A trans-disciplinary center devoted to promoting healthy youth development through focused research, training and service.

curry.virginia.edu/youth-nex
Tolan continues to work from the developmental-ecological approach that has characterized his risk and prevention efforts for 30 years. He is a frequent consultant to agencies, government groups and foundations advising and presenting at hearings, meetings, and institutions around the country, including board membership for the Blueprints for Youth Development and Violence Prevention. He has been the Principal Investigator on multiple National Institute of Health (NIH) and other funded projects and he has authored over 160 publications.

Current projects, detailed in this brief, include development and evaluation of a mindfulness-based health education curriculum for school children, effective development of inner-city children and families, how neighborhoods affect development, classroom management training to enable new teachers to be effective, identifying and measuring processes that explain the benefits of mentoring, and evaluation of community collaborations to affect middle school children.

Tolan was co-editor of a special issue of Child Development (2011)—the flagship journal for child development research. He is also co-editor of the book, Disruptive Behavior Disorders, part of the Advances in Development and Psychopathology: Brain Research Foundation Symposium Series (Springer, 2013) and a special issue of Journal of Research on Adolescence on positive youth development implications for intervention research entitled, Forward Thinking: Preparing Our Youth for the Coming World (2014). The issue emanated from the center’s inaugural conference of the same name. Other writings include “Children’s mental health as a primary care and concern: A system for comprehensive support and service,” published in 2005 in American Psychologist based on work when Tolan was chair of the American Psychological Association’s Working Group on Children’s Mental Health (1999-2001).
Youth-Nex is a trans-disciplinary center devoted to promoting healthy youth development through focused research, training, and service. The cross-University center’s work encompasses a wide range of areas including healthy lifestyles, engaged citizenship, and supportive relationships. Youth-Nex also aims to prevent youth problems such as violence, physical and mental health issues, substance abuse, and school failure.

**MISSION STATEMENT**
The mission of Youth-Nex is to promote healthy youth development and reduce developmental risk through focused research, training and service. Youth-Nex works across diverse areas to bring a holistic understanding of youth development to enhance the individual’s potential to become a healthy, productive citizen.

**A NEXUS OF INNOVATION**
By recruiting faculty from across the University, Youth-Nex utilizes multi-disciplinary approaches, multiple methods, and a coalescence of perspectives across diverse areas right at the “center of the center”—its research programs. This cross-pollination from one area of center study to another creates an intellectual nexus, providing a new understanding of youth development—allowing direct translation from research to practice, connection of training to research, and bridging the gaps between academia, practice, and policy.

**UNIQUE IN SCOPE**
Youth-Nex is the only center in the country accommodating work on diverse aspects of youth development. Areas include mental health, educational functioning, citizenship, social functioning and physical health. The engagement of scholars with diverse skills and interests leads to fresh approaches and creates better alignment of research to “real world” needs. This structure also provides greater sophistication and depth of understanding on topics related to promoting more effective youth development.

**A NATIONAL RESOURCE**
The center is a regional, state and national resource for scientific knowledge promoting positive youth development and problem prevention; as well as a resource for technical assistance in the implementation of evidence based practices related to these matters. Center faculty, staff, and affiliates increase national understanding of the issues surrounding youth development and contribute to public policy supporting youth in this country. Youth-Nex provides substantial direct training of center pre-doctoral and post-doctoral students, visiting faculty or professional fellows, and other professionals working in areas closely related to the center’s mission.

The Youth-Nex research center is supported by a grant from Philip Morris USA, an Altria Company. We gratefully acknowledge this important support. The work of Youth-Nex is solely determined by itself and Youth-Nex does not represent the official views of the sponsor.
ADMINISTRATION

Ellen Daniels  |  Director of Center Communications

Ellen Daniels is responsible for center communications including all writing, graphic design and marketing. She has worked in U.Va. communications since 2007 at the Law School and in the Office of the Vice President of Human Resources. Daniels moved to Charlottesville from New York City where she managed design studios and large-scale communications projects in advertising, graphic design, photography and finance. Daniels is a graduate of the University of Minnesota School of Journalism and an alumnus of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She studied Photography at Harvard University and Graphic Design at the Parsons School of Design in New York City. Daniels is also a graduate of the Institute of Integrative Nutrition and a holistic health counselor certified by the Columbia University Teacher’s College.

Crystal Haislip  |  Center Administrator and Assistant to the Director

Crystal Haislip brings savvy and a keen eye for detail to her role as Center Administrator and Assistant to the Director. Previously, as the Annual Fund and Events Coordinator for the Curry School Foundation, she served as an administrator in several diverse areas including event planning, annual fund administration and donor relations. Before coming to the Curry School, Haislip honed her analytical skills at U.Va.’s University Development Office and the Darden School of Business.

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS

Aisha N. Griffith  |  Postdoctoral Fellow

Aisha Griffith, Ph.D., is a postdoctoral fellow at Youth-Nex. She earned her Ph.D. in Human and Community Development from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 2014. Her research broadly focuses on conditions that promote adolescent development within the out-of-school time context, with a goal of sharing findings with youth program management and frontline staff. She currently researches the role of trust within youth-adult leader relationships. Griffith was awarded the William T. Grant Scholars Mentoring Grant for “Promoting Professional and Research Growth of a Postdoctoral Fellow through Mentoring.” (2015-2017), $84,993. She is a mentee to mentor Noelle Hurd, Ph.D., Youth-Nex Faculty member.

Tabitha Wurster  |  Postdoctoral Fellow

Tabitha Wurster, Ph.D., is a postdoctoral fellow at Youth-Nex. She completed her doctorate in Developmental Psychology at Temple University in 2014. Her research focuses on peer relations in preadolescence and adolescence. Specifically, she examines peer groups and social status, the relationship between affiliative and aggressive behaviors and social status, and social cognitive factors associated with aggressive and prosocial behaviors in preadolescence and adolescence. A recent presentation includes: Wurster, T. J., Sorhagen, N. (March, 2015). The influence of relative income on adolescent girls’ loneliness. 2015 Meeting of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Long Beach, CA.
FORMER POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS

Juliette Berg | Former Postdoctoral Fellow

Juliette Berg, Ph.D., was a postdoctoral fellow at Youth-Nex working with Catherine Bradshaw, Ph.D., and Dewey Cornell, Ph.D from to August 2013 to July 2015. Berg joined the AIR (American Institutes for Research) in Washington, DC as a researcher in the Health and Social Development Program. Berg was an IES Pre-doctoral Fellow and an AERA Grants Program Dissertation Grantee. Her research focuses on the design and evaluation of school-based and community-based prevention programs aimed at improving children's contexts of development, particularly in low-income neighborhoods; contextual influences on children's social-emotional and academic adjustment; and school climate.

Valerie A. Futch Ehrlich | Former Postdoctoral Fellow

In Fall 2014 Valerie Futch, Ehrlich Ph.D., became Research Assistant Professor of Education affiliated with Youth-Nex. She was a Youth-Nex postdoctoral fellow from June 2011 to August 2014. Her current work includes several projects that aim to better understanding of youth experiences in the classroom, in after-school programs, and in relationship to adults. She is currently serving as Secretary for the Society for Qualitative Inquiry in Psychology (SQIP, a section of APA's Division 5) and program chair for the Out-of-School-Time (OST) SIG for AERA 2015. Ongoing work includes the following longitudinal studies: Preventing Girls' Delinquency – “A Longitudinal Evaluation of the Young Women Leaders Program;” “Who Builds the Village?: Examining Youth-Adult Relationships Across Contexts and Time;” “Influences of Classroom-level Social Settings on Language and Content Learning in Linguistically Diverse Classrooms.”

