



**FLORIDA  
INSTITUTE  
FOR CHILD  
WELFARE**  
AT FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

# INSTITUTE INSIGHTS

Issue 8 | April 2019

## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Happy Child Abuse Prevention Month!



There are exciting things ahead! We are gearing up for a Research Symposium on Racial Equity, which is scheduled for May 9-10.

At the end of the Symposium, it is my goal that each of our attendees harness the lessons learned about our personal and professional responsibility for racial equity, and take that awareness and energy back to their agency and community. In addition, our Institute is launching a podcast series titled: *Child Protection Caseworker Support*. Each podcast will be focused on issues and topics for child welfare frontline workers. If you have interest in our podcast project, please reach out.

We have also been actively engaged in Florida's 2019 Legislative Session. The Institute is committed to staying involved and informed on these important issues facing our families. Below are updates for two key pieces of legislation.

## KEY LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

### SB 634 (Senator Rouson) Child Welfare

This is also being called *Jordan's Law*, and it would allow for law enforcement officers to be notified if a person they are interacting with has an open investigation or is under judicial supervision due to a child abuse case. In addition, this bill would create a statewide Guardian ad Litem (GAL) office that would review all GAL programming; create a training which includes recognition and response to head trauma; and create statewide performance measures and standards. This Bill will also require specialized training for all child protective investigators and their supervisors, and DCF attorneys. The Bill was heard favorably on 4/16/19 in the Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services.

### HB 421 (Representative Roach) Child Welfare (A Year is a Long Time in the Life of a Child Act)

This Bill was filed to expedite the process of finding permanent homes for children. The goal of this Bill requires the child is returned home or has a permanent placement within one year. It also creates more accountability for DCF, CBC agencies and parents who are seeking to be reunified with their children. Amendments to this Bill were heard on 4/16/19 and adopted without objection in the Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services.

## SPECIAL TOPIC

### APRIL IS CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH



The **Pinwheels for Prevention Campaign 2019 Partner Toolkit** contains great ideas that are useful all year long. The following suggestion (slightly revised) is just one of many: Social media is an inexpensive and effective way to share messages with a large audience. Through Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and blogs, we can deliver messages and connect with others in a variety of ways to promote child abuse prevention.

Prevent Child Abuse Arizona refashioned a traditional fable to put forward a simple, straightforward, and compelling prevention message. Watch the "**Up Stream Solution**" video for some prevention inspiration.

YouTube **makes posting videos easy**, and free digital media and video editing apps make creating videos even easier. These tools enable the total novice in video production to express her or his creativity, advocate for children, and then share the message on social media.

## ANNOUNCEMENT

The Institute is funding two projects to study racial disparity in Florida's child welfare and juvenile justice systems. Project timeline is July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020. The awards are going to:

#### ► USF CHILD AND FAMILY STUDIES

An Examination of Racial Disparities in the Experiences and Outcomes of Crossover Youth

#### ► CHILDREN'S SERVICES COUNCIL OF BROWARD COUNTY

Community Participatory Action Research: Co-Researching Disparities with Broward's Child Welfare Participants and System Partners

INTERESTED IN BEING AN AFFILIATE?

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## AFFILIATE SPOTLIGHT



### HEATHER FLYNN, PH.D.

Heather Flynn, Ph.D. is a clinical psychologist and Associate Professor & Vice Chair for Research at the Florida State University College of Medicine in the Department of Medical Humanities and Social Sciences. Dr. Flynn's research is focused on improved identification and treatment of depression in women, especially around the time of childbearing. She has published over 50 peer-reviewed scientific journal articles and has received federal and private funding for her research since 1999.

**The Florida Department of Health has partnered with Flynn as principal investigator on a \$3.25 million grant.**

Florida Department of Health (FDOH) received \$3.25 million in grant funding from the Health Resources and Services Administration. This new grant aims to improve maternal mental health outcomes by increasing screening rates and patient access to treatment and resources. Florida is one of seven states to receive the grant.

Dr. Flynn received \$2 million from the FDOH to help develop a sustainable screening and treatment model to address unmet maternal mental health needs across the state. She will work with the FDOH and Florida Maternal Mental Health Collaborative to improve perinatal depression detection, treatment, engagement and outcomes. The project aims to achieve 100 percent screening rates for perinatal mental health and behavioral health in three targeted regions in North Florida.

