OBH Center Highlights

Accreditation

The OBH Center continues to support the process of accreditation. It is exciting to think that we are currently in the process of reaccreditation for some OBH programs. Congrats to those who completed site visits!

14 Accredited Programs: As of 2017, we have 14 accredited programs including the Aspiro Group, Elements Wilderness Program, Redcliff Ascent, Summit Achievement, Open Sky, Evoke at Entrada, Anasazi, Evoke at Cascades, New Vision – West Coast, SUWS of the Carolinas, Legacy Outdoor Adventures, Outback Therapeutic Expeditions, Trails Carolina, and Second Nature.

Risk Management

The OBH Center continues to collect yearly risk management data from programs in an effort to show an accurate appraisal of OBH, which we have been doing since 2001. It is now the longest-running operational risk management database in the outdoor programming industry.

We can still say with confidence that youth who attend OBH programs are ½ as likely to be injured than those youth living in their community.

Insurance

We have made HUGE strides in insurance coverage and caught national attention (See “OBH in the News”). Many thanks to Mary Covington who recently presented to government officials on the parity act and OBH. The National Uniform Billing Committee (NUBC) fully recognizes OBH for claims, and insurers cover these other levels of care, but we need to be recognized within the parity act as intermediate care, since OBH programs are not outpatient or acute hospital programs.

Congratulations to Dr. Christine Norton who will be receiving the Association for Experiential Education's 2017 Distinguished Researcher of the Year Award in November in Montreal, Canada.

Congrats to Dr. Anita Tucker for receiving the University of New Hampshire's 2017 Teaching Excellence Award.
Conference Updates

Throughout 2017, OBH research scientists and affiliated researchers are hard at work spreading our research. In 2017, they will present close to 30 times to a large variety of audiences.

Past Conferences:
- The Meeting of Georgia College Psychological Science, GA
- The 63rd annual Conference of Southeastern Psychological Association, GA
- Pan-Africa Psychological Congress, South Africa
- Regional Wilderness Therapy Symposium, NC
- Global Conference on Obesity Treatment and Weight Management, NV
- The International Society for Research on Identity, Netherlands
- The Green Care Alliance Horticultural Therapy Conference, Taiwan
- NATSAP Annual Conference, AZ
- Annual Conv. of the American Counseling Association, CA
- Emergency Preparedness Coalition Conference, UT
- ÖSVÉNY - the 3rd Hungarian Experiential Learning, Hungary

Upcoming Conferences:
- Wilderness Therapy Symposium, UT
- The American Psychological Assn, Wash D.C.
- The Council on Social Work Education, TX
- The Society for Social Work Research, Wash D.C.
- The Association for Experiential Education, Quebec, Canada

AEE TAPG Best Practices Conference at UNH

The OBH Center was lucky to be a sponsor for TAPG’s Adventure Therapy Best Practices Conference in June 2017. With over 70 participants, it brought together community-based and wilderness practitioners to learn and grow. Many thanks for Dr. Steve DeMille and Scott Schill from Redcliff Ascent for coming and showing us how to use metaphors when carving soapstone lanterns!

Dr. Joanna Bettmann Schaefer will be publishing her text, Psychotherapy with Adolescents: A Primer for New Clinicians, in early 2019.

Steve DeMille & Scott Schill at TAPG

Dr. Michael Gass, Keynote at ÖSVÉNY - the 3rd Hungarian Experiential Learning Conference in July 2017

Effective Leadership in Adventure Programming (3rd Ed.) by Simon Priest and Dr. Gass will be available in October 2017

Congrats to these authors....
Research Updates: External

**Publications:** 2017 so far has been a wonderful year for OBH publishing literature across various disciplines with many additional articles in press or under review. Research scientists and affiliated researchers of the OBH Center published **12 new peer-reviewed** articles, available for reading, plus had an additional **3 new pieces accepted** (in press) with more publications under review. That is a total of 15 new pieces of research out in the professional literature! Below are the additions to the field so far from 2017:

