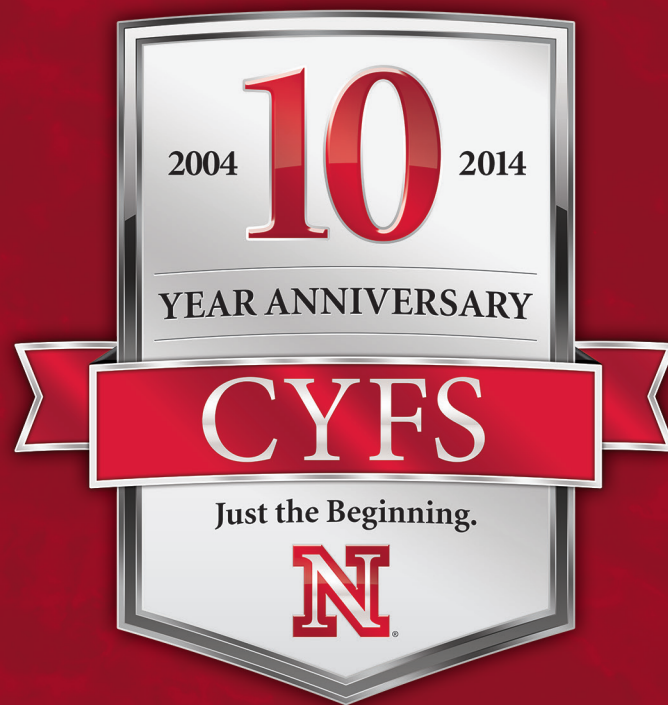


Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & Schools



ANNUAL REPORT
2013-2014

10TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Lincoln

Just the beginning.

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Susan M. Sheridan, PhD

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

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

Director, National Center for Research
on Rural Education

Message From the Director

For the past decade, the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools has striven to surpass the standards, transcend the responsibilities and exceed the expectations bestowed on us by the University of Nebraska in 2004. From the very start, we've endeavored to approach this mission with an enthusiasm that rivals the significance of the problems we address; an open-mindedness that equals the breadth of the issues we study; and a humility that matches the complexity of the people and institutions we seek to help.

Most importantly, we've continually enlisted the support and expertise of remarkable scholars, families, educators, administrators and organizations without whom we could not possibly have made it this far. These collaborations have profoundly informed the conduct, translation and communication of our research from day one to year 10. They have inspired, encouraged and sustained us. And they have ensured that we never forget why we established this center what seems both an age and a moment ago.

Many people have participated in this journey – one measured in time and effort, reflected by knowledge and progress, captured in memories and gratitude. Some have departed, yet their contributions continue to guide our course. Others will join, expanding and improving and evolving the work set forth by their predecessors.

In glancing back over the previous year, we carry forth a decade's worth of hope, evidence and belief that our past represents just a preview of our future. Just a glimpse at what we can achieve. Just the beginning.

Susan M. Sheridan



For a glimpse at a decade of impactful collaborations, research and results, please visit our 10-year anniversary website:

cyfs.unl.edu/2014



Our Mission

To advance the conduct of high-quality, interdisciplinary research that promotes the intellectual, behavioral and social-emotional development and functioning of individuals across educational, familial and community contexts. Central to this is enhancing our understanding of how these complex systems work dynamically to support the future of our nation.

About CYFS

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



CYFS Annual Report Executive Staff

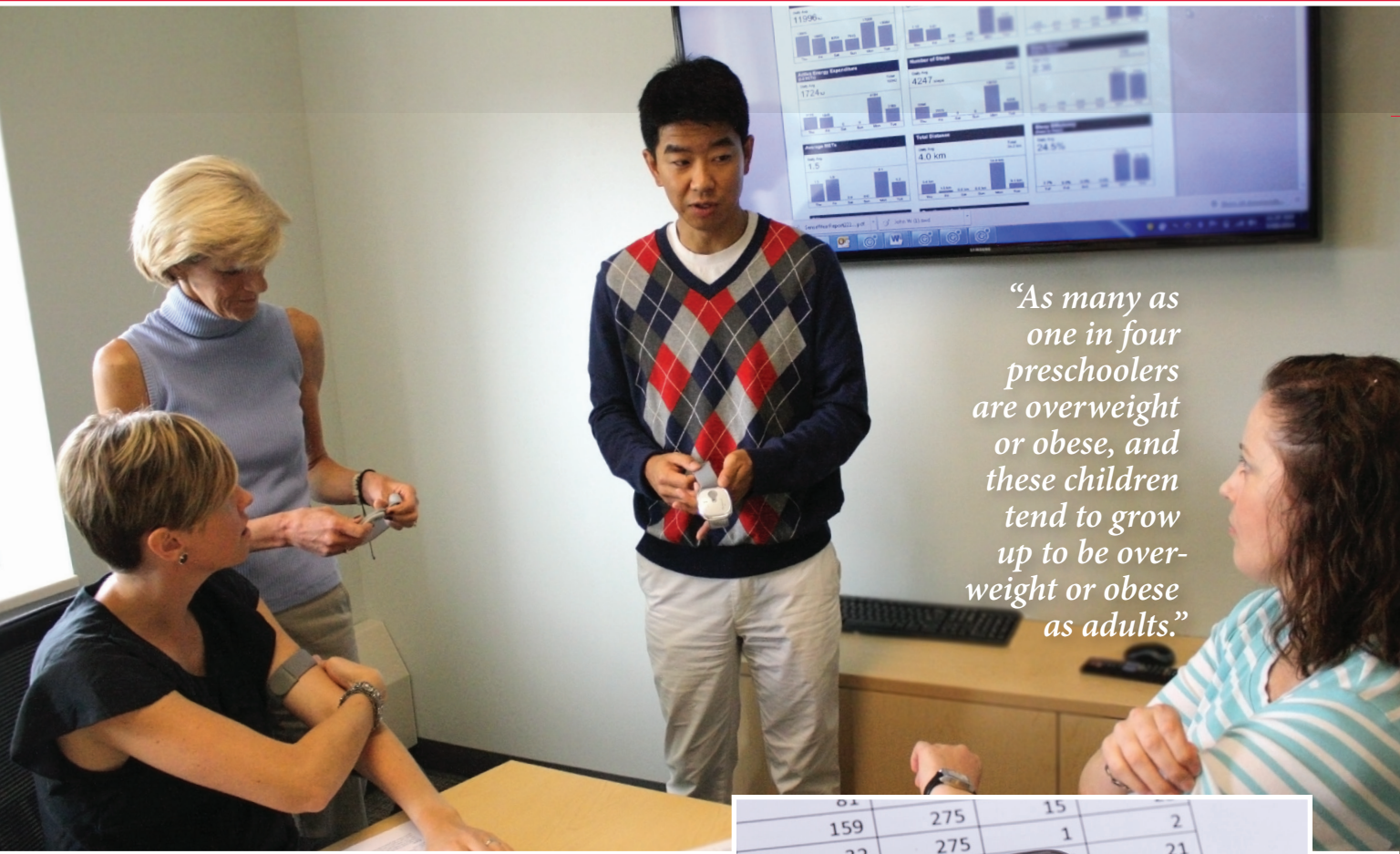
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“As many as one in four preschoolers are overweight or obese, and these children tend to grow up to be overweight or obese as adults.”



