Helping All Children Thrive

Office of Child Development
2018 – 19 Annual Report
Office of Child Development

ANNUAL REPORT

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At the Office of Child Development, we build strong bridges across stakeholders so that everyone's wisdom is included in determining the most useful actions to take so all children and their important adults thrive.

Shannon B. Wanless, PhD
Director, Office of Child Development
Associate Professor, Department of Psychology in Education
School of Education University of Pittsburgh
Six teams, 48 employees, numerous students with one goal

Our office is unique. We are dozens of people spread across multiple divisions. We are a collection of expertise spread across fields like psychology, social work, and children’s literature. We form connections, both within our unit and throughout our communities. Our strength comes from uniting those people, that expertise, and those connections under one office.

The Books for Change book drive exemplifies how that connection manifests itself. In response to the Tree of Life tragedy, our office came together to collect and distribute more than 3,000 books throughout the region. We had Early Head Start home visitors dropping books off to schools, Evaluation and Research Team (ERT) members visiting day cares, and School of Education students delivering far beyond the confines of campus. The result was more than 100 local organizations receiving packages, and the establishment of an annual effort that shows the power of our Office leaders, University colleagues and students, and community partners working toward a singular goal.

The impact of Books for Change can be felt beyond those deliveries, and highlights how our work connects research and practice. Through free workshops, local teachers received training as to how use the books effectively. And after the success of the book drive, ERT, together with other divisions, is now conducting research to learn how we can use books more effectively in the classroom to openly discuss topics like race, abilities, and mental wellness. It is research that we hope will be transformative, and it never would have happened without our office’s separate programs together with our university and community partners, coming together as one to serve children and families.
We strive to develop a mutually beneficial relationship between the university and community. We aim to cultivate a solid foundation that is built on trust between community and university members. We know that because we are supporting children, we have a broad range of stakeholders to listen to and work with, including parents, teachers, researchers, and students. We pride ourselves in being an office that connects people who share common goals for helping children thrive.

The bridges we build can be seen in how our work impacts families. Take Kenelle and James for example. They are part of our Early Head Start (EHS) program, which was established at our Office in 1995 as one of the first EHS programs in the United States. As first-time parents, EHS parent engagement specialists met the couple and explained how the program can help parents navigate life with a child. When Kenelle struggled with post-partum depression, she had EHS team members ready to help. Today, Kenelle and James are parents to two healthy children and will be graduating from the program as their daughter turns three. Following them are more than 300 families currently part of the program and building connections of their own.

In 2018-19, we continued establishing new, meaningful connections throughout the region. We became the Early School Age Cohort lead in the Pittsburgh Study, a wide-ranging study following children in Allegheny County from birth through high school. By connecting with leaders across communities for this expansive effort, we’ve built a new and important bridge to help our office’s reach continues to grow.
ROOTED IN JUSTICE

2018–19 Annual Report
It can be easy for words like social justice and equity to come across as buzzwords. Too often, they’ve been co-opted by organizations that want credit without implementing the challenging, longstanding practices that will make those ideals a foundational part of an organization. For the last two years, our primarily white office has worked to learn those ideals fully so that we can better serve children and families harmed by living in an inequitable society.

In 2018, we began learning about how race impacts our lives and work. Led by the P.R.I.D.E. (Positive Racial Identity Development in Early Education) team, we held monthly gatherings to discover how different pieces of our past influence us today. We rooted our learning in history by understanding the origins of the idea of race, unraveling the systemic nature of racism in our country, and asking how these play a role in our lives today. Building on that work, in 2019, we brought in a team of local social justice and equity consultants to lead mandatory, all-staff explorations of how we can bring an SJ&E lens to our work and, crucially, why we should. The enlightening journey is ongoing and truthfully will never be finished, but we’re committed to putting in the work.

The fruits of that work is evident in the work done by the P.R.I.D.E. Program. Stop by their Pop Up Mini Art Festival and you’ll see children reclaiming the Africana heritage through art. Peek inside a Parent Village class and you’ll see parents grappling with how their own childhood experiences with race influence their parenting. Watch the P.R.I.D.E. team conduct professional development across the region and country and it is clear that this work is impacting the world far beyond our Office.
EVERYONE’S WISDOM
For more than 30 years, the Office of Child Development has been committed to center the voices of those we serve. Families we work with, organizations we collaborate with, students we interact with — these groups bring knowledge that’s key to helping children thrive. And that is why our programs place a premium on including their knowledge in all that we do.