Peter Lovegrove | Former Postdoctoral Fellow

Peter Lovegrove was a postdoctoral fellow with Youth-Nex from August 2010 to August 2013. He worked on multi-level modeling of risk and protective factors and prevention impact. After his Youth-Nex fellowship he went on to JBS International, Aguirre Division in Charlottesville, as a research assistant. Lovegrove has expertise in quantitative research techniques in understanding developmental and intergenerational etiologies of childhood delinquency, violence and drug use.
FORMER POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS (continued)

Lauren Molloy Elreda | Former Postdoctoral Fellow

Lauren Molloy Elreda, Ph.D., was a postdoctoral fellow in Youth-Nex from August 2012 - August 2015. She became Research Assistant Professor of Education affiliated with Youth-Nex. Molloy Elreda is interested in understanding, evaluating, and improving educational and intervention settings for youth. She is particularly interested in applying advanced methodologies, such as social network analysis, to better understand social dynamics and relationships within these settings and how to improve them. Molloy Elreda received her Ph.D. from Pennsylvania State University in 2012, where her work focused on how interpersonal relationships at the dyadic, group, and broader peer network level contribute to individual development. Her current work at U.Va. includes several projects focused on how classroom peer interactions and relationships, classroom-level linguistic and ethnic diversity, and teacher attitudes and practices together to contribute to classroom functioning and students' academic development and well-being.

Dustin Sarver | Former Postdoctoral Fellow

Dustin Sarver was a postdoctoral fellow with Youth-Nex from August 2013 to July 2014. He worked with Michael Kofler on attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in youth. Sarver recently joined the University of Mississippi Medical Center as an assistant professor of pediatrics in the Center for the Advancement of Youth in the Division of Child Development. Sarver's research and clinical interests are in child developmental psychopathology.
GRADUATE STUDENTS

Nora Arkin
Arkin graduated from the University of Georgia in 2010 with a Bachelors of Science in Psychology. Through her undergraduate research experience there, Nora facilitated research assessments focusing on parenting styles and emotional maltreatment. In 2012, Nora began graduate work in the Programs in Clinical and School Psychology with Patrick Tolan as her advisor. Her research interests include positive risk taking behaviors during adolescence and interventions to promote healthful eating-related cognitions and positive body image. Arkin is working with Tolan to test how a program to promote healthy body image in college females may propagate through social organizations and networks.

Grace Maloney
In 2014, Maloney began graduate work in the Programs in Clinical and School Psychology with Patrick Tolan as her advisor. Her research interests include understanding how early life experiences influence emotion processing. She is also interested in looking at optimism as a protective factor.

Malachi Richardson
Richardson graduated from Morehouse College in 2012 with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology. During his time at Morehouse he conducted research on the process of identity formation for black male youth with the Identity Orchestration Research Lab, headed by David Wall Rice. Malachi began his graduate career in 2013 through the Clinical and School Psychology program under the tutelage of Patrick Tolan. His research interests include the impact that parent expectations, parent involvement, and particularly paternal involvement have on academic and developmental outcomes for minority youth.

Katherine Ross
Ross is a fourth year Institute of Educational Sciences and predoctoral fellow in the Educational Psychology- Applied Developmental Science program Ross’ focus is on a holistic and interdisciplinary approach to positive youth development. Her research interests are in adolescent health and well-being, particularly in social and emotional development. She is also interested in integrating mindfulness techniques, yoga, nutrition, and social and emotional learning with health and physical education curricula in schools. Ross is working with advisors Patrick Tolan and Tish Jennings. She is conducting a scale development project to enable assessment of the five core Social Emotional Learning Skills identified by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning that can be used to assess how programs and school efforts might affect youth.
RESEARCH SPECIALISTS
Courtney Fox | Research Specialist

Fox currently focuses her research on the youth-adult relationships study, *Who Builds the Village? Examining Youth-Adult Relationships Across Contexts and Time* (Deutsch, N.L., Futch, V., Co-PIs) and *Preventing Girls’ Delinquency - A Longitudinal Evaluation of the Young Women Leaders Program*.

Haley Johnson | Research Specialist

Johnson is a research specialist in Youth-Nex. She is interested in how developmental relationships contribute to positive youth outcomes. Johnson is working with Amanda Kibler’s on Peer Interaction Project, examining peer relationships; with Nancy Deutsch and Valerie Futch Ehrlich on Youth Adult Relationship Study (YAR); and Futch Ehrlich and Deutsch’s *Preventing Girls’ Delinquency – A Longitudinal Evaluation of the Young Women Leaders Program*, a study of college women/middle school girls mentoring relationships.
As an interdisciplinary and cross-University center, Youth-Nex works with its numerous faculty affiliates from departments and schools across U.Va., including the School of Medicine, the Department of Psychology, the Department of Systems and Information Engineering, the School of Law, the School of Nursing, the McIntire School of Commerce, and the School of Architecture. Following are recent highlights from each affiliate.

**Joseph P. Allen, Ph.D. | Psychology Professor, Associate Professor of Family Medicine and Director of Behavioral Science**

Allen studies adolescent social development, family relations, peer relations & problematic behaviors (ranging from delinquency and teen pregnancy to depression and anxiety).

**Ongoing Work:**
- Virginia Institute of Development in Adulthood project (KLIFF/VIDA), an ongoing longitudinal study examining the influences of social relationships, autonomy, and attachments to parents in young adult development.

**Recent Grants:**

**Award:**

**Ellen J. Bass, Ph.D. | Professor, College of Information Science and Technology, Drexel University**

Bass focuses her research in developing theories of human performance, quantitative modeling methodologies, and associated experimental designs that can be used to evaluate human-automation interaction in the context of total system performance. Bass accepted a position at Drexel University subsequent to her work with the University of Virginia’s Department of Systems and Information Engineering.

**Recent Publications:**

**Amy Boitnott, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, PNP-BC | Assistant Professor of Nursing, Primary Care Nurse Practitioner, Program Coordinator**

Boitnott oversees the school’s Family Nurse Practitioner and Pediatric Nurse Practitioner tracks and focuses her research and practice on childhood obesity. She collaborated in the Youth-Nex study and intervention to explore improving nutrition and exercise competence in obese schoolchildren via SALUD.

**Recent Publication:**
Catherine P. Bradshaw, Ph.D., M.Ed. | Professor, Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Development, Curry School of Education

Bradshaw’s primary research focuses on the development of aggressive behavior and school-based prevention, including bullying and school climate; effects of exposure to violence; environmental stress on children.

Recent Grants:
- “Comprehensive Assessment of School Climate to Improve Safety in Maryland Middle Schools,” National Institute of Justice, 2014, $3,616,205. Bradshaw, C., PI.
- Testing the Efficacy of a Developmentally Informed Coping Power Program in Middle Schools, Institute of Education Sciences. 7/01/14–5/31/18, $5,000,000.

Recent Accomplishments:
- Appointed to the Institute of Medicine (IOM) / National Academies Workshop Planning Committee on Bullying Prevention.
- Presented a report on youth mental health to the United Nations—“Social Inclusion of Youth with Mental Health Conditions.”

Susan E. Bruce, M.Ed. | Director, U.Va.’s Center for Alcohol and Substance Education

Bruce is an expert in collegiate health promotion and has developed nationally recognized substance abuse and sexual assault education and prevention programs.

- Bruce serves on the national advisory board of Step UP!—a prosocial behavior and bystander intervention program that educates students to be proactive in helping others.

Recent Publication:

Recent Accomplishments:
- Leads the national Gordie’s Call campaign to prevent alcohol abuse and hazing and the NCAA-funded APPLE conferences: The leading national training symposiums dedicated to substance abuse prevention and health promotion for student-athletes and athletics department administrators.

