



ACACI Spring Newsletter May 2020

Helping Children and Adolescents Thrive!

Greetings ACACI Members! We have devoted this issue to thinking about self-care. Please take time for yourself in these stressful times. We can provide the best support to others when we are in a good place ourselves.

The Pandemic has definitely changed life as we know it; as association members, as counselors, and in our personal lives. We continue to serve our members with our quarterly newsletter and have moved our networking events online to continue support. Our mentor program for counseling students is still launching but mentors and protégés will now connect online or by phone. You can read more about what we are up to and ways you can join us in this newsletter.

Please join us for our upcoming online networking events. These are informal gathering where participants can share and learn about the type of work their fellow counselors are doing. Please attend or zoom event and introduce yourself!

- **Wednesday, May 20th, from 7pm-8pm CST** <https://forms.gle/TryzwzSZLbdexp7L8>
- **Wednesday, July 15th from 7pm-8pm CST** here: <https://forms.gle/k8AgyAfaQtws716B9>

We welcome your shared experience in these chats relating to how our work is changing during the pandemic and suggestions for balancing work and home and working online with youth.

Thank you to all of our members for the important work you do with children and adolescents in Illinois. You make a difference. The Association for Child & Adolescent Counseling in Illinois (ACACI) is proud to support you. Visit our website or FB group to connect with us.

Warmly,
Your ACACI Board

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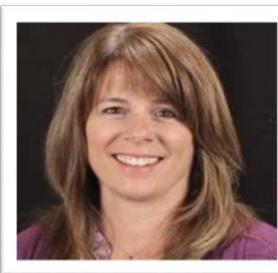
Website: <https://www.acacillinois.com>
Twitter: @Children Thrive
FB Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ACACinIllinois>
FB Page: <https://www.facebook.com/ACACinIllinois/>

2019-2021 ACACI Board



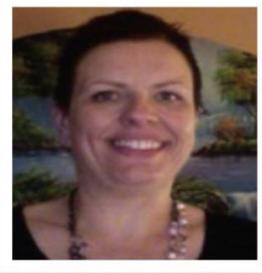
Leslie Contos, President

Leslie Contos, LCPC, NCC, CCMHC is counselor and counselor educator who looks forward to providing service to ACACI members and support for her amazing fellow board members



Greta Nielsen, President-Elect

Greta Nielsen, LCPC, NCC, MBSR, is clinical director at Clinical Care Consultants in Inverness, with over 25 years' experience working with youth in a variety of settings.



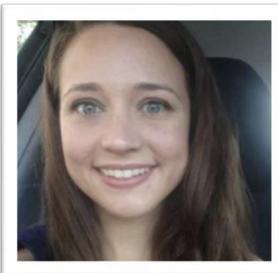
Karolina Hogueisson, President Elect-Elect

Karolina Hogueisson, LCPC, NCC, CCATP, has over 15 years of experience providing services from Early Interventions to Correctional Facilities and is now in private practice.



Marcia James, Social Media Committee Chair

Marcia James, LPC, NCC has over a decade of experience as a school counselor in District 215 and a doctoral candidate in counselor education at Governors State University.



Melissa Paluck, Treasurer

Melissa Paluck, LCPC, NCC is a bilingual (Spanish) therapist at Dynamic Direction Counseling where she works with children and adolescents and their families.



Sarah Silva, Literature Committee Chair

Sarah Silva, LCPC, NCC owns is founder and CEO of a group practice in Chicago where she works collaboratively with clients, and she is also a PhD candidate at Walden University.



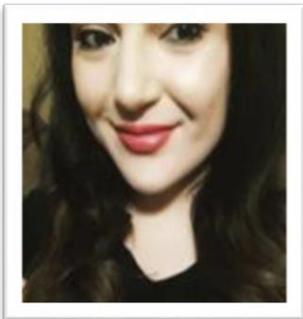
Christine Vinci, Secretary, Newsletter Editor

Christine Vinci, LCPC, NCC, CCTP, a therapist at Pillars Community Health, has experience working with children, adolescents, adults, families, and groups in a variety of settings.



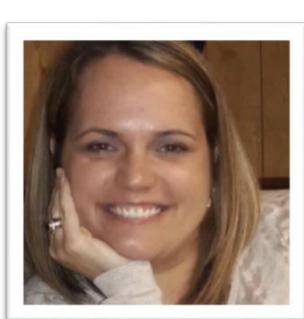
Christine Brown, Social Justice Committee Chair

Christine Brown, LCPC, NCC, EdD, is an assistant professor at National Louis University who brings over a decade of experience counseling and supervising at Metropolitan Family Services into her classrooms.



