



Frances McClelland Institute Children, Youth, and Families

Greetings from the Frances McClelland Institute,

The spring semester is off to a busy start! Although we had hoped to return to in-person and hybrid programming, we will continue to hold events virtually in January and February. We are looking forward to hosting talks this semester that highlight impactful work done in partnership with Latinx (January) and Indigenous (March) communities as part of our Turbeville Speaker Series. See below for details. We hope you can join us!

As we begin yet another semester and year trying to navigate the regularly changing pandemic conditions, we are once again reminded of the importance of being flexible and compassionate towards others, especially those who are experiencing disproportionate impacts of the pandemic. We will continue to share research on the pandemic and its collateral effects on children, youth and families.

We are pleased to announce the publication in English and Spanish of our newest brief titled, "Adolescents and COVID-19: School Re-openings and Mental Health and Academic Challenges" in English and Spanish. This brief was produced in collaboration with Bianca Levario, Graduate Student in Education Policy and Hijos Project Coordinator, and Eniola Idowu, Graduate student in Public Health. The brief includes data from the Hijos Project, a collaborative research study led by FMI affiliates that is focused on gaining insight into the experiences of Latinx families with the COVID-19 pandemic.

To read this brief or any of our other publications, please visit <https://fmi.arizona.edu/publications>.

ADOLESCENTS AND COVID-19: SCHOOL RE-OPENINGS AND MENTAL HEALTH AND ACADEMIC CHALLENGES

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 DECEMBER 2021

Nearly a year and half later, the effects of COVID-19 continue to unfold; most youth have returned to in-person learning, but the ongoing stress of new COVID-19 variants and changes in school policies regarding safety protocols are posing serious academic and mental health challenges for youth and families. Advocating for adolescents who face these risks is needed as academic problems, depression, and anxiety can impact youths' daily functioning and long-term development.

Background
 School closures transformed face-to-face instruction into virtual remote learning during the pandemic. The transition raised concerns about adolescents' access to technology and their educational progress. Less obvious was the impact of remote learning on adolescents' mental health, including anxiety and depression.

Academic Challenges During School Closures
National Data
 Barriers to virtual learning (e.g. access to technology) disproportionately affected youth of marginalized backgrounds. According to an ASU Morrison Institute poll, about 53% of parents reported their concerns about their children falling behind in their classes and these concerns were highest among Black and Latinx parents (Lough, 2020). In addition to parental concern, school closures also had implications for school engagement, particularly for students from low-income backgrounds. During the early stages of the pandemic, only 60% of lower income students not attending in-person school were logging on for online instruction, whereas for 90% of higher income students were logging online (Clark, 2020).

Local Community Data
 The challenges that youth faced nationally were also seen here in our own Tucson community. In Pima County, thousands of high school and middle school students were failing classes during the transition to online remote learning. In Tucson Unified School District, there was an increasing failure rate in middle and high schools, with 52% of students obtaining a failing grade in at least one class (Khanra, 2021). In some schools, the percentage of students failing at least one course was even higher (e.g., 67%).

Mental Health Challenges During School Closures
National Data
 During the pandemic we also saw alarming rates of mental health problems, including increased anxiety, depression, and suicidal ideations. In a national survey of parents of adolescents, 54% reported that their teens experienced emotional distress during virtual learning and 25% reported that their teens experienced worsened mental health, particularly depression during the pandemic (Veltingen et al., 2021). According to the CDC, the prevalence of suspected suicide attempts with Emergency Room visits were 50% higher among adolescent girls aged 12 to 17 years old from February to March, 2021 than in the previous year (Yard, 2021). School closures disrupted youths' daily opportunities to engage with peers, leading to high rates of loneliness due to quarantine (Loides et al., 2020).

Local Community Data
 Within our Tucson community, similar trends emerged. For instance, Pima County reported a 67% increase in suicide deaths since the transition to remote learning among youth ages 12-17 years old (Pima County Health Department, 2020). The rates in suicide among Tucson youth continue to remain elevated due to limited mental health services within our city. School counselors at high schools in Tucson Unified School Districts have witnessed an increase in depression and anxiety symptoms among their students (Khanra, 2021).



