Social work and couples and family therapy are practiced within the context of interpersonal relationships. On a macro level, interorganizational relationships may influence service provision. We are engaged in scholarship related to the nature of these human connections. In this issue, we explore a variety of ways in which relationships influence other aspects of people’s lives.

**MESSAGE FROM THE ASSOCIATE DEAN FOR RESEARCH**


This research examined the impact of individual and relational characteristics of foster parents on self-reported permanency outcomes for the children in their care. The results of surveys completed at the end of training showed that couple relationship quality and altruism were predictive of reunification of foster children with biological parent. The significant predictors of placement in a residential facility were age, education, and avoidant attachment style of the foster parent.

**FOSTER PARENTING**


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**BLACK FATHERS**


The study examined the association between law enforcement contact and Black fathers’ familial relationships. Results show, for fathers, both measures of law enforcement contact are associated with lower levels of relationship quality but not co-parenting. For mothers, only fathers who were previously incarcerated were associated with lower levels of relationship quality whereas both measures of law enforcement contact were associated with lower levels of co-parenting.
Particularly important to health risk behaviors may be specific aspects of relationships with non-parental adults, such as relationship quality, and types and frequency of social support provided within relationships.

Using survey and social network data form a sample of ethnically diverse young men who have sex with men (YMSM), this study examined longitudinal associations between emotional closeness to non-parental adults (NPAs). After controlling for race/ethnicity, closer relationships with NPAs were associated with a lower likelihood of binge-drinking and marijuana use six months later.

Implementation in real world child welfare and behavioral health settings present a vast array of contextual factors that may influence [capacity, collaboration and readiness for change], both related to and totally external to the project being implemented.

Guided by implementation science, this study found statistically significant differences in the perceptions of workers from each system in capacity for trauma-informed knowledge, collaboration, and organizational readiness for change. Leadership and policy change can facilitate growth in these implementation drivers through out the stages to full implementation and ultimately sustainability.

While social service agencies aim to reconnect youth economically and academically, these findings underscore the importance of addressing upstream drivers of social disconnectedness, as well as integrating healing-centered clinical interventions.

There is limited examination of how social isolation manifests in the lives of disconnected youth in urban communities. Youth reported an overarching theme of “staying to oneself,” and constructed isolation as a complex cognitive and physical process utilized to stay safe from community and interpersonal violence. Self-isolation functioned as a tool of self-protection and as being essential to surving amidst adversity. The consequences of self-isolation include perceptions that participants are alone to deal with life’s challenges and purposeful disengagement from community life.