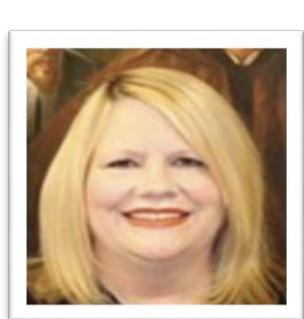
Karina Breezer, Grad Student Committee Chair

Karina Breezer is a graduate student in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Concordia University who expects to work with children and adolescents in her career and hopes to seek a PhD.



Elizabeth House, Membership Committee Chair

Elizabeth House is a Master of Science in Counseling student at National Louis University. Her experiences as an English Language Learning teacher led her to want to work with refugee and immigrant families.



Peggy Mayfield, Past President 2017-2019

Peggy Mayfield, PHD, LCPC, NCC, CCMHC, DCMHS, works with at-risk youth and families. As ACACI president she created the Emerging Leaders program and the first ACACI conference.

ACACI Working Committees 2019-2021

We would love you to join us!

Read the committee descriptions and sign up here: <https://tinyurl.com/acaci-committee>

Newsletter Committee: Gather newsletter articles and photos and edit newsletter.

Chair: Christine Vinci christine.vinci2@gmail.com

Leslie Contos lesliecontos@gmail.com

Ammarah Hussain

Ammarahhussain12@gmail.com

Emerging Leaders Committee: cultivate leadership in students & new counselors.

Chair: Peggy Mayfield

mayfield.peggy@gmail.com

Leslie Contos lesliecontos@gmail.com

Christine Brown cbrown87@nl.edu

Networking/Outreach Committee: Create networking events for counselors working with youth and provide online resources for counselors working with youth.

Chair: Greta Nielsen

GretaN@clinicalcareconsultants.com

Leslie Contos lesliecontos@gmail.com

Sarah Silva sarah.silva@waldenu.edu

Professional Development Committee: Create training opportunities (conference in odd years, and workshops and webinars in even years) for counselors working with youth.

Chair: Karolina Hogueisson

portabletherapy@gmail.com

Leslie Contos lesliecontos@gmail.com

Megan Sandos msandos@adler.edu

Karina Breezer karinabreezer@gmail.com

Christine Vinci christine.vinci2@gmail.com

Elizabeth House Houseelizabeths@gmail.com

Social Media Committee: Post articles related to counseling children & adolescents to ACACI Facebook page on regular basis.

Chair: Marcia James msjames74@yahoo.com

Leslie Contos lesliecontos@gmail.com

Graduate Student Committee: Create information on the structure of counseling professional societies for students and create mentor opportunities for students.

Chair: Karina Breezer karinabreezer@gmail.com

Leslie Contos lesliecontos@gmail.com

Elizabeth House Houseelizabeths@gmail.com

Christine Vinci christine.vinci2@gmail.com

April Harman harman.april@gmail.com

Membership Committee: Send emails to new and renewal members to help them stay connected; and reach out to agencies, universities, etc. to speak about ACACI.

Chair: Elizabeth House

Houseelizabeths@gmail.com

Leslie Contos lesliecontos@gmail.com

Karina Breezer karinabreezer@gmail.com

Social Justice Committee: Advocacy to give youth a voice.

Chair: Christine Brown cbrown87@nl.edu

Leslie Contos lesliecontos@gmail.com

Elizabeth House Houseelizabeths@gmail.com

Karina Breezer karinabreezer@gmail.com

Greta Nielsen

GretaN@clinicalcareconsultants.com

Christine Vinci christine.vinci2@gmail.com

April Harman harman.april@gmail.com

Literature Committee: Update ACACI literature and create publishing opportunities for counselors working with children.

Chair: Sarah Silva sarah.silva@waldenu.edu

Leslie Contos lesliecontos@gmail.com

*Join us in servant
leadership!*

Self-Care

By: Cindy Danzell

Practicing self-care for me does not come naturally. Being in this helping profession and coming from a big immigrant family, taking care of myself hasn't always been the main focus. So, I have to be intentional in practicing self-care. I remember sitting in my classes for my Masters, and my professor, and my supervisor, emphasizing the importance of self-care. While they were taking us through meditation, I was thinking about something else. Even when I am with clients or students, I am advocating for self-care and healthy boundaries for themselves. However, when I get swamped with work or family obligations, I forget all about advocating for myself. So, with COVID-19, I have had to be intentional more than ever. Currently, I am using a Virtual Reality (VR) device as one of my self-care. Using my VR keeps me focused on what I am doing, and I can stay at home and still be on the beach. Also, I have been trying new recipes at least 3 times a week; it has been fun and delicious. One other thing is doing zoom exercises with my sister and her kids. Each week we would pick a YouTube dance we like and dance to it. Remember, self-care is what works for you. Everyone has a different lens in what works for them, so find yours because it can be beneficial, especially in stressful moments.