Projects Taking Bite out of Early Obesity

From the lunch table to the dinner table, classroom to living room, and playground to backyard, CYFS researchers have embarked on a series of studies designed to get at the heart of early childhood health and obesity.

CYFS faculty affiliate Dipti Dev has launched several projects intended to improve eating habits in child care settings, where preschool-aged children may consume up to three-quarters of their daily calories. One of

those studies examines whether allowing children to choose their own portion sizes – and seating them with teachers who model healthy eating behaviors – represents an effective alternative to standard plated meal routines. Dev has also begun developing and testing evidence-based materials to help child care practitioners implement positive practices, which include encouraging children to heed their appetites

From left: Brandy Clarke, Susan Sheridan, Jung-Min Lee & Lorey Wheeler discuss their study's tracking of activity levels.



and try new foods. The materials likewise outline which traditional strategies to avoid, such as using food as a reward and forcing children to clean their plates.

Dev's collective efforts to improve children's nutrition have received funding from the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension and Cornell University.

Two CYFS-led research teams have also earned grants to study whether obesity among children ages 3-5 can be curbed by a collaborative intervention known as Teachers and Parents as Partners, or TAPP. The pilot studies will help determine TAPP's potential to reduce obese children's body mass index, a common measure of obesity calculated from height and weight. They will also examine how the intervention affects children's physical activity and dietary habits, especially their consumption of foods high in sugar and saturated fat.

In collaboration with colleagues at the University of Nebraska Medical Center and University of Nebraska at Omaha, these interdisciplinary teams will further assess whether participating parents, preschool educators and daycare providers adapt their practices and environments to help children reach a healthier BMI.

“As many as one in four preschoolers are overweight or obese, and these children tend to grow up to be overweight or obese as adults,” said Brandy Clarke, a CYFS research assistant professor. “This also places them at risk for a host of negative outcomes: diabetes, high blood pressure, even cancer. Changing these trajectories

will have a big impact on children's health and help to address the widespread obesity epidemic.”

Funded by the intercampus Nebraska Research Initiative and the Society for the Study of School Psychology, the studies' investigators include Clarke; Susan Sheridan, director of CYFS; Terry Huang, professor at the University of Nebraska Medical Center; Jung-Min Lee, visiting faculty member at the University of Nebraska at Omaha; Lorey Wheeler, CYFS research assistant professor; Rachel Valleley, associate professor at UNMC; and Nancy Foster, assistant professor at UNMC.



Texting Sends Message about Drug Use on Streets

The mercurial nature of homelessness has kept researchers from pinpointing which factors limit substance use – and how others trigger it – among the nearly 3 million American youth living on the streets.

With a grant from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, CYFS affiliate Kimberly Tyler is using technology to address this sociological challenge for the sake of confronting the societal one.

Tyler, a professor of sociology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, is distributing prepaid cell phones to 150 homeless teens and young adults. For 30 days, Tyler will use an automated texting system to send the study participants a series of daily questions. She will specifically track whether alcohol and drug use among homeless youth changes in combination with the presence of social resources – including support networks, positive role models and homeless services – that may buffer against it.

Tyler also seeks to determine whether drug use varies alongside social and psychological stress experienced on the streets. Texts aimed at assessing this stress will ask where participants slept; whether they have been assaulted or struggled to find basic necessities; and whether they have felt anxious or depressed.

“This is a difficult population to access, sample and collect data on,” Tyler said. “Texting will provide us

“Texting will provide us with additional and unique data that has not previously been collected with this population.”

with additional and unique data that has not previously been collected with this population.”

The real-time nature of this data collection technique, known as SMS (short message service) surveying, should also begin to clarify whether connections among substance use, social resources and stressors are causal or correlational, said Tyler.

“A youth could be assaulted and [subsequently] drink, or they may be drinking and thus are at higher risk of being assaulted,” she said. “[Alternatively], they might occur together. We’re hoping that the texting data will help shed additional light on the relationship between victimization and substance use.”

The study’s findings could further curb alcohol and drug use among the homeless, Tyler said, by serving as the foundation of a planned follow-up study that explores texting’s use in intervention programs.



Kimberly Tyler



From left: Lisa Crockett & Kathleen Rudasill

Tantrums at home call for time-outs in the corner. Clamming up in the classroom means sparse company at the lunch table.

Young children’s temperamental issues often have predictable short-term consequences. Their long-term implications lack this clarity – but have the attention of several CYFS faculty affiliates intent on determining how early temperament shapes children’s developmental trajectories.

A recent research article co-authored by Kathleen Rudasill and Eric Buhs, associate professors of educational psychology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, revealed that students with difficult temperaments were more likely to experience negative interactions with teachers from kindergarten through second grade. The

Studies Examining Fluid Dynamics of Early Personality

study also found that these interactions predicted contentious relationships between these students and their peers in third grade.

