



# 2015-2016 REPORT



NEBRASKA CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON  
CHILDREN, YOUTH, FAMILIES & SCHOOLS





## DEDICATION



**Prem S. Paul**

*October 5, 1947 – September 2, 2016*

*This report is dedicated to Prem S. Paul, DVM, PhD, Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development (2001–2016). Prem's relentless dedication, spirited passion, and contagious enthusiasm created the opportunity and condition for research excellence throughout the UNL campus. We were blessed by his leadership, guided by his vision, and aided by his support.*

*We will miss you, Prem.*



UNIVERSITY OF  
**Nebraska**  
Lincoln

## Message from the Director

At the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools, we're inspired by people who think big and propel dreams to realities. And we're thankful for the partnership of these dreamers and doers. Their contributions allow us to simultaneously pursue growth and remain grounded in our central mission: advancing high-quality, interdisciplinary research that enhances lives.

With the support of UNL and the College of Education and Human Sciences, we're leveraging strengths through the Nebraska Early Childhood Research Academy and the Nebraska Bureau for Education Research, Evaluation, and Policy. With the collaboration of interdisciplinary scholars and field-based partners, we're contributing to national and international research initiatives that advance the social, behavioral and educational sciences. And with the dedication of our team—students, staff and faculty—we're expanding capacity in grant development and management, research and outreach.

Together, we're pursuing this growth in the spirit of creating sustainable impacts. Our hope is that these impacts will stimulate change and build a better future—a future that is made possible through partnership.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan M. Sheridan".

Susan M. Sheridan



**Susan M. Sheridan, PhD**

George Holmes University Professor & Willa Cather Emeritus Professor of Educational Psychology

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



# Our Mission

The mission of the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools is to advance and conduct high-quality interdisciplinary research to promote the intellectual, behavioral and social-emotional development and functioning of individuals across educational, familial and community contexts.

# About CYFS

In partnership with community stakeholders, we create the context for researchers to establish reliable findings; inform and influence the knowledge base; translate findings into evidence-based practices; and provide scientifically grounded education, leadership and outreach. The CYFS infrastructure supports the establishment of prevailing initiatives that shape the progress of children, youth, families and schools.

## SUPPORT CYFS

If you wish to support CYFS, please visit:  
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# Autism Specialization Addresses Need for Early Intervention

Micheale Marcus puts her hands in the air. Then on her nose. Then on the table—a miniature one, where she sits with her client: a 3-year-old toddler who mimics her every move.

Marcus, a second-year graduate student, is receiving training in early childhood autism spectrum disorders through a new specialization in the College of Education and Human Sciences' school psychology program.

Funded by a \$1.25 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, students in the two-year specialization are learning to diagnose autism in young children—ages 18 months to 4 years—and implement early intervention services.

The project is led by Gina Kunz, CYFS research associate professor, and Terri Mathews, associate professor at the University of Nebraska Medical Center's Munroe-Meyer Institute.

"There is a need to identify autism spectrum disorders and provide services to children as early as possible," said Kunz. "School psychologists are in the best role to facilitate

that process and connect families and educators, so that children with ASD can enter formal school settings as well equipped and prepared as possible."

The specialization includes seminars, research and hands-on experience at UNMC's Autism Care for Toddlers Clinic, which provides services for young children with autism and their families.

At the clinic, students learn to use practices such as descriptive play: peppering children with words to encourage them to talk and interact. They also learn how to teach those skills to parents, who can then implement them at home.

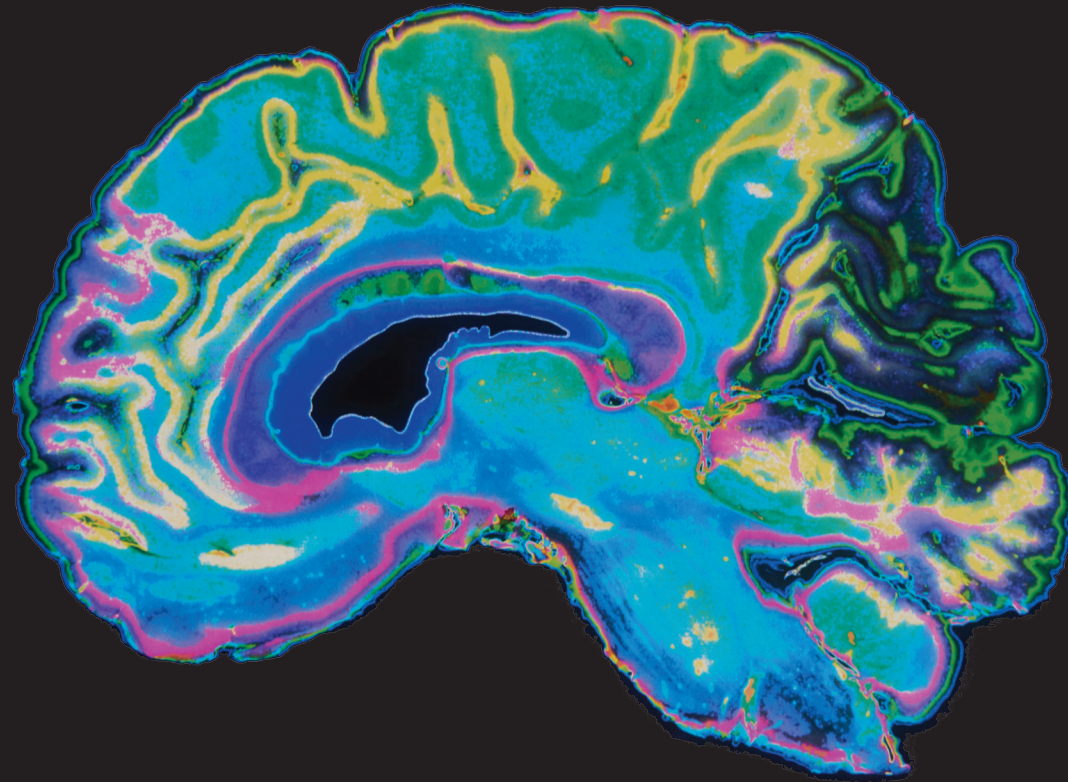
"One of the best parts of working in the clinic is watching the kids progress," said Marcus. "These are skills that they will use for the rest of their lives."



