

Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare Center

August 2019 Newsletter



The OBH Center had a very busy year actively supporting the field:

- Our research scientists and affiliated researchers have **traveled the world** informing others about the work that is being done in the field.
- In the past year, we have **published 22 new articles**, books or book chapters and our research scientists are actively providing training, research support and expertise to move the field forward.
- Finally, we have a new and **updated website**, please check it out at obhcenter.org

Hot off the Presses!!

We are excited to announce our first ever, soon to be published **cost-benefit analysis** which strongly supports the notion that OBH is worth its cost!

Many thanks to all the authors who worked so hard to get this manuscript out the door!

Gass, M.A.; Wilson, T.; Talbot, B.; Tucker, A.; Ugianskis, M.; & Brennan, N. (2019). The value of outdoor behavioral healthcare for adolescent substance users with comorbid conditions. *Substance Abuse: Treatment and Research*.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/article/s/sat>

OBH Goes to Washington, DC!



Steve DeMille, Christine Norton, Derek Daley and Mike Gass outside the Capitol Building

- In May 2019, Dr. Christine **Norton**, OBH Center Research Scientist, coordinated a visit to Washington, DC in partnership with the Normandy Group and Texas State University to speak with **SAMHSA, NCCIH, ACF, & ADAA**.
- Dr. Mike **Gass**, Dr. Steven **DeMille** of Redcliff Ascent and Derek **Daley** of Legacy Outdoors accompanied Dr. Norton to present on the efficacy of Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare and explore possible federal funding for OBH research.
- Together, this dynamic team shared current research, best practices, risk management and cost effectiveness data with key stakeholders in mainstream mental health and **government officials**.



The team at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Association (SAMHSA)

Conferences

Throughout 2019, OBH research scientists and affiliated researchers have presented on a variety of topics at numerous conferences across the country and internationally with more exciting presentations to come this fall.



Dr. Steve **DeMille** and Dr. Brett **Talbot** were invited to Renmin University of China in Beijing October 2018 to present at the **International Conference on Social Innovation in Child and Youth Services** on their recently published groundbreaking control group study ([DeMille, Tucker et al., 2018](#))



Dr. Christine **Norton**, Dr. Anita **Tucker** and Dr. Mike **Gass** gave the keynote address, “*Digging into research: Planting the seeds for effective adventure therapy practice*” at the **Adventure Therapy Best Practices Conference** in June 2019 highlighting the progress made on OBH and adventure therapy.



Dr. Keith **Russell** and Dr. Lee **Gillis** continue to inform mainstream mental health professionals on the impact of OBH and recently attended the **American Psychological Association’s 2019 Annual Convention** in Chicago, IL presenting on group process factors and their relation to outcomes in adventure therapy.



Dr. Tucker and Dr. Gass pictured here with OBH colleagues and researchers in April 2019 at the **Regional Wilderness Therapy Symposium**, where the OBH Center hosted a **Case Study** workshop highlighting the incredible, but challenging clinical work done in the field.

Don’t Miss the OBH Research Scientists as they present **8/22/19** on *Research and Social Justice: How Do We Create More Ethical and Socially Just Interventions through Research?*

FREE TO THE PUBLIC

Canyons Resort, Grand Summit, Park City, UT



Congrats to Dr. **Joanna Bettmann Schaefer** on her new book, **Evidence-based psychotherapy with adolescents: A primer for new clinicians**, filled with examples of adolescents in OBH settings.

In addition, Dr. Schaefer was awarded a grant by the **Sierra Club Military Outdoors** to investigate the effects of wilderness programming on veterans' psychosocial functioning.



Dr. **Anita Tucker**, Associate Director of the OBH Center, will be awarded the **2019 OBH Eagle Award** given annually at the Wilderness Therapy Symposium to recognize outstanding contributions to the field of wilderness therapy.

In addition, Dr. Tucker was promoted to the rank of **Full Professor** by the University of New Hampshire in June 2019.

Keep up with the OBH Research Scientists



Dr. **Christine Lynn Norton** and one of her undergraduate social work students, America Ambriz, have been involved and developed curriculum for U.S. State Department **Women4Peace** grant on experiential peacebuilding and traveled both to North Carolina State in June and Bogota, Columbia in August 2019.

Dr. Norton continues to build the Foster Care Adventure Therapy Network through research with **the Wilderness School**, in partnership with UNH/OBHC. Dr. Norton received final IRB approval from the State of CT-DCF to launch this multi-year, mixed methods study with co-investigator, Dr. Anita Tucker.



Dr. **Ellen Behrens** is in her 4th year as the Chief Editor of the **Journal of Therapeutic Schools and Programs**. As Editor, she has secured the next three guest editors and is applying for the JTSP to be listed in Psych Info in Social Sciences, a searchable database.

She is currently on sabbatical focusing on a collaborative research project with the **Calo residential programs** looking at the trajectory of change over time based on five years of program monitoring data.

In addition, Dr. Behrens is working with Best Notes helping them develop **research informed treatment plan templates** for users.