“The teacher-child relationship is so important for kids’ long-term academic and social outcomes that ... we need to continue studying it,” said Rudasill, whose article appeared in the Journal of School Psychology.

Rudasill and Buhs have also teamed with Lisa Crockett, a UNL professor of psychology, on a two-year study funded by the National Institutes of Health. Crockett’s team is overseeing the analysis of a national data set that includes classroom- and home-based assessments of nearly 1,000 children over 15 years. The researchers aim to learn how children’s experiences across multiple social contexts influence the links between early temperament and adolescents’ developmental outcomes.

Crockett said the team is especially interested in whether support from one context can compensate for a lack thereof in a second. If the team does find context-related effects, Crockett said, the resulting conclusions could inform efforts to support children who might otherwise fall behind their peers.

“That would open up all kinds of opportunities for interventions,” said Crockett. “We could then use [our knowledge of] these different contexts to make life better for the kids who are at temperamental risk.”

CYFS affiliate Kathleen Rudasill is overseeing the 2014 Occasional Temperament Conference, a Nov. 8-9 event that will draw temperament-focused researchers, students and clinicians from around the world to Lincoln, Nebraska. For details on the conference, visit cyfs.unl.edu/otc2014.

MAP Academy Charts Methodological Pursuits

A new CYFS-allied academy is helping University of Nebraska-Lincoln researchers navigate the diverse methodological terrain that separates theory from practice, hypotheses from findings and data from interpretation.

In late 2013, UNL associate professor James Bovaird established the Nebraska Academy for Methodology, Analytics and Psychometrics (MAP) to support research across the educational, social and behavioral sciences at the university. Its focus on treating methodology as a distinct field of study, Bovaird said, should help the MAP Academy advance the techniques and tools that researchers need to further scholarship within their own disciplines.

The MAP Academy is preserving the outreach mission of its predecessor, the CYFS Statistics and Research Methodology Unit, by hosting workshops that outline recent advancements and answer questions relevant to researchers across campus. It will also continue coordinating visits from some of the nation's most prominent methodologists and statisticians.

"By contributing to and improving the methodological science – and then educating [researchers] as to how and why methodology matters – we will elevate the quality of research conducted at UNL," Bovaird said. "We also look forward to accomplishing this by conducting our own methodological research and disseminating it nationally."

As both investigators and project collaborators, MAP faculty have already provided expertise in areas



ranging from research design, applied statistics, latent variable modeling and psychometrics to longitudinal research, program evaluation, mixed methods and qualitative research. The academy has also exhibited its versatility by supporting endeavors that include the National Center for Research on Rural Education; the CYFS Summit on Research in Early Childhood; the anti-bullying Empowerment Initiative; and the CYFS Research Fellowship Program.

"We wanted to create a methodology center because UNL needed one," Bovaird said. "The university has a number of wonderful resources scattered around campus, and there have been several attempts of one or another stepping forward to take the lead, but we have the critical mass to actually make it happen."

For more on the MAP Academy, visit mapacademy.unl.edu.

Inaugural Fellowship Makes Time for Research

CYFS has spent a decade helping faculty formulate, conduct and disseminate their research. In celebration of its 10th anniversary, the center has established an annual fellowship aimed at pushing these collaborations – and the resulting scholarship – to new heights.

Created for tenured professors in the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's College of Education and Human Sciences, the CYFS Research Fellowship Program offers a year of professional leave for one to two faculty members looking to expand the depth and breadth of their research programs. The center will assist fellowship recipients with conceptualizing and writing grants, analyzing data, and developing interdisciplinary research networks designed to elevate the capacity and strengthen the impact of their work.

CYFS awarded its inaugural fellowships to faculty affiliates Kathleen Rudasill, associate professor of educational psychology, and Julia Torquati, professor of child, youth and family studies. Torquati will spend part of her fellowship analyzing how brain activity, heart rates, stress hormones and other physiological markers vary when children and adolescents perform cognitive tasks in outdoor versus indoor settings.

"No one has linked these two types of data," she said, "so we are developing methodological innovations [and] generating new knowledge about how natural environments can influence children's cognition and self-regulation."

Torquati also aims to identify physiological indicators of harmony between parents and preschool-aged children, specifically examining the dynamics of real-time interactions that she noted sometimes get lost when viewing data only in the aggregate.

"The fellowship will allow me to focus in-depth on the analytic processes for each of these projects," said Torquati, who will work closely with methodologists from the CYFS-affiliated MAP Academy. "The data are complex and the methods of analysis are not widely used."

"When studying in a new area or using new research tools, it is really important to be able to immerse yourself in it as much as possible – [similar to] learning a new language. The fellowship will also offer a different kind of opportunity to collaborate. It's much easier to learn a new language when you are talking to other people."



Above: Julia Torquati



Left: A child participates in Torquati's research on cognitive performance in outdoor settings.

Consortium, Schools Writing the Book on Student Literacy

Whether working in a Ralston school or Rushville classroom, educators across Nebraska have spent the past eight years taking a page from a CYFS-led consortium designed to improve student reading performance.

With support from the Nebraska Department of Education, CYFS has collaborated with more than 430 educators from 172 schools as part of the Nebraska Response-to-Intervention Consortium. Teachers participating in the consortium, meanwhile, have worked with an estimated 31,000 students during that span.

The consortium has helped those teachers and their schools adopt the Rtl approach, which uses individualized data on student literacy to guide educational decisions regarding curriculum, instruction and the intensity of reading-focused interventions. Consortium director Tanya Ihlo noted that Rtl differs from many approaches by taking a proactive, preventive stance toward reading difficulties. Consequently, she said, the consortium aims to support students of all reading levels, including those most at risk of falling behind.

“The consortium takes a systems approach to developing the strongest possible instruction in schools, which has made it more effective, efficient, replicable and sustainable,” Ihlo said. “Every school has its own unique set of factors that influence its level



“Every school has its own unique set of factors that influence its level of success. We provide differentiated trainings and supports to build capacity – from leadership down to the teaching staff – to meet those different needs.”

of success. We provide differentiated trainings and supports to build capacity – from leadership down to the teaching staff – to meet those different needs.”

