



Policy Analysis & Research on Child and Family Issues

Institute News

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Upcoming Institute Events

Community Outreach

-- March 2008 --

“Developing Connections between Professionals and Students”

Wednesday, March 12, 2008, 3:30 - 5 p.m.,
207 Bowen-Thompson Student Union, BGSU
is a networking event for students and child and family agencies. The Institute for Child and Family Policy has worked at a grassroots level, to engage students and professionals by bringing the agencies to campus.

-- May 2008 --

“Community Needs Assessment: Understanding the Community You Serve, Serving the Community You Understand”

Friday, May 9, 2008, 8:30 - 12:30 a.m.,
308 Bowen-Thompson Student Union, BGSU
ICFP will present a multi-stage model of community needs assessment for agency personnel. This workshop is available for social work, MFT, and counseling CEU credit. To register, contact:

Institute for Child & Family Policy (ICFP)
Phone: 419-372-7825 OR
E-mail: icfp@bgsu.edu



Policy Activities

-- April 2008 --

“Bridging the Gap between Research and Social Policy”

Thursday, April 10, 2008, 12 - 1 p.m.,
316 Bowen-Thompson Student Union, BGSU
Faculty workshop will present practical ways researchers may communicate findings to policymakers and impact the policy process.

“Encouraging Father Involvement: Legislative and Policy Approaches”

Thursday, April 17, 2008, 8:30-10:30 a.m.
31st Floor, Vern Riffe Center, Columbus, OH
Seminar for state legislators and policymakers will focus on policy approaches to promoting young, unmarried father involvement in the lives of their children.

For additional information about any of the Institute’s upcoming events, please call or e-mail the ICFP staff.

Visit the Institute for Child and Family Policy online at
www.bgsu.edu/colleges/edhd/icfp

Spring 2008

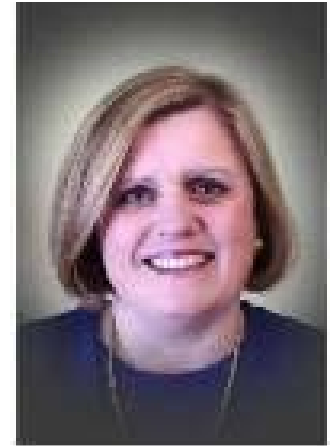


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Spotlight on ICFP Staff

Mary Murray, Ed.D.,
Associate Director - Educational Programs
Assistant Professor, School of Intervention Services



The Institute would like to welcome Dr. Mary Murray, as she has joined us as the Associate Director for Educational Programs. Dr. Murray has extensive teaching and administrative experience in inclusive early childhood and school-aged (birth-3, 3-5, and K-12) programs. She holds current teaching and administrative licensure in both general and special education. Her current teaching, research and scholarship focus is on personnel preparation of general and special educators toward effective parent-professional partnerships. An additional focus is on effective strategies for professionals to work with children with autism and other low incidence disabilities in inclusive settings. In addition to teaching and scholarship, she provides consultation services to several school districts and social service agencies. Dr. Murray serves locally on the Northwest Ohio Autism Regional Resource Center Board and is actively involved in the Autism Society of Ohio. Nationally, she is an NCATE/NAEYC reviewer and is on the Personnel Preparation Advisory Committee for the Council for Exceptional Children Division of Early Childhood.



Who's Who at the Institute



Daniel Pappalardo, Graduate Assistant

Dan provides the Institute with programmatic and administrative support as he assists with researching and writing of policy brief reports on topics of interest to state and local policymakers and agency personnel. He is also responsible for working with the Bowling Green Teen Center Director in mobilizing BGSU student volunteers to implement student-created youth programs at Teen Central. Dan's role as President and Founder of the AWE Foundation (www.awefoundation.org), his 5 ½ years of international volunteer experience in El Salvador, and his many hours of teaching youth make him an asset to the Institute and its functioning as a partner with the community.

Melissa Cup, Undergraduate Intern

Melissa provides programmatic and administrative support to the Institute Co-Directors and staff. She is responsible for maintaining communication, records, and correspondence within the Institute and with Institute contacts. Melissa also spends time conducting research literature and grant searches. Melissa's exploring her interest in non-profit events planning through her experience at the Institute by organizing legislative outreach initiatives, project-related focus groups, and by connecting with area agencies to establish stronger connections for the Institute and future interns.

Interested in child and family policy and research? Call the Institute at (419) 372-6824 to see how we can support your work.

Young, Unmarried Fathers: Understanding Barriers to Father Involvement

Every year in Ohio, thousands of young, unmarried men become fathers to new children. Nearly 40% of births today occur to unmarried mothers, a disproportionate number of whom are young and poor. It has been suggested that children born to unmarried mothers are four times more likely to have an absent father than children born to married mothers. While many young fathers report a desire to participate in raising their children, father involvement often wanes over the first two years of a child's life. Lack of child involvement among young, low-income fathers is a concern in light of the research suggesting a number of problematic outcomes common in children of these men including lower academic achievement and cognitive development, a higher rate of health problems, problem behaviors, probability of living in poverty, and an increased risk of becoming an adolescent parent than among children born to older fathers.

What We Know about Young Fathers

- Most young fathers want to be involved in their children's lives and live with their children if possible. The danger in the assumption that this is not the case is that it may contribute to others' creating barriers to fathers' involvement with their children.
- Teen fathers regularly express the belief that their parents hold the greatest influence over their decision-making about sexual activity, and their approach to fatherhood.
- The majority of teen fathers view a partner's pregnancy as a negative event and believe that

the pregnancy and fatherhood will hinder their ability to achieve life goals.

- Teenage fathers are likely to access and participate in programs if those programs provide content that is relevant to their situation.
- Many teenage fathers feel strong emotional commitments to the mothers of their children and desire an ongoing relationship with these women.
- Many teenage fathers report feeling alienated by medical providers and other professionals during their partner's pregnancy.

Recommendations for Improving Relationships

- ◆ Develop father involvement programs that more effectively meet fathers' basic needs, especially employment needs
- ◆ Better integrate fathers into family services and health care services to young mothers and children.
- ◆ Enhance connections between programs targeted to low-income men and child support programs.
- ◆ Provide stronger mechanisms to enhance fatherhood and fathering skills among incarcerated fathers about to be released from institutions.
- ◆ Make changes to legal processes and systems that may serve to discourage father contact with children.



For more on this topic, see the Institute policy brief on Promoting Involvement among Young, Unmarried Fathers, found at <http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/edhd/icfp/pubs/YoungFathersFinal.pdf>.



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Opportunities for BGSU Faculty

Writing and Reviewing Policy Briefs

A policy brief is a concise overview (800-1000 words or approximately two pages) of a topic that has policy implications for children and families. The intent is to educate policy makers on a topic by presenting relevant research findings as well as implications related to children and families. Policy brief authors are asked to conduct a thorough and thoughtful review of the literature and provide copies of materials used in their brief, including their synthesis of the literature. Briefs typically include demographic information, summaries of key research findings, and a set of nonpartisan policy recommendations.

At times, Institute staff will generate a policy brief on a topic of current interest to policymakers. Because the ICFP staff are not experts in every area of child and family life, the opportunity arises for an expert outside the Institute to review the information compiled by staff in a brief draft.



Policy brief writers and reviewers are asked to use the family impact approach in assessing the validity of policy brief recommendations. These guidelines and other brief writing tips are provided to every faculty member who expresses interest in producing or reviewing an Institute brief.

To look at completed policy briefs on topics related to children and families, visit the Institute web site at <http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/edhd/icfp/briefs.html>.



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