ACAC-NC NEWS
Briana Mack, BA, NC A& T Graduate Student – Editor
https://nccounselingassociation.org/ncca-divisions/acacnc/

ACAC of NC supports counselors working with children and adolescents from birth through age adolescent. The breadth of this developmental range offers its own unique experiences and challenges. ACAC of NC serves to bring a community of counselors together who strive to offer best practices to this under-served and distinct population.

TH I S M O N T H ' S N E W S

TIME TO RENEW YOUR NCCA / ACAC-NC MEMBERSHIP – OR JOIN!!!
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

PERSPECTIVES FROM THE FIELD:
• COUNSELORS-IN TRAINING
• INTERVENTIONS AND TECHNIQUES FOR CHILDREN
• FAVORITE BOOKS

GET INVOLVED WITH ACAC-NC
SUBMIT YOUR NOMINATION FOR BOARD TRUSTEE

ACAC-NC is currently soliciting nominations for three Trustee positions. The current trustee positions serve in rolls associated with Membership, Communications and Special Projects. The terms of all three positions are one year terms with current nominations being solicited for the term of July 2018 – June 2019. You must be a member of NCCA and ACAC-NC to serve as a Trustee.

The deadline for nominations is 02 June 2018 with elections to be held immediately following the close of nominations.

Please submit your nomination using this link – 2018-19 Nominations

For additional information, please contact Dr Sarah Moore, Past President & Chair of the Awards and Nomination Committee: sarahmoorephd@gmail.com
President’s Message

Happy May!

I cannot believe that it is almost June and that the year has rushed by so quickly. Last year, I was hopeful for a busy term and am happy to report upon some of our key accomplishments this past year. ACAC-NC was active during the 2018 NCCA Conference in early February. I was especially proud of the number workshops focused on the important work of child and adolescent counseling:

- ACAC-NC sponsored Dr. Kristie Opiola, Assistant Professor UNC-Charlotte, who presented an amazing pre-conference workshop: Building Healthy and Strong Bonds between Parents and Children who have Experienced Relational Breaks through Child Parent Relationship Training.
- One of the highlights this year at the Conference was a Silent Auction with proceeds going to a local charity. ACAC-NC participated by creating a “Portable Playroom”-themed basket filled with a selection of play materials.
- Current members, Dr Phyllis Post, Dr Sarah Moore (Past-President of ACAC-NC) and yours truly also presented workshops on play therapy-related topics.
- ACAC-NC held our annual membership meeting, which was well attended. We had a very full table with a number of “interested” potential new members.

Speaking of members, we need you! ACAC-NC was created to promote greater awareness, understanding and advocacy for professional counseling services that aim to improve the educational, emotional, and social functioning of children and adolescents. Right now, child and adolescent mental health services are at continued risk of defunding while the need for increased services in our schools and communities is ever present. We can have a voice for the children and adolescents we serve through advocacy for not only our minor clients but also our profession.

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ACAC of NC Board for the 2017–2018 year:

- President: Dr. Theresa Kascsak; Core Faculty, Capella University; tkascsakphd@icloud.com
- President-Elect: Courtney Evans-Thompson, ctevans@aggies.ncat.edu
- Secretary: Camila Pulgar, Associate Project Manager, Department of Epidemiology and Prevention, Division of Public Health Sciences, capulgar@wakehealth.edu
- Treasurer: Hannah Brady, Masters’ student, NC A & T; samoore6@ncat.edu
- Immediate Past President: Dr. Sarah Moore; Private Practice & Adjunct Faculty at NC A & T; samoore6@ncat.edu
- Trustee- Membership: Will Batchelor, Masters’ student, NC A & T; wdbatchelor@aggies.ncat.edu
- Trustee- Communications: Briana Mack, Masters’ student, NC A & T; bnmack@aggies.ncat.edu
- Trustee- special projects: Camila Pulgar, MS, NCC, LPCA
Who joins ACAC-NC?

ACAC of NC is open to all counselors who work with children and adolescents in a variety of settings, including schools, agencies, hospitals, and private practice. Counselors who benefit from membership in ACAC-NC include: Mental Health Clinicians, School Counselors, Play Therapists, Counselor Educators or ANY counselor working with children and/or adolescents and their families.

For more information and resources, visit the national division website – Association for Child and Adolescent Counseling at: http://acachild.com

President’s Message, cont’d

We currently have 23 members but I know we have so many more amazing child and adolescent counselors out there. We really hope to grow AND it is renewal season. If you are a member please renew your membership. If you are not a member but have a passion for child and adolescent counseling, please join. Student members can join NCCA and ACAC-NC for $25 with Professional dues of $70 annually. There is no better deal in NC for professional counselors or counseling students. Please see the last page of the newsletter for a registration form.

On the first page of the newsletter is the Call for Nominations for Board Trustees. If you are interested in becoming more active in “service”, please consider this opportunity. Complete the webform no later than 02 June 2018. We are a bit behind on our nominations and voting this year so we will open the voting immediately upon the close of nominations. You must be a member of NCCA and ACAC-NC to serve. As you may notice, many of our Board Trustees and Executive Committee members are graduate students.

Another way of showing your commitment and interest in your work with children and adolescents is to write something for our newsletter. Tell us about your practice, your research, etc. Also, the call for proposals for NCCA’s 2019 Conference is currently open. Visit the 2019 Annual Conference page for proposal submission details. Deadline for submissions is September 7, 2018. ACAC-NC will look to sponsor another pre-conference workshop and a strand of workshops dedicated to child and adolescent counseling. Please consider submitting a proposal.

Thank-you for all you do for children and adolescents in NC!