Project managers Lynette Block, Andrea Boden and Loretta Tabor said participating schools have recognized that Rtl’s successful implementation requires schoolwide collaboration and a willingness to consider new ways of supporting classroom instruction. As the proportion of students meeting state benchmarks has increased, schools have responded with an impressive level of commitment to incorporating Rtl principles, the managers said.

“The level of knowledge and conversations among school and district teams is so advanced now,” Boden said. “Teachers and administrators recognize that their data is improving and know that it is a result of the strong systems they are building.”

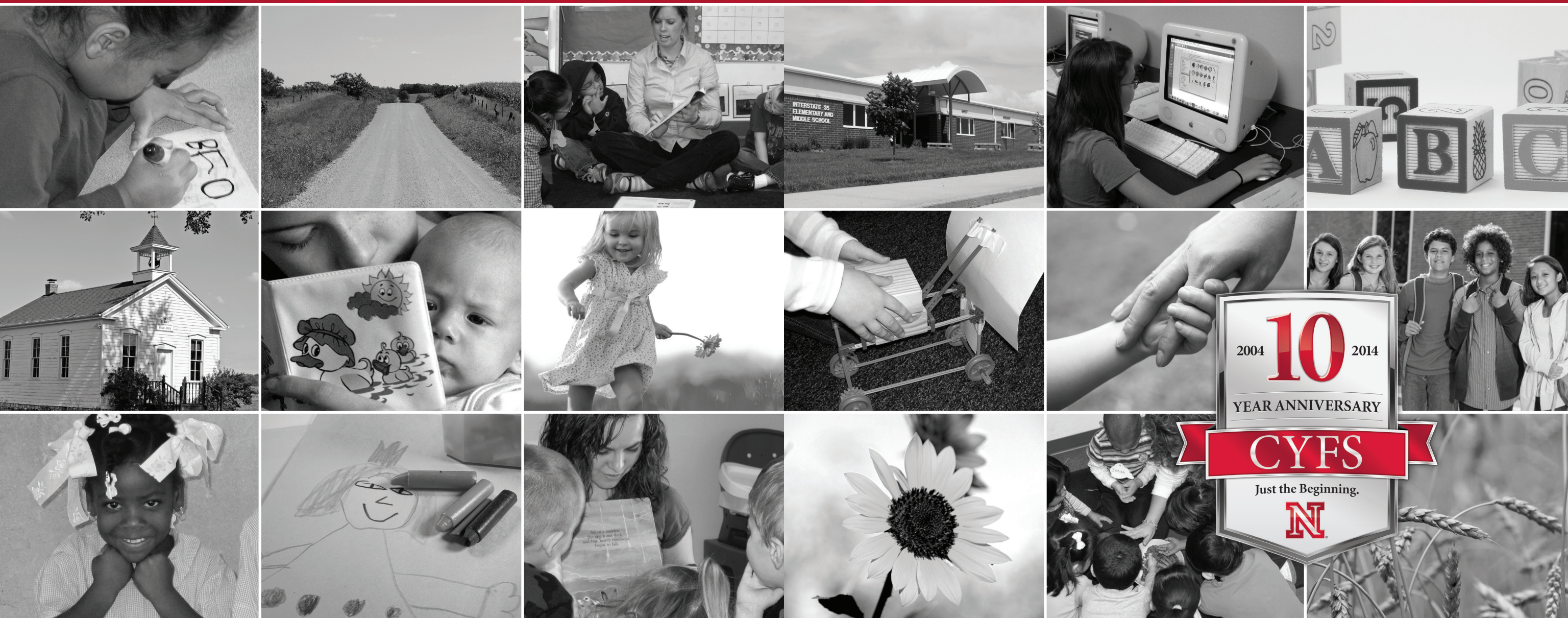
The consortium’s momentum has also taken other forms: Rtl practices first adopted at the elementary level are now working their way up to the high school ranks, and school administrators who move to new sites are bringing the Rtl approach with them, according to Block.

“Administrators and teachers are excited,” Tabor said. “They are setting higher goals ... and seeing their students achieve them.”



Celebrating Ten Years of Impact:
RESEARCH, RESULTS & COLLABORATION

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



For an expanded timeline and more information about the journey of CYFS, please visit our 10-year anniversary website:

cyfs.unl.edu/2014

October 2002

FACULTY RETREAT

Thirty-one faculty, three deans and two vice chancellors from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln assemble for a day-long interdisciplinary retreat to identify strengths and forge partnerships that will eventually yield a decade of innovative research.



September 2003

GETTING READY

Susan Sheridan and colleague Carolyn Pope Edwards receive a five-year, \$5 million grant to study the Getting Ready intervention. The funding represents the first major grant obtained through the new Program of Excellence.

2004

February 2004

FORMATION OF CYFS

The NU Board of Regents ratifies the formation of the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & Schools.



June 2003

PROGRAM OF EXCELLENCE

The University of Nebraska's Board of Regents approves the Nebraska Research Alliance on Children, Youth, Families and Schools as a Program of Excellence, one of the first 14 such programs designated by the university.



2002

2003

2005

2006



August 2006

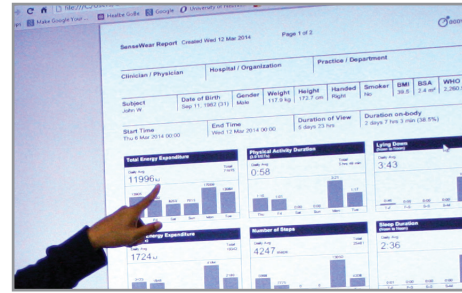
RTI CONSORTIUM

Funded by the Nebraska Department of Education, CYFS leads the launch of the first statewide Response-to-Intervention Consortium to help students improve their reading skills.

August 2005

STATISTICS & RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The hiring of an expert in ecosystemic methodology paves the way for the establishment of the CYFS Statistics & Research Methodology (SRM) Unit, headed by James Bovaird.



2007



August 2007

EARLY READING FIRST

Led by Lisa Knoche & Helen Raikes, CYFS earns a three-year, \$2.7 million grant for Early Reading First, an effort to enhance language and reading skills of preschool children.

