

## The Edna Bennett Pierce Prevention Research Center (PRC) at Pennsylvania State University is an international leader in prevention science, practice and policy.

At the PRC, we conduct cross-cutting, interdisciplinary research with the objective of making a positive impact on vulnerable populations. We actively transfer scientific knowledge to practitioners, educators, the media, community stakeholders, and policymakers to facilitate the wide-scale implementation and dissemination of preventive, evidence-based programs (EBPs) to benefit children, youth, families and communities across the globe. The PRC is also a pre-eminent incubator for developing a new generation of prevention scientists through our rigorous pre- and post-doctoral training and outreach programs. To expand its portfolio and increase real-world impact, the PRC is committed to the following.



**Reducing Inequality for Vulnerable Populations.** Our mission is to apply a broad range of scientific capabilities and advance social innovation and prevention economics to improve conditions for children at risk for behavioral and physical health problems caused by maltreatment, poverty, or exposure to other adversities and disparities. One of our largest projects, the EPISCenter, is an example of a Pennsylvania-based, wide-scale implementation initiative that has served more than 50,000 youth, improving knowledge, behavior, and attitudes, reducing risk, violence, and recidivism, and improving community health.

**Moving Research into Practice and Policy.** Through collaborations across Penn State, and with other universities and community, state and national organizations including the National Prevention Science Coalition, the PRC has become a reservoir of EBPs. EBPs are the “gold standard” in helping decision-makers address a broad range of public, behavioral and mental health issues. We routinely educate the public and brief policymakers on findings from the field and their implications for behavioral health.

### AREAS OF FOCUS

- Adversity and Inequality
- Poverty and Stress
- Substance Abuse and Addiction
- Chronic Disease
- Health Behaviors
- Social and Emotional Learning

**Leveraging the Work of Prevention Scientists.** We provide a full complement of supports and infrastructures to build social innovation, prevention economics, dissemination and implementation, and communications into all our work. We have a longstanding track record of successfully winning funding from foundations, state and federal government agencies and non-profit organizations. This year, our grants total \$16,575,500, with much more pending. Our many relationships with state and local agencies and other institutions position us to effectively implement and disseminate EBPs and diversify funding from both federal and foundation sources.

**Leading the Field in Prevention Return-on-Investment.** Our pioneering work in the economics of prevention has provided key insights into the costs, benefits and return-on-investment of preventive interventions across a variety of areas. Work within the PRC includes strengthening methods for conducting economics evaluations, analysing the costs and benefits of prevention programs and supporting the use of economic evidence in policy and practice.

**Developing a Network for Translational and Transdisciplinary Science.** Through our Program for Translational Research on Adversity and Neurodevelopment (P-TRAN), we are bringing scientists together to promote the application of neuroscientific knowledge and techniques to prevention science and to identify new strategies and widespread interventions in child development, childhood adversity, mental health and substance use disorders.

## A Sampling of PRC Projects

### Drug and Alcohol Prevention

- PROMoting School-community-university Partnerships to Enhance Resilience (PROSPER)
- Causes & Consequences of Alcohol Use in Adolescence
- Relationship between Sleep Problems & Drug Use in Adolescence
- Parent Communication with College Students about Alcohol

### Effective Parenting

- Family Foundations/Military Family Foundations
- Perinatal Intervention & Long-Term Outcomes
- Preventing Intimate Partner Violence among Teens who are Pregnant or Parenting
- Enhanced Family Involvement in Juvenile Justice Services

### Social-Emotional Learning

- Stress, Self-Regulation & Psychopathology in Middle Childhood
- Promoting Alternative THinking Strategies (PATHS)
- Project RESPECT: Responding in Emotionally Supportive & Positive ways in Educational Communication

### Building Healthy Habits

- Promoting Self-Regulation Skills & Healthy Eating Habits in Head Start
- HealthWise - Sexual risk prevention, South Africa
- Mindfulness & Compassion Programs & Practices in K-12

### Cost-Effectiveness and Program Evaluation

- Understanding the Economic Value of Social & Emotional Learning: Monetary Estimates for Program Evaluation & Policy Analysis
- Optimizing Prevention of Costly Adult Outcomes
- Effectiveness of Communities That Care on Reducing Youth Risk Factors
- Partnership Model for Diffusion of Proven Prevention



## PRC Signature Events

To fulfill our commitment to continuous learning for our students and faculty and to honor leaders in prevention science, the Center hosts two prominent lectures, the Bennett Prevention Lecture and the Compassion Lecture. In addition, during the fall and spring semesters, the Center invites prevention scientists from Penn State and other universities to present their research through seminars and brown bag discussions.

**Bennett Lecture.** Made possible by an endowment from alumna Edna Bennett Pierce, this lecture recognizes a renowned researcher in prevention science each fall. For the past 14 years, distinguished scholars from all over the world have been sharing their latest innovations in prevention research at this key event.

**Lecture on Compassion.** In 2016, founding Center director Mark Greenberg and Christa Turksma endowed the inaugural lecture on compassion. The first compassion lecture featured Richard Davidson, Ph.D., William James and Vilas Research Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry, University of Wisconsin at Madison.

*The Edna Bennett Pierce Prevention Research Center was established in 1998 to promote the health and well-being of children, families and communities. Made possible by an endowment from Edna Bennett Pierce, the Center's goal was to improve outcomes for children by forging partnerships and project collaborations with national and international prevention scientists. The Center's portfolio includes grants from the National Institutes of Health, including NIDA, NIAAA, NCI, and NICHD, and the U.S. Department of Education. Other current PRC projects are being funded through awards from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Annie E. Casey Foundation, Arnold Foundation, Spencer Foundation, NOVO Foundation, and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, among others.*

## Partners at Penn State and Beyond

The Center for Health Care and Policy Research

The Center for Healthy Aging

Child Maltreatment Solutions Network

Child Study Center

Clearinghouse for Military Family Readiness

The Penn State Methodology Center

National Prevention Science Coalition

To learn more about the Edna Bennett Pierce Prevention Research Center, go to [www.prevention.psu.edu](http://www.prevention.psu.edu) or contact Mel Miller, Strategic Communications Director, at [mem502@psu.edu](mailto:mem502@psu.edu).



**PennState**

College of Health and Human  
Development

Edna Bennett Pierce Prevention Research Center  
316 Biobehavioral Health Building  
The Pennsylvania State University  
University Park, PA 16802