, and Psychopathology</td>
<td>NIDA</td>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>Leve</td>
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<td>Endogenous Opioids in Meditation Pain Relief</td>
<td>Mind and Life Institute</td>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>Berkman</td>
</tr>
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<td>ADAPT Online: After Deployment Adaptive Parenting Tools</td>
<td>NICHD</td>
<td>2013-2015</td>
<td>DeGarmo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Check-Up for Early Childhood</td>
<td>Ford Family Foundation</td>
<td>2013-2015</td>
<td>Stormshak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological Approach to Family Intervention and Treatment (EcoFIT) Integrated with PBS: An Effectiveness Trial in Middle School</td>
<td>IES/US Dept of Education</td>
<td>2009-2015</td>
<td>Dishion, Stormshak</td>
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Elliot Berkman, PhD, studies the motivational and cognitive factors that contribute to success and failure at health goals, such as cigarette smoking cessation and dieting. His research leverages the distinct strengths of several research methods, including functional magnetic resonance imaging, longitudinal survey methods, and laboratory experiments. This work adopts a translational neuroscience approach by using knowledge of brain function, structure, and connectivity to design and improve interventions for health behavior and well-being.

Allison Caruthers, PhD, is interested in adolescent gender and sexual socialization and their relationship to sexual behavior, sexual risk taking, and emotional well-being in adolescence and adulthood. She is examining the distinction between normal, healthy sexual exploration and truly problematic behavior, as well as possible mechanisms by which intervention services reduce risky sexual behavior.

Krista Chronister, PhD, focuses her research on domestic violence prevention and community-based intervention, including women survivors’ economic and vocational development, community mental health interventions with ethnic minority and immigrant families experiencing domestic violence, and couple interventions for young adults at risk for domestic violence and substance use.

Dave DeGarmo, PhD, is interested in substantive evaluation of family stress models and in program evaluation of preventive intervention and treatments for families at risk for compromised parenting. His active research involves a blended group and online intervention for divorced fathers and multimodel comparisons of interventions for military parents. A major focus of his work is on independent and interactive effects of fathering. Dave teaches methodology in the College of Education and the Department of Educational Methodology, Policy, and Leadership (EMPL) and is director of the Center for Assessment, Statistics and Evaluation (CASE) housed in Research Core Facilities at the University of Oregon.

Phil Fisher, PhD, studies the effects of early stressful experiences (trauma, maltreatment, poverty) on children’s neurobiological and psychological development and the design and evaluation of prevention and treatment programs for improving children’s functioning in areas such as attachment to caregivers, relationships with peers, and functioning in school. He is also interested in the brain’s plasticity in the context of therapeutic interventions. Particular areas of neurobiological functioning studied by Dr. Fisher are the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis, the prefrontal cortex, and neural reward pathways. His laboratory, the Stress Neurobiology and Prevention lab, includes graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and other researchers with similar interests.

Andy Garbacz, PhD, is interested in promoting positive social behavior outcomes and supporting learning among children and adolescents by partnering families and educa-
tors to create sustainable systems of support across homes and schools. His research involves examining prevention and intervention programs that support children's learning and behavior within a tiered framework, including conjoint (parent–teacher) consultation, Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, and Positive Family Support. Andy is an assistant professor of school psychology at the University of Oregon. He is a licensed psychologist, licensed school psychologist, and nationally certified school psychologist.

Atika Khurana, PhD, is interested in understanding and preventing the onset of health risk behaviors during adolescence. She uses an ecological systems approach to examine the interplay of individual and environmental risk and protective factors as they relate to adolescent substance use, risky sexual behaviors, academic disengagement, and mental health problems. Her current research is focused on examining the role of executive functions (e.g., working memory) and impulsivity in predicting adolescent risk behavior trajectories, with an emphasis on the role of the family in the development of adolescent self-regulation.

Leslie Leve, PhD, associate director of the Prevention Science Institute, focuses her research on developmental pathways and intervention outcomes for at-risk youths and families. Her research includes intervention studies aimed at preventing risk behaviors and improving behavioral health outcomes among youths in foster care and youths in the juvenile justice system. She also directs adoption studies that examine the interplay between biological (genetic, hormonal), psychological, and social influences on development. Her work in the area of gene–environment interplay emphasizes the translation of basic research findings to help refine the selection of malleable environmental targets in the context of prevention and intervention studies. She is also interested in issues specific to adjustment and outcomes for girls and women.

