OCD, 20 Years Later

Redefining The University's Role In Helping Children And Families

Under the management of the University of Pittsburgh Office of Child Development (OCD), the Early Childhood Initiative-Demonstration Project emerged after three years as an example of how collaboration, careful planning, and a research-based approach to creating and sustaining quality learning opportunities can deliver outcomes ranging from improved school readiness among low-income children to significantly lower special education enrollment.

But it was just one example of OCD's skill at managing collaborations that have produced accomplishments that OCD and its collaborators celebrated at OCD's 20th anniversary on November 5, 2006.

OCD's qualifications included an extensive track record of managing complex programs with an emphasis on quality and fiscal responsibility. But it was OCD's decades-long experience working in the region's neighborhoods and the relationships it had forged with parents, agencies, policy makers, community leaders, and others that convinced the foundation it was the right fit for the job, said Margaret Petruska, Senior Program Director of Children, Youth & Families at the Heinz Endowments, one

---

Latin America

OCD Travels To Central America To Evaluate Orphanage Reforms

Scorching heat and frequent disruptions in electrical and water service made August difficult in Managua, Nicaragua. For a local orphanage, it meant having to cut its order of fresh chicken in half to adjust to the lack of adequate refrigeration, enduring the summer heat without fans, and storing scarce water during the day so some would be available for the children at night. It was under such conditions that University of Pittsburgh Office of Child Development (OCD) researchers began their work to address a concern more de-

bilitating to the development of the orphanage's children than oppressive weather and nagging power outages.

OCD researchers are evaluating efforts to improve the social-emotional interaction between the caregivers and children at the orphanage as part of a wider Central America project involving two nonprofit partners, Whole Child International and WestEd. During the three-year project, the partnership hope to also work in two orphanages in San Salvador, El Salvador.

While most children who are adopted from orphanages develop without problems, they do have a higher frequency of extreme behaviors. Studies suggest that the lack of warm, caring, sensitive, and responsive interaction with caregivers is responsible.

Improving orphanage conditions has been a focus of OCD's work over the past five years in St. Petersburg, Russia. There, a partnership with Russian researchers has helped caregivers provide more nurturing care which produced better physical, mental, and emotional development among the children.

Nicaragua

The Russia project and its promising outcomes led Whole Child International to approach OCD for help evaluating several Central American orphanages. Whole Child International's work is focused on improving the care provided by orphanages worldwide. OCD was asked to evaluate social-emotional interventions similar to those used in Russia that are being implemented in Central America by the nonprofit WestEd, a research, development, and service agency dedicated to enhancing education and human development.

In Nicaragua, the work involves an orphanage that employs a staff of about 50 caregivers, who care for 65 children. At the orphanage, WestEd is providing training that emphasizes the importance of social-emotional caregiving. OCD also will evaluate similar interventions being planned by WestEd in two Salvadorian orphanages, which care for approximately 120 children and 100 children respectively.

The OCD research team's trip to Managua in August, one of several they will take over a three-year period, focused on collecting pre-intervention data. The research team used several different instruments – the Battelle Developmental Inventory-Second Edition, the ITERS and ECERS assessments of caregiving environments, and a caregiver rating scale developed by OCD on the basis of the Russian experience to assess caregiver-child interaction.

"It can be a painstaking process," said Christina Groark, Ph.D., project leader and OCD Co-Director. "You have to observe each and every caregiver several times performing several different tasks and rate the caregivers across several different categories. And that is just one of the instruments we use.

"While it is hard to really tell what you will have before the intervention is over, we assessed more than 50 caregivers and roughly 65 children and we have a solid data base from which to move forward."

Success In Russia

More than five years ago, OCD researchers began collaborating with a team of Russian researchers to implement interventions designed to improve social-emotional development among children in two Russian baby homes. A third baby home, or orphanage, was used as a control group.

Researchers reported that by creating a family-like atmosphere and providing children with more attention and stable relationships with adults, they could improve the mental, social-emotional, and physical development of children in the orphanages.

The OCD and Russian team of collaborators trained caregivers in child development basics and other skills and oversaw changes within the orphanages that gave children fewer and more constant caregivers. The team, for example, conducted workshops with the caregivers to help them understand how to make themselves more emotionally and socially accessible to the children. These workshops included role playing, teaching seminars, and dialogue with the caregivers so that they could discuss their desires and insecurities. The workshops, along with structural changes within the baby homes, resulted in stunning improvements.

For example, the children generally improved their Battelle scores, particularly those children with severe disabilities, who improved a great deal. Children also improved in other areas such as physical development, functional abilities, mental, language, motor, adaptive, personal-social, and emotional development.

In addition, the environment at the baby homes has improved so that caregivers are no longer reluctant to hug or compliment the children. Children interact with caregivers, looking to them for affection and for safety and comfort in times of crisis, and they interact more cooperatively with their peers – all of which were almost never observed before the intervention.