2018 and 2019 Publications by OBH Researchers and Affiliates

Avery, M.E., Norton, C., & Tucker, A.R. (2018). Blazing a trail...together: The need for mentoring and collaboration among women in outdoor leadership. In T. Gray & D. Mitten (Eds). *The Palgrave MacMillan international handbook of women and outdoor learning: Nourishing terrains or worrying learnscapes* (pp. 801-813). London, England: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bettmann, J.E., Scheinfeld, D., Prince, K., Garland, E.L., & Ovrom, K. V. (2018). Changes in psychiatric symptoms and psychological processes among veterans participating in a therapeutic adventure program. *Psychological Services*. Advanced online publication. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/ser0000213>

Chapman, J., Groark, S., Beale, M.M., Mandas, P., Argos, K., & Gillis, H.L. (2018). The relationship between self-reported prior drug use and treatment effectiveness in substance use disorder during outdoor behavioral healthcare treatment for young adult males. *Journal of Therapeutic Schools and Programs, 10*, 92-105. <https://doi.org/10.19157/JTSP.issue.10.01.04>

Christian, D. D., Brown, C. L., & Portrie-Bethke, T. L. (2019). Group climate and development in adventure therapy: An exploratory study. *Journal for Specialists in Group Work, 44*(1), 25-45. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01933922.2018.1561776>

Christian, D. D., & Perryman, K. L. (2018). Adventures in supervision: Implications for supervision of adventure-based counseling. *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health, 13*(1), 19-30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2017.1345670>

Curtis, A., Briggs, J., & Behrens, E. (2018). Young adults in residential treatment and outdoor behavioral health programs: Preliminary outcomes from the Practice Research Network of the National Association of Therapeutic Schools and Programs. *Journal of Therapeutic Schools and Programs, 10*, 65-91. <https://doi.org/10.19157/JTSP.issue.10.01.03>

DeMille, S., Tucker, A., Gass, M., Javorski, S., VanKanegan, C., Talbot, B., & Karoff, M. (2018). The effectiveness of Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare with struggling adolescents: A comparison group study. *Child and Youth Service Review, 88*, 241-248. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2018.03.015>

Gass, M. A.; Wilson, T.; Talbot, B.; Tucker, A.; Ugianskis, M.; & Brennan, N. (in press). The value of outdoor behavioral healthcare for adolescent substance users with comorbid conditions. *Journal of Substance Abuse: Treatment and Research*.

Gillis, H.L., Russell, K.C., Mandas, P., Argo, K., Rose, H., Zelenik, T. et al. (2019). Differences between opioid and non-opioid users during and after outdoor behavioral treatment. *Journal of Therapeutic Schools and Programs, 11*, 105-119. https://natsap.org/pdf_files/JTSP/VOL11/11_ARTICLE_8.pdf

Gray, T., Norton, C.L., Breault-Hood, J., Christie, B., & Taylor, N. (2018) Curating a public self: Exploring social media images of women in the outdoors. *Journal of Outdoor Recreation, Education, and Leadership (JOREL) 10*(2), 153-170. <https://js.sagamorepub.com/jorel/article/view/8191/0>

Karoff, M., Norton, C.L., Tucker, A.T., Gass, M., & Foerster, E. (2019). A qualitative gender analysis of women field guides' experiences in Outdoor Behavioral Healthcare: A feminist social work perspective. *Affilia: Journal of Women in Social Work, 34*(1), 48-64. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886109918790932>

Norton, C.L., Schultz, M., Benton, A., Boden-McGill, C. & Kiosoglous, C. (2019). Outdoor adventure-based group work to promote coping and resilience among child welfare workers. In T. J. Carter, C. J. Boden-McGill, & K. Peno, (Eds). *Transformative Learning in Professional Learning Contexts: Building Resilient Professional Identities for Work-based Practice*.

Norton, C.L., & Tucker, A.R., Farnham, M., Borroel, F., & Pelletier, A. (2019). Family enrichment adventure therapy: A mixed methods study examining the impact of trauma-informed adventure therapy on children and families affected by abuse. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Trauma, 12*(1), 85-95. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40653-017-0133-4>

Russell, K. C., Gillis, H. L., & Jerrie Dee Harvey, L. P. C. (2018). An Evaluation of Alaska Crossings: Comparison of the Client Status Review and the Youth Outcome Questionnaire. *Journal of Therapeutic Schools and Programs, 10*(1), 3229. <https://doi.org/10.19157/JTSP.issue.10.01.06>

Russell, K., Gillis, H.L., Law, L., & Couillard, J. (2018). A pilot study examining outcomes associated with the implementation of progress monitoring at a substance use disorder treatment program for adolescents. *Child and Youth Care Forum*. Advanced online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10566-018-9437-2>

Tucker, A., Combs, K. M., Bettmann, J., Chang, T., Graham, S., Hoag, M., & Tatum, C. (2018). Longitudinal outcomes for youth transported to wilderness therapy programs. *Research on Social Work Practice, 29*(4), 438-451. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049731516647486>.

