



# 12th Annual Research Conference Proceedings

## *A System of Care for Children's Mental Health Expanding the Research Base*

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## About the Center...

Since its inception in 1984, the Center has conducted an integrated series of research, training, consultation, and dissemination activities to achieve its mission of improving service delivery systems for children with serious emotional or behavioral disabilities and their families. The annual research conference represents one of the events coordinated by the Center to encourage the development and sharing of information on effective service systems.

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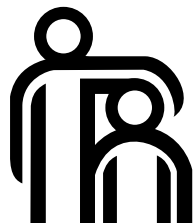
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# Preface



The faculty and staff of the Research and Training Center for Children's Mental Health are pleased to present the Proceedings of the *12th Annual Research Conference, A System of Care for Children's Mental Health: Expanding the Research Base*, held February 21 to 24, 1999, in Clearwater, Florida. The goal of the annual conference is to bring together researchers, policy makers, service professionals, educators, and families to talk about children's mental health service delivery systems. The conference Proceedings is intended to capture these discussions, and serve as a resource to support future investigation and implementation of systems of care.

The Annual Research Conference's presenters are selected for their commitment to high quality research, innovations, and for their unique perspectives. Following the event, all presenters are invited to contribute to the Proceedings.

The Proceedings contains abstracts describing research projects, program evaluations, aspects of investigation and implementation of service delivery systems, and innovative programming. Overall you will discover that the summaries reflect an interdisciplinary and participatory approach to children's mental health research and continue to capture trends that influence the work we do for children and their families.

Abstracts presented in this volume typically are composed of introductory remarks, a sketch of the methodology and findings, and a short discussion of the project's implications. The intent of the Proceedings is to provide a thumbnail sketch of efforts, nationwide, to develop a body of service systems research. Much presented here can be found in more detail elsewhere—in published journal articles, books, reports, or through direct contact with the authors.

This volume is organized around the central topics featured during the conference. Within chapters, you will find summaries from symposia, paper presentations, and poster presentations. In the back, the author index will help you locate offerings from your colleagues, friends and mentors. The Appendix contains the full conference agenda, including a synopsis of each presentation.

For more information on the Research and Training Center or the Proceedings, please contact the Center at 813/974-4661. We look forward to working together in the future on the behalf of children and families.

## ***On The Web...***

The Proceedings is available on the World Wide Web. Go to <http://rtckids.fmhi.usf.edu>, and you will find a route to the Center's pages and the Proceedings in its entirety. The 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th Annual Conference Proceedings are also on-line, in case you missed them.

## Preface to the Proceedings

### Thank you...

Each year, as the Research Conference concludes, we begin work on the Proceedings. The first step, of course, is to invite our presenters to share their work, and we are gratified that so many agree to do so. Thanks go to all for timely submissions, and patience with edits, suggestions and requests.

Upon receipt, each submission is matched with two expert reviewers from the University of South Florida's Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute's faculty and staff. Their thoughtful comments and suggestions continue to contribute enormously to the quality of this volume.

This year's review team included Kathy Armstrong, Mary Armstrong, Richard Briscoe, Eric Brown, Hewitt (aka Rusty) Clark, Norin Dollard, Albert Duchnowski, Mary Evans, Robert Friedman, Angela Gomez, Paul Greenbaum, Marcela Gutierrez-Mayka, Mario Hernandez, Sharon Hodges, Ruby Joseph, Mary Ann Kershaw, Krista Kutash, Kathy Lazear, Judy Moore, Starr Silver, Carl Sumi, and Bobbie Vaughn. Much multidisciplinary expertise is represented by this list. Thanks to you all.

The research conference is characterized by the collaboration of many disciplines; this is true for the production of this volume, as well. The Department of Child and Family Studies (CFS), which is home to the Research and Training Center, contributes support for production of the Proceedings. The department's CFS Communication staff members have worked on the Proceedings project for many years, and have created many of strategies that make this publication possible. This year, we were pleased that Melinda Allegar, who works with Bob Friedman, offered to take on the data entry for Proceedings submissions; her help was critical to keeping track of the process. A special thank you goes to our desktop publishing team, Julie Diniz-Almeida and George Shuttleworth, for their expert assistance in transforming hundreds of tables and figures into publication-ready digital images. We also want to acknowledge the always needed assistance of Tia Sparks and Francis Vayalumkal, our talented and tireless undergraduate students here at USF. Thanks also to Adam Jones, a retired Math teacher who is exploring another career through his work with us.

Finally, as we look forward to future volumes of the Annual Research Proceedings, we also look back on the wealth of research contained within the first 11 volumes. With this in mind, we wish to take a moment to thank our colleagues both here at the Research and Training Center and around the globe for their countless contributions to the conference, to the Proceedings, and for the friendships and collaborations we have formed together over the years. Here's looking forward to many more!

The editors: Cindy Liberton, Catherine Newman, Krista Kutash & Bob Friedman