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UNH Global

Lisa Jones

Research Associate Professor of Psychology (COLA) ~ Switzerland

Using a grant from UNH Faculty International Development Grant program, I traveled to Zurich, Switzerland from May 13th to May 18th, 2018, to extend and expand on work that I and a colleague have done developing program evaluation resources (2 documentary-style videos and 3 animated videos (<http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/evaluation-videos/index.html>)) for NGOs addressing children's exposure to violence in low and middle income countries. My colleague, Dr. Patricia Lannen, currently works at the Marie Meierhofer Children's Institute (MMI) in Zurich. The MMI is a center of excellence in Switzerland for work on early childhood as well as the implementation of children's rights. The institute combines expertise from developmental psychology, early learning prevention, and child protection. It is the leading organization in Switzerland focused on children that combines research and practice under one roof. I had a wonderful experience spending time at the MMI. They are a unique organization that is dedicated to careful integration of research and practice





Street scene in Zurich, Switzerland


My trip to Zurich was very successful. While there, I presented with Dr. Lannen as part of MMI's bi-annual round table conference (Kolloqium), held on May 17th. At the Kolloqium, over 40 experts on early child development attended, mostly from family agencies around Switzerland who work with young children from vulnerable populations. The aim of the Kolloqium was to foster an exchange of ideas between policy and practice. Dr. Lannen and I presented on the importance of "scientific accompaniment" for agencies working to implement programs to improve child health and safety. We discussed the value of research and evaluation to forming program theory and logic models that can best achieve program goals. We clarified for attendees the difference between process and outcome evaluation and the importance of both. The presentation also discussed the importance of implementer-researcher partnerships, and some of our views on factors that were important to good partnerships. Finally, we introduced the videos we created together, described above.



In addition to the round table discussions, Dr. Lannen and I conducted preliminary work planning a book on the topics that we presented on at the Kolloqium. We spent several days outlining the chapters and content of the book, and considering its format. While there are multiple how-to books on evaluation, we have found that most are highly technical, requiring a research background to use. What we think is lacking is a more basic discussion of the value of researcher-practice partnerships, and a book on research and evaluation that is directed to implementers and funders. Both Dr. Lannen and I have a very complementary set of experiences collaborating with implementing organizations, providing us with unique perspectives about when engagement with evaluation has been successful and when it has not. We have come away from our visit with a clear, shared vision for the book and specific next-steps for moving it forward. We both agreed that the progress we achieved could not have been done without the intensive time together that the travel opportunity afforded, and we have committed to finding ways to continue to meet in person, at least annually to continue our work together.

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