

Elizabeth Stormshak, PhD, director of the Prevention Science Institute, and John Seeley, PhD, senior research scientist at Oregon Research Institute, Eugene, have been awarded a four-year grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse to continue testing the efficacy of an online version of the Family Check-Up for schools that parents can use either at the school or at home. The FCU-Online will incorporate the successful components of the original FCU, such as a strengths-based assessment that is norm referenced, feedback using motivational interviewing, and follow-up modules that focus on enhancing parenting skills and family management in early adolescence. In the proposed research, 300 families will be randomly assigned to receive middle school as usual, the FCU-Online web/mobile only, or the FCU-Online web/mobile+coach version. Research on the delivery of mental health interventions via the Internet suggests that a coach or “in person” contact enhances outcomes. A coach version of the intervention will be compared with an online-only version that requires no staffing at schools.

This easily accessible online version of the FCU will be tested for effectiveness in changing key parenting constructs, such as positive parenting and parental monitoring, which could lead to reductions in risk behavior, such as problem behavior at school and substance use. This research will significantly contribute to the understanding of effective interventions for adolescents during the transition to high school, and it can significantly contribute to the overall uptake and dissemination of family-centered interventions in schools.