



[Child Flourishing: A Critical Indicator for Early Relational Health](#)

How to measure the impact of efforts that seek to promote Early Relationship Health (ERH) and improve child health outcomes is an essential question to explore. Christina Bethell, PhD, professor at Johns Hopkins University and director of the Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative (CAHMI) and the National Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health, has led the development of two indices drawn from survey items included in the National Survey of Children's Health, which provides representative data for all children across all states.

In this article, Drs. Christina Bethell and David Willis, MD, a professor of pediatrics at Georgetown University, describe those two indices, which are parent reported and related to ERH: the Child Flourishing Index (CFI) and the Family Resilience and Parent-Child Connection Index (FRCI). These indices show that ERH is foundational for child flourishing regardless of whether children have experienced adversity or not. The CFI is associated with ERH and is predictive of school readiness and child health and developmental outcomes, and the FRCI is a direct indicator for ERH that strongly predicts child flourishing.

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Nurture Connection Parent Perspective:

For Native American Parent Leader, Promoting Early Relational Health Means Keeping Her Word And Honoring Her Community

Nurture Connection is proud to honor November as Native American Heritage Month. This is an excerpt from reflections from Nicole Loveless, Nurture Connection Family Network Collaborative Parent Leader about her experience promoting Early Relational Health and supporting the health and wellbeing of children and families in her New Mexico tribal community.



The community I work for is the Native American community of New Mexico. I'm reaching out to my families, I'm talking with them, connecting with them, texting them, emailing them, going by their house to check up on them, going to the meetings that they have here at Indian Education (where) they have all the tribal leaders as well. I keep my word to my families, building the trust, building the relationship, keeping the honor, keeping the integrity. It's very sacred work.

With our Native American communities, words were always broken, trust was always broken. And today, in order to continue to heal (from) that, we have to keep our word; we have to honor trust. I'm actually hearing the families and listening to them, and when they're struggling, besides just saying, "oh, what could I do to help?" Just because you always wanna help. (But) sometimes they just want for you to listen. Just to *listen*.

So I have a variety of hats that I'm always interlinking. Like if you were to see me physically, I would probably be changing hats. Like, oh, we're talking about this, lemme put this hat on.

My message to my families is: "You're not alone. We're in this together and we're gonna keep speaking up. We're gonna to still keep knocking on those doors and we're still gonna give you the information that you're needing."



Explore More



Nuture Conversations:
Putting Trauma-Informed Pediatric Care into Practice
A Conversation with Amy King, PhD and R.J. Gillespie, MD, MHPE, FAAP

Thursday, 11/21
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM ET

The Trauma-Informed Pediatric Practice
A Resilience-Based Roadmap to Foster Early Relational Health

Amy King, PhD
R.J. Gillespie, MD, MHPE, FAAP
David W. Willis, MD, FAAP
Professor of Pediatrics, Georgetown University, and founder, Nuture Connection

New webinar recording available!

R. J. Gillespie, MD, MHPE, FAAP and Amy King, PhD are the authors of [“The Trauma-Informed Pediatric Practice: A Resilience-Based Roadmap to Foster Early Relational Health,”](#) published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.

On Thursday, November 21st, 2024, Nurture Connection hosted a conversation with the authors about the book and how it can transform pediatric practice for clinicians and families.

Guest Speakers:

- R. J. Gillespie, MD, MHPE, FAAP
- Amy King, PhD
- David W. Willis, MD, FAAP, Founder, Nurture Connection

Learn more about The Trauma-Informed Pediatric Practice (now available on Kindle!) at: <https://www.aap.org/The-Trauma-Informed-Pediatric-Practice-Paperback>

Hear more from RJ and Amy in this Nurture Connection interview:

<https://nutureconnection.org/how-do-clinicians-help-prevent-trauma-in-their-pediatric-patients-a-new-book-leads-the-way/>

Watch Here



Thrive Center Innovation Hub Fellowship: Applications Now Open!

Georgetown's Thrive Center is launching an Innovation Hub Fellowship. This fellowship aims to help innovators like *you/your colleagues* across key dimensions of scaling impact, including intervention validation, economic model development, and go-to-community strategies. Fellows will receive expertise, mentorship, and a network to accelerate impact, and the program is free (no cost or equity sharing)!



What is Early Relational Health?

[Early Relational Health](#) is the state of emotional well-being that grows from emotional connection between babies and toddlers and their parents and caregivers when they experience strong, positive, and nurturing relationships with each other.

ERH is foundational to children's healthy growth and development and parents' and caregivers' sense of competence, connection, and overall well-being. These strong and enduring relationships also help to protect the family from the harmful effects of stress.

Core ERH Resources

Frameworks Institute. [Building Relationships: Framing Early Relational Health](#). Prepared in collaboration with the Center for the Study of Social Policy. May 2020.

Willis D, Chavez S, Lee J, Hampton P, Fine A. [Early Relational Health National Survey: What We're Learning from the Field](#). Center for the Study of Social Policy. 2020.

Willis D, Sege R, Johnson K. [Changing the Mindset: Foundational Relationships Counter Adversity with HOPE](#). (Blog) Center for the Study of Social Policy. May 2020.

Perspectives on ERH Video Series. [Perspectives on Early Relational Health Series](#). Center for the Study of Social Policy. 2022.

Center of the Study of Social Policy and Health+ Studio. [How to Communicate Effectively About Early Relational Health: What It Is and Why It Matters](#). 2022.

Find additional resources on our [website](#).

If you are interested in learning more, please check out Innovation Hub @ Thrive Center's [website](#) and [FAQ](#). If you would like to apply or view the Fellowship Application, [click here](#).

Apply Now!

If you have any questions, you can contact the Innovation Hub team directly (innovationhub@georgetown.edu).

What We're Reading

- Community health workers in early childhood well-child care: a statement from the Pediatric Academic Societies Maternal Child Health: First 1,000 days Special Interest Group. T.R. Coker, E.F. Gregory, M. McCord, R. Cholera, H. Bakken, S. Chapman, et al (2024). BMC Primary Care, Vol. 25, Issue 1. DOI: 10.1186/s12875-024-02582-3. [Read here.](#)
- Hello Family Pay for Success Project Evaluation Design. H. Sandstrom, CXongdon, W., Zhong, M., & Hernandez-Lepe, F. (October 2024). Urban Institute, Washington DC. [Read here.](#)
- Early relational health and its impacts on the developing brain: A scoping review. L. Zhang, Lontos, D., Olsson, C., Evans-Whipp, T., McIntosh, J., Painter, F., Harverson, J., Whittle, S., & PFR Early Relational Health Network (2024). PFR Early Relational Health Network. [Read here.](#)
- *Of Boys and Men: Why the Modern Male Is Struggling, Why It Matters, and What to Do about It* by Richard Reeves. Brookings Institution Press, 2022. ISBN 9780815739876.

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