2014 CYFS SUMMIT ON RESEARCH IN
EARLY CHILDHOOD
CREATING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN RESEARCH, PRACTICE & POLICY

JOINTLY SPONSORED BY
CYFS, BUFFETT EARLY CHILDHOOD INSTITUTE & FIRST FIVE NEBRASKA

APRIL 10, 2014
THE LODGE AT WILDERNESS RIDGE
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA
Dear Colleagues,

The Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools (CYFS), Buffett Early Childhood Institute and First Five Nebraska welcome you to the 2014 CYFS Summit on Research in Early Childhood. In the tradition of its predecessors, this third biennial event will serve as a forum for sharing and discussing research on the most formative stage in the developmental trajectory – a stage that contributes so much to children’s long-term identities, values and capacities.

The critical importance of early childhood dictates that we thoroughly study its every facet, from the influences of ecological systems and socioeconomic realities to the design of approaches aimed at enhancing children’s cognitive, social-emotional and behavioral development. In this vein, it is equally critical that we consider the best means of applying and implementing the lessons our research has earned. This understanding has spurred the organization of today’s summit, just as it has motivated educators, service providers, administrators and policymakers from across the state to share their invaluable insights.

The fusion of leading-edge research, practice and policy forms the core of Nebraska’s collective efforts to ensure that we provide children with the environments, opportunities and skills they need to find fulfillment and achieve success. This mutual goal continually inspires us to engage in dialogue that can reinforce, refine or even change our notions of what most matters in early childhood. It will also continue driving us to forge partnerships that encourage the translation of research into enduring improvements for the families, schools and communities that serve as the cornerstones of children’s healthy development.

We are extremely grateful that you have elected to support this mission and vision by participating in today’s event. With your perspectives and passion as a guide, we look forward to collaboratively advancing our understanding of how best to support the education and growth of our children.

Susan M. Sheridan, PhD
Director – Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & Schools
George Holmes University Professor of Educational Psychology
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Samuel J. Meisels, EdD
Executive Director – Buffett Early Childhood Institute
Professor of Child, Youth & Family Studies
University of Nebraska

Becky Veak
Director – First Five Nebraska

College of Education & Human Sciences
8:30 - 9:00 AM
Registration

9:00 - 9:15 AM
Openings & Welcome | Yellowstone Room
Dr. Susan Sheridan
Director – Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & Schools | University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Dr. Samuel J. Meisels
Executive Director – Buffett Early Childhood Institute | University of Nebraska

9:15 - 10:30 AM
Keynote Address & Moderated Discussion | Yellowstone Room
Diverging Destinies in Rural America: Work, Family & Early Child Development
Dr. Lynne Vernon-Feagans
William C. Friday Distinguished Professor – University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

10:45 AM - 12:15 PM
Session I
Room | Presenters | Presentations
--- | --- | ---
Bitterroot | Brandy Clarke; Michelle Howell Smith | See page 2
Loft | Rebecca Swartz; Christine Marvin | See page 3
Blackfoot | Julia Torquati; Krista Adams | See page 4
Flathead | Tonia Durden; Soo-Young Hong | See page 5

12:30 - 1:30 PM
Luncheon

1:40 - 2:30 PM
Session II
Room | Presenter | Presentation
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Bitterroot | Kathleen Rudasill | See page 6
Loft | Traci Shizu Kutaka | See page 6
Blackfoot | Julia Dadds | See page 7
Flathead | Susan Sheridan | See page 8

2:40 - 3:30 PM
Session III
Room | Presenter | Presentation
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Bitterroot | Lisa Knoche | See page 9
Loft | Gina Kunz | See page 9
Blackfoot | Soo-Young Hong | See page 10
Flathead | Helen Raikes | See page 10

3:40 - 4:00 PM
Closing Remarks | Yellowstone Room
Dr. Marjorie Kostelnik
Dean – College of Education & Human Sciences | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

4:00 - 5:30 PM
Reception; Graduate Student Research Poster Session; Atatürk University (Turkey) Roundtable Conversation | Yellowstone Room
Over the last 40 years, families in rural America have faced numerous challenges relative to their urban peers: fewer quality jobs, less access to higher education, greater poverty. The Family Life Project has been documenting these challenges in rural life by following a representative sample of 1,300 rural children from birth.