2009

July 2009

RURAL EDUCATION RESEARCH CENTER

CYFS earns a five-year, \$10 million U.S. Department of Education grant to house the National Center for Research on Rural Education (R²Ed), the only one of its kind in the United States.



March 2010

CONJOINT BEHAVIORAL CONSULTATION

With \$3 million of support from the U.S. Department of Education, CYFS launches its second four-year study on the effectiveness of Conjoint Behavioral Consultation, a family-school partnership approach developed by CYFS director Susan Sheridan.

2010

September 2010

FAMILY-SCHOOL WORKING MEETING

CYFS hosts a national working meeting focused on family-school partnership research and its translation into practice. The meeting draws renowned scholars from 18 academic institutions.



2011

October 2011

ELEVATING HAITIAN EDUCATION

CYFS director Susan Sheridan establishes the nonprofit Elevating Haitian Education initiative. Its mission: advance educational opportunities for LaMontagne's children by helping to cover tuition costs their families cannot afford.



2012

2013



January 2014

RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The center announces the CYFS Research Fellowship Program, an annual opportunity that gives faculty from UNL's College of Education and Human Sciences a year of in-house leave to expand their research.

October 2013

MAP ACADEMY

CYFS announces the Nebraska Academy for Methodology, Analytics and Psychometrics (MAP), an outgrowth of the center's SRM Unit.

April 2013

CONNECT-INFORM-ADVANCE

R²Ed hosts *Connect-Inform-Advance*, a national conference that generates discussion and disseminates findings about factors influencing the academic success of rural K-12 students.

10 Years at a Glance

863

PK-12 EDUCATORS

PK-12 educators have taken part in CYFS projects ranging from professional development and family-school partnership initiatives to schoolwide, student-centered intervention and prevention programs.

41,480

CHILDREN & ADOLESCENTS

More than 41,000 children and adolescents have participated in the center's research across Nebraska, the Midwest and the United States. These programs have aimed to enhance school readiness, reading skills, science literacy, social-emotional maturity and other essential developmental capacities.

403

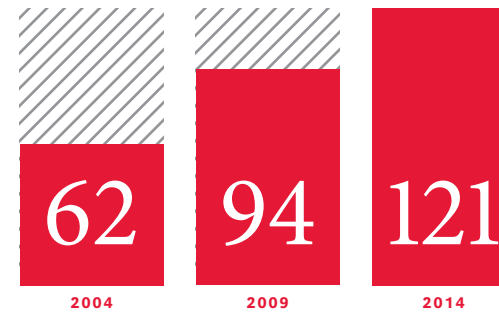
PK-12 SCHOOLS

More than 400 PK-12 schools in rural, suburban and urban districts have contributed to CYFS research. These schools have represented a wide range of socioeconomic and demographic populations, reflected both in student composition and available resources.



250 RURAL SCHOOLS

CYFS has partnered with more than 250 rural schools across Nebraska, the Midwest and the United States.



FACULTY AFFILIATES

The number of University of Nebraska faculty affiliated with CYFS has expanded steadily throughout the center's history, as has the breadth of research interests represented by those scholars.

223

STUDENT AFFILIATES

More than 200 UNL graduate and undergraduate students have affiliated themselves with CYFS since the center's inception in 2004.

\$54,745,061

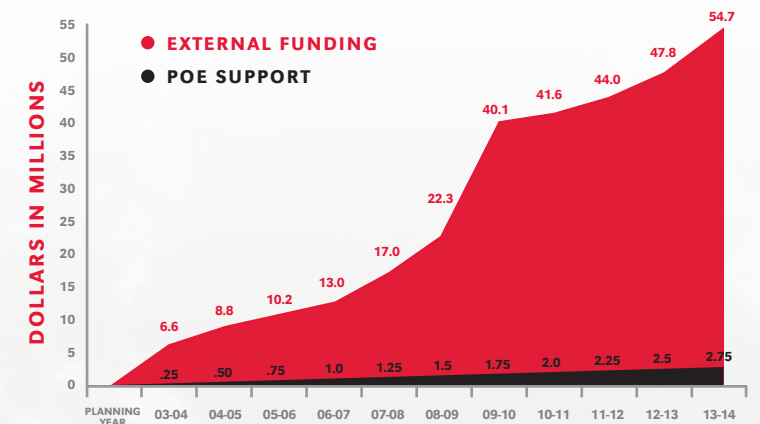
CYFS has received 129 research grants totaling more than \$54 million.

\$19.75

CYFS has earned \$19.75 in external funding for every \$1.00 invested via Program of Excellence funds.

43%

CYFS has received funding for approximately 43% of the grants it has submitted over the past 10 years.



Cumulative External Grant Dollars Relative to Program of Excellence (PoE) Support



Program Changes Equation for Early Math Education

A team of CYFS faculty affiliates has set out to show that introducing young children to math can involve far more than going by the numbers.

With the assistance of a grant from the Buffett Early Childhood Fund, the team has designed a professional development initiative named Math Early On that focuses on improving instruction and learning of the subject in preschool classrooms. University

of Nebraska-Lincoln professors Carolyn Edwards, Ruth Heaton and Victoria Molfese are specifically seeking to improve preschool teachers' content knowledge, motivation and self-efficacy, which the researchers anticipate will translate to similar gains among students. Participating educators also receive opportunities to hone leadership skills and cultivate partnerships with parents.

“Mathematics is just as natural a language for young children as any other way of understanding and representing their world,” Edwards said. “From the earliest age, children show curiosity about the numerical and quantitative aspects of objects and events around them. Research has established that children who enter school excited about math and equipped with a basic foundation are more likely to do well both immediately and in the long run.”

As a derivative of the K-3 Primarily Math program housed in faculty affiliate Jim Lewis’ Center for Science, Mathematics and Computer Education, Math Early On also aims to help teachers become more strategic, observant and reflective. The program consequently encourages educators to present mathematical scenarios that give children opportunities to explore key concepts such as patterns, numerals, measurement and geometry. These opportunities, the team

said, should help preschoolers begin developing fundamental skills that include classifying, sorting, sequencing and comparing. Such efforts should likewise allow teachers to promote the types of thinking that transcend grade levels and prepare preschoolers for later success, the researchers said.

