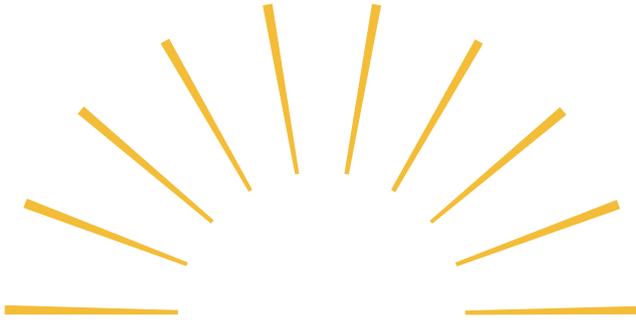




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Fall 2021 Edition



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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Greetings FCA Members,

We have successfully concluded our 72nd Annual Convention, held virtually for the second consecutive year. Congratulations to our FCA Awards of Excellence recipients! This year's theme, Cultivating Nurturing Relationships: Sustaining Connection Throughout Our Lives, encompasses the importance of building foundational support systems and putting forth effort to sustain them as we aspire to heal, grow, and move forward. This Convention would not have been possible without the FCA Convention Committee (a group of leaders who brought us an experience worth remembering), the FCA Graduate Student Volunteers (graduate students who helped us navigate the Convention in a virtual platform), and our Presenters (who shared their knowledge and expertise). A highlighted recognition is necessary for FCA Presidents' Council, Iris Soto, FCA President-Elect and Convention Committee Chair, for their unparalleled dedication in ensuring the flow and coordination of the Convention, as well as, Dr. Letitia Browne-James, FCA Past President; and FCA Coordinators, Dr. Elisa Niles, FCA Convention Coordinator, and Dr. Mercedes Machado, FCA Convention Volunteer Coordinator. A special thank you to Dr. Thelma Duffey, an ACA Fellow and Past President of the ACA, for sharing her wealth of knowledge regarding the Enneagram. Many of you were looking forward to hearing from our Plenary Speaker, Callie Lackey, on the topic of attachment, but unfortunately, she was unable to join us due to her unexpected and peaceful passing on September 30, 2021. I know that Callie's legacy in her work on Trauma-Informed Care will live on and other folks will continue to do the work to help Jacksonville heal. If you wish to share your support, her family requests that contributions be made to [Hope Street Inc.](#) and if you would like to support her family, you may do so on their [Go Fund Me](#) page.



On September 27, 2021, FCA Leadership was informed regarding the finalization of the Counseling Compact bill for the 2022 session. On this date, the bill, SB 358, was filed. Please find it here: [The Florida Senate \(flsenate.gov\)](#). On November 3, 2021, Dr. Karla Sapp, FCA's Public Policy and Legislation Co-Chair, provided testimony at the Florida Senate Health Committee Meeting advocating for Florida to join the Counseling Compact. The Counseling Compact Bill was unanimously approved by the Florida Senate Health Committee, now also a cosponsor. We look forward to supporting the Counseling Compact in Florida and eagerly await the future evolution and results. Thank you to ACA for your support!

In this issue of the FCA Guidelines, the focus is Building Connections: Tele-Health Interventions and the Counseling Relationship." Throughout this global pandemic, counseling professionals have been learning how to navigate and transition into a virtual world when working with their clients. One area I plan to focus on this fiscal year includes tele-health trainings. My hope is that this issue helps to provide interventions uniquely tailored to improve connections when working with various populations in an online environment. While tele-health may not be the best fit for all clients, it is pertinent to learn new ways to connect with our clients and ensure that they feel seen and heard, especially during this time when social isolation seems to be most prevalent.

With many challenges and uncertainties, please remember to take care of yourself and be kind. Thank you to our FCA Leaders for continuing to do the work to move our association forward.

Warmly,
Courtney N. Martensen, MS, LMHC, NCC
Florida Counseling Association, President 2021-2022

If you are interested in a leadership position, please contact the FCA office at fcaoffice@flacounseling.org





Thank you, Dr. Karla Sapp, for your testimony and advocacy for Florida to join the Counseling Compact!



Dr. Karla Sapp
FCA Public Policy and Legislation Co-Chair

[Check out the Video Here!](#)

Media Coverage:

[Florida Politics News Article](#)

[WFSU Public Media News Article](#)



FCA AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE!



Best Division Membership Service and/or Best Membership Recruitment Campaign – Award Recipient: The Florida Association for Child and Adolescent Counseling (FACAC)
 The purpose of this award is to recognize the division that best promotes the counseling profession or a division that creatively recruited new membership to the division.



