



## Cornell University College of Human Ecology

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### Selected Human Ecology Initiatives Addressing Children and Families

#### 4-H Youth Development

- 4-H is the youth development program of Cornell Cooperative Extension, linking the resources of Cornell University to young people.
- Nationally—as well as in New York State—4-H Youth Development creates educational opportunities for youngsters to develop skills, practical knowledge, and wisdom through observing, doing, and reflecting on experiences.
- In 2006 some 458,000 youth from New York State participated in 4-H Youth Development experiences in school enrichment, after-school, and community settings.
- <http://nys4h.cce.cornell.edu/>

#### Engaging Youth in Science

- *Go Figure!* <http://gofigure.cce.cornell.edu> engages youth in online science, technology, and math experiences.
- Youth collect data on human performance from their own lives, input numbers into a database, and compare their results with those of other teens—intensely interesting at this age.
- More than 5,000 youth in 12 states have participated so far.

#### Promoting Food Skills and Positive Youth Development

- Having few food preparation skills often means choosing fast-food restaurants and packaged or prepared foods at supermarkets.
- *Cooking Up Fun* ([www.cookingupfun.cornell.edu](http://www.cookingupfun.cornell.edu)) gives youth, ages 9 to 15, from low-income families the time, space, and support to practice food skills.
- In addition, through the experiential teaching method youth gain communication skills and respect for each other as they work together.

#### Thinking Like A Scientist

- *Thinking Like a Scientist* is aimed at youth, mainly from underrepresented groups such as girls and students of color.
- Primary purposes are to increase their representation in science careers and encourage pursuit of secondary education.

- Teaching how to think and reason scientifically about real-world problems has been implemented in Native American Tribal high schools in North Dakota, Mexican-American high schools in Arizona, low-SES white high schools in New York State. [www.human.cornell.edu/che/HD/CIRC/Research-and-Outreach/Thinking](http://www.human.cornell.edu/che/HD/CIRC/Research-and-Outreach/Thinking)

#### Self-Injurious Behavior among Teens and Young Adults

- The *Cornell Research Program on Self-Injurious Behaviors* addresses self-injurious behavior (SIB) among seemingly healthy teens and young adults.
- An apparently increasing number of youth use SIB to cope with emotional pain, numbness and isolation. SIB is rarely a suicidal gesture.
- Resources to assist schools, educators, families, and friends understand SIB are available at the program web site [www.cripsib.com](http://www.cripsib.com).

#### Military Family Support

- *Operation Ready* materials provide support for deployed soldiers and family members at U.S. Army installations.
- Online training materials for the Army's Family Advocacy Program staff provide prevention tools for strengthening families and reducing the incidence of child and domestic abuse.
- Through a U.S. Army contract with Cornell Cooperative Extension in Jefferson County, 100,000 contacts were made with Ft. Drum families last year.

#### Advancing Youth Development

- The *Advancing Youth Development* ([www.nyayd.org/](http://www.nyayd.org/)) Partnership provides free, efficient, and high-quality professional development for adults who work with youth.
- Principal partners include Cornell Cooperative Extension, NYS OCFS, the ACT for Youth Center of Excellence, and the Association of NYS Youth Bureaus.
- More than 2,200 community youth workers across New York State have participated in the project's in-depth training experiences.

## Selected Faculty in the College of Human Ecology

Addressing the needs of children and families brings together psychology, sociology, nutrition, human development, science, and design of environments for communities and people over their life spans.

### **Charlotte Coffman**

Senior Extension Associate, Fiber Science and Apparel Design  
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Fiber science and textile programs to engage young people (K-12) in science, technology, math, and design with an emphasis on youth development.

### **Jutta Dotterweich**

Extension Associate, Family Life Development Center  
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Positive youth development, coalition building and collaboration, and outcome-based evaluation.

### **Lorraine Maxwell**

Associate Professor, Design and Environmental Analysis  
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The role of the physical environment in child behavior, health, and development.

### **Anthony Ong**

Assistant Professor, Human Development  
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Social, emotional, and cognitive resources that people draw upon to adapt to stressful life circumstances as they age.

### **Valerie Reyna**

Professor, Human Development  
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Change of memory, judgment, and decision making with age and expertise.

### **Marney Thomas**

Senior Extension Associate, Family Life Development Center  
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Impact of stress, trauma and violence on children, youth and families through support to military installations worldwide.

### **Patricia Thoney**

Extension Associate, Nutritional Sciences  
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Integrating theories and research from youth development, parenting, food choice, nutrition communications and education that will build capacity of adults to strengthen assets for youth through nutrition.

### **Janis Whitlock**

Senior Research Associate, Family Life Development Center  
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Social, cultural, and contextual factors which influence adolescent development, mental health, and well-being.

### **Wendy Williams**

Professor, Human Development  
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Development, assessment, training, and societal implications of intelligence and related abilities.

Prepared by Dr. Josephine A. Swanson, Associate Director, Cornell Cooperative Extension and Assistant Dean for Outreach, College of Human Ecology

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