



## Society for Prevention Research 32nd Annual Meeting

### Pre-Conference Workshop I

**Date:** Tuesday, May 28, 2024

**Time:** 8:30am-5:00pm

**Title:** Moving beyond your academic self: Participatory approach tools that center community and youth voice to promote relevance and equity in prevention research and evaluation

#### Organizers and Presenters:

Jacinda K. Dariotis, PhD, MAS

Director, Professor, and Endowed Chair

Family Resiliency Center, Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Department of Kinesiology and Community Health, Department of Biomedical and Translational Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; [dariotis@illinois.edu](mailto:dariotis@illinois.edu); 443-717-2471

#### Presenters

- Jacinda K. Dariotis, PhD, MAS  
Director, Professor, and Endowed Chair  
Family Resiliency Center, Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Department of Kinesiology and Community Health, Department of Biomedical and Translational Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- Rachel Jackson-Gordon, PhD  
Postdoctoral Research Associate  
Family Resiliency Center, Department of Human Development and Family Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- Dana A. Eldreth, PhD  
Senior Research Associate  
Family Resiliency Center, Department of Human Development and Family Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

- Lisa M. Vaughn, PhD  
Professor  
Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center/University of Cincinnati College of  
Medicine Action Research Center, School of Education
-

## **Purpose & Objectives**

Evidence bases in primary prevention continue to grow; so too does the need to tailor and develop prevention strategies for local communities to achieve optimal effectiveness and address the prevalence of health disparities. Community and youth engagement is essential for ensuring alignment between Evidence Based Programs (EBPs) and intended community members and has garnered interest among prevention scientists (Chilenski et al., 2020),

Participatory research and evaluation approaches offer frameworks for gaining community and youth perspectives that can be used in the context of prevention efforts. Participatory approaches include strategies intended to promote mutual learning and relevance in research (e.g., Wallerstein et al., 2018).

Participatory research approaches can be particularly useful for garnering trust in communities where traditional approaches have historically harmed those communities or provided little in return for valuable information. Participatory approaches emphasize shared power, equity, and decision making between researchers and communities increasing the reach, rigor, and relevance of prevention research. Particularly for youth, participatory approaches to prevention research are important for centering the opinions and knowledge of youth that are often underestimated and discounted. Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) projects have impacts for the youth involved and their supporting organizations and communities, specifically providing voice for youth who identify from historically marginalized groups (Shamrova & Cummings, 2017). YPAR can change adults' critical consciousness, opening their understanding of how different perceptions can describe the same circumstances, and exposing the social components that may lead to feelings of oppression (Irby, 2018). Participatory approaches build the capacity for youth and community members as prevention science change agents and mobilizers.

While researchers and evaluators may have heard of or are aware of principles of participatory approaches, fewer utilize specific tools and methods that embody those participatory principles. They often default to traditional methods that center the researcher or evaluator as the primary expert.

**This proposed workshop will review key principles in participatory research and evaluation, reflect on the potential and utility of participatory methods in prevention science, and then provide training on two participatory methods our team uses to engage communities and youth in prevention work.**

The two participatory research methods are group level assessment (GLA) (e.g., Vaughn & Lohmueller, 2014; Vaughn & DeJonckheere, 2019) and data walks (Murray et al., 2015). GLA is a participatory qualitative method that can be used with large groups and adapted to different settings. GLA training will constitute the most time intensive component of the workshop. Participants will engage in each of the seven GLA steps to experience the entire process. Data walks are a culturally centered approach for presenting data and results and generating

solutions with communities and youth. This strategy fosters a greater understanding of how data are interpreted by different audiences and promotes diverse and relevant recommendations for improving the presentation of data. Data walks empower end-users to write new narratives or rewrite narratives written by others about them. Training on data walks will include data summary generation, review, assessment, and revisions.