Left: Micheale Marcus. Above: Autism specialization team, from left: William Higgins, Gina Kunz, and Terri Mathews.



# Reducing Concussion Impact with Student Training Program



With concussion awareness at an all-time high, school personnel are increasingly responsible for supporting students' recovery.

Scott Napolitano, assistant professor of practice in educational psychology, is developing evidence-based training that will help schools diagnose and manage cases of concussion and mild traumatic brain injury in students.

Funded with a \$1.1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, the five-year project has launched a concussion management specialization in UNL's school psychology graduate program.

The new specialization, which is among the first of its kind in the United States, aims to address a key issue in the field: the national and local shortage of practicing school psychologists trained in concussion management.

Addressing that shortage may also help schools comply with state legislation, including the 2014 "Return to Learn" provision of the Nebraska Concussion Awareness Act. The provision requires schools to assess concussion symptoms and create plans that support academic adjustments.

*"My ultimate goal is that there will be psychologists who are trained in evidence-based concussion assessment and management in every school in the country."*

"Now schools have to start monitoring and evaluating students with concussions and using new tests and instruments," said Napolitano, CYFS faculty affiliate.

"The whole essence of this grant is to train personnel to meet that need and help students have a more successful recovery and maintain academic success."

Students in the specialization will gain practical experience during a nine-month externship with Lincoln Public Schools' concussion management team clinics. They will also participate in workshops, seminars, web-based training and mentoring.

Napolitano's project includes an evaluation component to assess best practices for training school psychologists in concussion management, which includes feedback from



Scott Napolitano

schools and students who receive services. He envisions developing a train-the-trainer program to meet concussion management needs on a national scale.

"My ultimate goal is that there will be psychologists who are trained in evidence-based

concussion assessment and management in every school in the country," Napolitano said.

"There's such a need for people who have evidence-based training and know how to read and interpret new literature because the field is changing so fast."



# Supporting Caregivers to Help Families Recover

Reducing stress for caregivers may help their family members who are recovering from a severe injury or illness.

Natalie Williams, assistant professor of child, youth and family studies, is leading a project that provides massage therapy to primary caregivers during the first three weeks of their relative's inpatient rehabilitation.



Brandon and Tiffany Verzal hold their daughter, Alexis, who experienced a traumatic brain injury.

That initial time frame can be demanding and emotionally challenging for caregivers, who are adjusting to new family routines, responsibilities, and financial stressors. Researchers aim to ease their transition and improve family functioning.

"There are not many services focused on the caregivers to specifically help them adjust to this stressful environment," said Williams, CYFS faculty affiliate.

The project's research team includes Judy Burnfield, director of Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital's Institute for Rehabilitation and Engineering Sciences, and Paul Springer, associate professor of child, youth and family studies.

To understand massage therapy's effect on the mind, the team is assessing caregivers' self-reported levels of anxiety and depression. To understand its effect on the body, they are measuring levels of salivary cortisol and alpha-amylase—biological indicators of the body's response to stress.

The team is also collecting data from movement-tracking armbands to track sleep quality.

The study's advisory board includes Tiffany Verzal, whose daughter, Alexis, suffered a traumatic brain injury at age 13 months. Her injuries were consistent with shaken baby syndrome.

After seven years of rehabilitation, Alexis graduated from outpatient programs and is now in fourth grade. Based on her family's experience, Verzal says that reducing parents' stress during their child's rehabilitation is key to a successful recovery.

"I truly believe that by helping the entire family heal, we will continue to see more positive outcomes with children recovering from severe injury and illness," Verzal said. "(This research) should truly make a difference in the lives of future parents caring for children who have experienced a life-changing event."

*Paul Springer, Judy Burnfield and Natalie Williams at the pediatric unit of the Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital in Lincoln, Nebraska, where they are researching the impact of massage therapy to reduce stress for primary caregivers.*





# Evaluating Education from Preschool to College

As schools implement new education policies, a collaborative research initiative aims to help them understand what works.

Launched in fall 2015, the Nebraska Bureau for Education Research, Evaluation and Policy is conducting evaluation research from early education to career readiness.

Founded in UNL's Department of Educational Administration, the bureau provides a way for researchers across the university system to come together for cross-entity collaboration, said Brent Cejda, educational administration department chair.