Early findings from this longitudinal study suggest diverging destinies between rural college-educated parents and high school-educated parents with respect to income, non-standard work hours, chaotic households and early childrearing. These differences have major implications, particularly in terms of how much time parents spend with children and the quality of interactions between them.

The confluence of challenges facing parents who lack higher education is affecting children’s early development in language and other areas. Though these data on children’s development are concerning, the Family Life Project has also identified important early experiences that may buffer rural children at risk for negative outcomes.

From 9:15 to 10:15, Vernon-Feagans will address these and other findings arising from the Family Life Project. Following the presentation, Vernon-Feagans will participate in a 15-minute discussion co-moderated by CYFS director Susan Sheridan and Samuel Meisels, executive director of the Buffett Early Childhood Institute.

Dr. Lynne Vernon-Feagans is a William C. Friday Distinguished Professor of early childhood, intervention and literacy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she also holds a position as professor of psychology. Vernon-Feagans currently serves as principal investigator of the Family Life Project, a landmark 10-year birth-cohort study that is examining family stress, family health, parent-child interactions and child outcomes in a representative sample of children and families from impoverished rural communities. She previously served as co-principal investigator of the National Research Center on Rural Education Support.

Vernon-Feagans has spent the last three decades focusing on children at risk, particularly African-American children living in poverty. Her work on the Abecedarian Early Intervention Project revealed the disconnect between children’s neighborhood versus classroom language and culture, thereby helping educators and practitioners better understand the challenges facing minority children as they transition into school.

From 1975 to 1985, Vernon-Feagans held multiple research and faculty positions at UNC-Chapel Hill. She moved to The Pennsylvania State University in 1986, where she worked until returning to Chapel Hill in 2001. She holds a doctorate in psycholinguistics from the University of Michigan.
Session I

10:45 AM - 12:15 PM | Bitterroot Room

Early Language & Literacy: Supporting Teachers’ Data-based Decision-making

The Pre-3T project focused on developing and piloting a three-tiered prevention model (i.e., Response-to-Intervention) in early education for children at risk of reading difficulties. This presentation will describe the development of the teacher-implemented decision-making protocol used to identify children in need of differentiated literacy support and evaluate their response to intervention strategies. In addition to explicating the measures, tools and processes used in the study, the presentation will outline preliminary results demonstrating the feasibility and effectiveness of the decision-making protocol.

Brandy Clarke, PhD
Research Assistant Professor
Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & Schools

Lisa Knoche, PhD
Research Associate Professor
Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & Schools

Susan Sheridan, PhD
Director
Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & Schools

A Model of Effective Coaching Support for Early Reading RTI

This presentation will discuss outcomes from a large-scale randomized trial that evaluated the impact of a professional development approach for training rural K-3 teachers to implement Response-to-Intervention (RTI) in the area of early reading. Attendees will learn how professional development that supports teachers’ use of data-based decision-making and research-based interventions can be used to effectively promote student performance in schools.

Michelle Howell Smith, PhD
Project Manager
Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & Schools

Tanya Ihlo, PhD
Research Assistant Professor
Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & Schools
This presentation will offer insight into tailoring professional development for family childcare providers, specifically examining a mixed-methods study of how role identity influenced their participation in professional development. Survey analyses demonstrated that a stronger sense of identity as an early care and education professional predicted greater involvement in professional development. Through qualitative interviews, providers described the importance of balancing blended roles as family caregivers and professionals; they also outlined how professional development strengthened their knowledge and identities as early care providers.

Rebecca Swartz, PhD
Assistant Professor | Early Childhood Education Extension Specialist
Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

This presentation explores school readiness intervention strategies used by early childhood professionals to support parent engagement in young children’s learning. Thirty-two early childhood professionals were videorecorded during Early Head Start and Head Start home visits. Study findings help to unpack the black box of home visiting and investigate what professionals are doing to enhance parent engagement. The findings also help explain how families respond and who is interacting during these home visits.

