RESEARCH PROGRAMS

_The development of anxiety disorders in youth: Considering multiple systems_

Anxiety disorders are among the most prevalent mental health issues affecting children and adolescents today. Drawing from developmental psychopathology, there are multiple paths/domains which may be involved in the etiology of youth anxiety (equifinality) and there are also multiple outcomes which may derive from the same path (multifinality). My primary research program seeks to determine risk factors for the development of anxiety disorders, recognizing that children’s lives are influenced by transactions with various systems (systems theory). Consistent with these theoretical models, my research studies have investigated the roles of peer (e.g., bullying and friendship quality), familial (e.g., parental anxiety and stress), and academic (e.g., achievement, attention) variables on the development of youth anxiety and related adjustment difficulties (e.g., depression). This research program has been funded by numerous intramural research grants and an NIH/NICHD Mentored Clinical Scientist Development Award (2009-present, $619,215). The ultimate goal of this research program is to provide empirical information on the etiology of child anxiety disorders that can inform prevention and early intervention program efforts.

_Risk and resiliency following traumatic events_

Exposure to traumatic events has been linked with a myriad of adverse outcomes and has been shown to have far-reaching impacts (e.g., whole communities). Given this, it is of utmost importance to understand factors which might influence post-trauma outcomes for individuals exposed to them. A secondary focus of my research program examines risk and resiliency factors for individuals of all ages following traumatic events. Research studies have been conducted with survivors of natural disasters, sexual assault, and mass shootings, with the goal of delineating variables which may protect from or increase risk for adverse post-trauma outcomes. This research serves to influence intervention program development and refinement for victims of trauma and has been funded by research grants from the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Mental Health.

_Biographical Sketch_

Amie E. Grills, PhD is an Associate Professor and Director of the Counseling Psychology & Applied Human Development Cluster at Boston University. Dr. Grills-Taquechel specializes in anxiety, trauma, and depression (particularly in children), as well as the development and evaluation of cognitive-behavioral assessments and interventions, including those conducted using web-based designs (website). Dr. Grills-Taquechel has numerous publications and research presentations in each of these areas (available from her agrills@bu.edu), as well as a 2012 book entitled, “Phobic and Anxiety Disorders in Children and Adolescents”. She is a licensed clinical psychologist who is listed with the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology. She is an active member of over a half-dozen national and international organizations and has received awards from the American Psychological Society, Anxiety Disorders Association of America, and the Association for the Advancement of Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, including selection as a 2011 American Psychological Society Rising Star.