Roger C. Burket, M.D. | Chief, Developmental Disorders Section and Director, Child and Family Psychiatry in the Department of Psychiatry and Neurobehavioral Science

Burket’s research interests include delinquency, ADHD, personality disorders, affective disorders, psychopharmacology, and telemedicine.

Recent Publication:

Daniel J. Cox, Ph.D. | Professor, Departments of Psychiatric Medicine and Internal Medicine; Director of the Center for Behavioral Medicine Center Research

A primary focus of Cox’s research deals with youth driving safety in general and clinical populations to improve driving competency (e.g. Asperger’s disease, type 1 diabetes, Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder).

Recent Publications:
Robert L. Cross, D.B.A, M.B.A. | Associate Professor of Management, McIntire School of Commerce; Research Director, Network Roundtable

Cross' research focuses on how relationships and informal networks in organizations can be analyzed and improved to promote competitive advantage, innovation, customer retention and profitability, leadership effectiveness, talent management and quality of work life.

Recent Publications:

Mark D. DeBoer, M.D. | Assistant Professor, Department of Pediatrics, School of Medicine

DeBoer is interested in childhood obesity causes and problems as well as maternal depression. Much of his work focuses on metabolic syndrome.

Recent Publications:
• Scharf, R.J., Demmer, R.T., DeBoer, M.D. “Longitudinal Evaluation of Milk Type Consumption and Weight Status in Preschoolers.” *Archives of Disease in Childhood,* 98, pp. 335-340.

Nancy L. Deutsch, Ph.D. | Associate Professor, Educational Leadership and Foundations

Deutsch's research examines the socio-ecological contexts of adolescent development, particularly issues related to identity. She has focused on the role of after-school programs and relationships with important adults.

Recent Grants:
• “University of Virginia Jefferson Trust Grant,” to develop a national training curriculum, with Futures without Violence and Harvard Law School for colleges and universities for issues surrounding gender-based violence (Spring, 2015).

Recent Publications:

Recent Accomplishments / Awards:
• Received four new invitations for national positions which she accepted: a) The editorial board for the journal *Applied Developmental Science;* b) the editorial board for the “Encyclopedia of Out-of-School Learning;” c) The publications committee of the *Journal of Youth Development: Bridging Research and Practice* (JYD); and d) The research board of the National Mentoring Resource Center (NMRC) as an Associate Member.
• Chaired the Youth-Nex national conference on After-School Contexts for Adolescents – October 2014, Charlottesville, VA. Serving as editor for a special issue of *Advances in Child and Family Policy and Practice* based on this conference.
• One of the U.Va. representatives to the AAU Survey design team – the team comprised 8 institutions and the survey was given by 27 institutions.
Valerie A. Futch Ehrlich, Ph.D. | Research Assistant Professor of Education

Futch Ehrlich studies adolescent identity development, the importance of youth-adult relationships (such as mentors), and the experiences of various social settings for youth (such as after-school programs, community centers, etc.).

Recent Grants:

“ConnecTexts: A simple messaging service to improve informal mentoring relationships,” Curry School of Education IDEAs Dean’s Grant Fund. $9,998. Futch Ehrlich, PI, Griffith, A., Co-PI.

• Influences of Classroom-level Social Settings on Language and Content Learning in Linguistically Diverse Classrooms. William T. Grant Foundation. 8/01/14–7/31/17, $580,000. Kibler, A., Deutsch, N.L., Molloy, L., Futch, V.


Recent Publication:


• Guest Editor for special section of Qualitative Psychology: “The Promise of Qualitative Methods for Positive Youth Development.”

Erik Gunderson, M.D. | Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Neurobehavioral Sciences and Department of Medicine

Gunderson focuses on substance use medical education and treatment-effectiveness research. His clinical and research interests have involved opioid dependence treatment, the interface between pain and substance use, integrating alcohol and other substance use disorder screening and intervention in primary care, medical education, and human behavioral psychopharmacology. Between 2003-2008, he was Medical Director of Columbia University’s Buprenorphine Program, an outpatient program that specializes in the treatment of opioid dependence. Also during this time, he was Medical Director of Columbia’s Substance Use Research Center, a human behavioral pharmacology research laboratory. In 2008, he moved to Virginia and became Director of UVA’s Clinical Pharmacological Research Unit in the Department of Psychiatry and Neurobehavioral Sciences. He has received federal funding from the National Institute on Drug Abuse to study the effectiveness of buprenorphine treatment of opioid dependence in primary care, as well U.S. Department of Health and Human Services funding from the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment to develop substance use curricula for physicians.

Alexis R. Harris, Ph.D. | Research Assistant Professor of Education

Harris’ work employs qualitative and quantitative methods to develop a better understanding of how the interactions between developing youth and their school and community contexts influence social emotional development and wellbeing.

• Directs implementation of the Compassionate Schools Project—integrating a health and wellness curriculum for over 25 schools (K-5) in Louisville, KY.

• Developed a contemplative wellness-promotion intervention, the CALM program (Comprehensive Approach to Learning Mindfulness) as a 2014 doctoral student.

Recent Grants:

Noelle M. Hurd, Ph.D., M.P.H. | Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology

Hurd's research focuses on factors that promote more positive psychosocial outcomes among marginalized adolescents with a specific focus on intergenerational relationships between adolescents and non-parental adults.

Recent Grants:
• Received the William T. Grant Foundation Faculty Scholars Award. 2014-2019. $350,000. She will study family and neighborhood influences in forming mentoring relationships among economically disadvantaged African-American adolescents.

Recent Invited Presentations:
• Project DREAM (Developing Resourcefulness, Engagement, Acceptance, and Mentoring). Part of the Summer Institute on Youth Mentoring in Portland, OR, July 25, 2013.
• Chaired at a symposium conducted at the 25th Association for Psychological Science Convention in Washington, DC, and presented: “An analysis of natural mentoring relationship profiles and their association with mentees’ mental health: Considering links via support from important others.”
• What the research says: The retention of natural mentoring relationships during the transition to college. Invited presentation as a part of the 2015 National Mentoring Summit, Arlington, VA. (2015, January)

Patricia Jennings, Ph.D. | Associate Professor, Curry School of Education

Jennings studies the social and emotional dynamics of educational settings to enhance teachers' capacity to cultivate supportive relationships with their students and to support academic learning. She is particularly focused on applying recent findings on mindfulness-based approaches to reducing teacher and student stress and improving teaching and learning.

Recent Grants:

Recent Publications:

Andrew Kaufman, Ph.D. | Lecturer, College and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences

Kaufman is the creator and director of The University of Virginia's Books Behind Bars: Life, Literature, and Leadership program, in which undergraduate students lead discussions about Russian literature in juvenile correctional centers.

Recent Accomplishments:
• “Books Behind Bars” academic course was featured on “Katie,” Katie Couric’s national television show
• Published in the Washington Post, Op-Ed, “Changing the Way Juvenile Offenders See Themselves—One Book at a Time”
Michael J. Kennedy, Ph.D. | Assistant Professor, Curry School of Education

Kennedy’s core research interest is the use of multimedia to promote learning and development for pre- and in-service teachers, and students with disabilities.

**Recent Grants:**


**Recent Publication:**


**Recent Award:**

- 2015 Early Career Researcher Award—Awarded by the Instructional Technology Special Interest Group (SIG-IT) within the American Educational Research Association (AERA).

Amanda K. Kibler, Ph.D. | Assistant Professor, Curry School of Education

Kibler’s research focuses on multilingual adolescents’ language and literacy development and the implications of these processes for teaching, learning, and positive youth development across the content areas.

**Recent Grant:**

- “Influences of Classroom-level Social Settings on Language and Content Learning in Linguistically Diverse Classrooms,” William T. Grant Foundation. 8/01/14–7/31/17, $580,000. Kibler, A., PI, Deutsch, N.L., Molloy, L., Futch, V.