Such findings suggest that with appropriate intervention, care within orphanages can be significantly improved by focusing on the emotional-social relationship between the caregiver and the child, and that the approach adopted in the Russian baby homes might provide a financially realistic solution for helping the hundreds of thousands of children in orphanages worldwide. The findings also have implications for American children in foster care and the millions who spend long hours in unregulated home care.

Next Steps

In Nicaragua, WestEd is conducting a year-long intervention during which they will train the caregivers in more effective and appropriate social-emotional caregiving methods. OCD will return to collect immediate post-intervention data to see if the intervention has produced changes in caregiving. One year after the intervention has been completely implemented,

OCD: Key Projects And Partnerships Defined The Past 10 Years

For 20 years, the University of Pittsburgh Office of Child Development (OCD) has seeded, planned, funded, implemented, or managed some 265 programs and projects that seek to improve the well-being of children, youth, and families. A key to the success of these programs has been OCD's collaboration with more than 350 community partners. The past 10 years has been particularly fruitful. Here are highlights of a few of the significant projects over that period:

· **Early Head Start:** OCD operates one of the nation's first Early Head Start programs, a federal initiative that provides intensive and comprehensive child development and family support services to low-income families. An evaluation of the Pittsburgh Early Head Start program and 16 others across the nation reported significant gains among the young children they serve, including better performance on cognitive, language, and social-emotional development measures. The children's families also earned high marks in parenting behavior, home environment, and other measures.

· **Early Childhood Initiative – Demonstration Project:** In 2001, the ambitious Early Childhood Initiative, which sought to deliver high-quality early care and education to Allegheny County's poorest children, was scaled back and OCD was selected to manage the resulting demonstration project, which relied on a number of community partners. Three years later, a study by the Scaling Progress in Early Childhood Settings Program Evaluation Research Team at Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh reported significant gains among the children who participated in ECI-DP. Outcomes included improved school readiness, reduced grade retention, and lower rates of children entering special education programs.

· **Strengthening Early Learning Supports (SELS) Project:** In 17 months, quality early learning opportunities became more abundant and strategies to sustain them for years to come had taken root in four Allegheny County at-risk neighborhoods as a result of SELS. Under OCD management, several community organizations and agencies coordinated existing services to improve literacy, child care quality, children's overall development, learning readiness, and the breadth and quality of early learning opportunities for children with special needs. For example, parents, educators, early care and education providers and others collaborated to improve school readiness, child care providers improved the quality of their services, and parents increased their knowledge in literacy and learned how to help their children become better readers.

· **Barriers to Mental Health:** A 2003 environmental scan conducted by OCD revealed that reports of very young children with serious behavior problems were rising dramatically, while desperate parents, child care staff, and early education teachers found few services to help. It was the first-ever account of the growing population of children with behavioral problems in the county and the fragmented service system. As part of the scan, an advisory group offered recommendations for improvements. The scan was part of OCD's ongoing efforts to improve mental health services for young children.

· **Support for noncustodial fathers:** When children do not have their fathers involved in their lives, they are at higher risk of poor outcomes ranging from failure in school to emotional or behavioral problems. OCD's efforts to help noncustodial fathers become more engaged parents has included partnering with Goodwill Industries of Pittsburgh and the University of Pittsburgh School of Law to launch the Father's Collaborative. Collaborative programs include a law clinic, father-focused parenting and child development training and publications, and training for workers in family-related agencies and organizations on ways to better engage fathers in their activities.

· **United for Children:** In 2003, OCD convened and coordinated United for Children, a group of more than 80 local leaders in early childhood care and education. The group drafted a comprehensive plan for early care and education in Allegheny County that provides a roadmap for offering all children high-quality early childhood services and addresses issues such as quality and professional development, services for children with special needs, engaging parents in early care and education, and public awareness of the importance early education in improving child outcomes.

(Projects continued from Page 3)

· **Governor's Task Force On Early Care And Education:** OCD was a key player in the Universities Children's Policy Collaborative that produced five reports on the state of early care and education in Pennsylvania. Gov. Mark Schweiker's task force drew on UCPC's research to draft its 2002 blueprint for improving early care and education in the state. OCD's partners were Pennsylvania State University's College of Health and Human Development and the Center for Public Policy at Temple University. UCPC reported a rising demand for early childhood services and evidence that quality early education and child care offers benefits ranging from better math and reading scores to less delinquency. UCPC also reported that fewer than 20% of early childhood programs in the state offered the quality environments needed to achieve that potential.

· **Pennsylvania children's policies:** OCD directed the Governor's Cabinet for Children and Families and the state Commission for Children and Families, which have raised the profile of children and family issues at the highest levels of state government and promoted greater coordination among government departments and collaboration with stakeholders outside Harrisburg. The Cabinet brings together the secretaries of welfare, education, budget and other high-ranking state government officials to recommend ways to make services to children and families more responsive, efficient, effective, and easier to access. The 40-member Commission, made up of stakeholders from across the state, provides support for the Cabinet and a broader voice on child and family issues.