Christine Marvin, PhD
Associate Professor
Department of Special Education & Communication Disorders | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Lisa Knoche, PhD
Research Associate Professor
Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & Schools
Preschool Children’s Environmental Moral Reasoning

The presenter’s research uses Social Domain Theory to examine preschool children’s moral reasoning with respect to the environment. As part of this research, 126 preschool-aged children were interviewed; 53 attended a nature-focused preschool, while 73 attended non-nature-focused preschools. This presentation will examine the study’s results, including the finding that a majority of children in both types of programs judged throwing trash in a lake as wrong regardless of context, rules or social convention – indicating that it is a matter of obligatory morality.

Julia Torquati, PhD
Associate Professor
Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Evaluating Mobile Applications: Educational Mobile Application Teacher Rating Scale (E.MATRS)

Educators and researchers have recently become interested in using technology to enhance teaching effectiveness and children’s learning in developmentally appropriate ways. Determining whether a mobile application meets the needs of the young children, supports teacher instruction, and engages children in appropriate content is necessary prior to incorporating it into instruction. This session will discuss the development and results of a mobile application analysis tool for the teaching and learning of science among young children.

Krista Adams, PhD
Assistant Professor
Department of Teaching, Learning & Teacher Education | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Douglas Golick, PhD
Assistant Professor
Department of Entomology | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Soo-Young Hong, PhD
Assistant Professor
Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln
This presentation will share findings from an environmental scan of the early childhood professional development programs offered within the Cooperative Extension System. A study was conducted to identify the programs’ content, delivery, scope, evaluation and partners. Results indicate that Extension has become a player in providing professional development opportunities for early childhood professionals and, with a focused effort on streamlining current resources, has the capacity to become a leader in this field.

**Tonia Durden, PhD**  
Assistant Professor | Early Childhood Education Extension Specialist  
Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

This presentation outlines a study designed to (a) create learning communities between university researchers and preschool teachers that explore ways to promote teachers’ understanding of science concepts and practice; (b) help preschool teachers formulate developmentally appropriate science activities for preschool children; and (c) examine how teachers’ attitudes about teaching science – along with their behaviors in preschool classrooms – change over the course of the collaborative process.

**Soo-Young Hong, PhD**  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

**Shaista Syeda**  
Graduate Student  
Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

**Jungwon Eum**  
Graduate Student  
Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Difficult Temperament, Difficult Sleeper? Examination of Toddler Behavior & Sleep

Sleep habits of young children are related to the development of the cognitive and self-regulation skills that influence school readiness. While there is a growing awareness of the importance of sleep, there is also evidence that parents’ perceptions of children’s sleep habits is sometimes different from actual measures of sleep. This presentation focuses on how parents perceive their child’s sleep habits, whether those perceptions are influenced by children’s temperament, and how these factors collectively influence school readiness.

Kathleen Rudasill, PhD
Associate Professor
Department of Educational Psychology | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Victoria Molfese, PhD
Chancellor’s Professor
Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Amanda Prokasky
Project Coordinator
Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Elaina Montague
Graduate Student
Department of Psychology | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Longitudinal Changes in K-3 Teachers’ Mathematical Content & Pedagogical Knowledge

This presentation examines longitudinal trajectories of change in the knowledge, attitudes and beliefs of 90 K-3 teachers in Primarily Math – a professional development program designed to augment mathematical content and pedagogical knowledge – relative to a matched comparison group over five measurement occasions. Primarily Math teachers demonstrated greater geometric knowledge for teaching; reported more confidence, improved motivation and less anxiety for learning mathematics; and exhibited more student-centered beliefs alongside fewer teacher-centered beliefs.