**FAMFC
 PRESIDENT**
Viki Kelchner
 Ph.D., LPCS, LPC,
 NCC, CSC



FCA Advocate Award – Award Recipient: Viki Kelchner, FAMFC President
 The purpose of this award is to recognize an individual or organization which has made a significant contribution to the improvement of the counseling profession in Florida.



**FALGBTIC
 PRESIDENT**
**Christina
 McGrath Fair**
 Ph.D., LMHC



FCA Member of the Year – Award Recipient: Christina McGrath Fair, FALGBTIC President
 The purpose of this award is to recognize a member who has made a significant contribution to FCA.



PRESIDENT
**Courtney N.
 Martensen**
 MS, LMHC, NCC



The “Jeff Siskind” Leadership Award – Award Recipient: Courtney N. Martensen, FCA President
 As the FCA Executive Director, Jeff Siskind demonstrated exceptional leadership qualities. This award is designed to recognize an individual or an organization who/that has made a significant contribution in leading their Chapter, Division, and Association.



**Alachua
 County.us**

The “Pete Fisher” Humanitarian Award – Award Recipient: The Alachua County Crisis Center
 The purpose of this award is to recognize an individual or organization which has made a significant contribution for the betterment of humanity and the human condition.

LGBTQIA+ Youth Mental Health Concerns: The Unintended Impact of Physical Distancing During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Abby Maher, M.A, NCC

President-Elect Florida Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues in Counseling

Almost two years into the COVID-19 pandemic, the effect of the pandemic on mental health is just beginning to be understood. Although youth are estimated to have the lowest mortality rates from COVID-19 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020), they are not immune to the physical effects, and may be even more susceptible to the mental health effects. When assessing the mental health of youth, it is imperative to pay close attention to LGBTQIA+ youth, as even prior to the pandemic, LGBTQIA+ youth were found to be at a significantly heightened risk for mental health concerns including anxiety, depression and substance abuse (Johns et al., 2019; Kann et al., 2018). Compared to their heterosexual and cisgender peers, LGBTQIA+ youth have also consistently been found to have increased risk for suicidal ideation and suicide attempts (Kann et al., 2018). This trend has held true through the pandemic. According to The Trevor Project's National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health (2021), 42% of LGBTQIA+ youth seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year, 72% reported symptoms of generalized anxiety disorder, and 62% reported symptoms of Major Depressive Disorder.

Physical distancing measures put in place during the COVID-19 pandemic, while responsible and necessary to protect public safety, have had unintended consequences for LGBTQIA+ youth. As counselors, it is imperative to be cognizant of these consequences when working with this population.

Due to physical distancing measures, many people have seen significant decrease in social interaction. This is particularly concerning for LGBTQIA+ youth, as research shows that for LGBTQIA+ youth, positive social interactions act as a protective buffer against stress, depression, and suicidality (Parra et al., 2018). According to The Trevor Project's National Survey, LGBTQIA+ youth who reported having at least one accepting adult were 40% less likely to report a suicide attempt. Furthermore, LGBTQIA+ youth who have access to at least one affirming space show significantly decreased rates of suicide attempts. School closures, the halting of extracurricular activities, and the shut down of social gathering groups, meant a loss of access to peers, affirming spaces, and supportive adults for many LGBTQIA+ youth.

In addition to losing access to positive social interactions, physical distancing efforts left many LGBTQIA+ youth confined to unsupportive, or even abusive home environments. This is an unfortunate likelihood as research suggests that up to two thirds of LGBTQIA+ youth experience parental rejection or family alienation. Unsupportive home environments are directly correlated to poor mental health outcomes for LGBTQIA+ youth, including increased risk for suicide (Ryan et al., 2009). As mentioned previously, due to physical distancing measures, many LGBTQIA+ youth also lost access to safe and trusted adults, as well as mandated reporters, who play a vital role in recognizing signs of abuse and offering aid.

Furthermore, in order to avoid rejection and abuse, many LGBTQIA+ youth have to hide their identity at home. This is detrimental to mental health, especially for transgender and non-binary youth, who may experience heightened dysphoria as a result. LGBTQIA+ youth who report high levels of rejection from parents are eight times more likely to attempt suicide (Ryan et al., 2009). The effects of unsupportive home environments have been compounded during the pandemic by the concurrent loss of access to safe, supportive and affirming spaces.

