

Meet the Sprouts Team!



The Sprouts: Growing Healthy Habits lessons were developed by researchers at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign Family Resiliency Center. The development of the Sprouts curriculum was supported by the Christopher Family Foundation Food and Family Program. The development of Sprouts took place over multiple years with the help and collaboration of many undergraduate and graduate students, research staff, and faculty. Find out more about the key members of the Sprouts team below.

To learn more about projects from the Family Resiliency Center, visit our website:
<http://familyresiliency.illinois.edu/>

Meghan Fisher, MA

Meghan Fisher is currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC) in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS). Meghan's research focuses on the role early childhood educators play in childhood obesity prevention efforts. She is specifically interested in the professional development and training early childhood educators receive on nutrition and feeding practices, and how this impacts their practices.

Elizabeth Villegas, MS

Elizabeth Villegas, MS is earning her PhD in Human Development and Family Studies at the University of Illinois. Her research focuses on understanding family health behavior and routines among underrepresented communities. To promote optimal health among children and parents, she seeks to enhance parent-child relationships, communication, and routines. Additionally, she seeks to understand how cultural components play a role in health behavior and how culture can be a mechanism to protect against negative health outcomes.

Carolyn Sutter, PhD

Carolyn Sutter, PhD is a postdoctoral research associate with the Family Resiliency Center. Her research and outreach efforts focus on how social relationships with parents and peers relate to children's developing eating behaviors and risk of childhood obesity. She has experience conducting research, supporting intervention programming, and designing educational materials for parents and school settings, from preschool through high school.

Brenda Koester, MS

Brenda Davis Koester is Assistant Director of the Family Resiliency Center. Her research and policy work centers around food insecurity; children's feeding programs; effective community collaborations; and translating research into policy and practice and she serves as Co-PD and Co-I on several externally funded projects. She has experience supporting and coordinating transdisciplinary teams.

Barbara Fiese, PhD

Barbara H. Fiese, PhD, is a clinical and developmental psychologist whose research focuses on family factors that promote health and wellbeing in children. She holds the Pampered Chef, Ltd., Endowed Chair in Family Resiliency and is Professor and Director of the Family Resiliency Center at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, with affiliated appointments in the Departments of Pediatrics and Psychology. She is considered one of the national experts in the role that shared family mealtimes may play in promoting health.