

Children, Youth & Family Consortium

CYFC Monthly

CYFC Monthly — October 2015

Q&A with the Author of 'Bridging the Relationship Gap'

Redleaf Press® of St. Paul has just released a book by CYFC's Sara Langworthy, Ph.D., entitled, "Bridging the Relationship Gap: Connecting with Children Facing Adversity." Read on for a brief excerpt from the book, followed by a question-and-answer session with Langworthy, who's an Extension educator with CYFC.

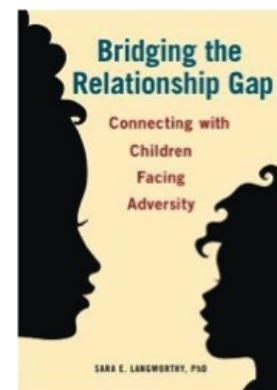
"We need never be hopeless, because we can never be irreparably broken." ~John Green

This quote from one of my favorite authors, John Green, was a constant mantra in my head while writing this book. Despite living in a world fraught with the pain and suffering of trauma and loss, we must cling to the hope of the possibility of change. The profound experiences of adversity — abuse, neglect, domestic violence, loss of a loved one, or homelessness — all leave their marks on the young children who experience them. Children who live through early adversity do not have words to express the pain and anguish of their experiences. They may not be able to ask for help from those around them, and they may cry out through their actions and emotions in ways that we don't understand. Such experiences may seem to change their lives irreparably.

It is enough to make anyone feel hopeless.

But the beauty of being human is that we constantly evolve and change. We have experiences every day that can alter the course of our lives to help us rebuild what was broken and rediscover what was lost. We, as humans, are never irreparably broken because our brains and bodies are built to change and adapt. And young children are often able to change more easily than the rest of us, which makes the earliest years of life the most full of hope.

The key to that hope is in relationships.



What's your book about?

Throughout the book, I endeavor to provide tools and encouragement to caregivers to be the strong, positive and nurturing adults that young children need to thrive. Diving into the research and pairing it with "practice wisdom," I've tried to highlight the science of what we know about how young children grow and learn, and showcase practical strategies for working with children who have faced hardship or trauma early in life.

How did you approach writing this book?

I've learned during my time with CYFC that science has a role in the conversation about improving the lives of kids and families, but it should not, and cannot dominate the conversation. There is immense value in the experience and practice wisdom of professionals who work with children and families on a daily basis. My approach with this book was to weave together research and reality to provide something scientifically accurate, but also practically useful. So not only did I do extensive reading, I also talked with professionals and experts in early childhood education and mental health to get real stories and practical examples of working with children. I used their expertise to help guide the framing, strategies, and recommendations presented in this book.

What is your hope for this book?

My hope is that "Bridging the Relationship Gap" is a useful resource for professionals who work with children facing adversity, for educators who are teaching the next generation of child care providers, and for caregivers who are trying to provide the best care for their children during difficult times. But really, if it helps just one person think a little differently about the young children that surround them every day, then it's been worth it for me.

What are you working on next?

I've started my own YouTube channel, "[Developmental Enthusiast](#)," where I talk about research related to children, youth and family issues. I'm also working on putting together some companion resources for the book (videos, readings, discussion guides) on my website at www.drlangworthy.com.

Learn More

If you're interested in buying your own copy of Sara's book, you can order it via Redleaf Press here: <http://z.umn.edu/brgbook>. Sara is available to do presentations or training sessions, and if you're interested you can contact her at spen0128@umn.edu, or you can find her on Twitter: [@DrLangworthy](https://twitter.com/DrLangworthy).

Consortium News

Integrating Mental Health Services in our Schools? — Video

A [new video](#) from CYFC explores how one elementary school in Saint Paul is providing mental health services for over 50 children and families through a partnership with a mental health outpatient services clinic. Family Innovations is providing six full-time clinicians to work in the school with students while also providing home visits. You can read more about the partnership on CYFC's "[Healthy Bodies. Healthy Minds. Healthy Learners](#)" [blog](#).