VanKanegan, C., Tucker, A.R., McMillion, P., & Gass, M. (2019). Adventure therapy and its impact on the functioning of youth in a community setting. *Social Work with Groups, 42*(2), 127-141. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01609513.2018.1478761>

OBH Researchers in the Media

See the links below for some highlights on OBH and AT in the Media:

“UNH studies effectiveness of heading outdoors to treat substance abuse” Dr. Mike Gass and Dr. Anita Tucker are interviewed by Mike Cherry from WMUR NH, Channel 9. 1/10/19.

https://www.wmur.com/article/unh-studies-effectiveness-of-heading-outdoors-to-treat-substance-abuse/25848687?fbclid=IwAR0lspMHjIp9B425vzVDhZQzY2vC5PPfJ-UJB-cUyf-Swo1XL_tK-TVQ8mw

“UNH Studying Outdoor Therapy for Substance Use Treatment”, Dr. Mike Gass discussed OBH research on NH Public Radio. 1/17/19.

https://www.nhpr.org/post/unh-studying-outdoor-therapy-substance-use-treatment?fbclid=IwAR1hfoLEuL4wChCyThoSmrDuU8zHmzJwTxCJjP8inVToFimaqVED_6Tz8EM#stream/o

“What is Wilderness Therapy and How Can it Help You” Refinery 29, Dr. Christine Norton and Alex White discuss OBH and current research. 7/9/19.

https://www.refinery29.com/en-us/wilderness-therapy?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=facebook_share&fbclid=IwAR3vwpERZnqXRk-4BJ1oPCP9z7sQIqlBPHz98JJVx4jIr-xyGv-2GaVUPl8

OBH Goes International



Dr. **Gass** visited **Pure Life Aspiro** in Costa Rica in July 2019 and shared with program staff and clinicians the current state of OBH Research.



Dr. **Norton** recently traveled to Norway to help Dr. Carina Ribe Fernee successfully **defend her PhD work** on wilderness therapy in Norway with Dr. Norton acting as a primary opponent in their defense process.

Important NATSAP and OBH Research Updates

1) The Golden Thread (GT)

The GT is a software system that shares outcomes and client progress information between participating programs that have worked with the same client. It allows providers to see a more complete record of client change and outcomes. It also prevents clients and families from completing surveys redundantly. Providers can participate in the GT without being a Research Designated Program. To join the GT, [email Mike Petree \(mike@remoteresearchdirector.com\)](mailto:mike@remoteresearchdirector.com) to acknowledge your interest. Mike will reply with instructions about how to join and will provide training.

2) The NATSAP Research Designated Program (RDP)

The RDP is a NATSAP endorsement designed to acknowledge programs that track outcomes using valid measures that is designed to track and measure outcomes. There are three identified levels: 1) Bronze which is 70% of Admit census sampled, 2) Silver which includes Bronze plus 70% of discharge data, and 3) Gold which includes Silver plus 25% of six and twelve months post discharge data. Providers can be an RDP without participating in the Golden Thread or the NATSAP research network.

For Petree Consulting customers using the Remote Research Director service, [email Mike Petree \(mike@remoteresearchdirector.com\)](mailto:mike@remoteresearchdirector.com)

For NATSAP programs not using the Remote Research Director service, [complete the following application:](#)

<https://docs.google.com/a/remoteresearchdirector.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdftgqA8seu26cgot4NcoDQfj5wMP3RUI79JJu9SHrYxF2cvg/viewform?c=0&w=1>

If you are already an RDP member and have questions about renewal, [please contact Mike Petree \(mike@remoteresearchdirector.com\)](mailto:mike@remoteresearchdirector.com)

3) New NATSAP Surveys (which rolled out February 2019)

If you are participating in the NATSAP Practice Research Network and you are using OutcomeTools (OT) to collect and submit data, the new surveys are already replaced in your accounts. PDF versions of the surveys are available in the "Resources" tab in your OutcomeTools account.

IF YOU COLLECT DATA ON PAPER OR RELY ON PDF'S you'll need to update your versions manually. If you are using the Remote Research Director Service your old NATSAP surveys will automatically be replaced with the new surveys in your R2D2 Bot rules. PDF versions of the new surveys are stored in the "Instrument Profile" icon in R2D2. Switching to the new surveys means that the NATSAP database will be making a clean break from the old dataset. That means **that new consent forms** must be signed by clients and parents if their data are to be included in the new NATSAP database.

With this in mind, we are generating new NATSAP consents for clients that are currently in the admit or discharge windows even if they completed an old consent. We are NOT generating new consents for post discharge instances if an old consent form was already completed but we ARE generating a new consent if no consent was completed before. We chose to do this because we wanted to extend a broad invitation to be in the new data set. We recognize that this might create unexpected situations for you. Please feel free to dismiss ANY new surveys at your discretion during this transition process. If an old NATSAP survey is currently pending it will be dismissed and replaced with the new surveys.