

Statements of Research, Teaching, and Service

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1. Research and Scholarship

The aim of my research is to advance the understanding, assessment, and treatment of behavioral and emotional dysregulation in children and adolescents (“youth”). I have a particular interest in youth irritability and aggressive behavior, which are highly common, impairing, and transdiagnostic problems for which effective assessment and treatment options are currently limited. My work is organized around three goals:

- (a) To better understand the developmental course, correlates, and outcomes of irritability and aggressive behavior in youth;
- (b) To help improve the assessment, diagnosis, and classification of behavioral and emotional problems in youth; and
- (c) To advance effective psychosocial intervention in youth mental health.

Across all areas, my research is grounded in an applied developmental psychopathology framework. For example, I adopt a developmental perspective, consider individual and social-contextual factors, and appreciate the interplay between typical and atypical development. This perspective also entails that I approach my research with an eye toward translational implications for clinical and practical applications, with a particular emphasis on evidence-based and transdiagnostic approaches. Finally, I strive to perform work that is community-engaged and actively includes youth and families from diverse backgrounds.

To date, I have published 66 peer-reviewed journal articles and 6 chapters. Several more manuscripts are currently under review, in revision, and in preparation. About one-third of my publications are first-author, and a growing number are senior-author papers led by graduate students and trainees. Recent work has appeared in such leading journals as *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *Journal of Psychopathology and Clinical Science*, *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology (JCCAP)* and *World Psychiatry*. My research has been cited more than 3,000 times (h-index = 29) and attracted recognitions such as the Rising Star Award from the Association for Psychological Science, the Huesmann Early Career Award from the International Society for Research on Aggression, and the JCCAP Future Directions Launch Award. I have given 50+ presentations at conferences and organizations in clinical psychology, psychiatry, and youth mental health, both nationally and internationally.

My research is highly collaborative. I strive to develop projects with graduate students, undergraduates, and colleagues. I have worked on international and interdisciplinary teams, such as the Cross-Cultural Consortium on Irritability and the World Health Organization’s (WHO) revision of the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) Mental, Behavioural, and Neurodevelopmental Disorders. These and other large-scale projects have yielded several rich datasets from which my students, collaborators, and I continue to publish. Methodologically, we leverage longitudinal designs, experimental and observational methods, meta-analytic and systematic review strategies, ecological momentary assessment (EMA), diagnostic interviews, and multi-informant survey measures. I also have an interest in quantitative methods (e.g., general linear and generalized models; multilevel and growth curve models; latent variable/class

analyses; meta-analysis). I enjoy learning and applying new methodological approaches, as well as sharing them through my collaborations, mentorship, and teaching.

My research evolved throughout my graduate training at the University of Kansas and my postdoctoral fellowship at Harvard University. Since joining the UM faculty in 2021, I have been fortunate to continue to develop all three lines of my research program. At UM, I have been involved with 6 active IRB protocols and 2 externally funded studies. I have established new collaborations with colleagues here and continued to collaborate with other teams across the country. My research has been supported by a Sparks Early Career Grant from the American Psychological Foundation, a Provost's Research Award from UM, two NIMH Loan Repayment Program awards, and a Co-Investigator NIMH R01. I submitted a K23 to NIMH last year (unfunded, but with favorable reviews), an R01 this year (under review), and I plan to submit an R21 next year. Below, I summarize how my three research foci have progressed and continue to guide my current and future research plans.

1.1. Developmental Psychopathology of Irritability and Aggression

Affective and behavioral problems in youth are often misunderstood, misidentified, and under-identified, which can lead to poor outcomes. In particular, irritability and aggression cut across multiple mental health conditions as well as typical development, and predict a diverse range of future problems over development. My early research in this area began by searching for greater specificity and precision regarding what problem dimensions predicted what outcomes. With colleagues at Kansas, I showed that it is reactive aggression (i.e., emotional, impulsive, “hot” aggressive responses to a perceived threat)—not proactive aggression (i.e., instrumental, calculated, “cold” aggression to achieve a goal)—that leads to poor social, emotional, and academic outcomes from early childhood (Evans, Frazer, et al., 2018) through adolescence (Evans, Fite et al., 2015). By incorporating these aggression subtypes into longitudinal models, my doctoral research (Evans & Fite, 2019) shed light on the social and academic pathways linking early antisocial behavior to later depression. We recently extended this research and found that youth who follow trajectories of chronic reactive aggression are at greatest risk for poor social, affective, and school outcomes (Evans, Diaz, et al., 2021).