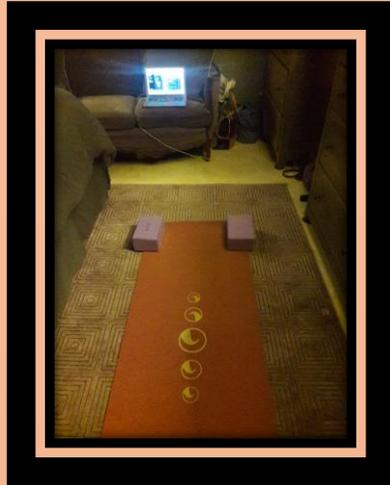
***Cindy Danzell, MS, LPC, NCC, PEL** currently works as a Licensed Professional Counselor at Compassionate Care at LSC Therapy Group and as a Suicide Prevention Director at National Louis University. Cindy has been in the field for about 3 years and has worked with children, adolescents, and adults. Working at National Louis University has allowed Cindy to create a wellness infrastructure and bring mental health awareness to campus. She enjoys working as a therapist because it allows her to partner with clients on their journey to better mental health. Trauma, PTSD, Suicide, and Adverse Childhood Experiences are some of the passions Cindy has, so joining ACACI and other organizations is important to her. Since Cindy is new to the counseling field, it is important for her to grow and learn from other clinicians. When she is not working at the private practice or the university, Cindy is volunteering with special needs children at her church; she has been doing this for almost 10 years. Cindy is hopeful for the future and feels blessed to be one of the 2020 Emerging Leaders*

Share Your Story!

Please consider sharing your story or an article on your counseling expertise or experience with ACACI members. If you are interested in contributing to the next newsletter, please contact

christine.vinci2@gmail.com

How Therapists are engaging in self-care.....



Thank you ACACI Board Members for sharing your self-care strategies:

- *Leslie Contos
- *Elizabeth House
- *Karolina Hogueisson
- *Greata Nielson



Maintaining Boundaries While Working from Home

By: Sandy Bednarz Petersen

As the stay-at-home order went into effect, I, like many other counselors, hit the ground running. I became familiar with telehealth, figured out a platform to use, and started planning activities for clients that could be done online. In navigating all of the moving parts to assist clients that I work with, it did not initially dawn on me to think about the effect of working from home would have.

In my journey to incorporate self-care effectively, I learned through trial and error how to establish boundaries between my work and personal life. This includes physically keeping my home and work life separated by not bringing home or answering emails after hours. Now that I am working from home, I have needed to reevaluate what this looks like. I found keeping to my regular work hours and working in a designated place easy for me to continue to implement. However, I found myself looking up additional resources and activities for my clients outside of my work hours.

Working with children and adolescents through telehealth came with a learning curve. Activities that I frequently incorporated in sessions needed to be adjusted, and new activities were needed in order to both hold younger client's attention as well as work on their goals. I found many great resources through ACA, ICA, ACACI, and Tele-PLAY Therapy Resources and Supports, but I was utilizing many of these resources with my cellphone off work hours.

As counselors we naturally help. With the stay-at-home order due to COVID-19, we know that our clients are being impacted, and some more severely than others. Even though this is the case, as counselors we need to continue to implement good boundaries in order to remain effective in our field. Silvy Khoucassian said, "Empathy without boundaries is self-destruction."



Sandy Bednarz Petersen, MA, LCPC is in private practice at Oasis Mental Health in Aurora, IL. She is also currently a doctoral student at Northern Illinois University in the Counseling Education and Supervision program.

ACACI Online Networking Events

Join Us!



ACACI is replacing our in-person networking events with zoom networking events during the pandemic.

Please attend online and introduce yourself. We welcome shared experience of how our work is changing and suggestions for balancing work and home life and working online with youth.

Wednesday, May 20th, from 7pm-8pm CST

register here: <https://forms.gle/TryzwzSZLbdexp7L8>

Wednesday, July 15th from 7pm-8pm CST

register here: <https://forms.gle/k8AgyAfaQtws716B9>

Upcoming ACACI Mentoring Pilot Program

Are you interested in encouraging the next generation of counselors? Are you looking for a way to give back but don't have much time to commit? You've come to the right place!

Starting in the Spring of 2020, ACACI will be offering a new pilot program where we pair counselors like you with graduate students.