Traci Shizu Kutaka, PhD
Postdoctoral Research Associate
Center for Science, Mathematics & Computer Education | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Carolyn Pope Edwards, EdD
Willa Cather Professor
Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Session II

1:40 - 2:30 PM | Blackfoot Room

Promoting Change from the Start: Year One Classroom Assessments & Feedback with a New Program

Classroom assessments (Classroom Assessment Scoring System [CLASS] and Rating Scales [RS]) were conducted during fall 2013 in 13 new Lincoln Educare classrooms. Results on the RS ranged from 5.4 to 6.8 overall, though sub-scales showed variance. Results of the Toddler CLASS ranged from 5.4 to 6.7 on Emotional and Behavioral Supports and from 2.9 to 4.6 on Engaged Support for Learning. Scores, feedback procedures and case studies related to improvement will be shared.

Julia Dadds, PhD
Executive Director
Educare of Lincoln

Jan Esteraich
Graduate Student
Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Amy Colgrove
Graduate Student
Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Helen Raikes, PhD
Willa Cather Professor
Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Rebecca Swartz, PhD
Assistant Professor | Early Childhood Education Extension Specialist
Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Michelle Rupiper, PhD
Associate Professor of Practice
Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Research has consistently documented the importance of the early years in establishing positive trajectories for behavioral competence and important relationships. This presentation addresses an important research question concerning the role of community setting (i.e., rural vs. non-rural) on kindergarten children’s social-behavioral skills and the cross-systemic supportive relationships in young children’s lives. Given the unique demographic features of many rural communities – particularly those plagued by poverty, low education and related risk factors – it also strives to understand how geographic setting interacts with cumulative risk in predicting child and parent-teacher outcomes.

Susan Sheridan, PhD  
Director  
Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & Schools

Michael Coutts  
Graduate Research Assistant  
Department of Educational Psychology | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Shannon Holmes  
Graduate Research Assistant  
Department of Educational Psychology | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Amanda Witte  
Project Manager  
Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & Schools

Sonya Bhatia  
Graduate Research Assistant  
Department of Educational Psychology | University of Nebraska-Lincoln
**ECONOMIC IMPACT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION & PROGRAMMING IN NEBRASKA**

This presentation will quantify a variety of benefits and costs associated with providing high-quality early childhood education to children at risk in Nebraska, with state-specific data used to make projections when possible. The presentation will report the results of measures that include the benefit-cost ratio of providing early childhood education, the internal rate of return, and the payback period.

*Lisa Knoche, PhD*
Research Associate Professor
Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & Schools

*David Rosenbaum, PhD*
Professor | Associate Director for Academic Affairs
Jeffrey S. Raikes School of Computer Science & Management | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

*Eric Thompson, PhD*
Director | Associate Professor
Bureau of Business Research | Department of Economics | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

**RURAL FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS: BRIDGING RESEARCH & PRACTICE**

This presentation will share the evidence base supporting family-school partnerships to promote positive academic, behavioral and social-emotional outcomes for young children. Specifically, the presenters will outline preliminary findings from a current study examining the efficacy of Conjoint Behavioral Consultation (CBC) on rural K-3 students, their families and teachers. To illustrate the connection between research and practice, the presenters will offer case examples of unique applications of CBC in the rural context.

*Gina Kunz, PhD*
Research Associate Professor
Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & Schools

*Susan Sheridan, PhD*
Director
Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & Schools
This presentation outlines a study that examined contexts in which typically developing preschoolers (TD) were likely to interact with their peers with disabilities (D), as well as the nature of those social interactions. An eco-behavioral analysis with observational data from 22 preschoolers and seven teachers revealed that TD tended to interact with D more in an outdoor than indoor classroom. TD also interacted with D more during play-based activities than during academic activities or transitions/routines. The presentation will examine the implications of these findings, along with the revelation that teachers provided minimal support for these social interactions.

Soo-Young Hong, PhD
Assistant Professor
Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Jungwon Eum
Graduate Student
Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Factors Affecting Kindergarten Readiness in Great Plains Rural ESSS Communities

This presentation focuses on baseline school readiness in 10 Great Plains rural communities participating in Save the Children’s Early Steps to School Success (ESSS) literacy-based home-visiting program for children ages 0-3, along with the pre-K/bookbag program for children ages 3-5. It will address kindergarten-entry findings from the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-4, which show that eligibility for free and reduced lunch, along with limited English proficiency, are negatively associated with test scores. The presentation will also discuss the finding that exposure to a year of preschool or Head Start positively correlates with test scores.