Led by Greg Welch, CYFS research associate professor, the bureau's research emphasizes accountability policies that promote improvement in educational systems.

In addition to conducting original research, the bureau's team is also supporting opportunities for Nebraska scholars to contribute expertise.

"As we continue to build relationships with educational entities in Nebraska, including the Nebraska Department of Education, we want to connect them with NU faculty and provide research support for specific needs," said Greg Welch, bureau director.

Welch is also leading a university-wide evaluation project that includes researchers at CYFS, UNL's College of Education and Human Sciences, the University of Nebraska Medical Center and the Buffett Early Childhood Institute at the University of Nebraska.

The team is evaluating what minimum thresholds of childcare quality are needed to promote positive development and prevent negative outcomes for children birth to age 5.

To identify those thresholds, the team is analyzing six early childhood datasets: five national and one from Nebraska.

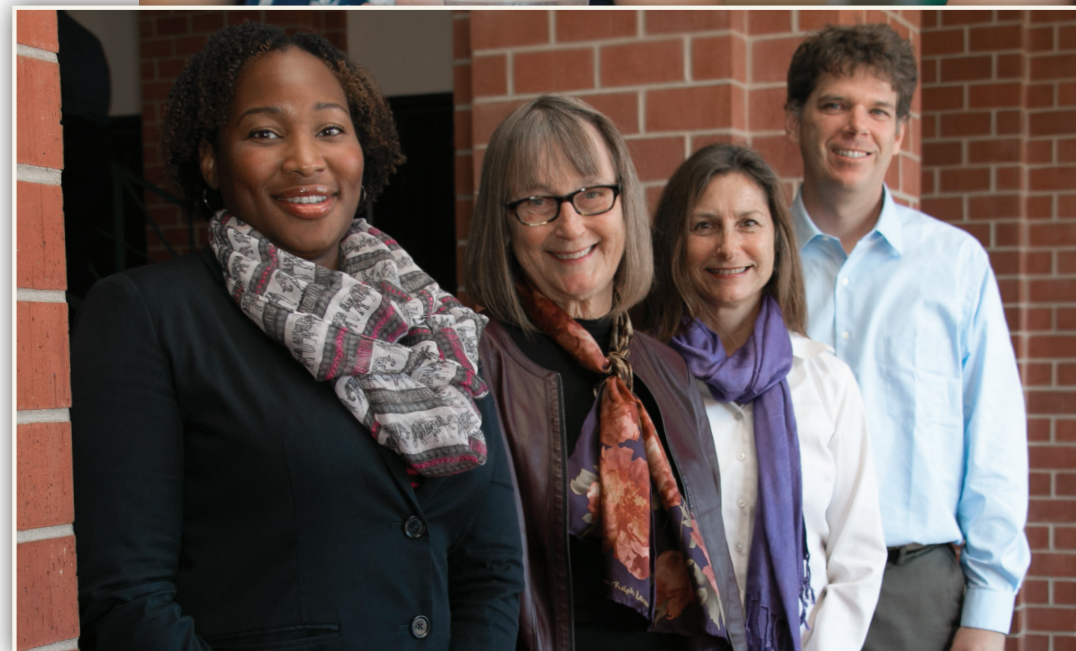
"This project is the first of its kind being done with Nebraska data," Welch said. "It has

potential to have a significant role in local, state and national conversations about early childhood education and quality of care."

With their research findings, the team aims to inform Quality Rating and Improvement Systems—a childcare assessment used by 37 states, including Nebraska. Findings may also help nationwide childcare providers determine whether their programs are affecting children's outcomes.

"There is a widespread focus on improving childcare quality throughout the whole system, which includes federal education programs and individual childcare providers," said Helen Raikes, UNL professor and co-principal investigator.

"Our research links these two systems together by informing quality ratings and improvements, which creates uniformity. It has tremendous implications for policy and practice."



***This project has potential to have a significant role in local, state and national conversations about early childhood education and quality of care.***

*The childcare evaluation research team includes, from left, Iheoma Iruka, Helen Raikes, Julia Torquati, and Greg Welch.*



# Expanding Early Childhood Research Capacity

A new academy is uniting early childhood researchers in the College of Education and Human Sciences.

Directed by Lisa Knoche, CYFS research associate professor, the Nebraska Early Childhood Research Academy is part of UNL's strategic initiative to strengthen support for early childhood development. Its primary aim is to increase campus research and expand collaborations focused on challenges facing young children and families.

To address those challenges, the academy is supporting the research capacity of faculty and graduate students, assisting in grant procurement and execution, and initiating outreach. It is also establishing and extending global partnerships, including collaboration with early childhood researchers in Brazil, Turkey and China.

"We want to support faculty in pursuing game-changing research to help policymakers, early childhood professionals, researchers,

educators and families improve the trajectory of all young Nebraskans—especially those who face challenges in achieving academic and life success," Knoche said.

"The academy will serve as a platform to conduct this research, as well as a pipeline to connect and apply new findings."

Knoche is also leading a Nebraska study focused on early childhood development. Supported by a \$2.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the project is using the Getting Ready intervention to improve children's language and social-emotional skills.

Developed at UNL, Getting Ready is a research-based model that enhances child development by strengthening relationships among parents, early childhood professionals and children. The model is being provided for infants and toddlers in center-based Early Head Start programs, which provide early childhood services for low-income families.