Schools Reopening

Across the country, schools are navigating the best ways to support students as they return to in-person schooling. One of the biggest challenges faced by schools is the implementation of COVID-19 safety protocols. Infections are already driving large quarantines, and high incidence rates may once again endanger in-person education despite the tremendous cost to youth (Bazelon, 2021). In Arizona, legislation was passed to ban face coverings and vaccine mandates (SB124) early in the 2021-2022 school year; however, recent legal challenges have ruled this unconstitutional and many school districts have continued mandating face coverings among their school campuses.

In addition to the concerns regarding students' transition to in-person learning, one of the major concerns is helping students with their mental health. Students are returning to school campuses in need of some guidance on how to navigate their emotional experiences and increased feelings of anxiety and depression.

How Can Parents Support Youth?

- Normalize talking with your teen about mental health and how the pandemic has been stressful.
- Look out for possible symptoms of anxiety and depression. This includes: tiredness and loss of appetite, or agitation or restlessness. Do not be afraid to seek professional help when needed. In Frontier Arizona can provide mental health treatment services to children, youth, and adults in Pima County. You can reach them directly at: (520) 838-3804.
- If you start noticing more serious signs of mental health problems including self-harm or if your adolescent talks about suicide, seek help immediately. The 24/7 Crisis Response Center can provide immediate help. (520) 301-2400. Also, the National Suicide Prevention Helpline: 1-800-273-TALK (5275) or text: 'HopeLine' to 41-741.
- Communicate with your adolescent's teachers regularly to understand how your adolescent is doing at school. This communication will help you understand what may be challenging or enjoyable for your adolescent. If there is a language barrier, seek a translator (that can be provided by your adolescent's school) to help you navigate these conversations.
- Be proactive and advocate for your adolescent. You should ask to meet with school counselors/staff if you have concerns about your child's mental health so that you can work collaboratively with the school to set up an optimal learning environment for your student.

How Can Teachers & Schools Support Youth?

- Check-in and communicate often with students and their families. Also, be flexible in the approaches used to connect with families. This can be through the school's online website, emails, phone calls, online platforms for parents to log on to, handouts, or visual announcements that are accessible to parents.
- Don't allow language barriers to limit the communication with families. Be prepared to seek additional support for families who are not comfortable speaking English.
- Be flexible on attendance policies. Students are now strongly encouraged to stay home with any signs of sickness. Consider online learning accommodations when needed.
- Consider extending office hours or availability after school during the week to allow students to ask questions on assignments or address other concerns they might have.
- Create informational sheets or lessons about challenges that are being experienced by students. Include local resources for families, and be willing to discuss with parents.

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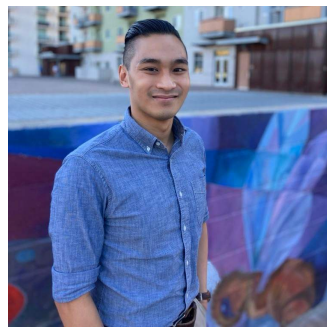
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FMI's 2021 Family Link

We released the 2021 Family Link in December. Family Link is an annual publication designed to keep you up-to-date about the accomplishments and activities of the Frances McClelland Institute for Children, Youth, and Families.

To read the 2021 Family Link issue, please visit <https://fmi.arizona.edu/familylink>.

Welcome to our new Program Coordinator!



We are happy to welcome Alvin Nguyen to the FMI team as a part-time program coordinator. Alvin will assist us with communications, scheduling and event planning. Alvin is a Vietnamese American graduate student pursuing a Master of Science degree in Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences with an emphasis on Speech-Language Pathology at the University of Arizona. He has a Bachelor of Arts in Educational Studies and previously

worked in the early childhood education field providing services to families and children. Welcome, Alvin!

Upcoming FMI Events

The Frances McClelland Institute for Children, Youth & Families invites you to the Pamela J. Turbeville Colloquium



Gilberto Lopez, ScD, MPH, MA.
Assistant Professor in the School of Transborder
Studies, Arizona State University

**"Challenging the Status Quo: Combining the Arts
and Social/Health Sciences to Develop Culturally-
Tailored COVID-19 Information for Latinx."**

Friday, January 28, 2022 from 1:15 PM – 2:30 PM

Register on Zoom at <https://bit.ly/307GN8a>



[Register Now](#)



SAVE THE DATE FACULTY DATA BLITZ!