CYFC Current and Former Staff Publish Paper on 'Wonder Years' Exhibition

Sara Langworthy, Extension educator-CYFC, and former CYFC staff and students Amanda Hodel, Lauren Robertson, Brittany Henn, Emily Prager, Karen Cadigan, and Sara Benning have published a paper in the journal, *Museums & Social Issues*. The article, "[Informal Science Learning Experience for State Legislators: Influence of a Science Museum Exhibition on Legislator Knowledge of Early Childhood Issues](#)," explores how Minnesota state legislators have learned about early childhood development from the [Wonder Years exhibition](#) at the Science Museum of Minnesota.

University & Community Announcements

The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain — Podcast

Sponsor: MomEnough website

Location: Online

[Marti Erickson](#), Ph.D., founding director of CYFC, and her daughter, Erin Erickson, recently interviewed author Dan Siegel about his new book, “Brainstorm: The Power and Purpose of the Teenage Brain.” In his conversation with the Ericksons, Siegel — a physician and professor of psychiatry at the University of California-Los Angeles — debunks common myths of adolescence, discusses changes in teenage brains, and offer tips for parents and teens to capitalize on these changes. Listen to [a podcast of the interview](#) on the MomEnough website.

Strategies for Stopping Bullying — Workshop

Sponsor: Minnesota Association for Children’s Mental Health

Date: October 29, 2015

Cost: \$89

Credits: 3 CEUs

Location: Maple Grove, MN

School Social Worker Catherine Thomas, M.S.Ed., L.I.S.W., will help participants learn ways to help solve the problem of bullying. She will define bullying, offer ways to support students, and give participants the opportunity to share ideas and strategies that have worked for them. Learn more and [register here for the workshop](#).

Equipping Youth with Social, Emotional Learning Skills — Symposium

Sponsor: University of Minnesota Extension Center for Youth Development

Date: November 24, 2015

Cost: Free

Location: Minneapolis, MN or online

At this symposium, [Michael Rodriguez](#), Ph.D., Campbell Leadership Chair in Education and Human Development at the University of Minnesota Department of Educational Psychology, and Eric Moore, director of research, evaluation, and assessment with [Minneapolis Public Schools](#), will first share the latest data from local youth on social and emotional learning (SEL) data. Then you will hear from a panel of practitioners about successes based on local strategies. Learn more and [register here for the symposium](#).

Upper Midwest Regional Community Partner Forum Planned

Sponsor: Community-Campus Partnerships for Health

Date: November 20, 2015

Cost: Free

Location: Minneapolis, MN

The 2015 Regional Community Partner Forums seeks to support the ability of community-based organizations and community leaders to play significant roles as partners in research, with the ultimate goal to ensure that the results of research are used to eliminate health disparities and achieve health equity in their communities. Learn more and register [here for the forum](#).

Incarcerated Mothers: A View into Public Health Challenges — Presentation

Sponsor: University of Minnesota School of Public Health

Date: November 12, 2015

Cost: Free

Location: Minneapolis, MN

University of Minnesota assistant professor [Rebecca Schlafer](#), Ph.D. and candidate for a Master of Public Health degree, will reflect on mass incarceration as a public health challenge and discuss her research on the topic. One in every 20 women who enter prison in Minnesota is pregnant. Incarcerated women and their children face complex health risks, and addressing these risks presents new challenges for corrections systems and public health professionals. Learn more and register here for this presentation. [no longer active]

Quick Guides Help You Use Social Media to Communicate About Adolescent Health Issues

Sponsor: University of Minnesota Center for Leadership Education in Maternal & Child Public Health, School of Public Health

Quick guides are now available to help you use social media to communicate about adolescent health issues as they are highlighted in monthly and weekly national “observances” throughout the year. Choose from 26 two-page guides developed by the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. Observances covered include National Nutrition Month in March, National Mental Health Month in May, National Bullying Prevention Month in October, and National Drug Facts Week in January. There's also a user guide to help you think about ways to use the quick guides. Find [the quick guides here](#).

Job Opportunities

[Headway Emotional Services — Licensed Therapist, School Based Grades 3-5](#)

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