Laura Lee McIntyre, PhD, is interested in early identification and treatment of childhood developmental and behavioral problems, with an emphasis on the multiple systems of care that support children (e.g., families, schools, healthcare). Within this broad framework, three specific lines of research emerge: (1) parent training, education, and support; (2) transition to kindergarten; and (3) child risk factors and family well-being. She is especially interested in early intervention and prevention work with families who have young children with developmental problems who are at risk for negative social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes at home and at school. She is the director of training in the school psychology program at UO, a licensed psychologist, certified school psychologist, and board-certified behavior analyst.

Kevin Moore, PhD, has focused his professional and scientific career on the development and implementation of evidence-based and evidence-informed behavior health treatments for children, youths, and families. He has extensive experience in researching, implementing, clinically supervising, and consulting on evidence-based treatments for externalizing and internalizing disorders across educational, community-based mental health, social welfare,
residential, and juvenile justice settings. For the past four years he has focused most of his implementation work on the Family Check-Up evidence-based treatment model. He is also interested in methodological and analytic techniques for the study of naturally occurring clinical events in the psychological and medical treatments of children and in the development and use of low response-cost clinical monitoring tools. He is currently working on the development of a web-based application of the Family Check-Up.

Jennifer Pfeifer, PhD, is interested in how brain functions related to affect, motivation, regulation, self-evaluation, and social context interact and influence adolescent behavior. She studies the development of these related phenomena at behavioral and neural levels, with the goal of enabling healthy transitions from childhood through adolescence and into adulthood. Her research is focused on building a knowledge base about normative and atypical trajectories of functional brain development in these content areas and using fMRI as a tool to advance understanding of neurobiological mechanisms that put some adolescents at risk for adverse outcomes. She is also interested in how functional brain development is related to various endogenous and exogenous factors, such as pubertal development and early adversity.

Fred Sabb, PhD, is the director of the Lewis Center for Neuroimaging. His work focuses broadly on examining component processes of cognitive control and their interaction and change throughout the lifespan by using functional magnetic resonance imaging and online/mobile behavioral assessment. He is particularly interested in using studies that elucidate the neurobiology of cognitive control and its maturational trajectory throughout adolescence to develop novel therapeutic targets for intervention that cross symptom and disorder boundaries.

Elizabeth Skowron, PhD, focuses on clarifying the individual and joint contributions of neurobiology, family processes, and environmental risks and supports to the early development of self-regulation and school readiness in children. With a focus on families involved in the child welfare system, she also studies the neurobiology of parenting at risk and neural mechanisms of change in parenting interventions that effect reductions in child abuse and neglect. She and her research team use physiological, behavioral, and microanalytic coding techniques to model neurobehavioral processes that are associated with healthy development and positive outcomes in children, adults, and their families.

Beth Stormshak, PhD, director of the Prevention Science Institute, has expertise in the area of prevention, including prevention of substance use, problem behavior, and later mental health problems in children and youths. Her research focuses on the development of family-centered, model-driven interventions designed to reduce problem behavior and promote successful developmental transitions. She has served as the principal investigator on multiple grants, including randomized trials that tested the efficacy and effectiveness of family-centered models of prevention to reduce risk behavior in early childhood, in school-age children, and in adolescents, with a primary focus.
on enhancing parenting skills and behavioral management. She currently is the principal investigator on Project Alliance 2, an NICHD-funded program to test the efficacy of the Family Check-Up (FCU) model of intervention during the early adult years. She has completed an effectiveness trial of the FCU in community mental health agencies and designed a website for dissemination and implementation of the model. She also was the principal investigator on an NIMH T32 award to support the training of predoctoral and postdoctoral students in translational research. She is currently beginning work on a new study funded by the Department of Education to develop the Positive Family Support model and the FCU for elementary schools in the Portland, Oregon, area. She is also initiating a new NIDA-funded efficacy trial to develop and test an online version of the FCU for middle school youths.
Nicholas Allen, PhD, uses a developmental psychopathology approach to understand how children and adolescents are affected by the environments they grow up in. He focuses on how family interactions and other aspects of the child's environment that have been shown to increase risk for mental health problems (e.g., stress, abuse, socioeconomic disadvantage) influence the child's or adolescent's emotional functioning and the development of the biological systems that undergird these emotions. The aim of this work is to not only shed light on the underlying causes of mental health and ill health during these stages of life, but also to inform innovative approaches to early intervention and prevention by using this knowledge to generate and test novel, developmentally targeted clinical and public health interventions.