Harnessing the power inherent in elevating voices

When the developmental health consultants on our HealthyCHILD team step into a classroom, they know that what they see is only part of the equation. Their goal is to build the capacity of early educators and families to promote children’s social-emotional wellness. To do that, they seek valuable input from the educators, parents and caregivers on a regular basis. Their collective wisdom, coupled with the early childhood development expertise of the HealthyCHILD team, creates a space for children coping with things like trauma to receive thoughtful guidance.

Our work with the Allegheny County Family Support system shows just how we elevate the wisdom of our neighbors. Community Programs provides regular support, training, and technical assistance for 28 Family Support centers serving more than 3,000 children and families. The lived experience of these families informs key parts of the team’s work, from publicly advocating for families and providing regular, compelling resources. By affirming our connections with vital local organizations like Family Support, we’re ensuring our Office benefits from including everyone’s wisdom.
ALL
THRIVE
With different programs spread across divisions, it can be overwhelming to think of how many children are impacted by the work we do. This year, we sat down and figured it out by looking at programs that were active in 2018-19 and came away surprised and excited by the results. We pride ourselves on being an Office that connects people who share common beliefs in the early childhood community, that expertise, and those connections under one office.

**Early Head Start** has 310 clients, with each client having at least one child.

**The Family Support** Centers that we support reach 1,000 families across 28 different centers.

Two programs that ended this year, **Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation** and **STARS Technical Assistance**, affected 790 children across various centers and divisions.

Our **HealthyCHILD** team reaches 3,600 children across 180 classrooms.

The **P.R.I.D.E.** team held events for more than 1,000 children.

**ERT** conducted critical research to better the lives of numerous children.

And the **Book Drive** delivered to more than 1,000 children at 154 different locations.

We have focused on reaching all children in every aspect of our work. That means thinking of reaching a wide range of populations — across races, classes, ability statuses, immigration status, family structures, and other identities — in everything that we do.

Serving all children is the core of our mission and drives everything that we do. To learn more about our work, visit [ocd.pitt.edu](http://ocd.pitt.edu).

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**Touching the lives of more than 8,000 children every year**
Organizational Chart

*Includes all staff who worked at the Office between July 2018 and July 2019

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**Early Head Start (EHS)**

**Chris Dunkerley**
Director

**Victoria Sabo**
Health Specialist

**Kelly Kubant Nee**
Disabilities Coordinator & Practice Based Coach

**Donna Sarneso**
Early Childhood Development Coordinator

**Annette Harris**
Data Coordinator

**Angela Tookes**
EHS Family Engagement/Training Coordinator

**Miriam Messick**
Project Coordinator

**Coni Hainsworth**
ERSEA Manager

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**Evaluation & Research**

**Caitlin Spear**
Director

**Amanda Cross**
Evaluation & Research Manager

**Jenn Briggs**
Evaluation & Research Manager

**Cecily Davis**
Senior Research & Evaluation Coordinator

**Abby Chen**
Evaluation & Research Coordinator

**Molly Matsik**
Evaluation & Research Coordinator

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**P.R.I.D.E.**

**Aisha White**
Director

**Medina Jackson**
Director of Engagement

**Adam Flango**
Communications Manager

**Katy Carney**
Administrative Assistant
Budget Report

- Core: $133,333
- Special Projects: $7,934,006
- Grant Support: $8,067,339
- University Support: $351,676
- Office Budget: $8,419,015
- Indirect Costs: $285,556

Grant Summary
New and Continuing Grants in 2018-19

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<tr>
<th>Grant Title</th>
<th>Funder</th>
<th>Award</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adoption Support Center, Phase II</td>
<td>Ana Yee Foundation</td>
<td>$154,810</td>
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<td>Propel Add-On</td>
<td>Propel Schools</td>
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<td>Evaluation of Igniting and Sustaining the Dream</td>
<td>McAuley Ministries</td>
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<td>Self-Regulating Lifestyle Behaviors: Nursing</td>
<td>National Institute of Health</td>
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<td>HealthyCHILD/Head Start</td>
<td>Pittsburgh Public Schools</td>
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<td>HealthyCHILD/EHS</td>
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<td>Project Name</td>
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<td>Amount</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>COTRAIC Early Head Start</td>
<td>COTRAIC EHS Year 4</td>
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<td>HealthyCHILD/CCP</td>
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<td>Education Law Center</td>
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<td>PPS Beechwood</td>
<td>Pittsburgh Public Schools</td>
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<td>KTEK3</td>
<td>University of Oregon</td>
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<td>STARS TA</td>
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<td>Early Childhood Mental Health</td>
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<td>Professional Development</td>
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<td>Partnerships for Success</td>
<td>Allegheny County Department of Human Services</td>
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<td>PRIDE Unconference</td>
<td>Commonwealth of PA</td>
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<td>PFS 2019</td>
<td>The Heinz Endowments</td>
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<td>Real Help, Real Time</td>
<td>Providence Connections</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Pittsburgh Study</td>
<td>Children’s Hospital of Pittsburgh Foundation</td>
<td>$650,000</td>
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Collaborations