**Published**


**In Press**


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**Research Updates: Internal**

NATSAP PRN Database Update: Almost 2,000 new clients participated in the NATSAP PRN and have completed at least one clinical instrument (e.g., YOQ) at intake since January 2017. The total active clients in the database is now 13,800, of which **6,300 are from OBH** member programs

On average, both adolescent and adult clients arrive to treatment with clinically significant levels of behavioral and emotional dysfunction, with clinically significant improvements in symptoms at discharge. These improvements are maintained at 6 and 12 months post-discharge

The past year continued to see the **largest growth** of OBH clients in the database since the inception of the NATSAP PRN

Automation of program reports has led to significant improvements starting this year. Program reports now contain advanced **visual representations** of data as well as detailed charts. Reports will be delivered in January and July each year.
OBH in the News...

The Boston Globe
“Families Sue Health Insurers to Cover Wilderness Therapy for Mental Illness”
http://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2017/06/19/families-fight-for-insurance-cover-trip-woods/e7loATBRnQqD98Z9HSkbO/story.html?event=event25

CBS News
“Should Insurers Cover Wilderness Therapy Programs?”

Bloomberg News
“Hiking and Camping for $500 Per Day? Let Me Call My Insurer”
https://www.bna.com/hiking-camping-500-n57982087225/

Social Work Helper
“When to Turn to Outside Help?”
https://www.socialworkhelper.com/2017/05/18/turn-outside-help/

OBH in the News...

Dr. Lee Gillis & Dr. Keith Russell were highlighted by the Society for the Advancement of Psychotherapy with their short article, “Explaining therapeutic change in residential wilderness therapy groups” which can be found at:

Derek Daley and Legacy Outdoor Adventures were highlighted by ABC News Salt Lake City in a segment called “Call of the wild: How nature can help restore your mental health”

Thanks Derek for rephrasing one of Dr. Gass’ seminal statements – “The question we should be asking is not why does Wilderness Therapy work, but why are we still doing therapy on a couch?”

Click below to watch the full segment:

NPR NH
Dr. Mike Gass was recently interviewed on NH NPR in a story titled “Healing Hands of Nature: Wilderness Therapy.” Check out the full interview at:
Nhpr.org/post/healing-hands-nature-wilderness-therapy#stream/o
Highlights: Research Scientists

❖ Dr. Christine Norton was appointed to the Advisory Board of the Student Conservation Association. In this role, she has developed a mental health training for field staff leaders and members.

❖ Dr. Ellen Behrens continues her role as the Chief Editor for the Journal of Therapeutic Schools and Programs. In January of 2017 the JTSP released its 9th volume, which was Guest Edited by John Hall and focused on clinical innovations.

❖ Through Dr. Behrens’ hard work the JTSP has a new website https://jtsp.scholasticahq.com/, in addition she has linked all prior articles published in JTSP thru CrossRefs, so that all prior articles now "pull" with Google and Google Scholar searches.

❖ Congratulations to Dr. Lee Gillis who was chosen by the American Psychological Association to be a 2016-2017 APA Fellow.

❖ Dr. Anita Tucker following the leadership of Dr. Bobbi Beale and with the help of Michael Petree, has been hired to evaluate the impact of the integration of weekly adventure therapy groups into the mental health care of youth involved in the child welfare system in Ohio.

❖ Both Dr. Tucker and Mike P. recently took part in the first ever Ohio Adventure Therapy Coalition three day training with over 70 practitioners, helping to explain the importance of researching the impact of their work! Adventure therapy will be implemented and evaluated in 8 Ohio counties at 11 different organizations, with the aim to reach 30 counties by March 2018!

❖ Congrats to Steve Javorski who has been given permanent Professor status in the Child and Youth Care program at Vancouver Island University. He has created three new courses that focus on therapeutic application of adventure and wilderness to support children, youth and families.

Visit us at obhcenter.org