Randy Kamphaus, PhD, is the dean of the College of Education at the University of Oregon. His work has focused on clinical test development, child psychodiagnostic, and classification methods. He is coauthor of the Behavioral Assessment System for Children (BASC), Behavioral and Emotional Screening System (BESS), and the BASC Intervention Guide, among several other measures, methods, software, and other tools intended to enhance the work of special educators, educational and school psychologists, clinical psychologists, developmental pediatricians, and related practitioners. His current research and development work is targeting the prevention of child mental health problems in schools. With a team of colleagues and former students, he is implementing universal screening to identify children with behavioral and emotional risk, deliver group-based preventive interventions, and implement data-based prevention evaluation and continuous service improvement for children at risk. This work is being conducted in the Los Angeles Unified School District and other locales.

Samantha Shune, PhD, focuses her research on mitigating the deleterious effects of healthy and of pathologic aging on eating and mealtime processes. Her research and clinical work as a speech–language pathologist focus on integrating the physiologic components of swallowing with a holistic view of the mealtime process (e.g., cognition, communication, socialization/social relationships). She is particularly interested in how the translation of this research into clinical practice can promote mealtime safety and improved quality of life for older adults and a variety of patient populations.

McKay Moore Sohlberg, PhD, CCC-SLP, has been teaching and conducting research at the University of Oregon since 1994. She is the director of the Communication Disorders and Sciences program and is internationally known for her pioneering work in the field of cognitive rehabilitation. Her research emphasis is the development and evaluation of interventions to address deficits in attention, memory, and executive functions following acquired brain injury. She is particularly interested in the development of treatments that mitigate cognitive effects for individuals with brain injury in the postacute phase, including individuals with persistent cognitive effects following concussive injuries and individuals who are attempting to pursue postsecondary education following brain trauma. Dr. Sohlberg has published numerous articles and book chapters and has coauthored three leading textbooks in the field of cognitive rehabilitation.
The Child and Family Center at PSI
15 Years of Clinical Services for Families

The Child and Family Center clinic recently completed 15 years of service to community families and their children. The clinic provides evidence-based parent training and skills-based coaching for children residing in Eugene and Springfield, Oregon, and surrounding areas. The center is staffed by counseling psychology and school psychology doctoral students and supervised by licensed clinicians. In Fiscal Year 2015, the clinic provided services to 52 families whose children ranged in age from 2 to 15 years.

The Family Check-Up is the cornerstone of the clinic services. This brief, strengths-based assessment and intervention provides information to parents about their children’s social and emotional development and about parenting skills that support healthy child development. Follow-up services are targeted to address parents’ concerns and goals.

Clinic Staff at PSI

**Kevin Moore, PhD,** supervisor at the CFC, has more than 25 years of experience in research and clinical supervision. He has consulted on evidence-based assessment and treatments for families and children across educational, community-based mental health, social welfare, residential, and juvenile justice settings. He is also a licensed school psychologist and helps the clinic provide psychoeducational assessments and independent psychoeducational evaluations.

**Karrie Walters, PhD,** practicum director at the CFC, has worked professionally with children and families for more than 15 years. She holds a doctorate degree in counseling psychology. Her research interests include child and family intervention and prevention, with a focus on identity-based motivation, empowerment, and social justice.

**Nancy Weisel, LCSW,** supervises the center’s graduate students and manages the intake process. She has worked with families and children in education and mental health settings for 30 years. For the past 14 years she has used the Family Check-Up to support families, trained other providers in the use of the model, and supervised and consulted with agency staff committed to implementing it at their site.
PSI 2015 Trainees

Kate Beauchamp, MS, is a fifth-year doctoral student in the clinical psychology program under the mentorship of Dr. Philip Fisher and Dr. Elliot Berkman. She is working at PSI as a project coordinator on the Training Adolescent Self-Control (TASC) project directed by Dr. Berkman. Her work at PSI, which began in September 2014, is funded by pilot grants for the TASC project through the National Institute on Drug Abuse and Frontiers of Innovation at the Harvard Center on the Developing Child. Her current research interests include investigating how experiences of early life stress affect neurobiological systems (e.g., the stress response system, neural systems underlying executive function) and how this information can be leveraged to design neurobiologically informed interventions to mitigate deleterious effects of early life stress across development.