Helen Raikes, PhD
Willa Cather Professor
Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Jan Esteraich
Graduate Student
Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Elsa Escalante
Graduate Student
Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies | University of Nebraska-Lincoln
The following 20 posters will be featured after closing remarks from Marjorie Kostelnik, dean of the UNL College of Education and Human Sciences. Posters were selected based on their potential to (a) offer various perspectives on critical and timely issues in early childhood; (b) highlight innovative research; (c) identify extensions of research to practice; and (d) examine how research findings may relate to public policies that affect young children and their families. All posters feature a graduate student as lead author and include at least one CYFS faculty affiliate as a co-author.

1) **A Quantitative Synthesis of Family-School Engagement Interventions: A Preliminary Examination in Early Childhood**
   Tyler Smith; Elizabeth Moorman Kim, PhD; Susan Sheridan, PhD

2) **Mental Health, Parenting Attributes & Family Support in a Rural Early Head Start Sample**
   Amanda Moen; Susan Sheridan, PhD; Sonya Bhatia

3) **Maternal Mental Health & Infant-Toddler Social-Emotional Development**
   Sonya Bhatia; Susan Sheridan, PhD; Amanda Moen

4) **Positive Pathways to Encourage Children’s Prosocial Behaviors across Contexts**
   Alicia Bower; Juan Casas, PhD

5) **Chinese Parents’ Developmental Expectations & Preschoolers’ Social-Emotional Development**
   Lixin Ren; Carolyn Pope Edwards, PhD

6) **Family-School Partnerships: Promoting Participation in K-3 Teacher Professional Development**
   Heidi Fleharty; Carolyn Pope Edwards, PhD

7) **The Effect of Yoga on Preschool-Aged Children’s Executive Functioning**
   Heidi Fleharty; Anne Schutte, PhD

8) **Parental Engagement & Executive Functioning**
   Courtney Boise; Lisa Knoche, PhD; Carolyn Pope Edwards, PhD

9) **Stabilizing Developmental Trajectories in Infants/Toddlers with a Double Disadvantage**
   Miriam Kuhn, EdS; Lisa Knoche, PhD; Christine Marvin, PhD
Poster Session

4:00 - 5:30 PM  |  Yellowstone Room

10) Parents' Roles in Fostering the Cultural Awareness of Young Children
Kimberly Blitch; Helen Raikes, PhD; Tonia Durden, PhD

11) Early Childhood Coaching Conversations: Observed Coach Behaviors & Coach Characteristics
Gayatri Jayaraman; Lisa Knoche, PhD; Christine Marvin, PhD

12) ECE Status, Issues & Teacher Training in Punjab, Pakistan
Shaista Syeda; Soo-Young Hong, PhD

13) Temperament by Environment in Predicting Teacher-Child Relationship Quality
Amanda Prokasky; Kathleen Rudasill, PhD; Victoria Molfese, PhD; Xiaoqing Tu

14) Identifying Child Temperament Profiles Using Cluster Analysis
Amanda Prokasky; Kathleen Rudasill, PhD; Victoria Molfese, PhD

15) Preschool Children's Knowledge about Nature
Car Mun Kok; Julia Torquati, PhD; Julia Kroeker

16) Data-Based Decision-Making in a Preschool Service-Learning Practicum
Anne Thomas; Chris Marvin, PhD

17) Effects of a Multi-Tiered Early Literacy Approach with Spanish-Speaking Preschoolers
Mackenzie Sommerhalder; Brandy Clarke, PhD; Sonya Bhatia

18) Early Steps to School Success: Differences between Latino & English-Speaking Families
Elsa Escalante; Helen Raikes, PhD; Jan Esteraich

19) Parenting Profiles: Using a Person-Oriented Approach to Examine Parenting Patterns in Early Head Start
Jan Esteraich; Helen Raikes, PhD

20) Relations of Water Quality & Food Security to Children's Development
Amy Encinger; Helen Raikes, PhD; Jentry Barrett
Scholars from Atatürk University in Erzurum, Turkey, will provide their perspectives on early childhood education and research. This conversational roundtable will offer the opportunity to learn about Turkish education and share impressions of the summit’s activities.