Approximately 24 teachers from three preschool Educare centers in Lincoln and Omaha are participating in the year-long program, which runs through May 2015. As the project winds down, the research team will commence plans to expand Math Early On to the nationwide Educare Learning Network Initiative.

“We have a very strong partnership with the Educare Schools and their teachers,” Edwards said, “so each side is learning from the other.”

“Research has established that children who enter school excited about math and equipped with a basic foundation are more likely to do well both immediately and in the long run.”



From left: Ruth Heaton, Victoria Molfese & Carolyn Edwards



Left: Marjorie Kostelnik delivers closing remarks to a crowd of researchers, practitioners and policymakers.

Research Shares with Practice, Policy at Early Childhood Summit

CYFS continued to shape and color the dialogue on early childhood when it hosted a third biennial summit that unveiled its latest research findings to Nebraska’s practitioners and policymakers.

Co-sponsored by the Buffett Early Childhood Institute and First Five Nebraska, the 2014 CYFS Summit on Research in Early Childhood outlined results from 16 studies spanning the spectrum of early development, care and education.

Approximately 175 researchers, educators, service providers and administrators attended the day-long summit, engaging in several rounds of discussion dedicated to applying these findings toward early childhood practice and policy.

Samuel Meisels chats with attendees before his opening remarks.

“The commitment to improving Nebraska’s early care and education can be seen in the number and diversity of the partnerships that have formed around it.”



The April summit opened with remarks from CYFS director Susan Sheridan and Samuel Meisels, executive director of the Buffett Early Childhood Institute.

“The commitment to improving Nebraska’s early care and education can be seen in the number and diversity of the partnerships that have formed around it,” Sheridan said. “It is in this spirit that we, who together encompass every point on the spectrum of early childhood, have assembled here.”

The remarks preceded a keynote address from Lynne Vernon-Feagans, a William C. Friday Distinguished Professor of early childhood, intervention and literacy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Vernon-Feagans’ presentation outlined preliminary results from the Family Life Project, an ongoing decade-long study that has investigated how the challenges facing rural parents shape childrearing practices and children’s development.

CYFS personnel and affiliates followed with presentations on a broad range of issues, from the impacts of context and socioeconomic realities to the development of approaches aimed at improving

children’s cognitive, social-emotional, behavioral and physical development.

Multiple researchers discussed efforts to bolster children’s early language, literacy and reading skills, with others addressing professional development initiatives for child care providers and PK-3 teachers. Presentation topics also included the development of children’s moral reasoning, economic impacts of early childhood investments, consequences of toddlers’ sleep habits and the importance of fostering partnerships in rural communities.

Attendees heard closing remarks from Prem Paul, vice chancellor for research and economic development, and Marjorie Kostelnik, dean of the College of Education and Human Sciences.



Above: Participants greet one another prior to the start of the summit. Right: Keynote speaker Lynne Vernon-Feagans



For access to videos and slideshows from the summit, visit cyfs.unl.edu/ecs.

Study Seeks Ties that Bind Families & Schools

Want to learn what makes a partnership work? Listen closely.

CYFS doctoral affiliate Shannon Holmes is doing just that while studying an intervention named Teachers and Parents as Partners, which research has shown cultivates family-school ties that help address students' academic and social-emotional challenges.

To derive the secrets of the intervention's success, Holmes is analyzing audio files from 200 meetings of trained consultants, teachers and parents who participated in it.

The data will allow Holmes to explore whether certain partnership strategies – focusing on strengths, showing sensitivity and responsiveness, fostering teamwork – help consultants strengthen the relationships between teachers and parents. She's also examining whether

this dynamic between strategies and relationships is itself influenced by the levels of engagement, turn-taking, perspective-taking and coherence that teachers and parents display during their interactions.

"Audio recordings provide richness to the data that wouldn't otherwise be captured with transcripts," said Holmes, who received a Dissertation Grant Award from the Society for the Study of School Psychology. "Hearing how parents, teachers and consultants speak to each other during meetings is going to provide us with the context to better understand their interactions."

Holmes noted that gaining a grasp of the intervention's inner workings could allow practitioners to better serve educators, caregivers and, ultimately, students.

"The findings can help psychologists tailor the intervention to the individual needs of the families and schools with which they are working," Holmes said. "For example, if we find that perspective-taking is important to the process, but a parent and teacher aren't trying to see each other's point of view, a consultant could model and build in additional opportunities for that."

"By examining what consultants do, as well as the ways parents and teachers interact, we can start to get an idea of how these relationships are built and why they remain so important."

Shannon Holmes



Center Shows Initiative in Expanding Education

Stricken both by a massive 2010 earthquake and the Western Hemisphere's most profound poverty, Haitian families have struggled to afford the tuition required by elementary and high schools that typically receive little to no governmental support.

In autumn 2013, CYFS director Susan Sheridan made her third visit to the LaMontagne (law-mawn-TYN') region of Haiti on behalf of the nonprofit Elevating Haitian Education initiative she established in late 2011. Since the inception of the initiative, generous donors have ensured that 50 LaMontagne students could attend school during each of the last two years.

The region's education association, Comité Education LaMontagne, has responded by voluntarily raising grade standards and requiring regular attendance for scholarship students. Families have responded by

coordinating with teachers to foster learning opportunities at home. And Sheridan has responded with "50 States, 50 Children," a personal quest to run a full or half-marathon in every state – one for each of the students the initiative aims to continue supporting through graduation.



Susan Sheridan visits a Haitian school.

Please visit cyfs.unl.edu/haiti to learn more about providing another year of education for a child of LaMontagne.

Publications

In disseminating important research findings, CYFS affiliates aim to advance the scientific knowledge base while informing practice, policy and future research related to children, youth, families and schools. Select publications are listed below, with faculty and student affiliates in bold.

Adams, K., Pedersen, J. E., & Narboni, N. (2014). Do you hear what I hear? *Science and Children, 51*(6), 56–63.