· **International collaborations:** OCD collaborated with colleagues in Russia to design, implement, and evaluate interventions that improved caregiver practices in orphanages in St. Petersburg and significantly raised the developmental levels of children in every major domain. The interventions, which included caregiver training and changes to orphanage infrastructure, are being implemented in other orphanages in Russia. OCD is also participating with two other international organizations to create, implement, and evaluate interventions in orphanages in Nicaragua and El Salvador.

· **Linking Information, Families and Technology (LIFT):** OCD collaborated with a for-profit technology firm, KIT Solutions, Inc., to develop a web-based information management system designed to solve a long-standing problem for family support centers – how to effectively and efficiently collect, store, and manage the vital data on children, families, and services that allow them to measure the effectiveness of programs and examine trends and outcomes. LIFT, introduced as a prototype in 2006, promises to be a faster, more flexible, and more powerful way of performing those essential tasks.

· **Children, youth, and families publications:** In the past 10 years, OCD has redoubled its efforts to publish and distribute accurate and timely information on children, youth, and families to a wide audience. With support from the Frank and Theresa Caplan Fund for Early Childhood Development and Parenting Education, for example, OCD produced more than 50 *Parenting Guides* and publishes *Background*, an annual set of reports on young children and the issues that affect them that is offered free-of-charge to journalists, students, educators, and others. Other publications include parenting columns on some 50 topics that interested newspapers, agencies, and others can obtain online at no cost. ∎

(Reforms continued from Page 2)

OCD will evaluate the caregivers and children to measure its effectiveness. OCD researchers intend to perform the same assessment process in the two Salvadorian orphanages during the same period. In all, they hope to evaluate interventions that involve more than 150 caregivers and nearly 300 children in the three Central American orphanages.

"This project is important not only because of the body of knowledge it will add to the field of child development, but because it is applicable knowledge," said Robert McCall, Ph.D., a research team member and OCD Co-Director. "The Russian project was a tremendous success and gave us hope that orphanages could be improved through financially realistic means. It demonstrated that you don't have to build whole new buildings, buy the latest toys, or hire a bunch of new staff. It was about changing mind sets and interaction patterns."

"The Latin American project will allow us to see if a similar intervention can be duplicated in a different culture and with multiple orphanages. Our assessment will clarify if social-emotional interventions are a viable option for the future. If it turns out that they are, then it could change the manner in which orphanages are operate throughout the world and that would make a huge impact on hundreds of thousands of children."

This story was written by Ian Downing. Ian works at the University of Pittsburgh's Office of Child Development as the assistant to the co-director and as part of the research team conducting the Latin American Orphanage Project. ∎

Racial-Ethnic Socialization: Understanding How Children Of Minorities Learn About Race, Culture, And Prejudice

Among the nation's minorities, the messages children receive about race, culture, identity, and discrimination are an important part of their development. At the same time, the content of those messages and how they are delivered are increasingly seen as important responsibilities of the families in which these children are raised.

Understanding racial-ethnic socialization – how children learn about race and ethnicity and related issues – is a developmental phenomenon of growing interest in the United States, where children of today's minority groups, particularly African American and Hispanic children, are expected to account for 50% of the school population by 2035.[1]

Much remains to be learned about racial-ethnic socialization within minority families. However, available research does provide insight into the characteristics of racial-ethnic socialization practices, including the types of messages given about culture and identity, the ways children are prepared to face bias, and the strategies parents use to discuss race and related issues with their children.

Studies also suggest that children can be significantly influenced by the messages they receive about race and ethnicity. These messages, to some degree, has been found to affect children's racial and ethnic identity, self-esteem, and their ability to cope with discrimination. Racial-ethnic socialization has also been associated with psychosocial outcomes, such as depression, anger management, and fighting.

Racial-Ethnic Socialization Characteristics

Racial-ethnic socialization practices within minority families are influenced by characteristics of children and parents, characteristics of the neighborhoods and regions in which they live, and their experiences with discrimination. Key characteristics that shape racial-ethnic socialization practices include:

· **Children's age**. Studies have found that parents' messages about race, ethnicity, and discrimination tend to shift according to children's cognitive abilities and experiences. In one study, for example, African American mothers prepared their older children to cope with discrimination more than they did their younger children.[2]

· **Children's gender**. Several studies of African American families report that boys are more likely to receive messages about racial barriers, while the messages girls receive emphasize racial pride. Other studies, however, report finding no significant gender differences in the messages minority children receive about race.