When working with LGBTQIA+ youth from a tele-health platform, counselors must be particularly mindful of the unique mental health concerns resulting from physical distancing during the pandemic. Furthermore, counselors must work to provide affirming spaces, and opportunities for the young LGBTQIA+ community to connect. Counselors can start small by ensuring that their individual counseling work is affirming and allows space for LGBTQIA+ youth to openly express themselves. Counselors can also provide support groups exclusive to LGBTQIA+ youth to provide opportunities to connect and engage. Finally, counselors should be aware of existing online LGBTQIA+ youth spaces. One of the largest resources is TrevorSpace, an international social networking platform, and online community for LGBTQIA+ youth ages thirteen to twenty-four. It provides a space for youth to connect, join discussion forums, and join groups within the community that are specified to different interests.

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For additional information please contact: Research@TheTrevorProject.org



HEART FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Juliana Lytle, PhD, LMHC
FASERVIC President-Elect & Region 2 Representative

I want to start by saying that I am not an authority on Covid or holidays for that matter. However, I am a reasonably intelligent individual who believes in the resilience and goodness of people. That being said, I believe the number one thing we as a community of clinicians (and clinicians-in-training) need to remember as we embark upon the 2021 holiday season is to treat ourselves and those around us with kindness and respect. Try not to focus on the divisions and divisiveness that abounds and instead look at the camaraderie and collective experiences we have all had to share. Over the past year “social distancing” became a thing, we all realized how hard it is to teach, and many of us mastered “business on top, comfy loungewear or pjs on the bottom.”

In spite of the necessity of distance, our need for connection has not diminished. What has happened instead is that we as a community have altered the ways we connect. Virtual conferences and webinars make professional development and networking possible. FaceTime, Zoom, and other video calling apps and systems help us see far away family members as well as our friends who live across town. Telehealth practices and services have become commonplace and, in some cases, preferable to meeting with clients in person.

Now, more than ever, taking the time to be kind and demonstrating good will towards others can go a long way in fostering an atmosphere of holiday cheer. Find ways to do small acts of kindness. Send a funny meme. Compliment a stranger. Hold a door. Buy a cup of coffee. As cliché as it sounds, be the change you want to see in our ever-changing world. Regardless of what holidays you celebrate, be a beacon of hope in a time of trial. In other words, be the embodiment of a counselor.

Making Self-Care Simple for the Holiday Season

Juliana Lytle, PhD, LMHC
FASERVIC President-Elect & Region 2 Representative

According to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) many people start to feel down once days begin to get shorter due to the transition into the fall and winter seasons. Below are a few ways to take extra care of your self as the holiday season begins.

Scented Candles

Set the mood for your soothing night in by lighting your favorite scented candles. Place them all around your room to create a tranquil ambience.



Favorite TV Show

Turn on the TV or grab your laptop and binge watch your favorite TV series. Go for a light and romantic show to make you swoon or a comedy that'll have you laughing your socks off!

Cup of Tea

Brew a cup of green tea, peppermint tea, or your favorite tea flavor. The warmth of the tea will help relax your nerves and muscles!



DIY exfoliating scrubs

Your dry elbows and knees need extra attention. Whip up a DIY scrub from raw sugar and your favorite essential oil to create the perfect exfoliator!

Favorite Music Playlist

Play all of your favorite songs and sing along! If you want, you can even dance around your house with a loved one or a pet.



Reference

National Institute of Mental Health (n.d.). *Seasonal Affective Disorder*. Retrieved October 3, 2021, from <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/seasonal-affective-disorder>

Welcome!



Florida Career Development Association Board Members!

President: Erica Mack

Email: Erica.mack@fscj.edu



Dr. Erica Mack serves as the Associate Director of Student Success for Career Development at Florida State College at Jacksonville. In this role, she oversees the career development staff and assists students with preparation for entry into the workforce. She has worked in the field of education for 17 years in the Northeast Florida region. She has served in a variety of roles related to enrollment management at Jacksonville University and the University of North Florida, ascending to leadership positions at each institution. She also serves as an adjunct faculty member for the Adult Education program.

Dr. Mack completed her B.A. in Communications from Jacksonville University and M.Ed. in Counselor Education from the University of North Florida. In August 2021, she completed her Ed.D. in Higher Education Administration from the University of Florida.

President-Elect: Kelli Carroll

Email: Kellicarrol91@gmail.com

As the daughter of a well-established, Career Counselor, Kelli M. Carroll has been immersed in the Career Development world for most of her life. Currently serving as the Career Coach at Ironhack US, a tech bootcamp school based in Spain, Kelli helps career changers with the soft skills needed to land a new career tech. She recently received her CCSP and will have her ACRW certification by year end.

Originally from Odenton, MD, Kelli graduated with her BA in Mass Communications-Public Relations from Claflin University, and her MS Ed. In Sports Administration from The University of Miami. Kelli is an active member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. as well as the Claflin University Young Alumni Council. In her free time, she enjoys hanging out with friends and playing with her fur baby, a 7-yr-old Pitador named Tesla.



