

**BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

Revised—17 November 2023

NAME: **Carol Coohy**eRA COMMONS USER NAME: **CCOOHEY**POSITION TITLE: **Research Scientist****EDUCATION/TRAINING**

INSTITUTION AND LOCATION	DEGREE (if applicable)	Completion Date MM/YYYY	FIELD OF STUDY
University of Northern Iowa	BA	08/1984	Sociology; Social Work
University of Michigan	MSW	08/1985	Social Policy
University of Chicago	PhD	05/1993	Social Service Admin.
University of Chicago	Postdoc Scholar	05/1996	Social Service Admin.
University of Chicago/NIMH	Predoc Fellow	05/1993	Traumatic Stress

**A. Personal Statement**

I have a broad background in research methods, with training and expertise in community-engaged program evaluation and measurement development. I also have substantial direct social work practice experience with children, adolescents, and adults who have experienced trauma and are in crisis or experiencing persistent mental health challenges. These practice experiences inform my research and vice-versa. For the past few years, my research projects have focused on counselor suicide-specific skill development and suicide prevention. I am the principal evaluator of the Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training in Iowa, a 16-hour training to prepare counselors and others to facilitate conversations about suicide with people in crisis. I am also the evaluator for Iowa Zero Suicide, a national initiative to reduce suicide deaths among people under the care of health and behavioral health systems, and the evaluator for Iowa Crisis Chat, a free online chat service affiliated with the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

Chat services are a crucial part of the safety net for children and young adults in crisis who need someone to help them cope with their depression or thoughts of suicide. Our research aims to pinpoint the specific skills counselors use to increase chat visitors' ability to regulate suicidal thoughts and decrease their intention to attempt suicide after the chat. For instance, while foundational skills such as empathy were necessary to sustain the interaction, we found more advanced skills, such as reflecting the visitor's strengths or their worth as a person, decreased their intention to suicide from pre- to post-chat.

1. Coohy, C. (in preparation). Is crisis chat just for kids? *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*.
2. Coohy, C., Landsman, M. J., & Neblett, K. (accepted). Evaluation of a suicide counseling skills course for social work students. *Journal of Social Work Education*.
3. Conrad, J., & Coohy, C. (2023). The constructed meaning of suicide: A relational dialectics theory analysis of online suicide chats. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 47, 168–186.
4. Coohy, C., & Neblett, K. (2022). Assessing crisis chat visitors' capacity to regulate thoughts related to suicide: A brief scale. *Crisis: The Journal of Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention*, 43(5), 434-440.
5. Coohy, C., Neblett, K. & Knox, S. (2022). Validation of the Suicide Counseling Skills Inventory (SCSI). *Crisis: The Journal of Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention*, 43(3), 170-182.

## B. Positions

### Academic Positions

2023-	Research Scientist National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice, University of Iowa, School of Social Work (UISSW)
2021-Present	Research Faculty Affiliate, Scanlan Center for School Mental Health
2017-Present	Program Evaluator, Iowa Crisis Chat, CommUnity & Foundation 2, IA
2017-Present	Program Evaluator, Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training, CommUnity, IA
2010-2023	Professor, UISSW
2014-2023	Faculty Affiliate, National Resource Center for Family-Centered Practice, UISSW
2005-16, 18-21	Director of Graduate Studies
2013-2015	Program Evaluator, Homelessness Project, Humility of Mary Shelter, Inc., Quad Cities
2002-2010	Associate Professor, UISSW
2004-2009	Inventory Developer, Validation of Iowa's Safety and Risk Assessment Tools Project, Department of Human Services (IDHS)
1996-2002	Assistant Professor, UISSW
1997-2001	Program Evaluator, Community Partnership for Safe Families, Linn County DHS, IA
1993-1996	Associate Director, Building Partnerships for Family Support Education, University of Chicago
	Research Associate and Lecturer (Postdoctoral), University of Chicago, SSA
1992-1993	NIMH Predoctoral Fellow (NRSA), Traumatic Stress and Violence, University of Chicago

### Social Work Positions

2022-Present	Project Evaluator, Zero Suicide, Iowa Department of Health and Human Services
1988-1992	Director, Family Support Programs, Southwest Women Working Together, Chicago
1985-1988	Counselor, Neumann Program (alternative high school), Philadelphia
1984-1985	Coordinator, Project Community, Juvenile Detention Center, Ypsilanti, MI