· **Parents' immigration status**. Research suggests recent immigrants are more likely to teach their children about their ethnic origin, native language, and traditions than immigrant parents who have lived in the United States longer.[3]

· **Parents' socioeconomic status**. Parents of higher socioeconomic status report more racial-ethnic socialization than lower socioeconomic parents. For example, studies suggest that parents with higher incomes and more years of schooling more frequently teach their children about cultural traditions, pride, and how to cope with discrimination.[4]

· **Neighborhood**. Few studies have examined neighborhood influence on minority racial-ethnic socialization, but those that do suggest the more integrated the neighborhood is, the more likely parents are to teach their children how to cope with discrimination.

· **Experiences with discrimination**. Several studies suggest that parents who experience messages about discrimi-

nation at work or in the community are more likely to prepare their children for bias and pass on messages of caution about people of other races.

The practices parents use to address race and ethnicity with their children vary among minority families. The key differences include the issues they address and the content of the messages they convey to their children.

Several themes emerge from recent research that help define the focus of the various types of racial-ethnic socialization practices found within minority families. Some practices teach children about their racial or ethnic heritage and culture. Some prepare minority children for the discrimination they may experience. Closely related are practices that promote a wariness or mistrust of other races and cultures. Other practices downplay racial or ethnic group membership and focus on encouraging children to value the individual qualities of people they encounter.

Cultural Socialization

Cultural socialization is when parents either deliberately or implicitly teach their children about racial and ethnic heritage and history, and promote cultural customs, traditions, and racial, cultural and ethnic pride. Common practices include talking about historical and cultural figures, celebrating cultural holidays, and exposing children to books, music, and stories related to their race and ethnicity.

Promoting cultural knowledge, pride, and traditions is a key aspect of child rearing among minority parents, studies suggest. Among African Americans, for example, the percentage of parents who report engaging in cultural socialization practices with their children range from 33%[5] to as many as 80%.[6] Among ethnic minorities, a high number of parents report doing the same. For example, about 66% of Japanese parents[7], and 85% or more of Dominican, Mexican, and Puerto Rican parents[8, 9] report engaging in cultural socialization.

Research suggests parents are more likely report having engaged in cultural socialization than having used other practices, such as preparing their children to deal with bias.Preparing For Discrimination
Another racial-ethnic socialization practice parents have been found to use is discussing discrimination with their children and preparing them to cope with it. Just how widespread this practice is among minority parents is unclear. Few parents report that they prepare their children for bias when asked open-ended questions about their socialization methods. For example, when asked what they taught children about being African American, only about 8% of the adults in the National Survey of Black Americans mentioned messages about racial barriers.[10]

However, studies that use more probing in-depth interviews and survey questions report that parents do discuss issues related to discrimination with their children. In one study, only 5% of African American parents reported that discrimination never came up in conversations with their children.[11] In other studies, estimates of the share of African American parents who prepare their children to cope with discrimination range from 67% to 90%.

Talking about discrimination and preparing children to cope with it is more prevalent among African American families when compared with families of other ethnic and racial backgrounds.Promoting Mistrust
Conveying messages that warn children to be cautious and wary of people of other races is another practice identified in studies of racial-ethnic socialization among minority families. Such messages differ from the practice of preparing a child for bias because they do not offer children advice on how to manage or cope with discrimination.

This is another practice that few minority parents spontaneously mention in surveys that pose open-ended questions about their socialization methods. Fewer than 3% of adults in the National Survey of Black Americans reported telling their children to maintain social distance from white children as a strategy for racial-ethnic socialization.[12]

However, research involving more in-depth interviews offers evidence that messages that promote mistrust are conveyed by at least a subset of minority parents. In one study, intensive interviews with African American parents revealed that nearly one-third convey messages of mistrust of other racial groups.[13] In another study, researchers reported that there were African American parents in every focus group conducted who had discussions that encouraged their children to be vigilant in their interactions with white peers, keep a social distance from them, and to be skeptical about their relationships with them.[14]

Such messages are found among other ethnic groups as well. Several studies have reported that immigrant West Indian, Caribbean, and Dominican parents express strong convictions that their children should distinguish themselves from native-born African Americans, a group they warn and caution their children about.[15]

Egalitarian Messages

Some parents convey messages that encourage their children to value individual qualities over racial group membership or they may avoid mentioning race at all with their children.

Although minority parents have been found to use such practices as preparing their children to manage discrimination, studies suggest egalitarian messages are also part of the racial-ethnic socialization of their children. For example, in interviews and focus groups, African American parents said some of the messages they convey emphasize values such as

hard work, virtue, self-acceptance, and equality.[16, 17] Researchers have also found that teaching children not to notice race is another strategy embraced by some parents, although it is more prominent among white parents than among African American parents.[18]

Studies have not thoroughly investigated silence about race as a strategy of racial-ethnic socialization. Studies that ask parents open-ended questions about the strategies parents use report that between 20% to 50% of those surveyed say they do nothing.