FEB 18, 2022 from 1:00 PM - 2:15 PM

Zoom Link: <https://bit.ly/3CocIP6>

[Register Now](#)

The Frances McClelland Institute for Children, Youth & Families
invites you to the Pamela J. Turbeville Colloquium



Mary Beth Jäger, MSW, & Lydia Jennings, Ph.D.
Native Nations Institute & US Indigenous Data Sovereignty
Network, University of Arizona

**"Putting Indigenous Data Sovereignty into Practice:
The Indigenous Food Knowledges Network"**

Friday, March 18, 2022 from 1:15 PM – 2:30 PM

Register on Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3sgRWRS>



[Register Now](#)

FSHD Student Updates



Congratulations to Zhen Zhao, FSHD Doctoral Student, on being selected as the recipient of the CALS Ph.D. Level Meritorious Graduate Teaching Award! Zhen was honored at an awards lunch on December 9, 2021, by the Dean of University of Arizona College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

Additional congratulations go to Zhen Zhao for a blog entry from the Society for Research on Adolescence focused on his recently published article, "Sexual Orientation Disclosure among Latinx Sexual Minority High School and College Youth".

[Read Now](#)



Congratulations to Elia Bueno, FSHD graduate student, on receiving a 2021 SACNAS Student Presentation Award for her talk "Self-Concept, Self-Efficacy, Self-Anxiety and Sense of Belonging among STEM Community College Students" at the SACNAS National Diversity in STEM Virtual Conference.

The Society for Advancement of Chicanos/Hispanics and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) hosts the country's largest multidisciplinary and multicultural STEM diversity event in the country.

Current Research from the Institute



Dr. Russell Toomey, FSHD Program Chair & Professor and Interim Director for the Institute for LGBT Studies recently published a new brief with colleagues titled, "Supporting Trans and Non-Binary Adolescents: What Research Tells Us About Promoting Healthy Development".

[Read Now](#)

The Conversation recently published, "Grocery workers suffer the mental health

effects of customer hostility and lack of safety in their workplace" by Dr. Brian Mayer (School of Sociology), Dr. Sabrina V. Helm (Norton School), Dr. Melissa Barnett (Norton School), and Dr. Mona Arora (Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health). This article for the general public is based on the ongoing research of the collaborative team.

Read Now

FMI Resources

Resources for COVID-19

Check out our website for updated COVID-19 resources at <https://fmi.arizona.edu/COVID19>.

FMI's Commitment to Social Justice

Check out our website for an updated list of anti-racist resources at <https://fmi.arizona.edu/social-justice>.

The Frances McClelland Institute for Children, Youth & Families
invites you to the Pamela J. Turbeville Colloquium



Ted Futris, Ph.D., University of Georgia
Professor in Human Development & Family Science

**"E...ships Through Couples
ip Education"**

Friday, December 3, 2021 | 1:15 PM – 2:30 PM

Register on Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3jmaTMI>



Dr. Ted Futris Turbeville Speaker Series Event on December 3, 2021

The Frances McClelland Institute for Children, Youth & Families
invites you to the Pamela J. Turbeville Colloquium



Caroline Black, Ph.D., Northern Arizona University
Professor of Early Childhood Education

**"...t Effects of Supportive
Copre...ps on Children's Social and
Behav...t: Does Coparenting Matter
More...enage Parents than Adult
Parents? "**

Friday, September 17, 2021 | 1:15PM – 2:30PM

Register on Zoom at <https://bit.ly/3m6mGQG>



Dr. Caroline Black Turbeville Speaker Series Event on September 17, 2021

The Frances McClelland Institute for Children, Youth & Families
invites you to the Pamela J. Turbeville Colloquium

Jennifer Earl, Ph.D., University of Arizona
Professor in the School of Sociology

"Young People and Social Media: What are
Scholars and Moving Forward?"

Friday, October 8, 2021, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Registration Link: <https://bit.ly/3lYoJ9o>



Dr. Jennifer Earl Turbeville Speaker Series Event on October 8, 2021



Thank you for your support of the Institute.
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and [LinkedIn](#).

In Partnership,

Melissa A. Barnett, Ph.D.

Norton Endowed Chair in Fathers, Parenting and Families

Associate Professor, Family Studies and Human Development

Director, Frances McClelland Institute for Children, Youth, and Families

Please invest in the Frances McClelland Institute for Children, Youth, and Families. Every dollar you contribute will help us further our work to use the power of research to build family, youth and community resilience.

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Questions? Contact FMI Program Coordinator, Ali Tsosie-Harvey, at
520.621.8067 or email families@cals.arizona.edu

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