**Recent Publications:**


**Recent Award:**

- Steve Cahir Award for Excellence in Early Scholarship, from the American Educational Research Association (AERA) Writing and Literacies Special Interest Group.

Michael J. Kofler, Ph.D.| Visiting Assistant Professor, Curry School of Education

Kofler’s research focuses on identifying strengths and building capabilities in children with ADHD. Currently, his primary research goals are to identify ways to improve ADHD behavioral treatment, and develop ADHD-centric, game-based neurocognitive training.

**Recent Grants:**

- “Central Executive Training for ADHD,” 2015. $226,000. National Institute of Mental Health

**Recent Publications:**

Nathan Lau, Ph.D. | Assistant Professor, College of Engineering, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Lau's ongoing research projects include development of a driver distraction alert system using motion capture and sonification technology. He has been at the Grado Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering at Virginia Tech since 2014. Lau's primary research interests are human-automation interaction, human-machine interface, and human performance assessment in safety-critical systems.

Recent Publication:

Recent Grant:
- STEM Research Focusing on Middle School Girls: “Advanced Manufacturing and Entrepreneurship, Integrating Advanced Manufacturing Curriculum into Afterschool Mentoring: The Young Women Leaders Program,” Alcoa Foundation. $41,000. Lawrence, E., PI.

Edith C. Lawrence, Ph.D. | Professor, Curry School of Education

Lawrence is a program chair for Curry’s new undergraduate degree program, Youth and Social Innovation. She co-founded and directs the Young Women Leaders Program, a curriculum-based mentoring program that empowers college women and adolescent girls to become leaders in their community. She is also working with Patrick Tolan to develop a measure of the five processes thought to constitute mentoring. Her research focuses on youth mentoring and a competence approach to working with families experiencing multiple problems.

Recent Grants:
- “Influences of Classroom-level Social Settings on Language and Content Learning in Linguistically Diverse Classrooms,” William T. Grant Foundation. 8/01/14-7/31/17, $580,000. Kibler, A., Deutsch, N. L., Molloy, L., Futch, V.

Recent Publications:

Recent Award:
- Faculty of the Year, 2014. Curry School of Education, University of Virginia.

Lauren Molloy Elreda, Ph.D. | Research Assistant Professor of Education

Molloy Elreda studies adolescent peer relationships within classroom, school, and intervention settings, as well as teacher and classroom characteristics and practices that contribute to classroom functioning and students’ academic development and well-being.

Recent Grant:
- “Influences of Classroom-level Social Settings on Language and Content Learning in Linguistically Diverse Classrooms,” William T. Grant Foundation. 8/01/14-7/31/17, $580,000. Kibler, A., Deutsch, N. L., Molloy, L., Futch, V.

Recent Publications:

Recent Presentation:
Andrew Mondschein, Ph.D., AICP | Assistant Professor, School of Architecture

Mondschein focuses on transportation, seeking to increase access to opportunities and foster community building and economic development through more sustainable forms of mobility. He is studying how youth exploration of urban environments could facilitate improved access to a range of opportunities over the long term, particularly for populations impeded by limited auto access and sparse nearby opportunities.

Recent Publication

Recent Grant
- “Variability in Sustainable Travel Choices by Neighborhood and Region,” The U.S. Department of Transportation's Office of the Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology. Mondschein is part of the Mid-Atlantic Transportation Sustainability University Transportation Center (MATS UTC) a consortium of universities receiving the grant. U.Va. received $5.16 million for 2013-2014.

Charlotte J. Patterson, Ph.D. | Professor, Department of Psychology

Patterson also works in the Center for Children, Families, and the Law, and is Director of the interdisciplinary program Women, Gender, and Sexuality (WGS). Her research focuses on the psychology of sexual orientation, with an emphasis on sexual orientation, human development, and family lives. Patterson is best known for her studies of child development in the context of lesbian- and gay-parented families.

Recent Publications:

Recent Award:
Her paper published in *Child Development* was selected for the SRCD 2015 Alexis Walker award as the best paper in the field of family studies. Co-author, Racher Farr. Paper: “Coparenting Among Lesbian, Gay, and Heterosexual Couples: Associations With Adopted Children's Outcomes.”

Recent Presentation:

Ronald E. Reeve, Ph.D. | Professor, Curry School of Education

Reeve teaches doctoral courses in cognitive assessment and psychological interventions in schools, and serves as Director of the Curry School of Education's American Psychological Association-accredited Ph.D. program in clinical and school psychology. His research interests are in high incidence disabilities, with special current focus in Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Recent Grant
- “Evaluating and Enhancing Driving Ability Among Teens with Autism Spectrum Disorder.” $345,605, Cox, D., Reeve, R.E.

Recent Publication:
Hillary S. Schaefer, Ph.D. | Professor, Curry School of Education

Schaefer explores neurocognition in children with ADHD and other behavioral concerns, with a focus on building strengths and capabilities. She runs the Children's Learning Clinic (at the Sheila Johnson Center), which provides assessment and diagnostic services, as well as parent training, to children with attention and behavioral difficulties.

Recent Publications:

N. Dickon Reppucci, Ph.D. | Professor of Psychology, Co-Director, Center for Children, Families and the Law

Reppucci’s research and teaching focus on community, clinical and developmental psychology, with special emphasis on law and children. His research focuses on violence in teen romantic relationships, legal decision-making by juveniles and juvenile confessions.

Recent Grants:
• “Disproportionate Minority Contact among youth in Charlottesville: Decision Making by Police Social Service and Juvenile Justice Agencies,” City of Charlottesville. $55,556. Reppucci, N.D., PI.

Recent Presentation:

Recent Publications:
• Commendation from dean as a significant teacher from graduated alumni; and from department chair for outstanding teacher ratings.

Sara E. Rimm-Kaufman, Ph.D. | Professor, Curry School of Education

Rimm-Kaufman conducts research on classroom social interactions and their influence on children's social and academic growth in the elementary school years. Currently, she conducts research to examine the strategies that teachers use to promote children's engagement in learning. She also directs the Educational Psychology: Applied Developmental Science graduate programs and The UVA Social Development Lab.

Recent Grants:

Recent Publication:

Additional Recent Projects:
• “Engaging Students in Environmental Service” and “The Leading Together Development Effort.” More at http://www.socialdevelopmentlab.org/
Sophie Trawalter, Ph.D | Assistant Professor of Public Policy and Psychology, Batten School of Public Policy; and College and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences

Trawalter focuses her research, part of Initiative Three, Reimagined Spaces—Voices and Visibility, on how people develop competencies and learn to thrive in diverse spaces.

Recent Publications:

Recent Presentation:

Matthew Trowbridge, M.D. | Associate Professor, Associate Research Director, School of Medicine

Trowbridge is a physician, public health researcher, and assistant professor. His academic research focuses on the impact of architecture, urban design, and transportation planning on public health issues including childhood obesity, traffic injury, and pre-hospital emergency care.

Recent Publications:
- Active Design Award, New York City Center for Active Design, for the project, “Impact of School Architecture on School Practices and Healthy Eating.” Trowbridge, M.J. & Huang, T., T-K

Recent Presentation:


Arthur L. Weltman, Ph.D. | Professor and Chair of Kinesiology, Curry School of Education, Professor of Medicine, School of Medicine

Weltman is also the director of the Exercise Physiology Graduate Program within the Curry School of Education and director of the School of Medicine Exercise Physiology Core Laboratory. His research laboratory has made major contributions in the areas of fitness and health, the blood lactate response to exercise, hormonal responses to acute and chronic exercise (particularly the growth hormone response to exercise), and in the area of lifestyle intervention on outcomes measures associated with cardiometabolic risk.