How Racial-Ethnic Socialization Affects Children

Measuring how various racial-ethnic socialization practices affect minority children is an underdeveloped field of study. Available research, however, suggests that these practices have potentially important consequences regarding children's racial-ethnic identity, self-esteem, and ability to cope with discrimination, and other issues.

Some racial-ethnic socialization practices have consistently been found to result in favorable outcomes among minority children, such as higher self-esteem, while others are tempered by less favorable outcomes, such as a heighten sense of mistrust of people of other races.

Ethnic Identity

Children's ethnic identity is one of the most commonly investigated outcomes of racial-ethnic socialization and one that has often been found to favorably influence child outcomes. Among the types of socialization practices, research suggests the most effective in helping children develop their racial and ethnic identity is cultural socialization, which includes messages that emphasize racial and ethnic pride, history, and cultural traditions.

Several studies of African American and Mexican adolescents, for example, associate the cultural socialization practices of their parents to more advanced identity development, identity exploration, positive group attitudes, and more group-oriented ethnic behaviors. Among younger children, most studies report that cultural socialization helps children develop knowledge about their racial or ethnic group and positive attitudes about that group.

The practice of preparing children for discrimination has also been associated with identity development. For example, advanced stages of racial-ethnic identity development is more likely to be found among adolescents who strongly believe that teaching about racism is important.[19]

Self-Esteem

Studies involving minority adolescents suggest their self-esteem may be sensitive to the racial-ethnic messages they receive from their parents.

Messages intended to prepare minority children for discrimination and parents' cultural socialization practices have been associated with higher family self-esteem. Parents' cultural socialization practices have also been associated with higher peer self-esteem. However, parent messages that promote blending with the mainstream culture have been associated with lower self-esteem in school.[20]

Coping With Discrimination

Parents' efforts to prepare their children to cope with prejudice and discrimination have been found to influence how minority children handle such situations when confronted with them. Studies suggest that minority adolescents whose parents discuss discrimination with them are more likely to use effective ways of dealing with it, such as seeking support and direct problem solving strategies, rather than ineffective coping strategies, such as engaging in verbal banter.[21]

Researchers have also found that children's experiences with discrimination are significantly associated with poorer mental health outcomes only among those who do not receive racial-ethnic socialization messages from their parents.[22]

However, studies that associate such protective outcomes with preparing minority children to cope with bias are tempered by findings that some children learn to expect discrimination and develop a mistrust of those of other races.

Psychosocial Outcomes

In studies that focus almost exclusively on minority adolescents, researchers report that some racial-ethnic socialization practices used by their parents are associated with psychosocial outcomes such as depression, anger management, and fighting.

The practice of cultural socialization tends to be protective. However, messages that focus on discrimination may result in protective outcomes and unfavorable psychosocial outcomes. In one study, African American boys who believed in the importance of emphasizing cultural pride and heritage were better able to control anger than those who focused on discrimination.[23] In another study, Asian and African American adolescents who expected to be discriminated against had more symptoms of depression and more conflicts with their parents than those who did not expect such experiences.[24]

Psychosocial outcomes of racial-ethnic socialization practices can also differ between boys and girls. For example, African American boys with high racial-ethnic socialization scores have been found to experience more frequent sad moods and greater hopelessness than African American girls.[25]

Academic Outcomes

Few studies have examined whether parents' racial-ethnic

socialization practices influence their children's academic outcomes and the findings of those that have addressed the issue are mixed. Other studies, however, suggest that such practices might have the potential to shape children's learning and school performance. For example, positive ethnic identity and high self-esteem have been favorably associated with children's academic outcomes.[26]

Implications For Policy

Racial-ethnic socialization among minority families is a complex issue and an emerging field of study. Much remains to be learned about this process, particularly in the area of child outcomes. Research suggests most parents engage in some kind of racial-ethic socialization and that the importance they place on these practices and how frequently they engage in them varies.

Cultural socialization, the most frequently studied practice, has consistently been found to benefit minority children. However, there is too little evidence to date from which to draw firm conclusions about other racial-ethnic socialization practices parents engage in, particularly those intended to prepare children for discrimination and those that deliver egalitarian messages, such urging children to adopt the values of the mainstream culture or teaching children to value individual qualities over membership in a group.

References

Hughes, D., Smith, E.P., Steven, H.C., Rodriquez, J., Johnson, D.J., & Spicer, P. (2006). Parents' ethnic-racial socialization practices: A review of research and directions for future study. Developmental Psychology, **42**, *747-770.*

This Special Report, written by Jeffery Fraser, is based on the publication cited above. It is not intended to be an original work but a summary for the convenience of our readers. References noted in the text follow:

(Endnotes)

[1] U.S. Census Bureau. (2004). U.S. interim projections by age, sex, and Hispanic origin. U.S. Census Bureau website: www.census.gov/ipc/www/usinterimproj/

[2] McHale, S., Crouter, A.C., Kim, J., Burton, L., Davis, K.D., Dotterer, A.M., & Swanson, D. (in press). Mothers' and fathers' racial socialization in African American families: Implications for youth. *Child Development.*

[3] Alba, R.D. (1990). *Ethnic identity: the transformation of White America.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

[4] Hughes, D., & Chen, L. (1997). When and what parents tell children about race: An examination of race-related socialization among African American families. *Applied Developmental Science, 1,* 200-214.