*"We want to support faculty in pursuing game-changing research."*

"We want to learn how this integrated intervention approach will support children's well-being, so that it could be adopted by other early childhood efforts," said Knoche. "Our study fits into other research priorities at the University of Nebraska, as we look to share information about how to grow and sustain community-based research partnerships in early childhood."

The study's investigators include Knoche; Susan Sheridan, director of CYFS; Helen Raikes, professor of child, youth and family studies; Christine Marvin, professor of special education and communication disorders; and Leslie Hawley, CYFS research assistant professor. Tammi Hechtner-Galvin is the project coordinator.

*From left: Lisa Knoche, Susan Sheridan, Helen Raikes, Christine Marvin, and Leslie Hawley.*





# Brazil Partnership Advancing Early Childhood Research



Christine Marvin



Helen Raikes, second from left, with Brazil partners.

At a publicly funded childcare center in São Paulo, Brazil, UNL professor Christine Marvin interacts with children as they create brightly colored collages.

Marvin was there to learn about Brazilian early childhood care and education programs as one of 13 UNL faculty who attended the spring 2016 UNL-Brazil Working Partners meeting.

Co-sponsored by UNL and Brazil's Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation, the event drew 60 early childhood scholars, policymakers and educators with the purpose of forming transnational teams for future research.

"We want to understand how we can support Brazilians and identify what issues are similar

enough that we can do collaborative research," said Marvin, professor of special education and communication disorders.

The working meeting featured an overview of early childhood issues in Brazil and the United States, as well as targeted sessions on early learning, the ecology of development, program quality and professional development. It also featured networking opportunities that allowed participants to brainstorm project ideas.

The meeting is part of a larger UNL-Brazil early childhood research initiative supported by Chancellor Ronnie Green. UNL has established Brazilian partnerships in critical areas that include life sciences, food security, water sustainability and livestock. Adding early

childhood is an important next step, said Green, who attended the São Paulo meeting.

UNL-Brazilian teams will be applying for project funding from the UNL Chancellor's Office and the Maria Cecilia Souto Vidigal Foundation with the intention of positioning their research for larger grants.

"We saw an incredible energy and commitment to working together across countries and cultures," said CYFS director Susan Sheridan. "We now have an unprecedented opportunity to leverage the passion and expertise present across UNL and our new Brazilian partners to advance outcomes for children."

UNL faculty who attended the Brazil working meeting include, from left, Greg Welch, Natalie Williams, Soo-Young Hong, Michelle Howell Smith, Lisa Knoche, Susan Sheridan, Christine Marvin, Kathleen Rudasill, Cody Hollist, and Amanda Witte. Not pictured are Carolyn Pope Edwards, Helen Raikes, and Paul Springer.





# Early Learning Network: Nebraska Research, National Leadership

Decisions made in legislative halls, city councils and individual classrooms all impact children’s educational outcomes.

A team led by CYFS director Susan Sheridan will investigate the effects of policies and practices in communities across Nebraska and coordinate a national network dedicated to early childhood research.

The \$6.5 million project is part of the multi-institutional Early Learning Network, a research initiative funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences. Its team includes researchers from CYFS, the Buffett Early Childhood Institute at the University of Nebraska and NU’s Public Policy Center.

Across Nebraska, the team will conduct three studies on early education policy, classroom practices and children’s transition from preschool through third grade.

By following children over time, the team aims to identify the nuances of transition—new

*“We have a tremendous opportunity to inform and shape policy around early childhood education.”*

classrooms, instructional approaches and curricular expectations—and their impact on educational progress.

“The goal of our research, both in Nebraska and nationally, is to understand what it will take to close the achievement gap and sustain positive outcomes for disadvantaged children,” Sheridan said.

The study also emphasizes rural education. With participation from 10 rural and two urban school districts, the team hopes to better understand how Nebraska’s diverse community contexts shape children’s development and learning.

As the lead team in the Early Learning Network, Nebraska scholars will coordinate research and outreach efforts among the University of

North Carolina at Chapel Hill; the University of California, Irvine; The Ohio State University; the University of Virginia; and MDRC, a policy research organization.

Together, network teams will guide early childhood assessment and evaluation, collaborate on additional research and enhance communication strategies for policy outreach.

“As a result of this set of studies, we have a tremendous opportunity to inform and shape policy around early childhood education,” Sheridan said.

The research team includes Sheridan; Iheoma Iruka, director of research and evaluation at the Buffett Early Childhood Institute; Mark DeKraai, senior research director at NU’s Public Policy Center; Lisa Knoche, CYFS research associate professor; James Bovaird, director of the MAP Academy; and Greg Welch, CYFS research associate professor. The project managers are Sommer Fousek and Amanda Witte.



# Early Childhood Research Summit Features Local, Global Partnerships

The 2016 CYFS Summit on Research in Early Childhood highlighted the power of partnerships, both local and global. Service providers, educators, administrators and researchers converged in Lincoln, Nebraska, on April 7 to learn the latest science in early childhood—and its implications for practice and policy.

The fourth biennial summit was sponsored by CYFS, the Buffett Early Childhood Institute and

First Five Nebraska. It began with remarks from Hank Bounds, president of the University of Nebraska; Renee Wessels, associate executive director of the Buffett Early Childhood Institute; and CYFS director Susan Sheridan.