As co-director of the **FSU Center for Behavioral Health and Integration**, Dr. Flynn has also received a \$113,000 grant from Sage Pharmaceuticals to develop a statewide mental health referral network. The grant is part of the more than \$1.8 million in annual funding the center has secured to help improve behavioral health in child welfare, pediatric and obstetrics settings.

**Click here to listen** as Dr. Flynn discusses the new project and the risks posed by untreated maternal depression on infant well being. She welcomes collaboration with other researchers across the state.

## UPCOMING CONFERENCES

**26<sup>th</sup> Annual National Foster Care Conference: Footsteps to the Future**  
May 15-17 St. Petersburg, FL

**Network for Social Work Management 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference**  
May 29- June 1 Chicago, IL

**National CASA/GAL Conference**  
May 31-June 4 Atlanta, GA

**National Organization of Forensic Social Work**  
June 11-14 Las Vegas, NV

**22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Rural Domestic Violence Statewide Training Institute**  
June 5-6 Dade City, FL

**Association of Oncology Social Work Conference**  
June 5-7 Tuscon, AZ

**Coalition to End Sexual Exploitation Global Summit**  
June 12-15 Washington, DC

**NASW Conference Florida Chapter**  
June 13-15 Orlando, FL

**National Alliance on Mental Illness Convention**  
June 19-22 Seattle, WA

**2019 Beyond Paper Tigers Trauma-Informed Conference**  
June 26-27 Pasco, WA

**2019 Florida Coalition for Children Annual Conference**  
July 8-10 Orlando, FL

**25<sup>th</sup> Annual Children's Defense Fund Samuel DeWitt Proctor Institute for Child Advocacy Ministry**  
July 15-19 Clinton, TN

## CALLS FOR PROPOSALS

**32<sup>nd</sup> Annual National Independent Living Conference: Growing Pains**  
August 27-30 Orlando, FL  
Deadline for submissions: May 28, 2019

## RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

### BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROVIDER CAPACITY TO ADDRESS KEY CHILD WELFARE OUTCOMES AMONG PARENTS WITH BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ISSUES

The spotlight stays on Affiliate Dr. Flynn for a research project she and her colleagues recently completed. To promote successful outcomes in child welfare practice, the behavioral health needs of parents involved with the child welfare system need to be addressed. The study used a mixed methods, two-phase approach to determine the (1) capacity of behavioral health providers contracting with the Big Bend Managing Entity to effectively address behavioral health issues among parents involved in the child welfare system and (2) training and system-level needs required to improve the ability of behavioral health providers to effectively address these issues. **Phase 1** of the project aimed to identify and address the gaps and needs for behavioral health integration among behavioral health providers and child welfare personnel. The **final report** presents the results of Phase 2 of the study, which aimed to identify behavioral health providers' capacity and determine their training and system-level needs to effectively address behavioral health issues of parents involved in the child welfare system. To address perceived training needs, this year's project piloted a training for behavioral health providers and child welfare personnel that focused on evidence-based approaches to the detection of parental substance abuse and mental health issues. **A research brief on the project is also available here.**



### A SYMPOSIUM ON RACIAL EQUITY

PRESENTED BY:



WITH SUPPORT FROM:

**MAY 9-10, 2019**

ALTHOUGH REGISTRATION IS NOW CLOSED, BE SURE TO FOLLOW OUR **FACEBOOK PAGE** FOR MORE INFORMATION AND COVERAGE DURING THE EVENT.

## STAFF SPOTLIGHT



Please join us in welcoming the Institute's newest staff member, **Jon'tae (Jai) McClure**, Administrative Specialist.

Jon'tae is a native to the Tallahassee Big Bend area. After graduating high school, she completed her initial core classes at Florida Agriculture & Mechanical University before transitioning to Atlanta, GA to complete her Associates degree in Funeral Service at Gupton-Jones College. Presently, Jon'tae is completing her online Bachelor's degree in Management (Funeral Service) with Mid-America College.

Jon'tae's FSU career began in November of 2016 with the Office of the Vice President for Research and joined the Florida Institute for Child Welfare in March 2019. In her times of relaxation, she enjoys taking spiritual journeys and spending time with her family and friends.

## INSTITUTE STAFF

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