Recent Publications:


Recent Award:
- *Henry J. Montoye Scholar Award* for his exemplary research contributions from the Southeast Chapter of the American College of Sports Medicine (SEACSM). He delivered the Scholar Award lecture at the 2015 SEACSM meeting.

- Named chair of the recently designated Kinesiology department as it moved from program to department status at the Curry School of Education.
Deb Zehner, M.B.A. | Management Consultant

Zehner's work has focused on the design, analysis, and effects of organizational network analysis, within large business settings and within schools. Zehner recently led an organizational network analysis entitled, “Improving Class Effectiveness and Student Well-Being,” which identified socially influential leaders in order to engage them in key class activities, as well as peripheral students, to facilitate the teacher's ability to integrate them more effectively into class.

Joanna Williams, Ph.D. | Associate Professor, Curry School of Education

Williams' research interests focus on race and ethnicity as social contexts for youth development. Specifically, her work examines ethnic identity as a form of positive youth development in the face of discrimination and other stressors, and ethnic identity in relation to youths' beliefs and behaviors. She is the Assistant Director of Research for the Young Women Leaders Program, a mentoring program for middle school girls.

Honors / Awards:

• Williams received the William T. Grant Foundation Faculty Scholars Award. 2014-2019, $350,000. “Benefits and Challenges of Ethnic Diversity in Middle Schools: The Mediating Role of Peer Groups.”

• Williams' Op-Ed, “Media Often Depicts Black Youth as Criminals and Rarely as Heroes,” was published in the Huffington Post.


Recent Publications


Diane Whaley, Ph.D. | Professor, Director, Lifetime Physical Activity Program, Curry School of Education

Whaley's expertise is in motivation and self-perceptions as they relate to health behaviors, with particular attention to issues of age, race, and gender. She directs the Lifetime Physical Activity program, and serves as the Co-Chair of the Curry Diversity Committee. Currently, Whaley is part of a community coalition on the Move2Health project, a large community initiative designed to get people to move more and eat healthier.

Recent Publications:


YOUTH-NEX AFFILIATED FACULTY (continued)
**Research Highlights**

**2014 William T. Grant Scholars:** Joanna Williams, Ph.D. and Noelle Hurd, Ph.D., MPH

For only the third time ever, the William T. Grant Foundation awarded two of its five prestigious national scholars awards to two members at the same institution—both faculty affiliates of Youth-Nex. Joanna Williams and Noelle Hurd. This is the first time since 1991 that a University of Virginia faculty member attained this award. Williams and Hurd will each receive $350,000 to further their research and explore creative extensions of this work. Hurd will study family and neighborhood influences in forming mentoring relationships and how youth make use of adults for successful development, among economically disadvantaged African-American adolescents. Williams will study the role of peer groups and ethnic diversity in middle schools and how positive development can be spurred by peer influence and ethnic identity orientation.

**Benefits and Challenges of Ethnic Diversity in Middle Schools: The Mediating Role of Peer Groups**

Joanna Williams, Ph.D. - Associate Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

Evidence suggests that youth in ethnically diverse schools report less victimization, feel their schools are safer, and have higher self-esteem compared to peers in less diverse schools, but there is little understanding of why, or of how to capitalize on ethnic diversity as an opportunity for student growth. The 5-year study will explore if and how diverse peer groups benefit adolescents in diverse middle schools.

**Critical Contexts for the Formation of Natural Mentoring Relationships among Economically Disadvantaged African-American Adolescents**

Noelle Hurd, Ph.D., MPH - Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Virginia

Hurd will examine how family and neighborhood settings support the development of mentoring relationships between economically disadvantaged African-American adolescents and the adults in their everyday lives.

**Success 360**

Patrick Tolan, Ph.D. - Professor, Youth-Nex Director, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

This developing evaluation effort is also a tool for a community collaboration to provide support for positive youth development of middle school students in Richmond. The evaluation will focus on determining what aspects of these programs is important in explaining effects and will examine how collaborations can be built for success.

**Measurement of Mentoring Processes**

Patrick Tolan, Ph.D. - Professor, Youth-Nex Director, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

Despite many years of research and evidence that mentoring has benefits for youth, little is known about how those benefits are derived. This is a measurement development study to produce an assessment tool of the processes theorized to comprise how mentoring benefits youth. Four processes have been identified and candidate items have been created for initial scale development; they are currently being tested for reliability and validity. This project is being carried out in collaboration with the national office of the Big Brothers Big Sisters and other mentoring organizations across the country. Seed funding supports the development work for the scale survey and incentives for participation. This project has garnered considerable interest in the mentoring world and will lead to opportunities for external funding in evaluation of mentoring impact. All of the examined studies were high quality (quasi-experimental or randomized experimental) in design. All involved youth at risk for delinquency based on the youth's behavior or their residence in high crime, high poverty communities.

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS (continued)

Study of Important Youth-Adult Relationships (YAR Study)
Nancy L. Deutsch, Ph.D. - Associate Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
Valerie Futch Ehrlich, Ph.D. - Research Assistant Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

This mixed-methods study seeks to understand the development, characteristics, and influence of non-parental youth-adult relationships (YARs) across contexts over key transition points during adolescence. A major goal of this longitudinal project is to identify characteristics of relationships that appeal to youth, contextual sources of YARs, and features of youth-serving settings that foster or impede supportive YARs. We will analyze the phenomena of YARs from the perspective of youth, to understand how they choose, assess and utilize these relationships, their potential social capital and psychosocial benefits, and how settings can foster or constrain youths’ and adults’ abilities to develop these connections. This study is supported by a grant from the William T. Grant Foundation.

Great Schools and Families
Patrick Tolan, Ph.D. - Youth-Nex Director, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

This preventive intervention study examines the impact on lowering violence perpetration and victimization in middle school. It analyzes data from a multisite longitudinal random assignment (of 36 schools) which focused on 9000 middle-school children, and compares a universal or whole-population approach and a selective or high-risk group focused approach. Data collection is complete and the data set is available for normative developmental analyses, intervention impact modeling, and related questions of population effects.

The Adolescent Relational Dialectic and the Peer Roots of Adult Social Functioning
Joseph Allen, Ph.D. - Hugh Kelly Professor of Psychology, Department of Psychology, University of Virginia

The major goal of this project is to study long term outcomes from adolescent family and peer relationship qualities to markers of psychosocial functioning in early adulthood. The long-term import of a fundamental challenge of adolescent social development establishing oneself as a desirable peer companion while avoiding problematic behaviors often supported within peer groups was examined in a community sample of 184 adolescents, followed from ages 13 to 23, along with parents, peers, and romantic partners. The dialectical nature of this challenge appeared in findings that autonomy vis-a-vis peer influences predicted both long-term success avoiding problematic behavior but also more difficulty establishing strong adult friendships. Conversely, being a desirable peer companion in adolescence predicted more positive adult relationships but also greater alcohol use. Adolescents who established themselves as both desirable companions and as autonomous vis-a-vis peers were rated as most successful by their parents at age 23.

Building Capabilities: Positive Youth Development for Children with ADHD, Galant ADHD Faculty and Research Fund
Michael Kofler - Visiting Assistant Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

Researchers in the Children’s Learning Clinic are identifying the strengths of youth with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and looking for insight on how to expand these youth’s capabilities. Kofler and his team are working to understand why behavioral management techniques work better with some children than with others and ultimately how behavioral therapies can be made more effective for more families. Kofler is also leading a multidisciplinary team developing a game-based neurocognitive training to build capabilities and provide significant and lasting improvement in ADHD children’s attention, impulse control, social functioning, academic performance, and complex reasoning skills.
Compassionate Schools Project
Patrick Tolan, Ph.D. - Youth-Nex Director, University of Virginia
Patricia Jennings, Ph.D. - Associate Professor, University of Virginia
Alexis Harris, Ph.D. - Research Assistant Professor of Education, University of Virginia

Researchers are evaluating a comprehensive elementary school, health-education curriculum on the use of yoga-based poses and related mindfulness practices to aid self-control and promote physical health. The curriculum is evidence-based and designed to support students’ mental and physical health and well-being. In doing so, the aim is to provide skills and foundation for effective learning and citizenship. The program involves 25 schools in a Kentucky School District, in a large-scale randomized trial.