Allen, K. D., & Wallace, D. P. (2013). Effectiveness of using noncontingent escape for general behavior management in a pediatric dental clinic. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis, 46,* 723–737.

Braithwaite, D. O., Baxter, L. A., & Schrodt, P. (in press). Becoming a “real family”: Turning points and competing discourses in stepfamilies. In **D. O. Braithwaite** & J. T. Wood (Eds.), *Casing interpersonal communication: Case studies in personal and social relationships*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.

Bryant, M., Cheng, A., & Notman, R. (Eds.). (2014). Exploring high need and social justice leadership in schools around the globe [Special issue]. *Management in Education, 28*(3).

Cantarero, R., & Potter, J. (2014). Quality of life, perceptions of change, and psychological well-being of the elderly population in small rural towns in the Midwest. *International Journal of Aging and Human Development, 78,* 301–324.

Castillo, J., **Welch, G. W.,** & Sarver, C. (2013). Fathers’ employment and family involvement: The relationship between fathers’ employment, workplace environment, and father involvement. *Journal of Social Service Research, 3,* 380–396.

Catalano, T. (2013). Anti-immigrant ideology in U.S. crime reports: Effects on the education of Latino children. *Journal of Latinos and Education, 12,* 254–270. doi:10.1080/15348431.2013.785408

Chai, W., Novotny, R., Maskarinec, G., Le Marchand, L., Franke, A. A., & Cooney, R. V. (2014). Serum conenzyme Q10, α -tocopherol, γ -tocopherol, and C-reactive protein levels and body mass index in adolescent and premenopausal females. *Journal of the American College of Nutrition, 8,* 1–6.

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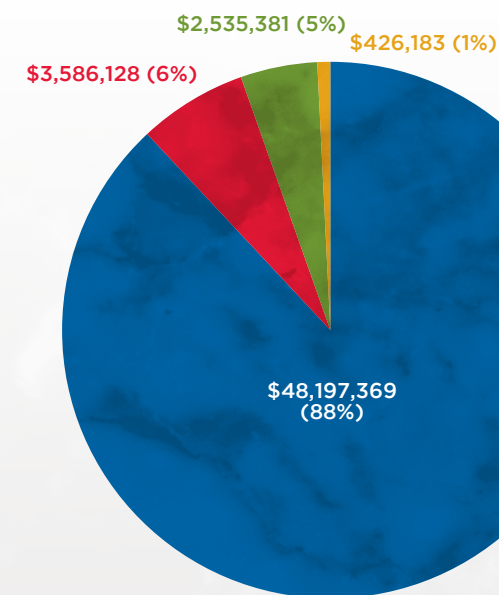
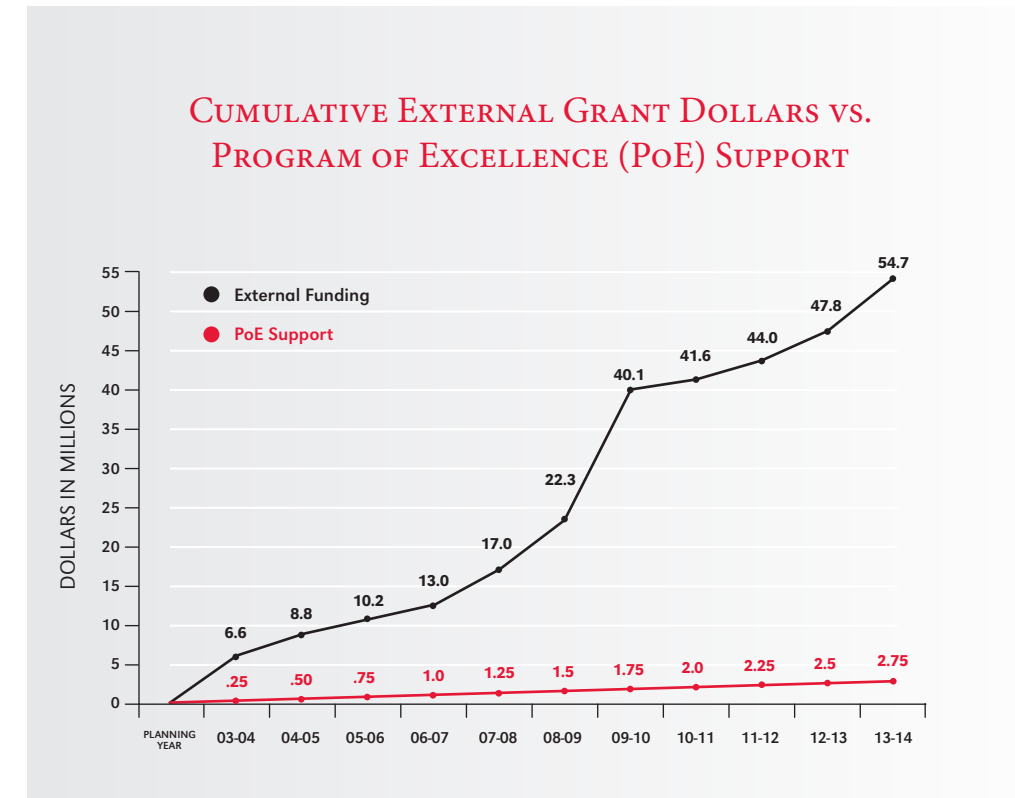
Landscape of Support

SNAPSHOT OF CUMULATIVE CYFS GRANT ACTIVITY

Total Program of Excellence Funds to Date	\$2,750,000
Total Number of Grants Submitted through CYFS	309
Total Dollar Amount of Grants Submitted	\$270,242,915
Total Number of Grants Funded	129
"Hit Rate" of Funded Grants (based on known decisions)	43%
Total Dollar Amount of External Grants Funded	\$54,318,878
Total Dollar Amount of Internal Grants Funded	\$426,183
Total Dollar Amount of All Grants Funded	\$54,745,061
Percentage of Grant Dollars from Federal Agencies	88%
Return Rate to UNL for Every \$1 Invested	\$19.75

Support for the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools (CYFS) is generated primarily through Program of Excellence (PoE) funds and external grants. The table above highlights information regarding grants submitted, grants awarded, "hit rate," total dollar amounts awarded, and return to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln since the center's inception in 2004.