Closely related to reactive aggression, youth irritability is a major public health problem. Irritability is identified by parents or youths as one of their “top problems” by 58% of cases referred for outpatient therapy (Evans, Corteselli, et al., 2023). In the population, 79% of adolescents experience clinical symptoms of irritability (Karlovich et al., 2023). Given that irritability overlaps with other behavior problems, I carried out a series of studies to disentangle irritability from defiance in school-age children. Cross-sectionally (Evans, Pederson, et al., 2016) and longitudinally (Evans, Cooley, et al., 2020) irritability and defiance are linked to different acute disturbances in functioning, whereas inattention and hyperactivity predicted more long-term problems. These findings lent support for the view that irritability can be *both* a normative phenomenon *and* a severe and impairing problem that predicts subsequent problems. More recently, we identified putative mechanisms—i.e., difficulties with tolerating uncertainty and coping with negative emotions—that may explain how irritability confers risk for negative outcomes, and could be viable targets for intervention (Evans, Blossom, & Fite, 2020).

Currently, I am continuing with this line of work at UM through certain active studies. I am very interested in understanding what psychosocial factors may predict mood and behavior problems in irritable youth in real-time and in real-world settings. To this end, my lab is

conducting our APF- and startup-funded study, Real-Time Understanding of Mood and Behavior in Everyday Life (RUMBEL). The goal is to better understand the time-varying associations of caregiving behaviors and social-contextual factors in predicting child irritability and outbursts. We continue to actively recruit children with elevated irritability and their caregivers to complete assessments and parent-rated EMA. I have pursued opportunities to complete similar analyses with collaborators (Evans, Hamilton, et al., 2023) examining daily sleep and affect in relation to externalizing problems. I am continuing to develop this line of research in real-time intensive-longitudinal methods, with plans to submit a NIMH R21 proposal in 2024.

1.2. Assessment, Diagnosis, and Classification in Youth Mental Health

Strong assessment is the foundation for effective intervention and for accurate knowledge of development and psychopathology. For this reason, a central focus of my research has been to evaluate and improve methods for measuring, diagnosing, and classifying emotional and behavioral problems in youth. I was fortunate to get involved with the WHO's development of ICD-11 Mental, Behavioural, and Neurodevelopmental Disorders, where improving clinical utility for public health was the top priority (Evans & Roberts, 2015 chapter; First et al., 2021; Keeley et al., 2016a). We used cluster-analytic (Reed et al., 2013), clinician survey (Evans, Roberts et al., 2013), and vignette methods (Evans, Roberts et al., 2015; Keeley et al., 2016b) to understand international mental health professionals' experiences with and views on diagnosis and classification, and to evaluate and refine proposals for ICD-11. I particularly contributed to Disruptive Behavior and Dissocial Disorders, writing comprehensive (Evans, Burke, et al., 2017) and brief (Lochman, Evans, et al., 2015) reviews of the literature on youth irritability. Later, I served as PI on the global, multilingual, case-controlled field study in this area (Evans, Roberts, Burke, et al., 2021), where results supported the utility of our proposed formulations, compared to ICD-10 and DSM-5.

Apart from ICD-11, this line of research also encompasses my interest in evaluating the psychometric properties of psychological instruments, with a particular emphasis on measures that are rigorous, brief, freely available, multi-informant, and appropriate for use across diverse populations and contexts. To this end, my colleagues and I have investigated measures of irritability and defiance (Evans, Bonadio, et al., 2020), emotion reactivity (Evans, Blossom, et al., 2016), general irritability (Evans, Abel, et al., 2021), social communication and repetitive behaviors (Evans, Boan, et al., 2019), and subtypes of aggression (Fite, Evans, et al., in revision, 2023), including translation and validation in Spanish (López-Sosa et al., under review, 2023).

