

Research Area: Clinical Child Psychology and Health Psychology

My research interests lie within Pediatric Psychology. These interests incorporate relationships and coping, multi-dimensional and transactional processes concerning how children and families manage stress, as a unifying theme. My research program includes three primary foci: (1) an attachment theory-based investigation of infant/toddler mental health associated with maternal parenting practices in pediatric samples. Specifically, with infants born very low birth weight (VLBW), an at-risk population, I have investigated infant-mother interactions and emotion regulation; the impact of ethnicity on the relationship between maternal interactive behavior and toddler developmental outcomes; the nature of dysregulation in this population; object permanence that underlies early working memory; associations between maternal scaffolding and medical severity, and executive functioning in preschoolers; differential associations between maternal scaffolding and toddler emotion regulation; and differential associations between infant affective and cortisol stress responses among infants born very low birth weight versus full-term. (2) My second area of interest addresses disordered eating and body image concerns in preadolescent girls, including developmental considerations, the relationship of these constructs to broader psychological domains such as self-esteem, mothers' and daughters' beliefs about factors affecting girls' body satisfaction, an investigation of ethnic differences, the influence of mother-daughter relationship quality on body image and disordered eating, and the psychological and physiological stress response in recovering adolescent anorexic girls. (3) The third research area within pediatric psychology addresses children's adaptation to chronic illness. This study of adaptation incorporates both trauma spectrum and quality of life theoretical models in understanding the long term adjustment of children with chronic illness (pediatric cancer survivors, pediatric traumatic brain injury) and their families. For pediatric cancer survivors, I have focused on trauma spectrum adaptation, concordance between adolescent and parent proxy report of trauma symptoms, somatization, and parental stress' relationship to child functional impairment, and how functional impairment relates to neurocognitive and executive function deficits. For pediatric traumatic brain injury, I have addressed self-reported quality of life and family functioning.

Publications

Books Co-Authored:

Goldblum, P.B. & Erickson, S.J. (1999). Working with AIDS bereavement: A comprehensive approach for mental health providers. *UCSF AIDS Health Project Monograph Series Number 3*. SF: UCSF AIDS Health Project.

Articles in Refereed Journals:

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Book Chapters:

- Zelenko, M. & Erickson, S.J. (2011). Attachment and related psychopathology. In H. Steiner (Ed.) *The Stanford University School of Medicine Handbook of Developmental Psychiatry for Children and Adolescents*. NY, NY: Jossey-Bass.

- Carrion, V., Erickson, S.J., & Bancroft, M.E. (2011). Traumatic stress and psychopathology. In H. Steiner (Ed.) *The Stanford University School of Medicine Handbook of Developmental Psychiatry for Children and Adolescents*. NY, NY: Jossey-Bass.
- Erickson, S.J. & Achilles, G. (2004). Cognitive behavioral therapy with children and adolescents. In H. Steiner (Ed.) *The Stanford University School of Medicine Handbook of Mental Health Interventions in Children and Adolescents: An Integrated Developmental Approach*. NY, NY: Jossey-Bass.
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