

2019 Annual Report

From the Director

2019 was an impactful year for the Center for Children and Families (CCF) and the School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences (BBS). With the installation of Dr. Steven Small as BBS dean in April, the school has charted a new course with an emphasis on building the school's research prominence and national rankings of its stellar programs. CCF simultaneously underwent strategic planning, outlining goals for our next five years. Our vision: to become a nationally recognized center where leading scholars and students generate knowledge and apply developmental science to service for children, families, and professionals to advance children's optimal development. To support this vision, we've generated and submitted several grant applications in tandem with the Center's faculty affiliates to integrate and apply new developmental research together with further testing of the programs' impact with the families we serve. These prospects are exciting and will bolster our reputation as a leading-edge research center in applied developmental science. CCF's service learning class for undergraduate students continues to be a success with students from a variety of BBS majors. The students receive training and supervision to experience and contribute to play and learning with children and parents in high-need communities in North Texas. The students' reflections on applying science from the classroom to the field and their growth through the invaluable, practical experiences they receive continue to motivate and inspire us. Finally, to strengthen the Center's foundation for success into the future, we will continue to strive to build CCF's endowment. Naming opportunities for CCF spaces are available and efforts are underway to secure these. Thank you for your continued support of our vision. I look forward to connecting with you throughout 2020.

Sincerely,

Margaret T. Owen

-Margaret Tresch Owen, PhD, Director, Center for Children and Families
Robinson Family Professor of Psychological Sciences



Our Impact

Grow With Me (Crece Conmigo)

provides developmental screenings for children ages 0-5.

- 222 Ages and Stages questionnaires administered
- 23% of children referred for intervention services, indicating high need
- 50 one-on-one screenings administered



"Thank you for all of your support, for the information that you provide, and the follow-up that you give. We are very happy with our daughter's development and improvement."

Play With Me (Juega Conmigo)

provides playful-learning sessions for at-risk children ages 0-3, together with their parents.

- 293 children and 250 parents served
- 208 sessions of Play With Me program provided with 1,979 visits by children and 1,735 visits by parents
- over 220 children and parents attended our fifth annual family celebration at the Latino Cultural Center in Dallas

"I learned how to control myself before I reacted with anger. This program helped me de-stress and learn about my child's development."



Educational Outreach

brings together nationally-known child development researchers, educators, practitioners, policy makers, students, and parents for an annual fall forum and spring lecture series.

- 368 people attended our 11th annual Spring Lecture Series and 10th Annual Fall Forum
- over 50 organizations and agencies were represented at the forum, which featured keynote speaker Dr. Kathy Hirsh-Pasek



"Great forum! The wide variety of backgrounds gave multiple perspectives on various issues."

Student Training

supports the next generation of developmental specialists by providing training in developmental science and practical experiences working with children and parents in at-risk communities.

- 65 volunteers dedicated their time to CCF including 22 students in our community-based service learning class, 34 student interns and volunteers, and 9 community volunteers

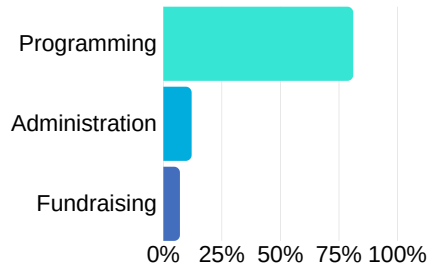
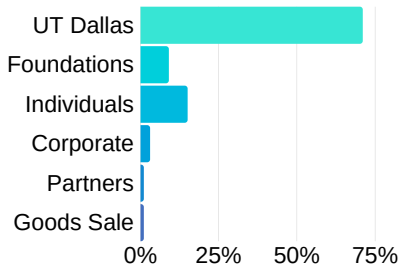
"It's one thing reading about developmental milestones in a textbook but to actually witness it and to apply my knowledge is a worthwhile experience."



Revenue & Expenses

Revenue: \$481,323

Expenses: \$475,766



81% of funds support our education and outreach programs



Affiliated Research

22 affiliated faculty from BBS and the School of Economic, Political, and Policy Sciences support the mission of the Center with a wide variety of research on how children develop and thrive.

Notable research grants:

- "Early social communication environment and brain development in infants at risk for autism," NIMH, **Swanson, M.**, 5/17/19 - 2/28/22, \$730,668.
- "How poverty impacts brain and language development: Understanding the vocabulary gap," NSF, **Maguire, M.**, 4/1/16 - 3/31/20, \$515,000.
- "Self-regulation development and the transition to middle school," NIH, **Owen, M.T.**, Co-PI, 7/1/17 - 6/31/22, \$2,865,971 total awarded; \$1,680,424 UT Dallas total subaward.

Selected faculty publications:

Tamis-LeMonda, C.T., Caughy, M.O., **Rojas, R.**, Bakeman, R., Adamson, L.B., Pacheco, D., **Owen, M.T.**, Suma, K., & Pace, A. (in press, 2020). Culture, parenting, and language: *Respeto* in Latine mother-child interactions. *Social Development*. First published online Dec. 4, 2019.

The cultural value of *respeto* (respect) is central to Latine parenting. In this study, *respeto* related to standard ratings of mother and child interactions (e.g., maternal sensitivity and child engagement) but also captured unique features of parent-child interactions. *Respeto* related to mothers' and toddlers' language production and discourse during the interaction, and explained unique variance in language variables above standard ratings of mother-child interaction.

Nelson, J.A., Boyer, B.P., Smith, O.A., & Villarreal, D.L. (2019). Relations between characteristics of collaborative and oppositional mother-child conflict. *Parenting: Science and Practice*, 19, 203-216.

Oppositional parent-child conflict interactions and inconsistent parenting practices have each been associated with more negative socioemotional outcomes for children. In this study, three types of families were identified based on mother-child conflict interactions over one week: *temperate stable* with consistently low negativity, *negative volatile* with high average negativity as well as highly variable negativity and positivity, and *moderate* with average quality interactions. Temperate stable dyads included older children with fewer behavior problems and mothers with less parenting distress. Results show that inconsistencies in conflict characteristics-whether negative or positive-tend to co-occur in families.

Ralph, Y.K., Schneider, J.M., Abel, A.D., & **Maguire, M.J.** (2020). Using the N400 Event-Related Potential (ERP) to study word learning from context in children from low and higher-income homes. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology*, 191, 1-15.

Children from low-SES homes have significantly smaller vocabularies than their higher-SES peers; one reason being that they learn fewer words from context. In this study, children from higher-SES homes showed the same neural response related to word learning as adults did in previous work, but children from low-SES homes did not, despite having learned the new words. These findings support previous work showing that children from low-SES homes may have differences or more variability in the neural components supporting language processing, and this variability may relate to word learning and, ultimately, vocabulary growth.

Thank You to Our Donors

The **Founders Society (f)** celebrates those who donate at least \$1,000 annually. The **Sustainers Society (s)** honors those who donate year after year. (*) Denotes CCF 2019-2020 Advisory Council Member

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CCF Garden Party, May 2019



New CCF Donor Wall, May 2019



Comets Giving Day, April 2019

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