Advanced Manufacturing and Entrepreneurship Pilot Phase I, Integrating Advanced Manufacturing Curriculum into Afterschool Mentoring: The Young Women Leaders Program
Edith “Winx” Lawrence, Ph.D. - Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

STEM Research Focusing on Middle School Girls. Lawrence received a grant facilitating a multidisciplinary collaboration with the U.Va. School of Engineering and Applied Science; The Curry School of Education; and the Charlottesville City and Albemarle County Schools to form the Young Women's Leadership Program (YWLP) Tech initiative. The effort will establish engineering design academies for advanced manufacturing and will develop and pilot an advanced manufacturing and entrepreneurship curriculum at two area middle schools next year: Buford Middle School and Jack Jouett Middle School. This initiative is in response to research that suggests that as a result of “stereotype threat,” girls are at risk for underachievement in STEM.

The Engaging Students in Environmental Service Project
Sara Rimm-Kaufman, Ph.D. - Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

This study, a continuation of work funded by a Youth-Nex seed grants, is an effort to integrate service learning activities into environmental science instruction in the elementary and middle school years. The work follows from growing efforts in the last decade to enhance children's social and emotional skills in schools. The goal is to take work on school-based social and emotional skills one step further by providing students with opportunities to apply their social and behavioral competencies to authentic problems in the community. In doing so, researchers strive to identify practices that teachers can use in their classrooms that teach academic content and contribute to students' civic engagement.

Promise Neighborhoods Charlottesville
Youth-Nex Program Evaluation and Community Consultation

Youth-Nex is part of a Charlottesville city collaborative, one of 15 entities nationwide, which received a neighborhood-focused comprehensive planning and implementation grant. The center and its partners including Children, Youth, & Family Services (CYFS) and Charlottesville City Schools will focus on the area's Westhaven neighborhood to support academic achievement, healthy development, and college and career success. The award is part of the U.S. Department of Education 2011 Promise Neighborhoods Program intended to significantly improve the educational and developmental outcomes of children in the most distressed communities. Youth-Nex will provide evaluation support and innovative approaches to data collection and use.
Professional Development to Support New Teachers’ Use of Effective Classroom Management Techniques

Patrick Tolan, Ph.D. - Youth-Nex Director, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
Catherine Bradshaw, Ph.D. - Professor, Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Development, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
Jason Downer, Ph.D. - CASTL Director, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
Nicholas Iolongo, Ph.D. - Professor, Johns Hopkins University
Robert Pianta, Ph.D. - Dean, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

Youth-Nex is leading a multidisciplinary team of researchers on this grant from the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences to test the effects of a training program for new elementary school teachers designed to increase student learning and teachers’ classroom management skills. The team will include experts from across the Curry School and others from Johns Hopkins University’s Bloomberg School of Public Health to study the effects of using two proven teaching training models together for the first time:

- MyTeachingPartner™, a Web-mediated, video-based coaching process focuses on improving the quality of teacher-student interactions in the classroom.
- The Good Behavior Game, a team-oriented classroom game that rewards students when they stay on task and accomplish goals. It helps reduce aggressive, disruptive behavior and can be integrated into any classroom lesson.

Who Builds the Village?: Examining Youth-Adult Relationships Across Contexts and Time

Nancy L. Deutsch, Ph.D. - Associate Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
Valerie Futch Ehrlich, Ph.D. - Research Assistant Professor of Education, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

This study will examine the influence of non-parental adult relationships in the lives of adolescents and how those bonds develop. Research has shown how important adults are in the lives of youth— as role models, mentors and sources of social support but little work has been done on how these relationships are formed and sustained. In their 3½-year study, Deutsch and Futch Ehrlich will follow two groups of youths: seventh- to 10th-graders, and 10th-graders to new high school graduates, to better understand these relationships. Researchers hope this will help us make informed decisions not only about our relationships with youth, but about how we create spaces—in schools, after-school programs and communities—that provide opportunities for fostering these beneficial ties.

Developmental Evaluation of Prevention Effects of the SAFE Children Intervention (SAFE-III)

Patrick Tolan, Ph.D. - Youth-Nex Director, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
Deborah Gorman-Smith, Ph.D. - Professor, University of Chicago
David Henry, Ph.D. - University of Illinois at Chicago

As the roster of efficacious preventive interventions for drug abuse risk grows, prevention researchers have become increasingly interested in refining and elaborating their understanding of intervention effects. These include: 1) how effects vary for subgroups with different levels of personal, familial and environmental risk; 2) how well initial effects last into long term benefits; and 3) what interim conditions curtail or enhance initial benefits. The SAFE Children study extends the initial findings of academic and social benefits in the early elementary grades to evaluate its long-term impact (to age 16). The SAFE Children program focuses on families residing in high risk (inner-city) communities, with a child entering elementary school. Results will help identify the ultimate promise of this approach and what contributes to sustaining effects on loss of benefits over time. Such studies are critical to learn what to take to scale.
Chicago Youth Development Study: From Adolescent Youth to Fathers in High-Risk Settings

Patrick Tolan, Ph.D. - Youth-Nex Director, University of Virginia; Deborah Gorman-Smith - Professor, University of Chicago

The purpose this study, which began in 1990, is to further understanding of the influences on development of young men and their parents, partners and children in economically depressed, high-crime neighborhoods; to identify risk and protection influences; and to see how functioning during adolescence affects fathering in young adulthood. In the current phase, the focus is on influences on father's involvement with his child(ren) and the impact of involvement and parenting practices on his child(ren)'s development. As part of the present study, we completed two additional waves of data collection (total of 11 waves over 20 years) from a sample of 271 young adult males who took part in the Chicago Youth Development Study (CYDS) that began when these young men were 11-13. During the first phase of CYDS, four waves of repeated interviews were conducted with these young men and their families-of-origin. During the second phase of CYDS, two waves of data were collected with the original sample as well as their intimate partners and preliminary information about their children and parenting. During the current third phase of CYDS, two waves of data were collected from the men, their children (i.e., biological and non-biological), and the mothers of the children.

Neighborhood Measurement of Violence Effects on Youth: A Developmental Ecological Approach

Deborah Gorman-Smith, Ph.D. - Professor University of Chicago
Patrick Tolan - Youth-Nex Director, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
David Henry, Ph.D. - University of Illinois at Chicago
Michael Schoeny, Ph.D. - Senior Researcher, University of Illinois at Chicago

This award provides support for a thorough review of conception and measurement of neighborhood effects on youth development, particularly related to risk for youth violence. From the initial review work, researchers have developed a cadre of measures to capture key neighborhood influences. They will validate these through neighborhood sampling and then apply in a short-term study of a sample of families with young children (ages 5-6) and of families with adolescents (ages 12-13). The focus is on direct relation of neighborhood characteristics to problem behavior, but also to prosocial and effective development and impact on parenting and family stress. Results will provide methods for measurement of recognized important processes that have been hampered by a dearth of measurement development, absent developmental conceptualization or inadequate validation as neighborhood indicators. Findings can help clarify the relative value of community-focused efforts to more individual focused approaches and determine how settings moderate risk and preventive efforts.