**Fahri Yavuz, PhD**  
Professor | Head  
Office of International Affairs | Atatürk University

**Ali Yıldırım, PhD**  
Professor | Dean  
College of Education | Atatürk University

**Mustafa Sözbılir, PhD**  
Professor  
Department of Secondary Science & Mathematics Education | Atatürk University

**Türkan Karakuş, PhD**  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Computer & Instructional Sciences Technology | Atatürk University

**Sinan Koçyiğit, PhD**  
Assistant Professor | Head  
Department of Early Childhood Education | Atatürk University

**Meryem Tan Çelik, PhD**  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Early Childhood Education | Atatürk University
Biographies

Krista Adams, PhD | kadams12@unl.edu
Dr. Krista Adams is an assistant professor of science education at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Her current research centers on creating instructional strategies to support the teaching and learning of science. She also investigates how subject-specific strategies influence elementary educators' teaching schema. Adams holds a doctorate in curriculum and instruction from Arizona State University.

Brandy Clarke, PhD | bclarke2@unl.edu
Dr. Brandy Clarke is a research assistant professor with the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Her research interests include early intervention and prevention programming for children and families. Clarke has served as project director for Pre-3T, a federally funded grant focused on developing a three-tiered language and literacy intervention program for children at risk for reading difficulties. She received her doctorate in educational psychology from UNL.

Julia Dadds, PhD | jdadds@educarelincoln.org
Dr. Julia Dadds serves as executive director for Educare of Lincoln, a state-of-the-science early childhood education center that combines investments from Head Start, the Buffett Early Childhood Institute and Fund, and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln’s College of Education and Human Sciences. With career experience in human services work, Dadds has expertise in family dynamics, rural and urban cultures, and economic disparity issues. She holds a doctorate in curriculum studies from Indiana University.

Tonia Durden, PhD | tdurden2@unl.edu
Dr. Tonia Durden is an early childhood education extension specialist and assistant professor of child, youth and family studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Durden’s work, which integrates research, extension and service, can be categorized under three core areas: early childhood education, cultural diversity, and early childhood systems engagement. She holds a doctorate in early childhood education from Georgia State University.

Carolyn Pope Edwards, EdD | cedwards1@unl.edu
Dr. Carolyn Pope Edwards serves as Willa Cather Professor of child, youth and family studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She has studied cultural influences on children’s development in multiple countries, focusing especially on the innovative and renowned public early childhood services of Italy. Edwards evaluates the quality of children’s services in an effort to strengthen the parent-child-teacher relationships that prepare children for school. She holds a doctorate in human development from Harvard University.

Douglas Golick, PhD | dgolick2@unl.edu
Dr. Douglas Golick is an assistant professor of entomology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. His research interests include the development of technologies that complement science instruction and enhance scientific literacy. Golick also investigates how technology, professional development and workshop interventions impact teachers’ and students' concept understanding, attitudes and instructional practices. He received his doctorate in educational studies from UNL.

Soo-Young Hong, PhD | shong5@unl.edu
Dr. Soo-Young Hong is an assistant professor of child, youth and family studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Her research focuses on early childhood professional development in the areas of inclusion and science, along with ecological factors related to children’s learning and development in preschool classrooms. She received her doctorate in child development and family studies from Purdue University.

Michelle Howell Smith, PhD | mhowellsmith@unl.edu
Dr. Michelle Howell Smith serves as a project manager and acting research assistant professor with the Nebraska Academy for Methodology, Analytics and Psychometrics at the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools. She specializes in mixed-method research designs, focusing specifically on instrument development procedures such as grounded theory analysis and exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. She holds a doctorate in educational psychology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.
**BIographies**

**Tanya Ihlo, PhD** | tihlo2@unl.edu
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Dr. Tanya Ihlo is a research assistant professor with the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Her research interests include early reading and behavioral supports for at-risk students, along with the use of coaching to improve the delivery of instructional practices and data-based decision-making. She holds a doctorate in school psychology from the University of Cincinnati.

