

Empowerment and Violence Prevention, Mood disorders, and Neuropsychology
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1. Empowerment in action: Empower, Heal, Thrive Program for Adolescent Girls

a. This research group has developed and implemented an empowerment curriculum for high school girls in order to ultimately prevent interpersonal violence. Implementation of this project began Fall Semester 2011. The seminar involves psychoeducation and psychological skills training along with physical self-defense training via an empowerment model. The program was integrated into collaborating school's PE/Health curriculum in the 2013-2014 academic school year. Further research on the program may be implemented as well. The research group would examine changes pre and post-class, along with several longitudinal assessments. Research group members will be actively involved in collecting and analyzing the data. Training for this project will begin in the summer. The research group is currently analyzing and writing papers from our previous research project.

b. Also, the research group is currently developing a similar program for adolescent boys. Once developed, they will start piloting the program. The aim is for this to be a companion program to the Girls' program.

2. Empowerment in action: Empower, Heal, Thrive Program for Adults with a History of Trauma

In this project, the research group has developed a class focusing on education, empowerment, psychological skills training, and physical self-defense training in women with a history of interpersonal trauma. A small body of empirical evidence suggests that self-defense training can be a potent means of empowering women to increase their feelings of self-efficacy. The research examines the psychological effects of such an intervention in adult women with emotional and interpersonal difficulties related to a history of interpersonal (emotional, physical, or sexual) violence. This project has collected pre-post class data and longitudinal follow up. The research group is currently analyzing data and writing scientific papers.

3. Evaluation of a High School Mentoring Program

Additional projects for this research group are beginning in collaboration with a local high school. This is a program evaluation and enhancement project on their mentoring program. Students are examining the current mentoring program and developing ways to improve the program, which will then be evaluated.

4. Launching Program for High School Seniors

The research group is in the midst of developing a short curriculum for high school girls about bridging from high school to college. The information will focus on alcohol use, sexual assault, and their interaction in college. The research group is simultaneously conducting a pilot study to follow girls who are currently seniors in high school through their first year of college. First round of data collection will begin April-May 2015. The data will be used to more thoroughly develop a launching program for a local high school.

5. Depression and Trauma: Psychological and Biological Sequelae

A number of studies have suggested a link between early adverse events in childhood to dysfunctional hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis activity. This research suggests that early life stress makes the HPA axis more stress-reactive and therefore leads to dysfunction in affect regulation, cognition, cortisol secretion, and brain function. In the current study investigating the HPA axis in depression, the research group also collected data on early life and adult trauma. Data collection on this sample is complete, and the research group is analyzing the inter-relationships between trauma and various cognitive, affective, and biological measures.

6. Psychological, Biological, and Cognitive Aspects of Severe Depression (P500 Study)

This is a large, multi-centered study to examine psychological, biological, and cognitive aspects of severe depression, including suicidal ideation. Patients will be assessed at baseline, and then followed every 3 months for one year. Baseline measures will then be repeated at one year. Patients will be recruited from inpatient units, as well as from the community. Students will have the opportunity to conduct diagnostic interviews, psychiatric ratings, and neuropsychological assessments. The study has been running for one year and is expected to recruit for 2 more years.

7. Mental Health and Empowerment in South Asian Women/Girls. Several projects are in the planning phase. In the first ongoing project the research group is working with an NGO in India to adapt our empowerment program for adolescent girls in a very low income community. Currently, the research group is culturally adapting the program for use within the community. Much of this work is done via weekly conference calls with India.

Openings: 2-3 new members to join the research group. Depending on the project of interest, new group members may be required to begin in Summer 2015.

Apply: Interested students are asked to submit the following items to Dr. Keller *via email* (jkeller@stanford.edu)

1. Curriculum Vitae
2. One or two page essay discussing past research experience, how and why the student became interested in this research group, and a description of their specific research and clinical interests.
3. A writing sample - usually a paper submitted for a psychology class while a student at PGSP. The research proposal from the Research Methods class is a good choice.

Dr. Keller will interview potential students and inform them for acceptance on notification day.