Influences of Classroom-level Social Settings on Language and Content Learning in Linguistically Diverse Classrooms

Amanda Kibler, Ph.D. - Assistant Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
Nancy Deutsch, Ph.D. - Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
Valerie Futch Ehrlich, Ph.D. - Research Assistant Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
Lauren Molloy, Ph.D. - Postdoctoral Fellow, Youth-Nex, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

Investigators are exploring instructional and social conditions in classrooms that support linguistic and academic development for adolescents whose primary languages are not English. These students, often known in U.S. schools as “English language learners,” or “ELLs,” are still learning the English they need for success in the classroom. The team is among the first to use social network analysis, an emerging tool used more often in business, sociology and psychology, to understand the experiences of ELL youth in mainstream classrooms. There have been studies that document positive results of instructional programs integrating adolescent ELLs with fluent English speakers, yet little is understood about the specific mechanisms through which this learning occurs.
Preventing Delinquency in Girls: An Evaluation of the Young Women Leaders Program
Joanna Williams, Ph.D. - Assistant Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
Edith “Winx” Lawrence, Ph.D. - Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
Nancy L. Deutsch, Ph.D. - Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
Patrick Tolan, Ph.D. - Professor, Youth-Nex Director, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

A growing body of work indicates an increase in aggressive behavior among adolescent girls; however there is little research-based evidence on gender-specific delinquency prevention programs. The primary goal of this project is to evaluate the effectiveness of the Young Women Leaders Program (YWLP), a one-on-one and group-based mentoring program, in preventing delinquency and related outcomes in girls who are at-risk for delinquency based on individual and/or ecological characteristics. Researchers are evaluating YWLP using an experimental design with randomized assignment to the program. They are also using observational data and interviews to identify “best practices” for effective program implementation. Research reports will document YWLP’s effectiveness in reducing problem behaviors related to girls’ delinquency, the transferability of YWLP to other communities, and the cost-effectiveness of YWLP as a delinquency-prevention program.

The Virginia Secondary School Climate Study
Dewey Cornell, Ph.D. - Professor, Director of the Virginia Youth Violence Project, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

The Virginia Secondary School Climate Study is designed to examine school climate and safety conditions in Virginia middle and high schools. This study builds upon the work of the previous Virginia High School Safety Study but expands our assessment to grades 7-12. A central research goal of this study is to develop standardized measures of school climate (disciplinary structure, student support, student engagement) that are predictive of both school safety conditions (discipline problems, suspension rates, bullying and other forms of peer aggression, teacher mistreatment) and academic outcomes (such as school academic performance and graduation rates).

Students as Social Networks for Learning
Christopher Hafen, Ph.D. - Research Scientist, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
Patrick Tolan, Ph.D. - Professor, Youth-Nex Director, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
Joseph Allen, Ph.D. - Hugh Kelly Professor of Psychology, Department of Psychology
Robert Cross, D.B.A, M.B.A. - Associate Professor of Commerce Management, McIntire School of Commerce
Lauren Molloy, Ph.D. - Postdoctoral Fellow, Youth-Nex, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

Peer influence has focused on negative effects. It is likely students can have positive effects on fellow students and that group characteristics can affect learning as well. This is a study collaboration with Curry faculty, the U.Va. Psychology Department and the McIntire School of Commerce to apply social network analyses to identify how student individual and group characteristics can benefit others in improving school engagement and academic achievement.

Comprehensive Assessment of School Climate to Improve Safety in Maryland Middle Schools
Catherine Bradshaw, Ph.D. - Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

Coping Power in the City: Promoting Safety and Coping Skills in Baltimore City High Schools
Catherine Bradshaw, Ph.D. - Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
John Lochman, Ph.D. - University of Alabama
Nicholas Ialongo, Ph.D. - Johns Hopkins University

Researchers will examine outcomes from the program, Coping Power, including whether it decreases aggressive behavior problems such as bullying and increases academic performance. This is a large randomized control trial in 10 Baltimore City high schools, which involves mental health services and police officer training in cultural sensitivity and mental health.
Driving Evaluating and Enhancing Driving Skills of Individuals with Asperger’s and High Functioning Autism
Daniel Cox, Ph.D. - Professor, Departments of Psychiatric Medicine and Internal Medicine, University of Virginia
Ronald Reeve, Ph.D. - Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
This work explores the use of virtual reality driving simulators to train and evaluate driving skills of teens with Asperger’s and autism. This study explores the maturing/developing of executive functioning, driving safety and general risk taking. The simulator has already been used to effectively teach teens with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder to drive more safely.

Increasing Teachers’ Use of Classroom-Based Behavior Supports through Coaching
Catherine Bradshaw, Ph.D. - Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
This project evaluates Maryland’s effort to increase a positive school climate for middle school students and to help school officials meet the behavioral and mental health needs of students or the “Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)” model. Researchers will test the PBIS model in 40 middle schools across three diverse Maryland counties in the Baltimore metro area.

Coaching Teachers in Detection and Intervention Related to Bullying
Catherine Bradshaw, Ph.D. - Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia
Researchers will use TeachLive simulator technology.

![YOUTH-NEX GRANTS 2009-2014](image-url)
SEED FUNDING

As an essential investment in the creation and development of the center Youth-Nex provides seed funding for promising ideas and scholars. To that end, we institute University-wide Requests for Proposals that emphasize multidisciplinary research on factors that could enhance youth development including productive citizenship, supportive relationships, risk avoidance, and healthy lifestyles. Projects may also relate to the prevention of health-related, psychological, and social risk among youth. Proposals must also show a clear and direct plan for external funding as a result of the seed funding, and demonstrate innovation in methods, collaboration, or approach to youth development.

THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS HAVE BEEN FUNDED:

Supporting Food and Exercise Counseling for Overweight and Obese Children

Stephanie Guerlain, Ph.D. - Associate Professor, Department of Systems and Information Engineering, University of Virginia
Martha Hellems, M.D., M.S. - Associate Professor, Department of Pediatrics, Division of General Pediatrics, University of Virginia

Researchers will finalize and evaluate a technical solution to extend the services provided at the University of Virginia (U.Va.) Children's Fitness Clinic (CFC) via an interactive website that includes health education, health progress and the capability to receive daily text messages from their patients. The motivation for this automation is three-fold. They hypothesize that such a system will 1) increase the patients’ interest and drive to consistently and more accurately report their daily food intake, mood and activity, 2) increase the amount of information exchange between the patients and their counselors between CFC visits, 3) shift clinician time during CFC sessions from “data gathering” activities to “counseling” activities, 4) be a feasible and useful alternative to paper logs for at least 25% of patients in the target age group, and 5) lead to longer patient retention in the CFC program.

Improving Nutrition and Exercise Competence in Obese Schoolchildren via SALUD, a Community-Based Intervention at Southwood

Diane Whaley, Ph.D. - Director, Lifetime Physical Activity Program, Curry School of Education;
Amy Boitnott, D.N.P., R.N., F.N.P.-B.C. - Assistant Professor of Nursing, Doctor of Nursing Practice, Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Program Coordinator
Mark DeBoer, M.D. - Assistant Professor, Department of Pediatrics, School of Medicine. All from the University of Virginia

In addition to affecting the health and longevity of the current generation of children, obesity has significant developmental implications for children. Obese children have been found to have a lower level of competency (i.e., expectancy of success) related to physical activity and nutrition compared to normal weight children, and these issues are exacerbated among children of lower socio-economic status (SES). These are significant problems because 32 percent of children nationally and 38 percent of children in the Charlottesville area are overweight (body mass index (BMI) 85-95 percentile) or obese (BMI greater than 95 percentile)—findings that are again more common among children in lower SES, as well as in minority ethnic groups. While it is known that the family unit has critical importance for achieving weight loss in children, it is less clear what the differential roles are of parental and child beliefs and behaviors. It is our thesis that improvements in childhood overweight/obesity status will be best achieved by targeting the expectancies for success and value toward healthy behaviors of parents and children. We will undergo a community-based intervention to assess competency for physical activity and nutrition among children in the Southwood Mobile Home Park in the Charlottesville area. We aim to demonstrate efficacy in improved competence and improved weight outcomes in children living in low-income communities.
Seed Funding (continued)

Vascular Disease in Adolescent Type 1 Diabetic (DM1) Subjects—Influence of Diet and Fitness
Eugene Barrett M.D., Ph.D. - Professor of Medicine, University of Virginia
Arthur Weltman, Ph.D. - Chair and Professor of Kinesiology, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

Life-limiting atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease begins in children with DM 1 as evidenced by several types of pre-atherosclerotic vascular dysfunction. Hyperglycemia alone is unlikely to account for this accelerated atherosclerosis. It may be that activity is one protective factor that could make a vital difference. This study will pilot test whether dietary and activity behaviors contribute to the risk for early vascular dysfunction in DM1 and to begin to address whether interventions, which can be lifelong, can prevent or reverse early vascular disease.