Theresa ☺

Theresa M. Kascasak, PhD, LPCS, NCC
President ACAC-NC 2017-2019
One of the many reasons why I decided that I would like to work with children and adolescents is because I believe that those ages are so vital and important in life. As a child, your mind is like a sponge. You take everything in, you have a thirst for knowledge, yet you have such little life experience. When things go awry, as a child, you may not always know how to properly handle your emotions or experiences. Being able to work with children to teach them positive coping skills and other strategies to manage their concerns is something they can take with them throughout life. I believe that it is important to ingrain that information in their brain when they are younger so that they can carry it with them throughout life.

As with adolescents, I believe the same applies. It wasn't too long ago that I was an adolescent myself. I remember the frustrations, concerns, fears, and stressors that came along with that period in my life. Trying to do well in high school, apply to colleges, financial aid, deciding a career path, taking AP classes, etc. As an adolescent, it can be hard to meet many of life’s demands, feeling like you are treated like a child, but expected to act like an adult. Adolescence is such an important part of life as it prepares you for the next step: adulthood. Being able to work with this population is so important to me because educating the youth on proper coping mechanisms, helping them process their feelings and experiences, and tackling stressors head on will help them so much when they enter adulthood. Often times I believe that counseling with children and adolescents is overlooked, so this is one way I want to fill in the gap and inspire young minds to reach their full potential in the most healthy way that they can.
My name is Dr. Courtney Evans. I am an Assistant Professor at Liberty University in the Professional Counseling Program, located in the Department of Counselor Education and Family Studies. In addition to teaching counselors, I also work part-time in private practice as a counselor. I am a Registered Play Therapist. Utilizing play therapy with children and adolescents is a passion of mine.

When I first started researching play therapy, I was torn between directive and non-directive approaches. While my first inclination was to go into a counseling room prepared with some activity to make progress toward the client’s goals, I received trainings in non-directive therapy that also were highly influential and worked! However, I would have to say that Adlerian Play therapy makes the most sense to me as a clinician. I think we all should “find ourselves” as clinicians and utilize approaches that “fit” the way we see the world. I not only am an Adlerian by nature (my theoretical orientation), but the structure of this play therapy “fits” the way I work with clients.

Therefore, I would have to say that my favorite book on child and adolescent counseling is *Partners in Play: An Adlerian Approach to Play Therapy* (3rd ed.) (Kottman & Meany-Walen, 2016). This book integrates tenet of Adlerian Theory into Play Therapy. Dr. Terri Kottman, the founder of Adlerian Play Therapy, does an excellent job of explaining, in a clear and concise way, how to utilize Adlerian Play Therapy.
The authors of this book discuss stages of Adlerian Play therapy, personality priorities, crucial c’s, goals of misbehavior, and even propose how to conceptualize and work with parents and teachers, as Adlerian Play therapy is a holistic approach (Kottman & Meany-Walen, 2016). Case studies are provided throughout to help the reader put theory into practice.

I have had the opportunity to receive training and intensive supervision with Dr. Terri Kottman, owner of The Encouragement Zone, in Adlerian Play Therapy. Adlerian Play therapy has also recently become an evidence-based practice (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration [SAMSHA], 2016). I would highly recommend this book for any practicing clinician working with children and adolescents.


Having the opportunity to work with children and their families is a very rewarding, challenging and fruitful learning experience for me, as a counselor in training. I work at three different locations within the same organization, CareNet Inc./Wake Forest Baptist Medical Center. I am collocated in our main office, Downtown Health Plaza and Winston East Pediatrics. Children that I work with come with an array of disorders, most common are: ADHD, Depression, Anxiety, and Disruptive Mood Dysregulation disorder. My approach is inspired around several theories, including: Play Therapy, Cognitive Behavioral therapy, Attachment Theory, Spirituality Based interventions, Child-Parent Relationship Training, and Latino Mental Health issues. When working with children, I am very team oriented where I include the parents, Primary Care Providers (PCP) and the child. We work on setting up routines that help the family keep track of their child’s behavior in a healthy way. I teach parents how to reflect more than give orders and set up rules to increase emotional regulation for their children. As part of an integrated health care setting, I communicate with PCPs as needed to make sure clients receive a holistic experience.

I was trained in Play Therapy while completing my Master’s at NC A&T. I learned the power of play as part of children language of communication. I have used some of those skills in my office as I have created a space where children can safely explore their emotions and show me how they are feeling through play. I also include parents during the process and teach them how to use unconstructed play time with their kids at home. I find it so therapeutic for both the parents and child!

Since my passion is Latinx Families, I have incorporated these skills and also adapted them to be more cultural sensitive. For example, I am mindful to have toys that my represent Latinx heritage and customs. Play therapy allows my Latinx families to connect while they are in my office in a way that they might have never learned to connect with one another before. From personal and professional experience, Latinx families can be a benefit and a challenge for healing. One of the most important parts of my training is supervision. Supervision is key to becoming a proficient and competent counselor. Supervision helps me to talk through cases, pay attention to my own countertransference and come up with effective treatment plans.

Some of the resources that I use in therapy:

- 123 Magic (Parenting book)
- Play Therapy: The Art of the Relationship (Landreth)
- Latino Families in Therapy (Falicov) Relaxation
- Stress Reduction for Kids (Shapiro).
Join ACAC-NC today! Mark ACAC-NC as your interest group and pay your annual dues for both NCCA and ACAC-NC. Memberships/Renewals received now extend through June 30, 2019. There are a number of benefits for joining NCCA and ACAC-NC: Counselor Advocacy, Reduced Conference Fees, Newsletters, the new NCCA Journal, Career Bank, and so much more.....