Following the workshop, participants will be able to:

- a. Describe key principles of participatory research and evaluation.
- b. Understand the potential benefits and rationales for using participatory approaches in prevention research.
- c. Challenges and limitations of participatory approaches for academics, community members, and youth.
- d. Outline the steps of a GLA.
- e. Design, conduct and analyze a GLA.
- f. Describe and practice “data walks” as a participatory method.
- g. Discuss ways participatory approaches may be applied to other data collection strategies like interviews, focus groups, and surveys.

### **Target Audience**

Researchers or evaluators in academic or community settings are the target audience for this workshop. Practitioners interested in participatory methods or already engaged in a community-academic partnership may also benefit. The workshop will be appropriate for all career stages.

### **Materials**

Workshop participants will receive access to a slide deck from the workshop as well as handouts outlining key concepts and resources related to workshop content. Content will include:

- Key definitions from the workshop
- Annotated references highlighted during the workshop
- Available toolkits

### **Brief CVs**

**Dr. Jacinda K. Dariotis**, is Professor of Human Development and Family Studies, Endowed Chair of Family Resiliency, and Director of the Family Resiliency Center in the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. She has a joint appointment as a Health Innovation Processor in the Department of Biomedical and Translational Sciences in the Carle Illinois College of Medicine and Professor in the Department of Kinesiology and Community Health. Her training is in prevention science, public health, biostatistics, and decision science. From biosocial, ecological, participatory, and mixed methods perspectives, she explores decision-making, emotional regulation, cognitive control, and stress reactivity and coping as they relate to risk-taking behaviors (e.g., sexual behaviors, substance

use, violence, delinquency) to inform how prevention and intervention programs. She trains doctoral, masters, and undergraduate students in community based and youth participatory research. She has collaborated on numerous studies implementing CBPR and YPAR on diverse topics (including community violence, over policing, public safety, early childhood education) and in diverse settings (including urban and rural areas, high school classrooms and after-school programs). Dr. Dariotis teaches courses in participatory methods, survey research methods, and biosocial perspectives on health. She is a National Prevention Science Coalition board member.

**Dr. Rachel Jackson-Gordon** is a Postdoctoral Research Associate at the Family Resiliency Center in the University of Illinois' Human Development and Family Studies department. Dr. Jackson-Gordon specializes in community-engaged and mixed methods research and evaluation, with substantive expertise in violence prevention program implementation. She has facilitated several group level assessments during her research career as well as provided training on group level assessment to students and colleagues. Dr. Jackson-Gordon completed her doctorate in Educational Studies with a focus on community-based action research at the University of Cincinnati. Prior to her role at the University of Illinois, she worked at the University of Cincinnati Evaluation Services Center and then the UNC Charlotte Urban Institute, where she further developed community-engaged research skills.

**Dr. Dana Eldreth** is Senior Research Associate at the Family Resiliency Center in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Dr. Eldreth's training is in psychology and public health with a focus on mental health across the lifespan. She has investigated the effects of school-based, community-based, and behavioral interventions using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Currently, she is involved in community based participatory research aimed at building evaluation capacity among agencies who provide mental health and developmental disability services. She has designed, implemented, and analyzed needs assessments, including in-depth interviews, focus groups and group level assessments. Dr. Eldreth has trained researchers across all academic and professional levels in quantitative and qualitative methods.

**Dr. Lisa M. Vaughn** is Professor of Pediatrics at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center/ University of Cincinnati College of Medicine with a joint appointment in the Educational Studies Community-Based Action Research PhD program at the University of Cincinnati. At Cincinnati Children's, Dr. Vaughn conducts research and co-directs the Qualitative Methods & Analysis Center (QMAC). At University of Cincinnati, Dr. Vaughn mentors PhD students in community-based action research and teaches graduate-level research classes in action research, participatory research, and group dynamics. She is formally trained as a social psychologist. Dr. Vaughn has specific training and expertise in qualitative research methodologies and community-engaged research with a focus on health equity and wellbeing of vulnerable and immigrant families and youth. She has been involved in many research projects either as a Principal or Co-Investigator that engage community stakeholders in the research process and use innovative, participatory methodologies. Dr. Vaughn formed the Youth Council for Suicide

Prevention (advisory team and youth co-researchers from 11 local high schools) and Latinos Unidos por la Salud (Latinx immigrant community research team) who both partner in research alongside academics. She is Co-Editor of the *Journal of Participatory Research Methods* (JPRM).