“Partnerships are essential to our work as we expand the scope and impact of early childhood research,” Sheridan said.

The summit opened with a keynote address by Carol McDonald Connor, chancellor’s professor at the University of California, Irvine. She discussed her team’s role in developing a classroom observation system, which aims to inform and promote effective early learning opportunities for children.

*Graduate student participants and poster presenters, from left: Sonya Bhatia, Courtney Boise, Tyler Smith, Amanda Moen, and Andrew White.*



Carol McDonald Connor

CYFS faculty affiliates and global partners shared research on topics including classroom self-regulation, family-school partnerships, cross-cultural studies in the U.S. and Turkey, educational data systems and the recently published Nebraska Early Childhood Workforce Survey.

UNL’s Marjorie Kostelnik acknowledged the summit’s increased diversity in early childhood topics and research methodology, which included qualitative, mixed methods and quantitative studies.

“This summit showed how questioning can lead to robust ideas and evidence-based knowledge, and that this whole notion of knowing is an open invitation,” said Kostelnik, acting senior vice chancellor of academic affairs.

“Anybody can come and join the conversation.”

# Conference Features Bullying Prevention in Early Childhood

The June 2016 Bullying Prevention Conference at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln highlighted bullying prevention research and intervention in early childhood.

The event drew more than 150 early childhood educators, teachers, administrators, parents and researchers.

Keynote speakers included Cynthia Germanotta, president and co-founder of the Born This Way Foundation; Dan Olweus, international bullying prevention scholar; and Marjorie Kostelnik, UNL’s acting senior vice chancellor of academic affairs.

In her keynote address, Kostelnik discussed ways to identify and address aggressive behaviors in young children. Infants and toddlers can develop skills to be less inclined to engage in hostile aggression, she said.

“There is hardly anything more important than helping children figure out how to get along,” Kostelnik said. “Prevention and intervention must start early.”

Four workshop sessions provided additional opportunities to explore topics on children’s temperament, black boys’ socio-emotional

development, social-learning curriculum and the evolving landscape of play.

The conference was sponsored by the Buffett Early Childhood Institute, the College of Education and Human Sciences, and CYFS.

It is the sixth annual conference hosted by the Bullying Research Network, which is co-directed by Susan Swearer, professor of educational psychology.

*Learn more at [go.unl.edu/bpc2016](http://go.unl.edu/bpc2016)*



Dan Olweus



Susan Swearer



Kathleen Rudasill



# Family-School Partnership Projects Encourage Sustainability

CYFS teams are conducting two studies to enhance and sustain family-school collaboration with Teachers and Parents as Partners. TAPP is an evidence-based program that strengthens relationships to improve students' social, behavioral and academic outcomes.

The first study will explore how to better support Nebraska's Latino students by connecting their experiences at home and school. Led by CYFS director Susan Sheridan, the \$3.5 million study is funded by the U.S. Department of

Education's Institute of Education Sciences. It is the first Nebraska study to explore family-school partnerships for diverse student populations and will involve 90 K-5 classrooms in school districts across the state.

"Many Latino students come from home environments where their values, backgrounds, language and parents' education are disconnected from what they experience when they walk through a classroom door," said Sheridan, who developed the TAPP program.

"Those incongruities can create challenges for learning, so we're trying to build a bridge and create consistency—and we do that by fostering relationships."

During the project's first three years, classrooms will be randomly assigned either to the TAPP intervention or a control group. Teachers participating in TAPP will receive additional

support to build relationships with Latino families and create culturally responsive partnerships.

The project's fourth and final year will focus on sustainability. Researchers will work with schools to identify teachers, administrators, school psychologists and counselors who can be trained as consultants and work directly with families and teachers.

A second study, funded by the Rural Futures Institute, also aims to improve sustainability. CYFS project manager Amanda Witte is leading the study of TAPP in rural Nebraska communities.

Witte's team is training school personnel to serve as TAPP facilitators. They are also developing materials for distance training that will take place throughout the school year.

"It's time to give TAPP away," Witte said. "We have good evidence to show that it works, so now it's time to get it into the hands of people who can use it every day."

Learn more about TAPP at [tapp.unl.edu](http://tapp.unl.edu)



Amanda Witte and Chuck Schroeder, director of the Rural Futures Institute.



*"We're trying to build a bridge and create consistency—and we do that by fostering relationships."*

The TAPP Latino team, from left: Lorey Wheeler, Brandy Clarke (UNMC), Susan Sheridan, and Kristen Derr. Not pictured: James Bovaird.



# Supporting 4-H Program Evaluation

As America's largest youth development organization, 4-H impacts nearly six million participants nationwide. A CYFS team is developing a way to better measure that impact.

With a grant from the National 4-H Council, the team is reviewing and revising the 4-H Common Measures: a set of surveys used to identify and measure youth outcomes.

As part of the multi-phase project, CYFS researchers are providing recommendations to improve the rigor of the 4-H Common Measure's nine existing instruments. They are also developing new measures to document youth behavioral changes in science, healthy living, citizenship, positive youth development and career readiness.

The project's first phase included input from a national advisory board. In its second phase,

researchers are traveling nationwide to conduct qualitative interviews and focus groups with 4-H youth and adult leaders.

"4-H is a diverse organization that serves youth at multiple age levels, so we need to go out and ask them about the content of the Common Measures," said Leslie Hawley, CYFS research assistant professor and project lead.

