

Newsletter, Issue 11, Fall 2016

CCF-Affiliated Research Spotlights

[Dr. Candice Mills](#), an associate professor in UT Dallas' School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences and CCF faculty affiliate, recently received a three-year \$475,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to study children's thinking. The research seeks to better understand how children process scientific explanations, and whether those explanations whet their appetite to learn more about a topic. "There are a lot of individual differences in how kids evaluate explanations," Mills said. "One of the goals is to better understand those individual differences. Another goal is to help children better recognize explanations that are weak with the hope that they will be motivated to learn more about the topic." [Read More...](#)



Dr. Candice Mills

Dr. Mills is currently recruiting participants for this line of research. Families with children between the ages of 4 and 11 can find out more about their research at their [lab's website](#) and can sign up to participate by contacting the Think Lab at utdallas.thinklab@gmail.com or 972-883-6075.



Dr. Pamela Rollins

[Dr. Pamela Rollins](#) is an associate professor in the School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences and CCF faculty affiliate. She was recently awarded a grant from the State of Texas for more than \$980,000 to evaluate an early intervention program for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The community-based program for toddlers, called [Pathways Early Autism Intervention Program](#), was developed in 2010 to fit the service delivery model and guiding principles of Texas' publicly funded early childhood intervention programs. Rollins' research will be a randomized control trial focusing on the effectiveness of the Pathways program on social communication and interaction. The results of the research will be used to identify children and families who would receive the optimum benefit from the Pathways intervention. "If it's effective, which I truly believe it is, we'll be training more and more people in early intervention and really beginning to change what early intervention is doing with kids on the autism spectrum," Rollins said. [Read More...](#)

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Registration Open: Annual Forum January 20th, 2017



Registration is now open for the Center's 7th annual forum on **"Out of School Time: Expanding Learning Opportunities, Reducing Achievement Gaps"** featuring keynote speaker [Dr. Deborah Vandell](#) from The University of California, Irvine. The forum will be held at Communities Foundation in Dallas. See the [schedule of events](#) here. Registration is \$30 and \$10 for UT Dallas faculty, staff, and students.

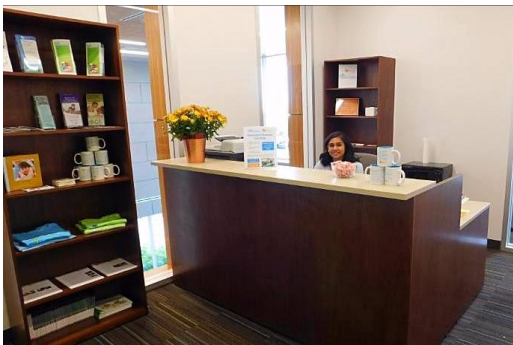
REGISTER NOW

Partner Spotlight: Children's Health Family Well-Being

CCF began working with members of [Children's Health](#) Population Health team this summer on a contractual basis to help develop and test a prototype for their Family Well-Being Program. The program seeks to connect families with resources to help improve their overall health and well-being. Program managers from CCF's [Juega Conmigo](#) and [Crece Conmigo](#) programs were sought out by the Population Health team to assist with the prototype, particularly because of their relationship-centered, non-hierarchical approach with parents, which fits closely with the goals Children's Health had



developed for the prototype that they are now testing. CCF staff members have provided training for the program's delivery team on topics such as using a family-centered approach, the centrality of relationships, and how to empower parents and help them connect with health and wellness resources in their communities. CCF is also providing staff to serve as family navigators who are working one-on-one with program parents to help them create meaningful wellness goals and plans to achieve them. "The family I'm serving is remarkable," said CCF developmental specialist Suzy Armstrong, "They have many, many challenges right now, but still come to our meetings with optimism and have enthusiastically responded to many resources we suggest." The Family Well-Being Program seeks to empower families to connect with services and resources that they may have otherwise missed in the hope that it will have long-lasting positive impacts on their futures. "I think focusing on the needs of the entire family rather than just the health needs of their young children makes so much sense and I applaud Children's Health for testing this prototype to help move our medical system toward a more holistic care approach for families," Armstrong said.



We've Moved!

The Center for Children and Families is now located in the [Callier Richardson Addition \(CRA\), room 12.401](#) on the second floor on UT Dallas' main campus. The CCF office suite includes a reception area, offices, conference room, and storage space.

Stop by to say hi!

Research & Resource Fair Highlights

On October 20th, research labs from the School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences and nonprofit agencies working to promote children and families' success participated in CCF's annual Research & Research Fair. Over 200 students attended to learn about research assistant, volunteer, and intern opportunities.



Thank you to the following for your participation:

Blackberry Project	Family Research Lab	Couples Daily Lives Project	Dallas Preschool Readiness Project	The Think Lab	Schizophrenia and Social Cognition Lab
The PAIR Lab	Healthy Development Project	Development of Social Cognition Lab	Lifespan Neuroscience and Cognition Lab	Speech Language Cognition and Communication Lab	Park Aging Mind Lab
Online Social Influence Lab	Developmental Neurolinguistics Lab	Social Communication Lab	UT Dallas Career Center	Center for Vital Longevity	Plano Public Library
Succeeding at Work	First3Years	Rainbow Days	Momentous Institute	Catholic Charities	Jubilee Center

Save the Date for #GivingTuesday



You've heard of Black Friday, Small Business Saturday, and Cyber Monday. Save the date, **November 29th**, to join CCF on [#GivingTuesday](#), a global day of giving and kick-off for the holiday season of giving back.

From the Director

In addition to the outstanding, cross-cutting and laudable child and family research of the Center's affiliated faculty, highlighted in this newsletter, and our on-going direct-service programming for young children and their families, I want to highlight our newest work with Children's Health System of Texas. CCF's contract providing support to Children's Family Well-Being program is a result of growing recognition of the expertise of our Center's developmental specialists and their experiences. Further, it is based on admiration of our relationship-centered, non-hierarchical approach working with children at risk and their families. The work with Children's Health this fall is serving to deepen these connections.



- Margaret T. Owen, Ph.D., Robinson Family Professor, Director, Center for Children and Families

How to Give



As we work to promote optimal family and child development, our community outreach programs and our child and family research **need your support**. To learn more about giving to the Center for Children and Families or how to designate your gift, contact Pagett Gosslee, CFRE, at pgosslee@utdallas.edu or [visit our giving page](#).

STAY CONNECTED:



Center for Children and Families, The University of Texas at Dallas,
800 W. Campbell Road, Richardson, TX 75080

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