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



SOURCES OF FUNDING

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

- Federal
- State
- Foundation
- Internal

* Percentages rounded to nearest 1%

Active Grants & Contracts

The following grants and contracts received new or ongoing funding during the 2013 CYFS fiscal year.

FEDERAL AWARDS (\$29,399,964)

Administration for Children and Families

Identifying Risk for and Preventing Child Maltreatment in Early Head Start Families

PIs: Grace Hubel, David Hansen, Lisa Knoche, Mary Fran Flood

Intervention Fidelity, Teacher Perceptions and Child Outcomes of a Literacy Curriculum in a Head Start Program: A Mixed Methods Study

PIs: Dawn Davis, Helen Raikes

National Institutes of Health

Early Temperament, Social/Contextual Support, and Adolescent Adjustment

PIs: Lisa Crockett, Kathleen Rudasill, Eric Buhs, James Bovaird

Stressors, Protective Factors, and Substance Use among Homeless Youth and Young Adults

PIs: Kimberly Tyler, Kristen Olson

National Science Foundation

Nebraska Wearable Technologies

PIs: Bradley Barker, Gwen Nugent, Jennifer Melander, Carl Nelson, Neal Grandgenett

Scale-Up: National Robotics in 4-H: Workforce Skills for the 21st Century

PIs: Bradley Barker, Viacheslav Adamchuk, Gwen Nugent, Neal Grandgenett, Bing Chen

Strategies: Action at a Distance

PIs: Daniel Claes, Jon Pedersen, Gregory Snow

U.S. Department of Education

A Meta-Analysis of Parent Involvement Interventions and Family-School Partnerships' Effects on Student Outcomes

PIs: Susan Sheridan, Elizabeth Moorman Kim, S. Natasha Beretvas

A Randomized Trial of Conjoint Behavioral Consultation (CBC) in Rural Educational Settings: Efficacy for Elementary Students with Disruptive Behavior

PIs: Susan Sheridan, Todd Glover, Gina Kunz, James Bovaird

Efficacy of Supplemental Early Vocabulary Connections Instruction for English Language Learners

PIs: J. Ron Nelson, James Bovaird

Efficacy of the Getting Ready Intervention at Supporting Parental Engagement and Positive Outcomes for Preschool Children at Educational Risk

PIs: Susan Sheridan, Lisa Knoche, Carolyn Edwards, James Bovaird

Language Bases of Skilled Reading Comprehension

PIs: Tiffany Hogan, J. Ron Nelson, James Bovaird

Mountain Prairie Upgrade Partnership Itinerant (MPUP-I)

PI: Malinda Eccarius

National Center for Research on Rural Education (R²Ed)

PIs: Susan Sheridan, Todd Glover, Gwen Nugent, Gina Kunz, James Bovaird

Postdoctoral Fellowship for Research on Consultation-Based Interventions for Students with Social and Behavioral Concerns

PIs: Susan Sheridan, James Bovaird, Todd Glover

School Psychology Specialization for Toddlers with Autism Spectrum Disorders

PIs: Susan Sheridan, Therese Mathews, Gina Kunz

STATE AWARDS (\$706,958)

Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education

Coaching for Sustainability: Peer Coaching Science Inquiry in Rural Schools

PIs: SoonChun Lee, Gwen Nugent, Gina Kunz

Enhancing Nebraska 6–12 Nebraska Teachers' Knowledge of Earth Science Content

PIs: Mindi Searls, Leilani Arthurs, Elizabeth Lewis

Nebraska Department of Education

State-Wide Response-to-Intervention Consortium for Training and Evaluation

PIs: Todd Glover, Tanya Ihlo

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

Obesity Prevention Practices in Early Care and Education Programs: Development of a Web-Based Instrument for Assessment and Programming

PI: Dipti Dev

FOUNDATION / OTHER AWARDS (\$1,817,195)

An Ecological Approach to Family Style Dining: Encouraging Healthier Food Choices in Preschoolers in Childcare

Funding Source: Cornell University

PI: Dipti Dev

Bullying Prevention Center – Education and Outreach Division

Funding Source: Andrew Gomez Dream Foundation

PI: Susan Swearer

Conjoint Behavioral Consultation: A Cross-Systemic Intervention to Manage Overweight and Obesity in Early Childhood

Funding Source: UNL Office of Research and Economic Development

PIs: Susan Sheridan, Brandy Clarke

Conjoint Behavioral Consultation via Distance Delivery (CBC-D): An Evaluation of Efficacy and Acceptability

Funding Source: Society for the Study of School Psychology

PIs: Michael Coutts, Susan Sheridan

Distance Learning and Art Museum Education

Funding Source: Windgate Charitable Foundation

PIs: Greg Welch, Leslie Hawley

Early Childhood Course Conversion

Funding Source: Buffett Early Childhood Fund

PI: Carolyn Edwards

Early Steps to School Success

Funding Source: Save the Children Foundation

PI: Helen Raikes

Identifying the Service Needs of Vulnerable Children and Families in Lancaster and Saunders Counties: A Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment

Funding Source: Community Action Partnership of Lancaster and Saunders Counties

PIs: Maria de Guzman, Lisa Knoche, Rodrigo Cantarero

Math Early On

Buffett Early Childhood Fund

PIs: Ruth Heaton, Carolyn Edwards, Victoria Molfese

Measuring the Impacts and Returns from Early Childhood Education and Programming in Nebraska: A Phase 2 Proposal to First Five Nebraska

Funding Source: Nebraska Children and Families Foundation

PIs: Lisa Knoche, David Rosenbaum, Eric Thompson

Pilot Test of a Cross-System Intervention Managing Overweight and Obesity for Young Children

Society for the Study of School Psychology

PI: Brandy Clarke

Temperament and Preschool Classroom Processes as Predictors of Kindergarten Achievement for Children with Demographic Risk

Funding Source: American Educational Research Association

PI: Kathleen Rudasill

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