Our pilot program is offering you the opportunity to **give back in a HUGE way** without a huge time-commitment. Your 3-month time commitment will have a lasting impact on the future counselor, as well as their clients!

- **Little time?** Mentor students via weekly email or Skype!
- **Hate wasting paper?** Fill out the mentorship forms online!
- **Want to be a mentor but don't know where to start?** We will do all the work to match you with a graduate student.

Please email Karina Breezer karinabreezer@gmail.com for more information. Please write in the subject line: "I CAN'T WAIT TO BE A MENTOR!"

The Professional Development Committee is hard at work creating training opportunities to deliver quality educational programs to our members and friends.

Our Biennial Conference, themed “*Resilience*,” will be held on March 5, 2021 (tentatively in Oak Park).

Given the situation with COVID-19, we are considering all options, including a blended format of in-person and remote program delivery. Please be on a lookout for a call-for-proposals later this summer.

We will also be announcing a call-for-proposals for a webinar we plan to host in September. This is a great opportunity to share your expertise with your fellow ACACI members and colleagues. More details to follow.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns
portabletherapy@gmail.com

~ Karolina



May 2020 Newsletter Resource Section

Self-care Resources

The University of Buffalo School of Social Work has a Self-care website that has a lot of great tools and resources for students and professionals. <http://socialwork.buffalo.edu/resources/self-care-starter-kit.html>. Below are various assessments available on this site:

Self-Care Assessments

[The Lifestyle Behaviors \(pdf\) \(86 KB\)](#) assessment can help you to identify the coping strategies you currently use and whether they are likely to be good (or not so good) for your well-being.

[The Self-Care Assessment \(60 KB\)](#) will help you highlight the good things you are already doing for yourself and whether there is an imbalance in the areas in which you practice self-care.

[My Maintenance Self-Care Worksheet \(pdf\)\(69 KB\)](#) provides an opportunity for you to identify the activities you would like to add to your self-care practice in each self-care domain (“new practice”).

[Emergency Self-Care worksheet \(pdf\) \(156 KB\)](#) can be utilized *before* you are faced with a crisis or feel overwhelmed. This is not to suggest that you will invariably face such a situation; the idea is to be prepared *just in case*.

[Tips for Starting a Support or Discussion Group \(81 KB\)](#) is a resource that can assist if you are interested in joining or starting a support or discussion group related to self-care.

[Developing Your Self-Care Plan](#) is a great tool to start with for specific self-care assessments. These tools can be used to examine the ways in which you are practicing self-care and the attention you are paying to each of the domains of your life.

Stress

[The Holmes-Rahe Life Stress Inventory\(35 KB\)](#) is a widely used measure of cumulative life stressors over the preceding year. Higher scores on this measure indicate that you are at increased risk of psychological stress and physical illness.

To assess more recent stressors and stress we have included three other measures:

1. [Where is Your Time Going? \(116 KB\)](#) can give you a good idea of how you are spending your available time and why there never feels like there is enough of it.
2. [Stress Warning Signs and Symptoms \(159 KB\)](#) lists a range of physical, behavioral, emotional, and cognitive symptoms that can help you identify when you are becoming stressed.
3. [Are You Stressed? \(123 KB\)](#) assesses the extent to which you endorse the types of experiences and complaints that stressed people report.

Burnout and Secondary (Vicarious) Traumatization

[Are You Burning Out? \(117 KB\)](#) scale can help determine whether you are experiencing the complaints commonly associated with burnout.

[The Compassion Satisfaction and Fatigue Scale \(72 KB\)](#) should be considered if you scored highly on the preceding scale or believe that your work with traumatized clients has had lingering effects in your life

Aspects of Personality

[The Brief Big Five Personality Inventory \(121 KB\)](#) is a quick and easy assessment of some of the basic dimensions of your personality, which can be beneficial in how different personality traits are associated with negative mood and perceptions of stress.

The “Big Five” factors and their associated traits include:

- **Openness to Experience** – Whether you are inventive and intellectually curious (vs. consistent, cautious, and conventional). Those who are high on this factor tend to appreciate art, adventure, unique ideas and varied experience, and emotions, and are curious and imaginative.
- **Conscientiousness** – Whether you are efficient and organized (vs. easy-going and careless). Those high on this factor tend to be self-disciplined, achievement-oriented, and dutiful, and engage in planned rather than spontaneous behavior.
- **Extraversion** – Whether you are outgoing and energetic (vs. shy and reserved). Those high on this factor tend to demonstrate sociability, positive emotions, surgency (related to assertiveness, competitiveness, and self-confidence), and are stimulation-seeking in social settings.
- **Agreeableness** – Whether you are friendly and compassionate (vs. competitive and outspoken). Those high on this factor tend to be compassionate, considerate, cooperative, optimistic, trusting, and altruistic towards others.
- **Neuroticism** – Whether you are sensitive and nervous (vs. secure and confident). Those high on this factor tend to experience unpleasant emotions easily (including anger, anxiety, depression, and/or vulnerability) and be highly reactive and vulnerable to stress.