[5] Marshall, S. (1995). Ethnic socialization of African American children: Implications for parenting, identity development, and academic achievement. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 24,* 377-396.

[6] Caughy, M.O., O'Campo, P.J., Randolph, S.M., & Nickerson, K. (2002). The influence of racial socialization practices on the cognitive and behavioral competence of African American preschoolers. *Child Development, 73,* 1611-1625.

[7] Phinney, J.S., & Chavira, V. (1995). Parental ethnic socialization and adolescent coping with problems related to ethnicity. *Journal of Research of Adolescence, 5,* 31-54.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Hughes, D. (2003). Correlates of African American and Latino parent's messages to children about ethnicity and race: A comparative study of racial socialization. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 31,* 15-33.

[10] Bowman, P.J., & Howard, C. (1985). Race-related socialization, motivation, and academic achievement: A study of Black youths in three-generation families. *Journal of the American Academy of Child Psychiatry, 24,* 134-141.

[11] Frabutt, J.A., Walker, A.M., & MacKinnon-Lewis, C. (2002). Racial socialization messages and the quality of mother/child interactions in African American families. *Journal of Early Adolescence, 22,* 200-217.

[12] Thornton, M.C., Chatters, R.M., Taylor, R.J., Allen, W.R. (1990). Sociodemographic and environmental correlates of racial socialization by Black parents. *Child Development, 61,* 401-409.

[13] Coard, S.J., Wallace, S.A., Stevenson, H.C., & Brotman,

L.M. (2004). Towards culturally relevant preventive interventions: The consideration of racial socialization in parent training with African American families. *American Journal of Child and Family Studies, 13,* 277-293.

[14] Hughes, D., & DuMont, K. (1993). Using focus groups to facilitate culturally anchored research. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 21,* 775-806.

[15] Pessar, P. (1995). The elusive enclave: Ethnicity, class, and nationality among Latino entrepreneurs in Greater Washington, DC. *Human Organization, 54,* 383-392.

[16] Demo, D.H., & Hughes, M. (1990). Socialization and racial identity among Black Americans. *Social Psychology Quarterly, 53,* 364-374.

[17] Hughes, & DuMont, loc. cit.

[18] Hamm, J.V. (2001). Barriers and bridges to positive cross-ethnic relations: African American and White parent socialization beliefs and practices. *Youth and Society, 33,* 62-98.

[19] Stevenson, H.C. (1995). Relationship of adolescent perceptions of racial socialization to racial identity. *Journal of Black Psychology, 21,* 49-70.

[20] Constantine, M.G., & Blackmon, S.K. (2002). Black adolescents' racial socialization experiences: Their relations to home, school, and peer self-esteem. *Journal of Black Studies, 32,* 322-335.

[21] Scott, L.D. (2003). The relation of racial identity and racial socialization to coping with discrimination among African Americans. *Journal of Black Studies, 33,* 520-538.

[22] Fischer, A.R., & Shaw, C.M. (1999). African Americans' mental health and perceptions of racist discrimination: The moderating effects of racial socialization experiences and self-esteem. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 46,* 395-407.

[23] Stevenson, H.C. (1997). Managing anger: Protective, proactive, or adaptive racial socialization identity profiles and African-American manhood development. *Journal of Prevention and Intervention in the Community, 16,* 35-61.

[24] Rumbaut, R. (1994). The crucible within: Ethnic identity, self-esteem, and segmented assimilation among children of immigrants. *International Migration Review, 28,* 748-794.

[25] Stevenson. Managing anger: Protective, proactive, or adaptive racial socialization identity profiles and African-American manhood development.

[26] Chavous, T.M., Bernat, D.H., Schmeelk-Cone, K., Caldwell, C..H., Kohn-Wood, L., & Zimmerman, M.A. (2003). Racial identity and academic attainment among African American adolescents. *Child Development, 74,* 1076-1090.■

Commentary
Walter Howard Smith, Jr., Ph.D.
Family Resources

1. The article is important to addressing the observed variability in how minorities manage racism and prejudice, and I am glad to see this area explored. Some minorities experience less trauma than others, and the differences rest in coping abilities, and not the severity and frequency of the traumas. What kinds of childhood experiences buffer us from trauma needs to be investigated. The implications are for all children, as many children experience threats in social settings, including community violence, unsafe schools, and prejudice beyond racial bias.

2. Children learn a great deal from watching and observing parents and other family members. They also learn through extended family contacts and experiences. The extended nature of African American families (and other ethnic groups) is well documented, creating a caution that researchers do not use a nuclear family lens when examining how children learn.

