

Looking Beyond Our Borders: What Therapeutic Residential Care in Other Countries can Teach Us

In this presentation, Dr. James will present findings from a multi-national case study of therapeutic residential care in five EU countries. She will highlight the macro-system structures and features that define programs as well as staff training, youth issues, and current strengths and challenges. Dr. Lee will present the US data for these indicators, illustrating what we know and where limitations of available data create obstacles. Together, Dr. James and Dr. Lee will offer suggestions for possible next steps for policy, practice, and research that can be informed by a multi-national TRC database.

Presenters:



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Sigrid James has a Ph.D. in Social Work from the University of Southern California and she is an Associate Professor in the Department of Social Work and Social Ecology at Loma Linda University. Dr. James aims through this fellowship to deepen her knowledge about implementation science in the area of interventions for children in the child welfare system who present with serious mental health needs and are often placed in residential care settings. She is currently in the second year of an NIMH KO1 Award, entitled “The Treatment of EBD Children in Foster Care – the Role of Residential Group Care.” Her research has a dual focus: (1) studying processes in CW/MH systems as they wrestle with how to expand evidence-based practices and reduce use of residential care or, if placement is unavoidable, reduce length of time spent in residential care settings, and (2) studying changes implemented by residential care settings as some attempt to serve children and families from a more evidence-based driven perspective and thus remain a viable provider of services. Her work up to this point has shown that the systemic issues

between residential care settings and county systems are complex. Sustained implementation of alternative evidence-based interventions, once they have been identified, will in part depend on understanding and leveraging these complexities. While Dr. James' KO1 Award is providing a basic introduction to the implementation literature, she hopes that this fellowship will substantially deepen her training, providing her with a different way of thinking about these systemic complexities and a skill set to methodologically approach her questions of interest.



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Dr. Bethany Lee is a professor at the University of Maryland School of Social Work. She has been on the faculty since 2007. She received her MSW and PhD from the Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis, where she was a student of J. Curtis McMillen (UM SSW PhD alumnus).

Her research is centered on services for youth involved in the public systems of child welfare and/or mental health. She is also interested in advanced statistical methods. She has received funding for her research from federal sources including the Children's Bureau and Center for Medicaid Services, as well as state and local partners. She is an Associate Editor at the Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research and is also the Editor of the journal Residential Treatment for Children & Youth.

Dr. Lee teaches in both the MSW and Ph.D. programs. For MSW students, she teaches an advanced research course on Research in Child Welfare. In the Ph.D. program, Dr. Lee facilitates the second semester of Research Practicum. Dr. Lee enjoys working with students and helping them see the value of research in social work practice.

As a West Baltimore resident, Dr. Lee is involved in community development and advocacy efforts in her Sandtown neighborhood.