## **Outline of Workshop**

### Morning

9:00 – Introductions / ice breaker

9:45 – Review foundations of participatory research

- History of participatory research
- Need / justification for participatory research
- Key tenets of participatory research
- Varieties of participatory research / naming and language differences
- Examples of spectrum of engagement in participatory research

10:30 – Facilitated discussion: Application of participatory methods to prevention research

- Alignment between participatory methodology and prevention science
  - How to combine with rigorous evaluation methods or hybrid research designs
- Examples of participatory approaches to prevention research – presenters
- Examples of participatory approaches to prevention research – participants

11:15 – Data walks

### Afternoon

12:00 – Lunch break

12:45 – Group level assessment

- Step 1 (explanation) until 1:15
- Step 2 (generating) until 2:00
- Step 3 (appreciating) until 2:15
- Step 4 (reflecting) until 2:20
- Step 5 (understanding) until 3:10
- Step 6 (selecting) until 3:40
- Step 7 (action) until 4:00

3:00 – Examples of GLA applied for different objectives / specific to prevention research

- Modifying GLA for virtual use

3:30 – Participatory approaches to interviews, focus groups, and surveys

4:15 – Ethical considerations

4:30 – Discussion / Debrief

### Hands-on Components

The GLA will be hands-on learning and constitute the largest segment of the workshop. Other components of the workshop will be discussion-based.

### Relevance to Conference

Partnerships and collaboration are the core of participatory approaches to research. As such, the proposed workshop centered on training specific participatory methods directly aligns with this year’s conference theme: Advancing Partnerships and Collaborative Approaches in Prevention Science. Additionally, the proposed workshop content reflects **multiple key training objectives** identified by Chilenski et al. (2020), such as **community input and collaboration** to preventive intervention topics; a subsection for which 71% of SPR survey respondents indicated interest in receiving training. As described in the call for proposals, this proposed workshop best aligns with priority number three: **novel approaches to CBPR**. Finally, as noted in Boyd et al. (2022), “community engagement strategies are critical to producing interventions that **promote health equity** at the community level based on shifting the power gradient from the researchers to community representatives” (p. 582).

### References

Boyd, R. C., Castro, F. G., Finigan-Carr, N., et al. (2023). Strategic directions in preventive intervention research to advance health equity. *Prevention Science, 24*(4), 577-596.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11121-022-01462-5>

Chilenski, S. M., Pasch, K. E., Knapp, A., et al. (2020). The society for prevention research 20 years later: A summary of training needs. *Prevention science, 21*, 985-1000.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11121-020-01151-1>

Irby, D. J. (2018). Mo’data, mo’problems: Making sense of racial discipline disparities in a large diversifying suburban high school. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 54*(5), 693-722.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161x18769051>

Murray, B., Falkenburger, E., & Saxena, P. (2015). *Data Walks: An Innovative Way to Share Data with Communities*. Urban Institute.

Shamrova, D. P., & Cummings, C. E. (2017). Participatory action research (PAR) with children and youth: An integrative review of methodology and PAR outcomes for participants, organizations, and communities. *Children and Youth Services Review, 81*, 400-412.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2017.08.022>

Vaughn, L. M., & DeJonckheere, M. (2019). Methodological Progress Note: Group Level Assessment. *Journal of Hospital Medicine, 14*(10), 627-629.

Vaughn, L. M., & Lohmueller, M. (2014). Calling all stakeholders: Group-level assessment (GLA)—A qualitative and participatory method for large groups. *Evaluation Review*, 38(4), 336-355. doi:10.1177/0193841X14544903

Wallerstein, N., Duran, B., Oetzel, J., & Minkler, M. (Eds.). (2018). *Community-based participatory research for health: Advancing social and health equity (3rd ed.)*. Jossey-Bass.