I continue to advance this line of work through a variety of new and current projects. One notable lab project is a systematic methodological review of 68 instruments used to assess irritability, anger, and aggression in youth, in an invited contribution for the *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology* (Evans, Karlovich et al., in press). In a second project, I am working on an ongoing integrative data analysis with external collaborators (at Harvard, VCU, Virginia Tech, UConn, UCLA, UNC, and elsewhere). This involves examining latent structure and clusters of psychopathology by analyzing parent- and youth-reported symptom checklist data from a large pooled sample of clinically referred youths ($N=4,126$; ages 4-18; 41% female). Originally funded by a Harvard Dean's Award for Competitive Scholarship, this project provided pilot analyses for my recently submitted R01 proposal focused on developing a trifactor model for multi-informant measurement of internalizing and externalizing psychopathology in youth mental health services. Moving forward, my students, collaborators, and I continue to

publish novel results from these existing data, with manuscripts currently in preparation. Other future projects in assessment, diagnosis, and classification will be pursued using these data and data we are collecting through some of the surveys described in the next section.

1.3. Psychosocial Intervention in Youth Mental Health

My postdoctoral fellowship afforded me the opportunity to build on my clinical training and research in irritability/aggression (section 1.1) and assessment/diagnosis (section 1.2), to develop a third line of work in intervention. Working with Mandy Jensen-Doss, I contributed to the methods, analyses, and results of two clinical trials of transdiagnostic youth psychotherapies (Weisz, Bearman, et al., 2020; Weisz, Thomassin, et al., 2020). I also helped write a successful R01 for a current 5-year trial of a new transdiagnostic therapy, on which I am a co-investigator, with collaborators at Harvard and UT-Austin (MH124965; PIs Weisz and Bearman). While working on these collaborative team projects in intervention, I also developed my own research specifically on treatment of irritability. First, in a re-analysis of randomized trial data, I showed that established modular behavioral/CBT interventions are effective in treating severe irritability (Evans, Weisz, et al., 2020). I then showed that behavioral parent training and CBT-depression techniques are likely to be helpful for irritability/dysregulation—particularly when guided by comprehensive assessment (Evans, Wei, et al., 2021). My colleagues and I have since developed a conceptual paper to provide clinical guidance in the assessment and treatment of youth irritability (Evans & Santucci, 2021), and I am now preparing a book on this topic (Evans & Blossom, in preparation) under contract with Hogrefe Publishing and APA Division 12.

In general, I try to develop my research with a clear line toward treatment and clinical implications. This interest has led me to pursue new ideas in novel and innovative directions. Building on the recent systematic review of measures for irritability, anger, and aggression (Evans, Karlovich et al., in revision, 2023), we are carrying out a meta-analysis on the effectiveness of different psychosocial treatments for overt externalizing problems in youth. This project builds upon a collaborators meta-analytic database spanning more than 6 decades of youth psychotherapy research. Additionally, I have helped develop new parent- and youth-rated progress-monitoring tools for measurement-based care (Weisz, Vaugh-Coaxum, et al., 2020), which we have recently adapted for teacher-report (Evans, Karlovich, et al., in preparation). Finally, in collaboration with Mandy Jensen-Doss and Kiara Timpano, we recently conducted a survey of 576 caregivers aiming to better understand youth and parent mental health concerns in the community via alternative sampling methods (i.e., MTurk, Prolific, Qualtrics Panels). This work has fueled further community-oriented projects, including one supported by a Provost's Research Award, to serve as a research registry for families and a platform for sharing evidence-based resources aimed at supporting youth well-being.

Although my intervention-related work has not focused on leading clinical trials or developing new therapies, my aim is to shed light on the extent and nature of youth problems for which treatment might be needed, as well as to provide some tools and insights to parents and caregivers that may be helpful for addressing or preventing such problems. Moving forward, I look forward to pursuing external funding to grow and sustain these community-facing projects, through sponsors such as the William T. Grant Foundation and Jacobs Foundation. I also look forward to continuing to develop and grow collaborations with UM colleagues and external collaborators engaged with intervention and implementation research.

2. Teaching and Mentorship

I thoroughly enjoy teaching and research mentorship at the graduate and undergraduate levels. At Kansas, I taught two advanced-undergraduate-level courses, *Developmental Psychopathology* and *Social and Personality Development*, in the Departments of Psychology and Applied Behavioral Sciences. At Harvard, I combined my developmental-clinical and methodological interests by co-teaching an advanced-undergraduate-level course entitled, *Research Methods in Child and Adolescent Clinical Psychology*. In addition to classroom teaching, I have been involved in mentoring undergraduate research throughout my entire career. I have been involved in mentoring doctoral student research for about 5 years now, first at Harvard and now at UM.

