

Ciara Collins

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EDUCATION

University of Connecticut, Storrs, Connecticut Expected: May 2020
Doctor of Philosophy in Human Development and Family Sciences, Emphasis in
Health, Wellbeing, and Prevention

Advisor: Preston Britner, Ph.D.

Dissertation Topic: Subjective Well-Being of Transition-Age Foster Youth: A
Mixed Methods Evaluation

Quantitative Research Methods Certificate Expected: May 2020

Advisor: Stephanie Milan, Ph.D.

University of Connecticut, Storrs, Connecticut May 2015

Master of Arts in Human Development and Family Studies, Emphasis in
Marriage and Family Therapy

Advisor: Preston Britner, Ph.D.

Biola University, La Mirada, California Dec 2010

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, Minor in Biblical & Theological Studies

Honors: Dean's List, Magna Cum Laude, Epsilon Kappa Epsilon Honors Society,
Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges, Psi Chi
National Honor Society

Honors Thesis: Authenticity and Emotion Suppression

University of Oxford, Oxford, United Kingdom Jan 2010 – Apr 2010

Semester Abroad

Tutorials: Philosophy of Science and Philosophy of Psychology and
Neuroscience, Theology of Pauline Literature

SKILLS

- Presentation of process and outcome research to stakeholders through technical reports, peer-reviewed articles, and presentations
- Experience providing program evaluation to multiple community partners and state departments
- Management of multiple projects simultaneously as a graduate research assistant
- Extensive knowledge of research on child maltreatment, child well-being, and foster care/adoption
- Experience working with child protective service agencies, state department of children and families, and adoption agencies
- Supervisory experience of 1-5 people per project
- Competencies in statistical packages: SPSS, Mplus, R, SAS
- Experience creating, managing, and using large data sets
- Clinical experience as a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Graduate Research Associate

Aug 2019 – Present

University of Connecticut, Center for Applied Research in Human Development (CARHD), Storrs, CT

- Analyze longitudinal data from the Aspire, Connect, Thrive (ACT) evaluation project
- Compose manuscripts detailing the impact of ACT program on resiliency in middle childhood

Supervisor: Beth Russell, Ph.D.

Graduate Research Associate

Jul 2019 – Present

University of Connecticut & Office of Early Childhood (OEC), Hartford, CT

- Conduct focus groups with parents regarding experiences with home-based services in CT
- Analyze qualitative focus group data for state MIECHV needs assessment
- Conduct mixed methods analyses regarding the impact of child care provision on adult education programming

Supervisor: Kathryn Parr, Ph.D.

Graduate Research Associate

Mar 2019 – Aug 2019

University of Connecticut & Department of Social Services (DSS), Center for Applied Research in Human Development (CARHD), Storrs, CT

- Conducted focus groups with fathers regarding experiences with fathering programs in CT

Supervisor: Kari Adamsons, Ph.D.

Project Manager

Nov 2013 – Aug 2019

University of Connecticut & EASTCONN Head Start, Center for Applied Research in Human Development (CARHD), Storrs, CT

- Facilitated conversations between director, management, and UConn research team around continuous quality improvement, staff development, and family outcomes
- Provided technical reports to enhance continuous quality improvement and achieve long-term goals for agency, staff, and families
- Provided trainings to direct service staff on goal development
- Mentored undergraduate and master's degree student researchers
- Trained managers at agency to build capacity to conduct research and create reports in-house

Supervisors: JoAnn Robinson, Ph.D. and Beth Russell, Ph.D.

Products: see Technical Reports and Conference Presentations sections

Project Manager

Sep 2013 – Jun 2019

University of Connecticut Rising Scholars Program, Storrs, CT

- Assisted in designing program evaluation assessment protocols to determine the impact of a college-preparatory program for youth in foster care
- Analyzed mixed methods data and provided feedback to program directors
- Provided technical assistance to program directors on how to manage program data and accurately report program stats

Supervisor: Preston Britner, Ph.D.

Products: see Publications and Conference Presentations sections

Project Manager

Aug 2016 – May 2018

University of Connecticut & The Village for Families and Children, Center for Applied Research in Human Development (CARHD), Storrs, CT

- Managed a trauma-based multitiered initiative in urban K-8 schools from inception through Year 2 of a 5-year grant through the Office of Minority Health
- Created and maintained longitudinal database for quantitative data and created coding protocol for qualitative interview data with teachers
- Conducted interviews with teacher participants related to trauma awareness and classroom practices
- Analyzed quantitative and qualitative data for annual reports for grantor and stakeholders
- Mentored undergraduate, master's, and doctoral student researchers

Supervisor: Beth Russell, Ph.D.