3. Children acquire the coping skills used to manage racial and cultural stresses and discrimination through a multitude of experiences beyond their experiences in their families with race and culture, and they apply these skills to specific racial and cultural situations. For example, a large extended African-American family may teach its children to not share family and personal experiences with non-family members. Children will use this strategy to manage racial discrimination without specific and overt messages about race being discussed. The "keeping it in the family" message is related to race and culture as documented in research about African American families, but the parents may have little idea of this.

4. The transmission of information between generations of a family is a complex matter and contextual and content variables must be considered. Content is easier to study and measure. Context is more difficult. My parents emphasized education all of my life, as did their parents and grandparents. I did not know this had to do with social achievement and racism, but as an adult I learned it did. The failure of a

cousin in college triggered strong pushing for my brother and me not to fail, and this was related to avoiding shame to the family. I knew I had better do well, but this was never spoken like this. I just knew it! My cousin's father still talks about his pride around my social achievement. This certainly teaches my cousin a lot, even today.

     5. Racial discrimination is traumatic and we know a lot more about how all aspects of our functioning is shaped by trauma. What parent say and do during a traumatic experience has more impact than at other times. Parenting is not often viewed as having more impact in specific settings, and

much less impact in others. When understanding what parenting experiences influence and shape child functioning, we must take into account that how parents respond to some critical moments may have a greater influence than their overall teaching, coaching, and parenting of children.

     6. In general, I like the exploration of the topic, and I believe we will know more with continued vigorous research. I think we should look broadly at this issue for all children, and focus on how socialization impacts specific traumatic events and circumstances. This would tie this research into the stress and trauma studies, as well as assure that what we learn from minorities is made applicable to all children. ◼

of the principal supporters of the Early Childhood Initiative.

     "They didn't have to learn their way through the community," Petruska said. "We liked the fact that they had strong partnerships with community agencies, that they had a smart staff full of ideas, that they understood how important that connection to community is, and that they were seen as a trusted ally in the community."

     OCD celebrated its 20th anniversary in November. Established as an office of three primarily to facilitate research and education on children's issues, OCD has grown to include dedicated divisions for applied research and evaluation, policy initiatives, service demonstration projects, internal affairs, and administration.

     Moreover, OCD has demonstrated the profound impact university-community partnerships can have on not only advancing knowledge of issues related to children and families, but also on improving the well-being of children and families themselves. During its first 20 years, OCD has seeded, planned, funded, implemented, or managed some 265 programs that, over their lifetime, have been supported by an estimated $250 million in public and private grants.

     "Universities are learning that the storage, retrieval, transmission, and creation of knowledge are not sufficient," said Morton W. Weir, Ph.D., Chancellor Emeritus at the University of Illinois and a member of the OCD National Advisory Board. "Another dimension must be added so that the people who support universities can see practical applications of the work that goes on."

Built On Collaboration

From the start, OCD was built around collaboration. Two University of Pittsburgh faculty colleagues, Carl N. Johnson, Ph.D., and Mark S. Strauss, Ph.D., co-founded OCD as a center within the university that would facilitate interdisciplinary education and research on children and family issues, promote mutually beneficial partnerships between faculty and community professionals, and disseminate information to professionals, policy makers, and the public.

     Although OCD's budget, staff, and scope of work has significantly expanded under the leadership of co-directors Robert B. McCall, Ph.D., and Christina J. Groark, Ph.D., collaboration remains the vehicle for achieving its mission and the foundation of the university-community partnerships that continue to flourish.

     The model for these partnerships developed over time through strategic planning and lessons learned from working within the neighborhoods of western Pennsylvania with families, agencies, policy makers, and others. But from the start,

OCD recognized that effective interventions meant reaching into the community and recruiting all relevant stakeholders from parents to social services professionals onto the project.

"If your goal is to improve the welfare of children, youth, and families, that responsibility falls largely on people outside of the university," Dr. McCall said. "If you want to have an impact, you have to hire those ballplayers, play in their stadium, and play by their rules. By and large, that is what OCD has done."

Diverse Partners

The ability to develop diverse and extensive partners is a key characteristic of the university-community partnership model that has evolved at OCD. Over 20 years, its partnerships have grown to include more than 350 human services agencies, community organizations, health care providers, religious organizations, universities and public and private schools, companies and corporations, state and local government programs, community leaders, foundations, and others.

These partners have worked directly to implement programs, helped to define important community issues, provided insight and guidance, and taken on other roles. OCD, for example, organizes an advisory group of constituents, funders, and other stakeholders for each significant project undertaken.

"We rely on the community and all of our partners to lead the way and guide us every step of the way to do what is needed in a way that is going to be useful," Dr. Groark said. "We have parents advising us, civic leaders guiding us through the communities we are in, and elected officials and philanthropists telling us what the trends are so we can stay on the cutting edge."