Elisa DeVargas, MS, is a fourth-year doctoral student in the counseling psychology program under the mentorship of Dr. Elizabeth Stormshak. She is working at the PSI as an investigator on the Parenting to Prevent Substance Use in Late Adolescence project directed by Dr. Stormshak. She began working at PSI in October 2013 after having been awarded a supplemental research grant for ethnic minorities from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. She is initiatiing a dissertation project investigating the use of motivational interviewing in the Family Check-Up. Her future career plans include working with children, adolescents, and families, specifically those living in monolingual Spanish-speaking homes. She is very interested in better understanding school and home environments and the experiences of Latino and other ethnic/racial minority children and adolescents in these contexts.

Jessica Flannery, MS, is a third-year doctoral student in the clinical psychology program under the co-mentorship of Dr. Phillip Fisher and Dr. Jennifer Pfeifer. She is currently working on the Teen Decision Study directed by PSI scientists Drs. Fisher and Pfeifer. She began working on this project as a graduate research fellow through PSI in March 2014. She recently received a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship and will continue to work extensively on this project. Her research interests broadly focus on how early adverse experiences influence neuroendocrine pathways and function and their impact on the development of brain structures and connectivity between brain regions specifically associated with social and emotional development.

John Flournoy, MS, is a fourth-year doctoral student in psychology who is working with mentors Dr. Jennifer Pfeifer in developmental social neuroscience and Dr. Sanjay Srivastava in personality psychology. He seeks to characterize cognitive processes underlying the perception of individual differences in the self and in others, and to identify how those perceptions influence decision making. Specifically, his recent research has examined how neural sensitivity to emotional expressions is linked to prosocial behaviors, developmental trends, and causes of personality change, and how social context influences risky decision making. He is also keenly interested in and proficient with a wide variety of statistical and computational methods.
Arian Mobasser, MS, is a doctoral student in developmental psychology working under the mentorship of Dr. Jennifer Pfeifer. His research is focused primarily on self-development and socioemotional development during adolescence and its implications for healthy brain development. Arian’s current project uses functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) to better understand the behavioral and neural effects of socioemotional context on adolescent decision making.

Harpreet Nagra, MC, MS, is a counseling psychology doctoral candidate. In 2013–2014 she was a clinical extern at the Child and Family Center. Her clinical and research interests include exploring relationship dynamics among marginalized families and couples, and in particular, understanding intimate partner violence.

Shannon Peake, Ph.D., is a postdoctoral researcher in developmental psychology. His research interests focus on the influence of social factors on cognitive skills and brain development. He is currently exploring the effect of social rejection on adolescent risk decisions with the intent of determining the extent to which certain adolescents may be more susceptible to making poor choices in social situations. The studies combine behavioral and neuroimaging approaches to explore how the development of social and emotional regions of the adolescent brain contribute to decision making.

Aleksandria Perez, BA, is a doctoral student in counseling psychology who is working under the mentorship of Dr. Atika Khurana. She was awarded a diversity supplemental research grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse in summer 2014 and since then has been working at the PSI under the direction of Dr. Leslie Leve on the Early Growth and Development Study. Her career goals involve working with children, adolescents, and parents in underserved communities to understand and predict risk behaviors, with particular interest in research on the developmental and contextual predictors of problem behaviors in children and adolescents and long-term outcomes.

Emily Reich, BA, is a doctoral student in the counseling psychology program who is working under the mentorship of Dr. Leslie Leve. She has had a graduate teaching fellowship at PSI since September 2014, during which time she has been completing assessments for the Early Growth and Development Study and other research-related tasks. Her career goals include research and clinical work with children and adolescents, and she is specifically interested in the mental health outcomes of at-risk youths. Her current work focuses on the impact of relational aggression on suicidal ideation of girls in foster care.
**FY 2015 PSI Scientists’ Publications (selected from 76)**


**PSI Mission Statement**

The core mission of the Prevention Science Institute (PSI) is to improve the lives and well-being of at-risk children, individuals, and families throughout the lifespan. PSI's three major focus areas are consistent with the field of prevention science: translational neuroscience, prevention and intervention, and implementation science. PSI researchers identify effective interventions and the outcomes associated with these interventions across multiple domains of functioning, including biological, social, and contextual. The PSI is committed to research that expands our understanding of interventions and development among diverse populations and actively promotes research that reduces health disparities in service utilization. Collaboration is fostered in all areas of prevention science and among researchers and faculty across disciplines, including psychology, social and affective neuroscience, development, and education. Our work is conducted in partnership with local, state, national, and international organizations and researchers, including child welfare service providers, school district leaders, mental health providers, criminal justice system leaders, and policy makers. Together, we work to understand and promote healthy adaptation in children and families, with a particular emphasis on the dissemination of effective interventions to real-world settings.