Products: see Technical Reports section

Graduate Research Associate

Aug 2016 – Dec 2016

University of Connecticut & The Village for Families and Children, Center for Applied Research in Human Development (CARHD), Storrs, CT

- Conducted interviews with fathers who participated in a fatherhood program

Supervisor: Beth Russell, Ph.D.

Products: see Publications and Conference Presentations sections

Project Manager

May 2015 – May 2016

University of Connecticut, Center for Applied Research in Human Development (CARHD), Storrs, CT

- Collaborated with and promoted data sharing between multiple state agencies regarding crossover youth (i.e., youth involved with both the child welfare system and juvenile justice system): The Department of Children and Families (DCF), the Child Protection Division of the Superior Court for Juvenile Matters, the Court Support Services Division of the Juvenile Branch (CSSD), the Office of Policy Management (OPM), the Department of Education (CSDE), the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) within the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and Social Venture Partners (SVP)

Supervisors: Anne Farrell, Ph.D. and Ronald Sabatelli, Ph.D.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**Wheeler Clinic**

May 2015 – Present

Clinician, Plainville, CT

- Manage small caseload comprised of children 3-17 and their families
- Participate in staff meetings, individual supervision, and attend trainings

The Humphrey Clinic

May 2015 – Aug 2018

Clinician, Storrs, CT

- Managed small caseload comprised of young adults, couples, co-parenting dyads, and families
- Participated in staff meetings, group supervision, and attended trainings

University of Connecticut

July 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018

Instructor, Rising Scholars Program, Storrs, CT

- Taught life skills courses (i.e., communication, emotion regulation, financial literacy) for high school age foster youth in a month-long residential college preparatory program
- Provided counseling and mediation services for foster youth during month-long program

Nightlight Christian Adoptions

May 2011 – Aug 2013

Snowflakes Embryo Adoption Program Coordinator, Anaheim Hills, CA

- Managed daily operations of embryo adoption program (e.g., maintained databases, prepared legal contracts, coordinated embryo shipments, facilitated semi-open adoptions)
- Guided families through adoption/donation process
- Corresponded and established partnerships with adoption agencies and IVF clinics
- Spoke at seminars and Embryo Adoption Summit
- Implemented feedback-based program improvement

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles:

Collins, C. M., & Russell, B. (In progress). Collaborative language systems: Engaging high-risk adolescent fathers.

Collins, C. M., Csizmadia, A., & Hynes, K. C. (In progress). Ethnic racial identity development in transracial foster placements: Building on what we know.

Collins, C. M., Okpych, N. J., & Britner, P. A. (In progress). Longitudinal academic and socioemotional outcomes for youth in foster care participating in an immersive college preparation experience.

Collins, C. M., Russell, B. (In progress). Longitudinal impact of school-based trauma program on children's resilience.

Book Chapters:

Britner, P. A., & **Collins, C. M.** (2018). Permanent and formal connections: Mentors, community services, and connectedness. In E. Trejos-Castillo & N. Trevino-Schafer (Eds.), *Handbook of foster youth* (pp. 473-487). New York: Routledge.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Collins, C. M., Okpych, N. J., & Britner, P. A. (2019, June). *Improving academic and socioemotional outcomes for youth in foster care through immersive college preparation experiences*. Media ready micro-session presented at the annual meeting of The American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children, Salt Lake City, UT.

Collins, C. M., Csizmadia, A., & Hynes, K. C. (2018, November). Ethnic racial identity development in transracial foster placements: Building on what we know. In K. M. Hrapczynski (Chair), *Transracial adoption, foster care, and socialization*. Symposium presented at the annual meeting of the National Council on Family Relations, San Diego, CA.

Collins, C. M., & Russell, B. (2017, November). *Using Collaborative Language Systems to engage high-risk adolescent fathers*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Council on Family Relations, Orlando, FL.

Collins, C. M., Forcier, P., Russell, B., & Snyder, M. (2017, May). *Engaging high-risk adolescent fathers: A qualitative examination of motivation to change in fatherhood programs*. Poster presented at the Association for Psychological Science's Annual Convention, Boston, MA.

Robinson, J., Gozemba, D., & **Collins, C. M.** (2017, April). *Serving families: How well are you assessing it? Who is better off?* Workshop presented at the National Head Start Conference and Expo, Chicago, IL.

Collins, C. M., Theriault, K., Altamura, V., & Britner, P. A. (2016, November). *Improving academic and socioemotional outcomes for youth in foster care*. Lightning paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Council on Family Relations, Minneapolis, MN.

Gozemba, D., **Collins, C. M.,** & Ellsworth, A. (2016, May). *Translating staff and family voices into data-based program planning*. Workshop presented at the National Head Start Conference and Expo: The next Generation of Opportunity, Nashville, TN.