In teaching, my overarching goal is to foster students' intellectual development in a manner that will benefit them in their future educational, professional, and personal endeavors. In practice, this goal implies three pedagogical objectives: that students will (a) acquire, retain, and demonstrate a working knowledge of the subject; (b) sharpen their critical thinking skills to become more effective consumers of information, with a special emphasis on peer-reviewed research; and (c) learn from one another in an environment that values diversity and individual differences. At the graduate level, my teaching philosophy entails one further objective: (d) to help students acquire exposure, experience, and expertise in the functional and foundational competencies of psychology. In pursuing these objectives, I operationalize learning goals as measurable outcomes, and I continually work to improve my effectiveness as an educator.

2.1. Undergraduate Education

Since starting at UM, my undergraduate teaching has been largely in research methods, including *PSY290 Introduction to Research Methods* (~60 students; 2 semesters) and *PSY490 Advanced Research Methods* (15-28 students; 2 semesters), as well as *PSY190 Faculty Overview of Research and Undergraduate Mentoring* (FORUM; 16 students; 1 semester). I greatly enjoy providing students with everything from an initial exposure to an in-depth hands-on experience in how knowledge in psychology is generated through research. It is worth noting that my research methods courses are degree requirements for all students who take them, and methods/statistics courses are notorious for not being students' favorites. Nonetheless, students have rated my courses positively. Across courses and semesters, average course evaluations have endorsed "The instructor teaches effectively" (class *M*s = 4.2 – 4.6 on a 1-5 scale, with 79-100% selecting agree or strongly agree), and for "My overall evaluation of the instructor is positive" (class *M*s = 4.3 – 4.8, with 83-100% selecting agree or strongly agree). The data also reveal longitudinal improvements, with ratings getting higher the longer I teach and with repeated course offerings. Students' written comments suggest they appreciate my courses for the hands-on learning activities, real-world examples, and opportunities to engage with topics of interest to them. Students also consistently comment on the instructor being kind, inclusive, supportive, and helpful regarding their thinking about academic and career paths.

I regularly involve UM undergraduates in my research. At any given time, my lab typically has 3-6 students directly engaged on a weekly basis as research assistants (RAs), the majority of whom are enrolled in PSY280 or PSY380 for 3 credit hours; the others are involved as volunteers but have the same duties and opportunities. Last year, I mentored my first PSY580 senior honors thesis student who completed a solid project, graduated with honors, and received the Ellen Eber Award. I am mentoring a second senior honors thesis this year, and I have already

agreed to mentor a third next year. Undergraduates in my lab work under the direct supervision of doctoral students and myself. They receive professional development guidance, exposure to clinical child psychology, training on multiple lab/project protocols, and experience with all steps of the research process. My former undergraduate thesis students and RAs have routinely gone on to be admitted to clinical psychology Ph.D. programs, or other competitive positions and degree programs of their choosing (e.g., Social Work MSW, Youth Mental Health Counselor, Research Coordinator).

2.2. Graduate Education

I greatly value my roles as a teacher, clinical supervisor, and research mentor in working with graduate students. Thus far, my graduate teaching has mostly consisted of *PSY670 Practicum in Clinical Psychology* (4-5 students per semester, now in my third year). I have enjoyed working with these doctoral students in the Psychological Services Center as they gain their first clinical experiences with psychological assessment. In supervision, I use various strategies (e.g., role-playing, video observation, direct feedback) to help scaffold their progress. Student feedback has been largely positive but also constructive. Their comments and my experiences have led me to make changes including holding weekly group supervision meetings and providing greater clarity, support, and structure throughout (e.g., a supervision syllabus, standard starting batteries, assessment checklists). More recently, I taught my first traditional graduate course, *PSY632 Multiple Regression* in Spring 2023. I took an applied conceptual approach to the course, providing students with brief manuscript-style homework assignments involving analyzing real data (e.g., from randomized trials and longitudinal datasets) to answer common empirical questions within the General Linear Model. Faculty observations and student evaluations were positive, e.g., with 91% endorsing agree or strongly agree for “the instructor teaches effectively” ($M = 4.6$ out of 5), and 90% for “my overall evaluation of the course is positive” ($M = 4.7$). I look forward to continuing to teach this course, as it is both very relevant to my work and foundational to students’ success in their own research trajectories.