**Lisa Knoche, PhD** | lknoche2@unl.edu
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Dr. Lisa Knoche is a research associate professor with the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She designs and evaluates intervention and prevention programs for children and families at risk, focusing on approaches that support school readiness and family involvement in early learning. Knoche also aims to identify effective professional development strategies for early childhood professionals. She holds a doctorate in developmental psychology from UNL.

**Marjorie Kostelnik, PhD** | mkostelnik2@unl.edu
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Dr. Marjorie Kostelnik serves as dean of the College of Education and Human Sciences at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. An early childhood educator by training, Kostelnik’s scholarship has focused on child socialization and developmentally appropriate practices for young children. She received her doctorate in human development and family studies from The Pennsylvania State University.

**Gina Kunz, PhD** | gkunz2@unl.edu
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Dr. Gina Kunz is a research associate professor with the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Kunz conducts large-scale research studies that have recently focused on family-school partnerships, school-based consultation, and professional development featuring distance-based instructional coaching for teachers. She also studies behavior management among children with attention deficits. Kunz holds a doctorate in psychology from Louisiana State University.

**Traci Shizu Kutaka, PhD** | traci.kutaka@gmail.com
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Dr. Traci Shizu Kutaka serves as a postdoctoral research associate with the Center for Science, Mathematics and Computer Education at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Her research focuses on the development of mathematical learning and reasoning in early childhood; progressive early childhood education systems; and program evaluation. She holds a doctorate in developmental psychology from UNL.

**Christine Marvin, PhD** | cmarvin1@unl.edu
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Dr. Christine Marvin serves as associate professor of special education and communication disorders at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Her research interests include prevention and intervention programs for infants, toddlers and preschool-aged children with developmental delays or disabilities. Marvin has promoted interdisciplinary and family-centered approaches in home- and community-based education and care programs. She received her doctorate in early childhood special education from the University of Oregon.

**Samuel J. Meisels, EdD** | smeisels2@unl.edu
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Dr. Samuel Meisels is the founding executive director of the Buffett Early Childhood Institute and professor of child, youth and family studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. From 2002 to 2012, Meisels served as president of the Erikson Institute, the nation’s premier graduate school in child development. A leading authority on the assessment of young children, Meisels has published nearly 200 research articles, books and monographs. He holds a doctorate from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

**Victoria Molfese, PhD** | vmolfese2@unl.edu
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Dr. Victoria Molfese is a Chancellor’s Professor of child, youth and family studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Molfese focuses on brain processing and the development of executive function skills in young children, along with the impacts of sleep, health status and learning-related behaviors on early academic gains. She received her doctorate in developmental psychology from The Pennsylvania State University.
Helen Raikes, PhD | hraikes2@unl.edu
Dr. Helen Raikes serves as a Willa Cather Professor of child, youth and family studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Raikes' research focuses on intervention programs for children in families that contend with risk factors such as poverty. She currently serves as principal investigator for evaluations of Educare of Lincoln and Save the Children’s Early Steps to School Success program. Raikes holds a doctorate in child development from Iowa State University.

David Rosenbaum, PhD | drosenbaum1@unl.edu
Dr. David Rosenbaum is a professor of economics and associate director for academic affairs at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln’s Jeffrey S. Raikes School of Computer Science and Management. He has participated in numerous research projects analyzing costs and benefits of both public infrastructure development and private investments, including early childhood education in Nebraska. He received his doctorate in economics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Kathleen Rudasill, PhD | krudasill2@unl.edu
Dr. Kathleen Rudasill serves as associate professor of educational psychology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Her research investigates the impact of temperament – particularly behavioral inhibition and effortful control – on the effectiveness of classroom interventions for young children. She holds a doctorate in educational psychology from the University of Virginia.

Michelle Rupiper, PhD | mrupiper1@unl.edu
Dr. Michelle Rupiper serves as associate professor of practice in child, youth and family studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Her research interests lie in teacher preparation, with a focus on helping pre-service educators acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to effectively teach young children. Rupiper received her doctorate in psychological and cultural studies from UNL.

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