

Child Affect and Behavior Lab – Overview of Research Projects and Datasets

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CURRENT LAB PROJECTS

The Child, Family, and Community Research Network (CFCRN). This is a new project being pursued with colleagues at UM and in partnership with collaborators in Boston, Maine, and New Orleans. We are developing the CFCRN, an online platform where caregivers, children, and adolescents can (a) register for opportunities to participate in research (i.e., knowledge generating activities), and (b) obtain high-quality research-based information (i.e., knowledge sharing activities)—all to support the well-being of youth and families. This project follows a community-based participatory approach, with an emphasis on including diverse, underserved, and underrepresented populations. Our goal for the first 2 years is to engage with community members, conduct initial pilot studies, apply for larger-scale funding, and build a network of 1,000+ families interested in research opportunities.

Real-Time Understanding of Mood and Behavior in Everyday Life (RUMBEL). The goal of this study is to better understand the time-varying associations of caregiving behaviors and social-contextual factors in predicting child irritability and outbursts. We will recruit 28 children with elevated irritability and mood dysregulation and their caregivers to complete an ecological momentary assessment protocol involving caregiver interval and user-initiated reports. This study will be carried out at UM in 2021-2022, funded by an APF Sparks Early Career Grant.

Externalizing Treatment Meta-Analysis. This project builds upon a meta-analytic database spanning 1960-2020 (e.g., Weisz et al., 2017, *American Psychologist*). Our aim is to conduct a comprehensive meta-analysis of psychotherapy effectiveness for overt externalizing spectrum problems (including irritability/anger, aggression, and oppositionality) in youth. Relatedly, plans are in development for forthcoming review papers, including a systematic review of assessment instruments of irritability, anger, and aggression in youth mental health.

Harmonized Data Analysis. In collaboration with John Weisz (Harvard), Tony Bonadio (UMD-Baltimore), Tom Ollendick (Virginia Tech), Eric Youngstrom (UNC-Chapel Hill), and others, this project involves combining baseline assessment data from general samples of youth referred for outpatient mental health care, with a focus on item-level data on the Child Behavior Checklist and Youth Self Report (CBCL/YSR) measures (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2002). The primary aims involve latent profile cluster analyses of transdiagnostic symptom profiles within a large ($N = 3000+$) clinical sample. These data will offer additional opportunities for analyses and papers. This project was supported by a Harvard Dean's Award for Competitive Scholarship to John Weisz and Spencer Evans.

CURRENT COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

University of Miami Child and Adolescent Needs (U-CAN) Survey. In collaboration with Mandy Jensen-Doss and Kiara Timpano, we are carrying out a survey of parents/caregivers in Miami-Dade County. The goal of this project is to better understand youth wellbeing and mental health concerns in the local

community, and to investigate the performance of alternative recruitment methods (MTurk, Prolific, Qualtrics, Craigslist, and direct community outreach) for obtaining a diverse and representative sample. Additional opportunities for this dataset include psychometric and psychopathology analyses. This project includes parent-report mental health measures and is available in English and Spanish.

Randomized Controlled Trial of FIRST. With PIs John Weisz (Harvard) and Sarah Kate Bearman (U Texas), this is a multisite effectiveness trial of FIRST in Boston, MA and Austin, TX. FIRST is a brief, transdiagnostic, evidence-based principles psychotherapy (Weisz & Bearman, 2020), which has shown promising results leading to this full-scale RCT of FIRST vs. usual care in community outpatient mental health clinics. Dr. Evans serves as co-investigator focusing on assessment and quantitative methods. Supported by NIMH R01 (MH124965; NCT04725721).

PAST PROJECTS AND EXISTING DATASETS

Harvard Youth Mental Health Lab. I have been working with John Weisz and his team since 2017. A major focus of the Weisz Lab is to conduct randomized trials testing the effectiveness of transdiagnostic psychotherapies and different strategies for implementation. This work has largely focused on studies of the Modular Approach to Therapy with Children with Anxiety, Depression, Trauma, or Conduct (MATCH; Chorpita & Weisz, 2009). About 5 datasets, representing a combined N of 1,000+ clinically referred youth have been gathered with comprehensive multi-informant baseline, progress-monitoring, and outcomes data in clinics in Massachusetts, Hawaii, Connecticut, Maine, and school districts in greater Boston. For example, see Evans, Bonadio, et al. (2019, *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*) for an aggregated baseline data analysis, and Evans, Weisz et al. (2020, *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*) for a secondary treatment outcomes analysis.

WHO ICD-11 Disruptive Behaviour and Dissocial Disorders Global Field Study. In my work as a consultant and PI for the development of ICD-11 Disruptive Behaviour and Dissocial Disorders, I prepared a comprehensive integrative review on youth irritability (Evans, Burke, et al., 2017, *Clinical Psychology Review*) to guide our formulation in ICD-11. This formulation—classifying chronic irritability as a dimension of Oppositional Defiant Disorder—was tested in a global field trial among clinicians (Evans, Roberts, et al., 2021, *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*), with results reflecting favorably on ICD-11 relative to ICD-10 and DSM-5 alternatives. This study was experimental in design, systematically varying the stimuli presented to clinicians.

WHO ICD-11 Global Clinician Surveys and Formative Studies. The WHO's development of Mental, Behavioral, and Neurodevelopmental Disorders was an extensive research program, led by Geoff Reed (for an overview, see Keeley et al., 2016, *American Psychologist*). I was fortunate to be involved from the early days, including publishing the results of a global survey of 2,155 psychologists on their views of diagnostic classification (Evans, et al., 2013, *International Journal of Psychology*). Our subsequent formative studies included investigations of the relations among mental disorders (Reed et al., 2013, *Journal of Clinical Psychology*) and the development of a Global Clinical Practice Network of over 15,000 clinicians registered for field studies (Reed et al., 2015, *Lancet Psychiatry*). This, too, was a very collaborative group, producing unique data from which we are still publishing (Evans, Roberts, et al., 2021, *Journal of Clinical Psychology*).

KU Child Behavior Lab. Related to my doctoral work with Paula Fite, this study represents a long-term research partnership that we in the Fite Lab established and maintained with a local school district.

Teacher-report data were collected on nearly all students enrolled in grades K-5 on any occasion (plus pre-K on some occasions), nearly every semester, over 6 school years (2012-2018). Converging child self-report and school records data were also collected from students in grades 3-5. Several rich findings have come from this dataset, and it still has a lot of untapped potential for further analyses. Our recent multimodal longitudinal paper (Evans, Diaz, et al., 2021, *Research on Child and Adolescent Psychopathology*) provides the most comprehensive picture ($N = 1,420$). Again, this is a very collaborative group and student opportunities are available.

KU Child and Family Services Clinic Research Database. Since around 2012, families referred to the KU Clinical Child Psychology training clinic have completed parent- and child-report standardized assessment measures at baseline (and some outcome/post data). More than 90% have consented for it to be used for research, resulting in general clinically referred sample of more than 200 youth referred for mental health services (Evans, Abel, et al., *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 2021), with a focus on internalizing and externalizing symptoms, aggression, irritability, and emotion regulation measures.