### Volunteer Positions

2016-2019	Food Bank Volunteer, CommUnity, Johnson County Crisis Center
2015-2019	Master Interface Trainer and Member, Iowa Adverse Childhood Experiences Interface Group, Building Self-Healing Communities, IA
2015-2016	Volunteer, Guest Services, University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, Iowa City, IA
2005-2010	Certified Domestic Violence Advocate and Volunteer, DVIP, IA

## C. Contributions to Science

### Contribution 1: Preparing Counselors to Intervene with People Thinking of Suicide

Most students encounter clients contemplating suicide during their graduate training and, later, in their professional practice. Despite the likelihood of encountering a client contemplating suicide, most counselors receive no or inadequate preparation to respond effectively to someone who feels suicidal. While there is substantial research on counselor skill development, there is very little research on suicide-specific skill development. To investigate suicide-specific skill development, we first developed, validated, and published appropriate measures. Our team is now investigating skill development among counselors and other people completing ASIST, and how using these skills affects clients' capacity to regulate thoughts of suicide. The results demonstrated that regardless of education level or prior professional practice experience, trainees can increase their competency in intervening with suicidal clients. From our chat research, we found several general and suicide-specific skills affected chat

visitors' self-reported intention to suicide after the chat. These findings have been/will be used to refine suicide intervention skills training programs.

1. Coohy, C. (in preparation). Is crisis chat just for kids? *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*.
2. Coohy, C., Landsman, M. J., & Neblett, K. (accepted). Evaluation of a suicide counseling skills course for social work students. *Journal of Social Work Education*.
3. Conrad, J., & Coohy, C. (2023). The constructed meaning of suicide: A relational dialectics theory analysis of online suicide chats. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 47, 168–186.
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### **Contribution 2: Preparing Students to Manage Anxiety, Avoid Secondary Trauma, and Intervene with Traumatized Populations**

Students preparing to work with traumatized populations must manage their anxiety, set boundaries, and develop intervention skills to avoid secondary trauma and burnout. With my colleagues, we developed several non-credit and credit opportunities to prepare students for this demanding and rewarding work. These experiments showed students were better able to manage their anxiety and demonstrate population-specific skills post-course than pre-course.

1. Coohy, C., Cummings, S., & Landsman, M. (2023). Engaging the imaginative mind to reduce test anxiety among MSW students preparing for licensure. *The Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, 43(2), 226-238.
2. Coohy, C., Landsman, M. J., & Neblett, K. (accepted). Evaluation of a suicide counseling skills course for social work students.
3. Clayden, A., & Coohy, C. (2023). Working with refugees and immigrants: A brief skill development course. *Social Work Education: The International Journal*. (Advance online publication, July 25, 2022).
4. Coohy, C., & Cummings, S. (2019). Evaluation of an online group intervention to improve test-taking self-efficacy and reduce licensure test anxiety. *Journal of Social Work Education*, 55, 376-388.

### **Contribution 3: Creating Resilience- and Trauma-Informed Practices in Health, Educational, and Other Settings**

Counselors can help individuals understand and cope with their trauma experiences; they can help them build on their strengths and become more resilient. Counselors, however, cannot alone address the effects of trauma. Everyone who is part of a system must recognize and respond to the impact of traumatic stress on members of their organizational system, including traumatic stress caused by systemic racism. Resilience- and trauma-informed systems infuse and sustain trauma awareness, knowledge, and skills in their organizational culture, policies, and practices. Physically and psychologically safer systems help facilitate recovery among traumatized members of a system and create conditions that allow them to thrive. To address these goals, Jude Jensen and I founded the Promoting Resiliency Initiative (formerly the Trauma-Informed Practice Interest Group) at the UI in 2016. This inter-collegiate initiative includes teaching, service, and research goals. Some accomplishments include creating the intercollegiate undergraduate Resilience and Trauma-Informed Perspectives Certificate and a graduate-level Resilience and Trauma-Informed Practice Graduate Certificate of Completion. The research arm of the Initiative has presented and published articles on trauma-informed care implementation and workforce development, primarily in healthcare settings.