"Ultimately, we want to help refine the instruments so they can best capture the positive benefits of 4-H."

The research team is also producing several publications focused on developmental

considerations for surveying youth and cognitive interview protocols for youth.

The team includes Hawley; Michelle Howell Smith, CYFS research assistant professor; graduate students Ann Arthur, Jared Stevens and Andrew White; Lorey Wheeler, CYFS research assistant professor; and Natalie Koziol, postdoctoral research associate. All are affiliated with or housed in CYFS's Nebraska Academy for Methodology, Analytics and Psychometrics.

"In the true spirit of 4-H, this is very much a team effort," Hawley said. "Everyone contributes different strengths, because enhancing the Common Measures requires many different voices."



From left: Jared Stevens, Natalie Koziol, Lorey Wheeler, Ann Arthur, Michelle Howell Smith, and Leslie Hawley.

# Study Reveals Benefits of Youth Robotics Project

Robots are inspiring the middle school students who may one day engineer them, while also benefiting those who pursue other career paths, according to a study led by Brad Barker, UNL professor, and Gwen Nugent, CYFS research professor.

The study examined findings from a student robotics project developed at UNL and implemented across the country—including one site in Cuba. Funded by the National Science Foundation, the project delivered robotics and geospatial mapping curriculum to after-school clubs and summer camps. It also supported youth robotics competitions.

Across all three formats, participating students reported an increased interest in engineering careers. Given a projected shortfall of engineers in Nebraska and across the country, encouraging students to pursue these fields—and encouraging them early—is of critical importance, Nugent said.

"This project showed how robotics technology can complement what students are learning



Gwen Nugent and Brad Barker

Students participate in a Nebraska youth robotics competition.

about STEM in school," Nugent said. "It can also begin to positively orient them to look at engineering as a possible career."

According to the team's findings, robotics camps, clubs and competitions all helped students hone problem-solving skills while improving their content knowledge of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

"Our project encouraged problem solving and systematic planning through an iterative design, which really helps students—not just in robotics, but in life," said Barker.

The team's study, "Robotics camps, clubs and competitions: Results from a US robotics project," appeared in the journal *Robotics and Autonomous Systems*.



# Landscape of Support

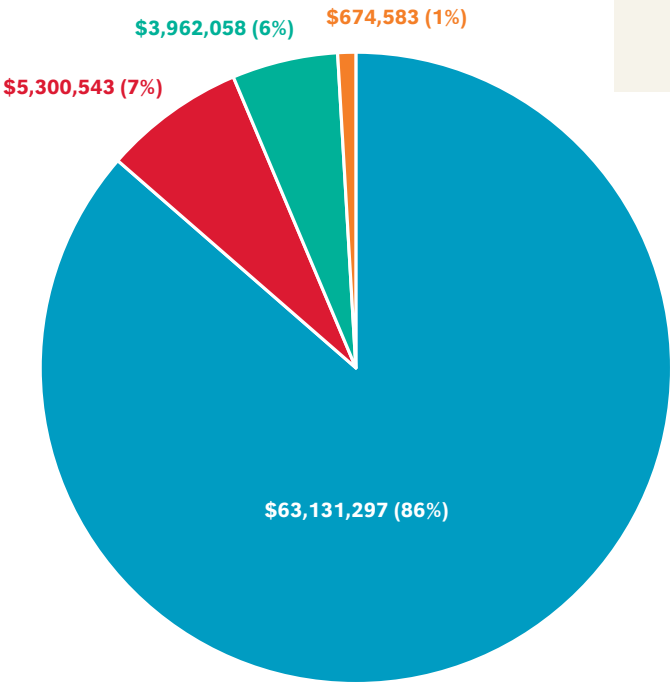
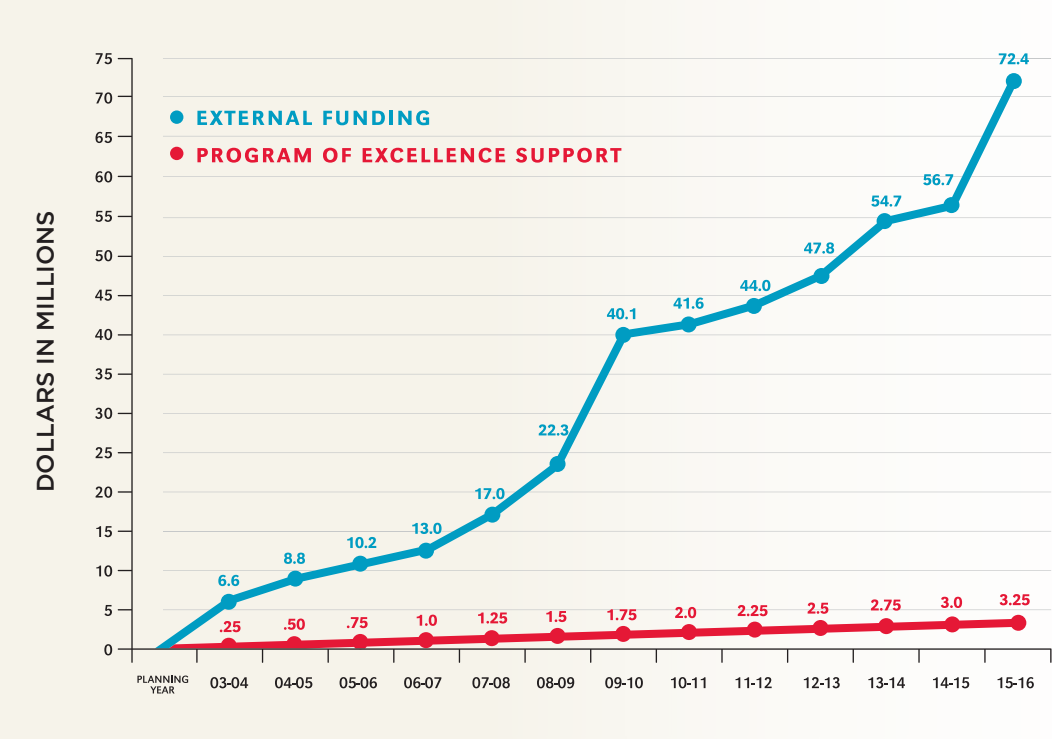
## Snapshot of Cumulative CYFS Grant Activity