Welcome!



Florida Career Development Association Board Members!

Secretary: Galaxina Wright
Email: ggwright@knights.ucf.edu



Galaxina G. Wright, NCC, RMHCI is a doctoral candidate at the University of Central Florida, working towards a Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision. She completed her master's degree in Marriage, Couple & Family Therapy from Regent University in Virginia. Galaxina is currently a Registered Mental Health Counseling Intern for the state of Florida, working towards completing her hours for licensure. She carries a range of expertise providing career counseling services in multiple settings including a non-profit organization, a private university, and a local government assistant program. Further, Galaxina has an interest in conducting career-related research for historically marginalized populations, and is currently exploring the efficacy of a job search intervention on unemployed individuals for her dissertation.

Treasurer: Dilian Rolins
Email: drolins@knights.ucf.edu

Dilian Rolins is a doctoral candidate at the University of Central Florida in the College of Community Innovation and Education in the Counselor Education and School Psychology department. Ms. Rolins is a Certified School Counselor and a registered mental health counselor intern. Ms. Rolins research interests include training school counselors to provide comprehensive school counseling interventions and intentional career development for students with exceptionalities.





"Therapy with LGBTQ+ Survivors of Sexual Violence: A Holistic and Empowerment Based Approach"

Presented by Jennifer Hearn, M.Ed., LMHC

Friday, December 10, 2021

10:30 a.m. until 12:00 p.m.

1.5 Hours of CEs Approved for NBCC and Florida Board

In this presentation we will explore what it is like for LGBTQ+ survivors of sexual violence to begin and continue on their healing journey. We will do this by looking at various approaches to therapy including why a focus on themes of vulnerability and empowerment are more effective than diagnostic focused approaches. Examples of survivorship from LGBTQ+ survivors will be included as we look at the importance of creating open spaces in the therapeutic setting.

About the presenter. . . Jennifer Hearn earned her Master in Education, and Education Specialist degrees in Marriage and Family Therapy from the University of Florida in 2007 and has been a Licensed Mental Health Counselor since 2010. For the past nine and a half years Jennifer has served as the Program Therapist for Alachua County Victim Services & Rape Crisis Center. Jennifer's areas of interest include creating LGBTQ+ inclusive spaces and services, empowerment based therapies, trauma response and how the body holds trauma, and vulnerability as a guidepost for healing. She sits on multiple statewide policy advisory groups for the Florida Counsel Against Sexual Violence and was selected by the National Sexual Violence Resource Center as the State of Florida 2019 Visionary Voice Award recipient.

Continuing Education (CE) Approval of 1.5 hours: The Florida Board of Clinical Social Work, Marriage and Family and Mental Health Counseling has approved this course under continuing education provider BAP#50-15249 & National Board of Certified Counselors Provider #2010 materials prepared for FCA, 2750 Taylor Avenue, A36, Orlando, FL 32806.

REGISTRATION FEES:

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\$10 for Non-FCA Members (CEs included)

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Best regards,

Florida Association for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Issues in Counseling
www.flacounseling.org/FALGBTIC

Questions? Contact the FCA Office at fcaoffice@flacounseling.org



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The infographic is set against a background of a snowy landscape with evergreen trees. It features three icons: a stack of gift cards, a hand holding a dollar sign, and a heart with a dollar sign. The text is in a clean, sans-serif font, with key phrases in bold.

Creative Interventions When Working with Younger Clients via Telehealth

By Luisairis Soto, LMHC, NCC, CCTP
FCA President-elect & FACAC Past President

Since the onset of the COVID-19, the delivery of mental health services drastically shifted from in-person services to a virtual platform. Cataldo et al. (2021) mentioned how psychotherapy sessions are traditionally held face-to-face where the client and therapist take the time to build rapport and mutual trust. One of the important factors in therapy is presence, as it allows for the client and therapist to connect and experience being in the moment, engage in empathy and develop the therapeutic relationship (Buchanan, Cataldo, Chang, & Mendoza, 2021). As our society continues to navigate through this global pandemic, tele-mental health has become central to delivering counseling services across the state.