1. Wojciak, A., Butcher, B., Conrad-Hiebner, A., Coohy, C., Oral, R., & Peek-Asa, C. (2021). National trends in child abuse and neglect hospitalization rates and costs. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(14), 7585.
2. Oral, R., Coohy, C., Zarei, K., Conrad, A., Nielsen, A., Wibbenmeyer, L., Segal, R., Wojciak, A., Jennissen, C., & Peek-Asa, C. (2020). Nationwide efforts for trauma-informed care implementation

and workforce development in healthcare and related fields: A systematic review. *Turkish Journal of Pediatrics*, 62(6), 906-920.

3. Oral, R., Ramirez, M., Coohy, C., Nakada, S., Walz, A., Kuntz, A., & Peek-Asa, C. (2016). Adverse childhood experiences and trauma-informed care: The future of health care. *Pediatric Research*, 79, 227–233.
4. Coohy, C., Renner, L., Hua, L., Zhang, Y. & Whitney, S. (2011). Academic achievement despite child maltreatment: A longitudinal study. *Child Abuse & Neglect: The International Journal*, 35, 688-699.

#### **Contribution 4: Preparing Field Instructors to Supervise Students**

While courses, workshops, and training teach students skills in the classroom, real-world experience with one-on-one instruction and supervision in the field is essential to prepare students for professional practice post-graduation. Research can help us better understand the most important supervisor skills and when supervisors should use them. Our research showed that core skills included six types of developmental and task support. Social work programs used these findings to evaluate field instructors' performance, intervene when students' learning needs are not adequately met by their field instructors, and teach field instructors skills needed to facilitate students' development.

1. Coohy, C., & Landsman, M. (2020). The Field Instructor Supervision Scale (FISS). *Journal of Social Work Education*, 56 (2), 273-285.
2. Coohy, C., French, L. & Dickinson, R. (2017). Core field instructor behaviors that facilitate student learning. *Field Educator Journal*, 7, 1-15
3. Coohy, C., & French, L. (2016). Evaluation of the social work field education program at the University of Iowa. In S. E. Gasumova (Ed.), *КАК ОРГАНИЗОВАТЬ ПРАКТИКУ СТУДЕНТОВ ПО СОЦИАЛЬНОЙ РАБОТЕ? [How to organize students' experience in the field of social work?]*. Perm, Russia: Perm State National Research University Press.

#### **Contribution 5: Understanding the Relationship between Childhood Trauma, Resiliency, and Mental Health among Diverse Populations**

Childhood trauma can have a devastating impact on children's and adolescents' mental health and affect developmental outcomes, such as academic success. We examined the short- and long-term adverse impact of traumatic experiences on diverse outcomes among diverse populations. People who experienced or were exposed to more severe or multiple types of victimization consistently had poorer outcomes. However, we observed some group differences when age, gender, or race/ethnicity was considered, providing valuable information to tailor interventions and prevention efforts. While adverse childhood experiences can negatively affect children's, adolescents', and adults' mental health and well-being, many people with these experiences seem to thrive. Accordingly, researchers have sought to identify these protective factors with the goal of developing resilience-building interventions. We investigated several potential protective factors and repeatedly found that people who were more connected to others fared better than those who were not—regardless of age, gender, or ethnicity. Therefore, interventions that provide opportunities for connection and understanding are likely to benefit people who have experienced trauma.

1. Coohy, C., & Easton, S. A. (2016). Distal stressors and depression among homeless men. *Health and Social Work*, 41, 111-119. Coohy, C., & Easton, S. A. (2019). Reprinted in T. B. Bent-Goodley, J. H. Williams, M. L. Teasley, & S. Gorin (Eds.). *Grand Challenges for society: Evidence-based social work practice*. Washington, DC: NASW Press.
2. Coohy, C., Dirks-Bihun, A., Renner, L., & Baller, R. (2014). Strain, depressed mood and suicidal thoughts among maltreated adolescents in the United States. *Child Abuse & Neglect: The International Journal*, 38, 1171-1179.
3. Coohy, C., Easton, S. A., Kong, J. & Bockenstedt, J. (2015). Sources of psychological pain among homeless men and women. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, 45 (3), 271-280.
4. Coohy, C., Renner, L. & Sabri, B. (2013). Victimization, the parent-child relationship, and externalizing behavior among Latino and White adolescents in the U.S. *Journal of Family Violence*, 28 (4), 359-368.