Total Program of Excellence funds to date	\$3,250,000
Total dollar amount of all grants funded	\$73,068,481
Total dollar amount of external grants funded	\$72,393,898
Total dollar amount of internal grants funded	\$674,583
Total number of grants funded	172
Total number of grants submitted	429
Total dollar amount of grants submitted	\$353,642,262
Percentage of grant dollars from federal agencies	86%
Hit rate of funded grants (based on known decisions)	45%
Return rate to UNL for every \$1 invested	\$22.48

Support for the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools is generated primarily through Program of Excellence funds and external grants. The table to the left highlights grant activity and indicators of research impact since the center's inception in 2004.

## Cumulative External Grant Dollars vs. Program of Excellence Support

The line graph to the right depicts the center's cumulative external funding (i.e., federal, state and foundation) relative to Program of Excellence support from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.



## Sources of Funding

The pie chart to the left shows the cumulative dollar amounts and proportions of funding that CYFS researchers have garnered from federal, state, foundation and internal (i.e., University of Nebraska-Lincoln) sources.

- Federal (73 grants)
- State (27 grants)
- Foundation (46 grants)
- Internal (26 grants)

Percentages rounded to nearest 1%



# Active Grants & Contracts

**The following grants and contracts received new or ongoing funding during 2015-2016.**

## Federal Awards (\$29,587,040)

### Administration for Children and Families

*Early Head Start Home Visitors Identification of Risk for Maltreatment*  
Pls: Alayna Schreier, David Hansen, Mary Fran Flood

*Getting Ready 0-3 (GR03): Supporting the Development of Infants/Toddlers Through an Integrated Parent-Teacher Relationship-Based Approach*  
Pls: Lisa Knoche, Susan Sheridan

*Thresholds II*  
Pls: Greg Welch, Helen Raikes, Julia Torquati

### Centers for Disease Control

*NAP SACC Web Development and Analysis*  
Pl: Dipti Dev

### Environmental Protection Agency

*Evidence-Based Interactions Between Indoor Environmental Factors and Their Effects on K-12 Student Achievement*  
Pls: Lily Wang, James Bovaird, Josephine Lau, Clarence Waters

### National Institutes of Health

*Early Temperament, Social/Contextual Support, and Adolescent Adjustment*  
Pls: Lisa Crockett, Kathleen Moritz Rudasill, Eric Buhs, James Bovaird

*Estimating Mediation Effects in Prevention Studies*  
Pl: Matt Fritz

*Stressors, Protective Factors, and Substance Use among Homeless Youth and Young Adults*  
Pls: Kimberly Tyler, Kristen Olson

### National Science Foundation

*Nebraska Wearable Technologies*  
Pls: Bradley Barker, Gwen Nugent, Jennifer Melander, Carl Nelson, Neal Grandgenett

*Strategies: Action at a Distance*  
Pls: Daniel Claes, Jon Pedersen, Gregory Snow, Greg Welch

### U.S. Department of Agriculture

*Family Style Dining: An Approach to Improve Healthier Meal Choices in Preschoolers*  
Pls: Dipti Dev, Susan Sheridan, Greg Welch

### U.S. Department of Education

*A Randomized Trial of Conjoint Behavioral Consultation (CBC) in Rural Educational Settings: Efficacy for Elementary Students with Disruptive Behaviors*  
Pls: Susan Sheridan, Gina Kunz, James Bovaird

*A Randomized Trial of Conjoint Behavioral Consultation (CBC) with Latino Students: A Replication Study*  
Pls: Susan Sheridan, Brandy Clarke, James Bovaird

*Early Learning Network Lead*  
Pls: Susan Sheridan, Lisa Knoche

*Efficacy of the Getting Ready Intervention at Supporting Parental Engagement and Positive Outcomes for Preschool Children at Educational Risk*  
Pls: Susan Sheridan, Lisa Knoche, Carolyn Pope Edwards, James Bovaird

*Efficacy of the START-Play Program for Infants with Neuromotor Disorders*  
Pl: James Bovaird

*Language Bases of Skilled Reading Comprehension*  
Pls: Tiffany Hogan, James Bovaird

*Learning Frontiers: Pre-K to Grade 3*  
Pls: Susan Sheridan, Lisa Knoche, James Bovaird