University of Denver - School Psychology Graduate Student
University of Pittsburgh School of Education - Applied Developmental Psychology Student Interns
University of Pittsburgh – Falk School collaboration for PAUS Professional Development Day
University of Pittsburgh – School of Social Work Graduate Student Interns
University of Pittsburgh -- Undergrad Dept. of Psychology – Senior Practicum for Psych Undergrad students
University of Pittsburgh – School of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry
The LEND Center of Children’s Hospital of UPMC
Pittsburgh Public Schools Early Childhood Program
Pittsburgh Public Schools Beechwood Elementary School
COTRAIC Early Head Start and Child Care Partners
Propel Schools
Pittsburgh Public Schools- Program for Students with Exceptionalities

Partnership between the Duquesne University School of Nursing students, Pittsburgh Public School (PPS) Early Childhood Center (ECC) teachers and preschool children enrolled in Crescent and Minadeo ECCs.

Courses Taught


Courses Taught (cont.)


Dissemination


Invited Articles and Chapters


Invited Presentations


Inter-Agency Reports


**Presentations**


Boyd, T., Esposto, D.A. (2019, November). Childhood Trauma Topics and Interventions. Train the trainer workshop for Pittsburgh Public School Education Manager, Education Coaches and Administrators. Pittsburgh, PA

Boyd, T., Esposto, D. A. (2019, December). Compassion Fatigue and Toxic Stress. PPT presentations for Pittsburgh Public School Supervising Staff to share with Teaching Staff. Pittsburgh, PA


Esposto, D.A. (2019, January – May). HealthyCHILD Incredible Years Positive Parenting Group. 20 hours of educational sessions provided at two Pittsburgh Public School Early Childhood Centers (Lincoln ECC and Crescent ECC) for family members, Pittsburgh, PA


Esposto, D.A. (October, 2018). Children with Special Healthcare Needs (CSHCN) - Child Life Assessment and Intervention, presentation for the University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA


Larson, T., LePage, R. (2019, January) Mindfulness in Early Childhood Education: presented foundational research on the benefits of mindfulness on the body, mind, and in the classroom. The MindFEEL curriculum and Mindful Moments activities, both created by HealthyCHILD consultants, were introduced and explored with the attendees. Pittsburgh Public Schools In-service Professional Development. Pittsburgh, PA.


Larson, T., (2019, May) CPSEL Conference ACES AND RESILIENCE: A Paradigm Shift in How Communities can Address The Whole Child. Baltimore, MD


Larson, T., (2018,November) Guest lecturer- University of Pittsburgh School of Education; Applied Developmental Psychology, behavioral health. Dr. Stephen Bagnato

Larson, T., (2019, January) Pittsburgh Public School- In-service Mindfulness in Early Childhood Education


Presentations (cont.)


Publications


Boyd, T. (2019, March) Family Play Shop Expert. Provided developmental social and emotional resources to caregivers and answered questions while representing HealthyCHILD. Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh-North Side, Pittsburgh, PA

Boyd, T., Esposto, D. A. (2019, April) Mindfulness Fair. Represented HealthyCHILD and provided topic resources. The Center for Mindfulness and Consciousness Studies, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA

Boyd, T. (2019, May) Family Play Shop Expert. Provided developmental social and emotional resources to caregivers and answered questions while representing HealthyCHILD. Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh Hazelwood, PA


Cullinan, S., Palikaras, A. (2019, April) The 2019 4th Annual Wellness 4 Schools Symposium. Represented HealthyCHILD and provided topic resources. Pittsburgh, PA


White, A. (2019, January) Annual Professional Development. Presented to Pittsburgh Public Schools educators, Pittsburgh PA-