Collins, C. M., Britner, P. A., Theriault, K., & Altamura, V. (2015, June). *Resiliency in foster youth and perceived social support: A mixed methods program evaluation*. Poster presented at the Resilience Research Centre's Pathways to Resilience III: Beyond Nature vs. Nurture Conference, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Collins, C. M. (2011, April). *Authenticity and emotion suppression*. Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Western Psychological Association, Los Angeles, CA.

TECHNICAL REPORTS

Aspire, Connect, Thrive: Project Evaluation Technical Report Year 1. Technical report prepared for The Village for Families and Children, Hartford, CT. (October 2017)

Aspire, Connect, Thrive: Infographics Report Year 1. Infographics report prepared for The Village for Families and Children, Hartford, CT. (October 2017)

Aspire, Connect, Thrive: ACT Academy Snapshot. Graphic overview of program prepared for The Village for Families and Children, Hartford, CT. (October 2017)

Education goal-setting report: Fall. Technical report prepared for EASTCONN Early Head Start and Head Start, Hampton, CT. (February 2017)

Family goal-setting report: Winter. Technical report prepared for EASTCONN Early Head Start and Head Start, Hampton, CT. (March 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019)

Family functioning assessment report: End-of-year. Technical report prepared for EASTCONN Early Head Start and Head Start, Hampton, CT. (July 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018)

Home visit report: Winter. Technical report prepared for EASTCONN Early Head Start and Head Start, Hampton, CT. (March 2015)

Family check-in report: Mid-year. Technical report prepared for EASTCONN Early Head Start and Head Start, Hampton, CT. (February 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019)

Home visit report: Fall. Technical report prepared for EASTCONN Early Head Start and Head Start, Hampton, CT. (January 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019)

Family functioning assessment report: Fall. Technical report prepared for EASTCONN Early Head Start and Head Start, Hampton, CT. (December 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018)

Family goal-setting report: Fall. Technical report prepared for EASTCONN Early Head Start and Head Start, Hampton, CT. (December 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018)

Family check-in report: End-of-year. Technical report prepared for EASTCONN Early Head Start and Head Start, Hampton, CT. (July 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019)

Home visit report: End-of-year. Technical report prepared for EASTCONN Early Head Start and Head Start, Hampton, CT. (July 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019).

Family goal-setting report: End-of-year. Technical report prepared for EASTCONN Early Head Start and Head Start, Hampton, CT. (July 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018).

PROFESSIONAL TRAININGS OFFERED

Data Documentation, Willimantic, CT Nov 2017

- Assisted EASTCONN Head Start in continuous quality improvement by training Head Start staff on new processes for data documentation

Infant Toddler Conference, Hampton, CT Mar 2017

- Co-led a presentation on serving families with complex needs, looking at individual and aggregate data

Goal Setting, Hampton, CT Oct 2016

- Led a training for Head Start staff on goal setting and connecting family goals with agency family functioning framework

Dialectical Behavior Therapy, Storrs, CT Mar 2016

- Trained students enrolled in the Marriage and Family Therapy program at the University of Connecticut on Dialectical Behavior Therapy

Social Support for Caregivers and Foster/Adoptive Children, Storrs, CT Jan 2016

- Led workshop for caregivers of foster/adoptive children in the Rising Scholars Program on how to build support networks for themselves and their foster/adoptive children

Goal Setting, Willimantic, CT Jan 2016

- Led two trainings for Head Start staff on goal setting and connecting family goals with agency family functioning framework

Embryo Adoption Summit, Loveland, CO Oct 2012

- Led trainings for adoption agency staff on the process of embryo adoption

PROFESSIONAL LICENSES

Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT), Connecticut, License #002013

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children (APSAC), Feb 2019 – Present

National Council on Family Relations (NCFR), Jun 2016 – Present

American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT), Sep 2013 – Present

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Conference Proposals Reviewer:

- National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) Annual Conference, 2018, 2019
- American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT) Annual Conference, 2019

Ad Hoc Reviews:

- *Journal of Child and Family Studies*
- *Children and Youth Services Review*

AWARDS & FELLOWSHIPS

Mattoon-Kline Endowed Scholarship Fund, University of Connecticut, May 2019

Human Development and Family Sciences Departmental Award, University of Connecticut, May 2019

Predocctoral Graduate School Fellowship Award, University of Connecticut, May 2019

Human Development and Family Sciences Internal Dissertation Grant Award, University of Connecticut, Mar 2019

Summer Fellowship for Advanced Graduate Students, University of Connecticut, Jun 2017, May 2018

CLAS Dean's Fund Fellowship, University of Connecticut, May 2016

Graduate School Fellowship, University of Connecticut, May 2016

Tuition Assistance Award, University of Connecticut, Aug 2013 - May 2014

Gilman International Scholarship, Biola University, Dec 2009

George Mayr Scholarship, Biola University, Aug 2008 – Aug 2010