

Rural Psychology and the National Center for *Research* on *Rural* Education (R²Ed)

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Families and Schools (CYFS) and the
National Center for Research on Rural Education
(R²Ed)*

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Professional Psychology*

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Professional Background and Training

Licensed Psychologist

Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA

Nebraska Internship Consortium, Munroe-Meyer
Institute for Genetics and Rehabilitation

Assistant Professor, MMI (Omaha, NE)

Assistant Professor, LSU Health Sciences Center
(New Orleans, LA)



Professional Background, cont.

Research Assistant Professor, Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools, College of Education and Human Sciences, UNL

National Center for Research on Rural Education, Director of Rural Outreach and Coordination

Clinical/Behavioral Health services in urban and rural communities in Louisiana and Nebraska



Surprising Populations Holding Special Places in my Heart



Adolescents

Children and
families in rural
communities



Rural Communities

Externship in Assumption Parish – Louisiana

- Assumption General Community Services
- School-Based Mental Health Counselor
- Bayou L'Ourse Primary and Pierre Part Primary

Involved with first MMI rural satellite clinic – Columbus Community Hospital Pediatrics Clinic, Columbus, NE

Scottsbluff Genetics and Interdisciplinary Clinic (MMI)

Pediatric Partners – Fremont, NE



Unique Issues in Rural Psychology

Professional Isolation – real and perceived

Threats to Anonymity – professionals and clients

Trust Building and Stigma

Get to know the Family Tree

Linking Systems



Professional Isolation

Dangers:

- Expert in everything
- Feelings of being overwhelmed
- Lack professional communication and sharing

Managing professional isolation:

- Develop & maintain professional collaborations and regular communication about cases and professional skills (adjunct appointments, connections through a medical center, schedule regular meetings – use distance technology)



Threats to Anonymity

Professionals

- Grocery store, restaurants, community organizations (children at same schools, church, exercise facility)

Clients

- Grocery stores, restaurants, community organizations
- Friends of family who you also serve; high profile clients in the community



Stigma and Trust Building

Stigma attached to “going to the psychiatrist”

Go where the children are

- Pediatrician offices
- Schools
- Homes
- All of the above!

Initial skepticism - families and community members; true community operation

Community pride: invest; take an interest; participate



Let them know you
are honored to be
there, not that they
should be honored
that you are there –
and REALLY mean it!



Once accepted and “in,”
you become part of the
community: protected,
cared for, lasting
(even after you move away)



Get to know the Family Tree

Know who the legal guardian is

Large majority have extensive and extended network of adult care providers in children's lives

Important to know who needs to be included



Linking Systems

Coordination among systems and resources is key to effective service delivery

Family system (immediate and extended)

School system (teachers, principals, paraprofessionals, classroom aides, counselors, office staff)

Community organizations (churches, after-school activities)



Common Issues in Psychology

Basic principles remain static

- Who's your client?
- What's your role?
- What are your areas of professional expertise?
- Where are your professional limits?
- Know and draw on additional resources when needed
- Fundamental principles of psychological services apply to humans, regardless of the context





National Center for **Research** on **Rural** Education (R²Ed)

Housed in the

*Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families
and Schools (CYFS) at UNL*

<http://r2ed.unl.edu>

Susan M. Sheridan, PhD, Director

Co-Directors: Drs. Todd Glover, Gwen Nugent, Gina Kunz,
Jim Bovaird



CYFS Mission

Advance the conduct of high quality interdisciplinary research to promote the intellectual, behavioral, and social-emotional development and functioning of individuals across educational, familial, and community contexts.

Housed in the College of Education and Human Sciences at UNL

Director: Dr. Susan M. Sheridan

<http://cyfs.unl.edu>



CYFS Composition and Functions

Core set of research faculty

Faculty across departments, colleges, and campuses in the NU system who are Faculty Affiliates of our Center

Conduct independent lines of research

Provide support to faculty and student affiliates for high-quality research programs and funding pursuits for such programs

One-stop-shop for research support and intellectual capacity building



About R²Ed

Funded by the Institute of Education Sciences,
U.S. Department of Education

Provide leadership in the conduct of ongoing rural education research

Conduct research studies to identify, develop, and validate strategies for improving the quality of rural education

Disseminate information on evidence-based educational practices appropriate for rural schools



Why Rural Schools?

Generally speaking, rural schools in America are:

Susceptible to isolation, staff turnover, limited resources, and diminished access to cutting-edge innovations, teacher support and professional development

Located in geographic settings with considerable distances between them

Plagued by many of the same issues facing urban areas, such as poverty, diverse learners, and low achieving schools



R²Ed Priorities

Development of **rural students' skills and competencies** in the areas of reading and science

Identification of effective **school, teacher, and family supports** needed to help advance the learning of rural students

The availability of and access to cutting-edge, research-based educational/instructional strategies



Developed through R²Ed

Infrastructure to conduct and disseminate nationally-relevant, cutting-edge rural education research and provide essential leadership for the field

Data-based understandings of what works, for whom, and under what conditions, in the areas of rural instruction/education, professional development of rural teachers, and related rural issues (e.g., family-school relationships and parent involvement in rural settings)



Immediate Goals of R²Ed

To improve students' reading and science knowledge and skills by identifying research-based methods to help teachers systematically deliver evidence-based instruction in rural settings

To identify, develop, and validate strategies for improving the quality of education including challenges faced by rural schools in providing professional development and advanced training to teachers

To provide leadership to the field of rural education researchers



Studies of R²Ed

Identification of professional development experiences in reading instruction, science inquiry instruction, and math instruction for rural and non-rural K-5 teachers nationally

Project READERS

CSI: Coaching Science Inquiry in Rural Schools

CBC in Rural Communities (funded independently through IES)



Implications for Rural Educators Broadly

Research-based findings directing instruction in reading and science, in rural schools

Research-based practices for supporting teachers' acquisition and use of innovative instructional approaches in rural schools

Connections between rural research and practice communities

Products/deliverables such as toolkits and policy briefs

Ongoing scholarship and training



*For more information, please
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Questions?



Thank you!