Statutory Rape or ‘Normal’ Teen Love? Psychological Investigations of Adolescent Sexuality and the Law
N. Dickon Reppucci, Ph.D. - Professor of Psychology, Co-Director, Center for Children, Families and the Law, University of Virginia

The production of legal responses to try to protect youth from sexual predators has spawned vexing legal and social issues related to adolescent relationships. In many cases sexual activity between an adolescent and their near same-age partner could result in classification as a sex offender. There is dire need for illumination about the developmental and social issues that affect and are affected by the intersection of youth and sexuality in this legal context. This support provides an opportunity to shed light on this controversial but important issue. The planned effort seeks to address teens’ and young adults’ comprehension and perception of existing laws; to understand parents’ or guardians’ perceptions and knowledge of statutory rape laws; and adolescents’ competence to consent to sex.

Motivating Youth Through the Humanities: Pilot Study of Community-Based Model of Teaching Literature to University Students and High-Risk Youth
Andrew Kaufman, Ph.D. - Professor, College and Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, University of Virginia

The humanities have been slow to respond to growing skepticism in recent decades about their value in post-secondary education. “Books Behind Bars: Life, Literature, and Community Leadership” is an innovative, 12-month-old, format of humanities education that places undergraduates from U.Va. to work through literature training with incarcerated juvenile delinquents. Because of its unique format and approach, Books Behind Bars is challenging literature students at U.Va. to learn and grow in ways that are unusual for most literature courses, and it is thought to support positive development of the college students in a number of areas:

1. Students gain a deeper more holistic understanding of literary texts.
2. Students recognize that their acquisition of knowledge and skills has practical, “real-world” application.
3. Students have a greater perception that the literature and learning activities are relevant to their own lives.
4. Students are more engaged in the class and are therefore more motivated to do well in their studies.
5. Students have a heightened sense of civic responsibility and as a result of this class are more likely to choose courses and careers that have a community service component.
6. Students feel a closer connection to their peers and to the residents at the partner sites, leading, in turn, to greater appreciation of the value of human connectedness in their other professional and personal relationships.

Funds will be used to conduct a pilot study of the Books Behind Bars program and will lay the necessary groundwork for funding applications seeking support for the larger-scale program and its evaluation in the near future.
Academic and Student Affairs Partnership for Substance Abuse Prevention: Reducing Risky Behaviors Associated With 21st Birthdays

Ellen J. Bass, Ph.D. - Professor, iSchool, College of Information Science and Technology, Drexel University

This research project builds on the experience of Student Health’s Gordie Center for Substance Abuse Prevention in developing and evaluating celebratory drinking interventions. The project goal is to increase protective behaviors, and reduce alcohol consumption, estimated blood alcohol concentrations (eBAC), and negative consequences associated with 21st birthday celebrations.

Impact of Cardiac Surgery on Executive Function

Daniel J. Cox, Ph.D. - Professor, Departments of Psychiatric Medicine and Internal Medicine, University of Virginia

Researchers are investigating the impact of cardiac surgery on cognitive motor function that impairs driving safety, medical self-management, social functioning and quality of life, and the extent to which such impacts can be reversed with specific and specialized rehabilitation using virtual reality driving simulation.

Languages Across Borders (LAB): Building Positive Cross-Linguistic and Cross-Cultural Networks in High Schools

Amanda Kibler, Ph.D. - Assistant Professor, Department of Curriculum, Instruction, and Special Education, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

Researchers are exploring instructional and social conditions in classrooms that support linguistic and academic development for adolescents whose primary languages are not English. These students, often known in U.S. schools as “English language learners,” or “ELLs,” are still learning the English they need for success in the classroom. This study will explore what, if any, consequences exist for non-native English speaking students who lack meaningful interactions with peers during class time and what can be done to improve the learning environment for all students.

Reproductive Health Among Sexual Minority Youth

Charlotte J. Patterson, Ph.D. - Professor of Psychology, University of Virginia

Many of the problems experienced by sexual minority youth – such as family and peer-group problems, victimization and bullying – have been well-documented, but other potential problem areas are less known. Research is focusing on gaining more understanding of the reproductive health of this vulnerable population. The work will provide documentation of disparities as a function of sexual orientation in sexual behavior and reproductive health among adolescents in the United States. This study will assess reproductive health among sexual minority youth, and to understand risk and protective factors for reproductive health among members of this vulnerable population.

Impact of School Architecture on School Practices and Healthy Eating

Matthew Trowbridge, M.D., M.P.H. - Associate Professor, Associate Research Director, School of Medicine, University of Virginia
Terry T-K Huang, Ph.D. - Professor and Chair, College of Public Health, University of Nebraska Medical Center

Researchers worked with architects to create a school environment that improves student well-being. Matthew Trowbridge, M.D., of U.Va.’s Department of Emergency Medicine and Terry Huang, Ph.D., MPH, of the University of Nebraska’s College of Public Health will evaluate whether innovations such as a teaching kitchen, soil lab and nutrition resource library will impact the eating behaviors of school children at Buckingham Elementary in Dillwyn, Virginia.
Promoting Positive Youth Development Through Homegrown Video Production

Michael J. Kennedy, Ph.D. - Assistant Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

Researchers instructed students to produce their own videos on bullying prevention. They hope to help students at Charlottesville area schools both understand themselves, and understand themselves as agents of change. Kennedy hopes the students will progress in the “5C’s” of Positive Youth Development — Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, and Caring.

Understanding and Supporting Safe Driving of ADHD Teenagers with Auditory Feedback

Daniel J. Cox, Ph.D. - Professor, Departments of Psychiatric Medicine and Internal Medicine, University of Virginia
Nathan Lau, Ph.D. - Assistant Professor, College of Engineering, Virginia Tech

A systems engineer and cognitive behavioral therapist are combining efforts to design a tool that mitigates driving distraction through a Wii-like device that tracks eye, body, and head movement. Lau and Cox will seek to help adolescents with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) to drive safely by creating a negative feedback loop that detects driver distraction. Engineering and driving alone have contributed much independently, but the areas are not well integrated. There is also a lot of research being done on distraction, but not much on device building. Researchers envision a time when we are not relying solely on medication to help these youth drive.

A Study of Positive Youth Development Among High School Students

Joanna Williams, Ph.D. - Associate Professor, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia

This study examines whether participation in an intergroup dialogue program during the school year enhances strengths conceptualized in the “positive youth development” paradigm and diversity-related values, and promotes ethnic identity exploration among high school students. Intergroup dialogue is a process that brings together individuals from two or more social identity groups – for instance, groups based on race, religion or gender – that have either had a history of conflicting relationships or have not had substantive opportunities to communicate. This pilot study compares Charlottesville High School students who participate in the Youth Roundtables program with non-participants in order to examine how the program may contribute to positive youth development. Among other issues, researchers are exploring whether there is increased competence, confidence, connection, character and caring/compassion when compared to non-participants.