Shifting to telehealth

The Family Institute’s director of child, adolescent & family services, [Natasha Varela, LCPC](#), answers questions about providing [teletherapy](#) to younger clients. <https://www.family-institute.org/sharing-our-expertise/teletherapy-kids>

Here are some on-line interventions to use with children and youth:

<https://www.guidancett.com/blog/interventions-for-online-therapy-with-children-and-youth-2020>

Here are 6 free tele courses that are replaying through May 6, 2020 that share tips and tricks for getting started and best practices in teletherapy!

<https://www.bethebrightest.com/conferences/slp-telecon/register>

Here are 3 new apps that can be used for teleplay-therapy:

<http://southernsandtray.com/3-cool-apps-for-play-therapy/>

Here's an article by APA on ways to connect with kids and teens via telehealth:

<https://www.apa.org/topics/covid-19/telehealth-children>

Here's a video with suggestions on what to do in a session:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9hEcN8tgnc>

Other Resources for Shift to Telehealth

1. PESI:
 - o PESI is having a telehealth training. It's usually \$400+ dollars but if you use the code "telehealth" you can purchase it for FREE! [Click here for more information.](#)
2. Parent-Child Tele Play Therapy:
 - o SF Bay Play Therapy has a free Youtube training that provides tips and ideas for activities on telehealth. [Click here for more information.](#)
3. Liana Lowenstein:
 - o Creative Interventions for Online Therapy with Children: Techniques to Build Rapport. The article is in the "Articles for Professionals" section on my website: www.lianalowenstein.com
4. EMDR Child Therapy:
 - o Free archived recording of EMDR Child Therapy in wake of COVID-19. [Click here to register.](#)
5. An Article by Dr. Sonya Lorelle from the Illinois Association for Play Therapy:

Tele-Play Therapy

By Sonya Lorelle, PhD, LPC, NCC, RPT
Membership Director

In a time where our country faces a new health crisis, families are facing shelter-in-place, schools and events closed, and parents juggling working from home with no childcare. Play therapists are looking for ways to adjust and be flexible to continue to meet the needs of their clients. Here are some ideas for online therapy with children.

1. Online drawing pad: If using an online telemental health platform, the screen may have a drawing pad that can be used to ask the child to draw on the screen as a way to keep a creative connection from afar. If not, the child can draw on their own paper and share it with the therapist. Children may feel scared and feel the anxiety of their parents and need to process it. One counselor on the Tele-PLAY Therapy Resources and Support facebook group said she asked her 5 year old client to draw the coronavirus to process her feelings and provided an opportunity to talk about how to stay safe. You could also invite the child to draw a "safe space".

2. Emotional regulation exercises: With increased anxiety, it may be helpful to practice skills that can help lower children's anxiety and give them coping and emotional regulation skills. Practice fun breathing exercises such as butterfly breathing. Together imagine each other as a butterfly and ask the child to breath in and out slowly while raising and lowering their butterfly wings. They can choose a stuffed animal to be their "breathing buddy". They take their buddy and lie on their backs and put the animal on their belly. Count to three and breathe in watching the stuffed animal rise. Count to three while they breathe out, and they can watch their stuffed animal lower along with their breath.

3. Story telling: Make up a story together. The child could use their own toys and stuffed animals to use as characters as they tell you a story. You can also share pictures that you find online to be the inspiration for the start of a story. The metaphors in these stories can be a great place to continue to explore themes and emotions that may be ringing true in the child's life.

4. Scavenger hunt: Ask the child to find things in their home. If they have a phone with a screen they can bring the counselor on the hunt. Ask the child to find a toy or object that represents how they are feeling. Ask the child to find an object that represents each family member.

5. Emotional regulation exercises: With increased anxiety, it may be helpful to practice skills that can help lower children's anxiety and give them coping and emotional regulation skills. Practice fun breathing exercises such as butterfly breathing. Together imagine each other as a butterfly and ask the child to breath in and out slowly while raising and lowering their butterfly wings. They can choose a stuffed animal to be their "breathing buddy". They take their buddy and lie on their backs and put the animal on their belly. Count to three and breathe in watching the stuffed animal rise. Count to three while they breathe out, and they can watch their stuffed animal lower along with their breath.