In the OCD model, community partners are counted on to define the issues to be addressed and are afforded equal rights and responsibilities in the projects that are developed. Such partners are particularly important given OCD's commitment to teaching local agencies and organizations how to carry out successful programs, rather than operate the programs for them, and the fact that OCD is not single-issue driven or confined to addressing a particular age group of children.

"Diverse partners are important when your projects range from food banks, to orphanages in other countries, to child care centers here, to training adults," said Dr. Groark. "If you partner with the right people, they gently take you through the processes, you learn and grow with each project, pick up a few more skills and more knowledge about how to collaborate, and it gets a little easier."

Applying Knowledge

Several other characteristics define OCD's university-community partnership model. Among them is the broad expertise OCD has developed over the years that allows it to take a comprehensive approach to addressing the needs of children and families.

OCD has, for example, recruited staff to develop expertise in every step that is necessary to successfully transfer knowledge to practice. These steps include critically reviewing information related to an issue, creating and trying out a service or a policy, evaluating it, and using the evaluation data to shape policy and practices. This comprehensive expertise and a "can-do" mentality has given OCD the capacity to rapidly respond to a broad range of grants, requests, and initiatives.

Other internal characteristics that have shaped the OCD model include an administrative philosophy that emphasizes internal collaboration and promotes a working environment that places a premium on respecting outside constituents and partners and promotes respect among staff. OCD also follows a strategic plan, with its performance and direction subject to regular review by local and national advisory boards, and periodic evaluation.

Wide-Ranging Impact

OCD's comprehensive university-community partnership model has given the university an important role in improving the services and support networks available to children and families in the region, state, nation, and beyond.

Through its coordination and support of the Partnerships for Family Support and the Family Support Policy Board, OCD played an instrumental role in creating and sustaining more than 30 family support centers in Allegheny County – the largest regional family support network in the nation. OCD also led a collaborative effort to create Family Foundations, the Pittsburgh site for the federal Comprehensive Child Development Program, which evolved into the region's Early Head Start program.

Several innovative demonstration projects created by OCD have become successful, lasting programs. One of those, the Alliance for Infants, was one of the nation's first comprehensive public outreach programs for screening and referral of at-risk infants and children.

In addition to its involvement in early childhood education programs, OCD has addressed the urgent need to improve the education and training of those who provide early care and education to young children. OCD, for example, coordinated the regional site of the federal Strengthening Early Learning Supports programs that offered training and education to child care and family support providers.

OCD established one of the few university-based, interdisciplinary units in the world that specializes in evaluating community created and operated services for children and families. Hundreds of local agencies have used OCD expertise to help them plan, implement, and report on the services they provide. The list of programs OCD has evaluated includes Early Head Start and Keystone STARS, Pennsylvania's program to promote quality early care and education.

OCD has also undertaken important roles in advancing policies for children, youth, and families in the region and across the state. OCD directed Gov. Edward Rendell's Cabinet on Children and Families as well as the Governor's Commission on Children and Families.

More recently, OCD has taken its expertise and collaborative approach to other nations, including Russia, where OCD researchers helped improve the development of children in orphanages through innovative staff training, changes in infrastructure, and other reforms.

As a rule, OCD seeks to spin-off management of the initiatives they help shepherd to maturity. In many cases, initiatives that took root under OCD management continue today, successfully managed and sustained by others, such as Pittsburgh's Healthy Start and the Alliance for Infants.

Future Directions

The University of Pittsburgh is quietly strengthening its capacity to advance knowledge of human development and its practical use in programs for children, youth, and families. And OCD is playing an important role.

A key part of this effort is to more fully develop the teaching and research dimensions of OCD. Another is to more effectively pool the talents and resources of OCD and other programs involved in the study of children and families, including the Applied Developmental Psychology program in the Department of Psychology in Education and the Department of Psychology's Developmental Program.

The idea is to build upon the university's strengths in developmental research; the design, implementation, and evaluation of effective community-based programs; and the education of the next generation of teachers, researchers, and practitioners in the field.

Meanwhile, OCD continues to build the community partnerships that have made significant contributions to the well-being of children and families. Precisely which issues and projects OCD will become involved in is unclear, however. OCD, remaining true to its long-standing tradition, will continue to address issues that are defined by the community, as they arise. "We've always sort of gone with the flow; it has made us reelvant and useful in a changing environment. I cannot see us stopping now," said Dr. McCall.■

Help us keep our mailing list current. Please cut out this label portion of the newsletter and mail to the address below with any corrections. Thanks!

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Pittsburgh, PA
Permit No. 511

Developments

University of Pittsburgh
Office of Child Development
School of Education
400 N. Lexington Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15208

Interdisciplinary education and research
University-community service demonstrations
Program evaluation and policy studies
Dissemination

Visit us on the World Wide Web at www.education.pitt.edu/ocd