As a graduate research mentor, I have developed a full and productive team in my 2.5 years here. To date, I have recruited 2 doctoral students, currently 1st- and 2nd-year students in the clinical program, child track. They have been supported by my start-up as well as by attracting their own funding (NSF Graduate Research Fellowship, UM Dean’s Fellowship). I hold weekly one-on-one and team meetings, and periodic special gatherings (e.g., paper-in-a-day writing sessions, small and large team events), to help support their development. My mentorship style entails building a strong working relationship, being closely involved in projects, and providing students with an ongoing mix of opportunities so they can develop skills in lead, independent, and supporting roles. I aim to support their development as clinical scientists, personalizing my approach to their unique interests and stage of development. Students are regularly first- and co-authors on publications in my lab. I was deeply honored to receive the Department’s Award for Outstanding Graduate Mentor of the Year in 2023. Beyond my own students, I have served, or am currently serving on, several master’s thesis and doctoral dissertation committees at UM and other institutions nationally and internationally.

3. Service

3.1. *National, International, and Professional Service*

At the national level, I serve on the Board of the Society for Child and Family Policy and Practice (Division 37 of APA) as Member-At-Large for Communications and Technology. Internationally, I worked for years in various capacities (coordinator, consultant, principal investigator) on the WHO's ICD-11 development groups, as noted above (section 1.2). Although this work has also been an important part of my research, it also constitutes service toward WHO's public health mission, as we helped develop and evaluate ICD-11's classification to reflect the best available evidence and improve clinical utility for global applications. Stemming in part from this experience, I was invited to serve as a consultant on an initiative led by Gabrielle Carlson as part of her presidential term at the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychology (AACAP), where we ultimately added an "R Code" to DSM-5/ICD-10-CM that will identify youth with Impairing Emotional Outbursts—a clinically important problem not captured by any diagnostic category. These collaborations with AACAP and WHO continue to lead to new research and service opportunities. For example, I recently became involved with the Cross-Cultural Consortium on Irritability, leading a working group on conceptualization and participating in team projects intended to help shape future research directions in this area (Evans, Shaughnessy, & Karlovich, 2023; Leibenluft et al., in press).

Another major aspect of my service to the profession is my editorial and review work. I serve on editorial boards for top journals in my field: *American Psychologist*, *JCCAP*, *Research on Child and Adolescent Psychopathology*, and *Behaviour Research and Therapy*. I regularly review manuscripts for these and numerous other journals. Along with Co-Editor Jeff Burke, I am currently Guest-Editing a Special Issue of *JCCAP*, "The Affective Side of Disruptive Behavior Disorders: Toward Better Understanding, Assessment, and Treatment." We have handled 12 invited submissions (including 2 first-author papers), with the issue anticipated for publication in 2024. This editorial activity is contributing meaningfully to the field.

3.2. *Program, Departmental, University, and Community Service*

As a pre-tenure faculty member, I appreciate the Department's efforts to shield junior faculty from a heavy load of service obligations in order to facilitate more time for research. Still, I have agreed and volunteered to serve in various roles. Within the Clinical Program, I am participating in the adult faculty search committee this year. I also served on a faculty committee working toward obtaining accreditation from the Psychological Clinical Science Accreditation System (PCSAS). As a member of the child clinical faculty, I have written clinical cases and graded students' case conceptualizations for their qualifying exams. At the Department level, I have supervised graduate students' teaching of undergraduate courses, providing feedback on syllabus preparation, observing teaching, and meeting to offer feedback. Within the broader UM community, I have been a reviewer for Graduate Research Awards, Summer Research Awards, Provost's Research Awards, and U-LINK Awards. In the Miami community, I have been participating in the Mental Health Subcommittee of the Student Health Advisory Committee (SHAC) for the Miami-Dade County Public Schools, where we have been working to implement school-based mental health screenings. I look forward to continuing to engage in these and other opportunities to serve the University of Miami and the community.