*Mountain Prairie Upgrade Partnership Itinerant (MPUP-I)*  
Pls: Malinda Eccarius, James Bovaird, Greg Welch

*School Psychology Specialization in Toddlers with Autism Spectrum Disorders*  
Pls: Gina Kunz, Therese Mathews

### U.S. Department of Labor

*Alternative Transportation Fuel Systems—Advancing the Workforce*  
Pl: Greg Welch

## State Awards (\$681,229)

### Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education

*Enhancing Nebraska 6-12 Nebraska Teachers' Knowledge of Earth Science Content*  
Pls: Mindi Searls, Leilani Arthurs, Elizabeth Lewis

### Nebraska Department of Education

*Evaluating the Impact of School Improvement Grants in Nebraska Title I Schools*  
Pl: Greg Welch

*Nebraska Multi-Tiered System of Support Implementation Support Team*  
Pl: Tanya Ihlo

## Foundation / Other Awards (\$3,060,869)

*Afterschool Programming Return on Investments Studies: A Review of the Literature*  
Funding Source: Nebraska Children and Families Foundation  
Pls: Greg Welch, Gina Kunz

*BECI Superintendents Early Childhood Education Plan*  
Funding Source: Buffett Early Childhood Institute  
Pls: Dawn Davis, Lisa Knoche, Greg Welch

*Buffett Early Childhood Institute Database Development*  
Funding Source: Buffett Early Childhood Institute  
Pl: Lisa Knoche

*Building Bridges Through Relationships: A High-School Dropout Prevention Program*  
Funding Source: Woods Charitable Fund  
Pls: Michael Scheel, Gina Kunz

*Collaborative Capacity Building in Rural Nebraska Schools via Technology: Teachers and Parents as Partners*  
Funding Source: UNL Rural Futures Institute  
Pls: Amanda Witte, Susan Sheridan

*Combining Latent Variable Modeling Techniques with Cross-Classified Mixed Effect Models for Use in Longitudinal Research*  
Funding Source: UNL Office of Research and Economic Development  
Pl: Leslie Hawley

*Conjoint Behavioral Consultation: A Cross-Systemic Intervention to Manage Overweight and Obesity for Low Income Preschoolers*  
Funding Source: UNL Office of Research and Economic Development  
Pls: Brandy Clarke, Susan Sheridan, Lorey Wheeler

*Conjoint Behavioral Consultation: A Cross-Systemic Intervention to Manage Overweight and Obesity in Early Childhood*  
Funding Source: UNL Office of Research and Economic Development  
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*Developing a Model for Quality of Life: Identifying Domains and Determinants for Rural Ethnic Minorities*  
Funding Source: UNL Rural Futures Institute  
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*Early Childhood Course Conversion*  
Funding Source: Buffett Early Childhood Fund  
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*Early Steps to School Success*  
Funding Source: Save the Children Foundation  
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*Enhancing the 4-H Common Measures: An Evaluation Proposal*  
Funding Source: National 4-H Council  
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*Evaluation of the Psychometric Properties of the Teacher Efficacy for Promoting Partnership Measure*  
Funding Source: Buffett Early Childhood Institute  
Pls: Amanda Moen, Susan Sheridan

*Evaluation of the Psychometric Properties of the Teacher Efficacy for Promoting Partnership Measure*  
Funding Source: Society for the Study of School Psychology  
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*Exploring Student Engagement and Student Development in Caribbean Tertiary Education*  
Funding Source: ACPA—College Student Educators International  
Pl: Elizabeth Niehaus

*Exploring Student Engagement and Student Development in Caribbean Tertiary Education*  
Funding Source: NASPA Foundation  
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*Family, Cultural, and Work Contexts as Linked to Mexican-Origin Youth's Health Risk Behavior*  
Funding Source: UNL Research Council  
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*Impact of Massage Therapy on Well-Being for Parents of Children Recovering from Traumatic Injury or Illness*  
Funding Source: The Massage Therapy Foundation  
Pls: Natalie Williams, Paul Springer, Judy Burnfield

*Implications of Insecure Parent-Child Attachment for Early Childhood Obesity Risk*  
Funding Source: UNL Office of Research and Economic Development  
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*Improving and Evaluating Assessment Literacy in Preservice and Practicing Teachers*  
Funding Source: UNL Office of Research and Economic Development  
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*Learning to Teach in Urban Teacher Residencies: A Comparative Study*  
Funding Source: UNL Office of Research and Economic Development  
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*Math Early On*  
Funding Source: Buffett Early Childhood Fund  
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*Math Early On II*  
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*Mexican-Origin Youth's Health-Risk Behavior: Interplay between Stress, Familial, Cultural, and Work Processes*  
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*Superintendents' Early Childhood Plan Evaluation*  
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*The Efficacy of Self-Regulation Interventions: A Series of Meta-Analyses*  
Funding Source: UNL Office of Research and Economic Development  
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*The Impacts of No Child Left Behind on School Leadership: An Empirical Examination Based on National SASS Data*  
Funding Source: UNL Office of Research and Economic Development  
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*Unpacking the Black Box of Community College Student Success Programs: Discovering What Works and Why*  
Funding Source: UNL Office of Research and Economic Development  
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*Using Technology to Deliver Early Childhood Professional Development*  
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