When I made the transition from providing mental health counseling from my office of my private practice to seeing clients through a virtual platform from my small apartment, I felt optimistic that my clients and I would be able to continue the healing work, even if it we were in different spaces. It did not occur to me how this would impact my younger clients, kiddos and teens. Although telehealth offered opportunities to reach children and teens outside of a traditional, in-person counseling space, there were other moving parts that I needed to consider such as confidentiality and its limitations, being able to fully read body language and non-verbal cues and engaging in crisis prevention through a computer screen. Sometimes it was challenging enough to engage younger clients to talk about emotions within the counseling space, and it became even more difficult to talk about emotions when sessions were held virtually. My younger clients were able to have their sessions in the comfort of their bedrooms, which made it safer for them to be open about their mental health, which was one of the upsides. And of course, on the downside, my younger clients were not as present in session due to being distracted by distant conversations from parents and other family members, or the cat walking back and forth in front of the screen, or turning off the camera and not being able to notice their expressions and body language when they would talk about self-harming behaviors. Talk about anxiety, am I right?

Gurwitch, Salem, Nelson and Comer (2020) mentioned how unique mental health challenges came about when the global pandemic impacted children and youth because of school closures and being homeschooled, not being able to hangout with their friends, being and feeling isolated from others, or even from family if there is a poor dynamic in the household. As a mental health counselor, working with children and teens was not easy because this kind of counselor-and-client relationship requires a lot of rapport building. I became anxious when it was time to meet with my younger clients via telehealth because I did not know what to expect. How was I going to create a trusting relationship through a computer screen? I had to take some time to think about some creative ways to build rapport with my new younger clients and keep up the momentum with my regular ones.

Once I was able to calm my anxiety, the creative side of my brain lit up. After figuring out how Zoom worked and how to operate the share-screen feature, I was able to engage my younger clients with Therapist Aid, an online platform that has interactive therapy tools. This was a great tool for reviewing different worksheets and videos on emotions, communication, and self-esteem. My sessions became interactive, and my younger clients and I were able to engage in great conversations. Not only could I share my screen, but I could also share my computer sound (this worked well with my teens who had Spotify music playing in the background). It was a great conversation starter asking my teen client what they were listening to, having them share their computer sound, and hearing the tunes and lyrics they felt most connected to in that moment.

There was another feature on Zoom that was very useful and helpful - the Whiteboard. With this feature, my younger clients and I were able to create drawings that represented different feelings, create a family genogram, and write a list of positive attributes and personal goals. Although we were able to engage in these interventions in-person, it was nice to see this accomplished in a virtual setting, especially with my younger clients doing this from the comfort of their homes. Another option was using Youtube to connect to my younger clients. I remember working with an 11-year-old who felt sad and withdrawn because they had a bad day at school. As our session continued, they mentioned their love for rollercoasters. I pulled up Youtube on my computer, shared my screen, and encouraged my client to lead and express what their favorite rollercoasters were. Towards the end of our session, it turned out I was the one who needed counseling after watching rollercoasters drop, twist, and turn, just as my stomach did.

Even though there were numerous technical difficulties along the way, I was able to become creative in a way I did not think possible, especially during a global pandemic. There is this parallel phenomenon happening to me and my clients. Not only are my clients experiencing lack of connection and mental health challenges because of this pandemic, but I was experiencing this as well as a mental health counselor and as a human being. Being able to connect with my younger clients, even from different physical spaces and through a screen, I think that this global traumatic experience helped me expand on my creative thinking so that my clients and I can continue doing the healing work together. It is not going to be perfect, but we are doing our best to survive and thrive.

References

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FCA Members,

Dr. LaTonya Summers, FAMCD Past-President is excited to offer you a free digital copy of the premiere issue of Black Mental Health Today magazine. Dr. Rheeda Walker, the author of The Unapologetic Guide to Black Mental Health is on its cover. Pick up your copy at blackmentalhealthtoday.com.





Telehealth has made mental health services more accessible to clients. Telehealth is really shaping the future of how mental health clinicians deliver services. At the beginning of the Covid-19 shutdown, I was concerned about my new and existing clients' therapy appointment experience via teletherapy. How do we blend building rapport, scheduling, registration, intake and payments? I am sure there were many counselors with these same thoughts.

Telehealth negates that personal touch that many therapists prefer to give to their clients. This new way of delivering services requires that therapists develop meaningful interactions with clients to maintain the needed relationship for services to be effective. Here are a few things I learned to help maintain the relationship through the screen:

1. Always dress professional.
2. Give the client your undivided attention. Let them know if you look down, you're writing not scrolling on social media.
3. Make sure the client knows what platform you're using ahead of the appointment.
4. Make sure you have good lighting and sound.
5. Position your camera so the client sees that you are in a secure private area.

I am certain there are many other ways that help clients feel connect even when utilizing telehealth as a means to receive counseling services. These are just a few that have helped me maintain strong relationships with my clients.

Cherlette McCullough, M.A.
Registered Marriage & Family Therapist
FAMFC Professional Development & Community Committee Chair

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