

KERRIE L. OCASIO

Assistant Professor
Graduate Social Work Program
West Chester University of Pennsylvania
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RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Help-seeking and engagement in social services
- Foster care services and well-being outcomes
- Racial disparities in child welfare
- Implementation Science informed evaluations
- Practice-based service evaluation

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

2018 – Present: Assistant Professor, Graduate Social Work Program, West Chester University of Pennsylvania

2015 – 2018: Assistant Research Professor, School of Social Work, The State University of New Jersey

EDUCATION

- 2015 Rutgers, The State University Of New Jersey**
Ph.D. in Social Work
Dissertation: Understanding Individual Level Motivations for Repeat Service Use in a Family Support Program
Committee: Beth Angell, Ph.D. (Chair); Cassandra Simmel, MSW, Ph.D.; Emily Greenfield, Ph.D., and Fred Wulczyn, Ph.D. (Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago).
- 2008 Fordham University**
Master of Social Work, Summa Cum Laude, Specialization: Research
- 2001 Rutgers, The State University Of New Jersey**
Bachelor of Arts In Social Work, Summa Cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa

PEER REVIEWED MANUSCRIPTS AND EDITED BOOK CHAPTERS

Rolock, N., **Ocasio, K.**, Webb, J., Fleary-Simmons, D., Cohen, L., & Fong, R. (Accepted.) Implementation science and prevention in action: Application in a post-permanency world. *Journal of Evidence-Based Social Work*.

Rolock, N., White, K. R., **Ocasio, K.**, Zhang, L., MacKenzie, M. J., & Fong, R. (2018). A comparison of foster care reentry after adoption in two large U.S. states. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 10.1177/1049731518783857

Koivunen, J., Van Alst, D., **Ocasio, K.**, & Allegra, C. (2017). Understanding engagement in mental health services for preschool children: An analysis of teacher, clinician, and parent perspectives. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 45(3), 313-320.

Shpiegel, S. & **Ocasio, K.** (2015). Functioning patterns among older adolescents in foster care: Results from a cluster analysis. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 58, 227-235.

Walsh, T. B., McCourt, S. N., Rostad, W. L., Byers, K., & **Ocasio, K.** (2015). Promoting protective factors and strengthening resilience. In D. Daro, A. Cohn Donnelly, L. A. Huang, & B. J. Powell (Eds.), *Advances in child abuse prevention knowledge: The perspective of new leadership* (203-233). New York: Springer Publishing

Ocasio, K., Van Alst, D., Koivunen, J., Huang, C. C., & Allegra, C. (2014). Improving social emotional development in at-risk preschoolers through a combination of universal and selected approaches. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 10.1007/s10826-014-9983-7.

Ocasio, K., Morton, C., & Simmel, C. (2013). An exploration of child welfare investigation disparity differences between states. *Journal of Public Child Welfare*, 7(1), 79-97.

Morton, C. M., **Ocasio, K.** & Simmel, C. (2011). A critique of methods used to describe the overrepresentation of African Americans in the child welfare system. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 33(9), 1538-1542.

MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW OR IN PREPARATION

Ocasio, K. Understanding individual level motivations for repeat service use in a family support program. (Under review).

Ocasio, K., Bosk, E., Duron, J., Stepleton, K., Fay, K., & MacKenzie, M. J. Predictors of caseworker's leanings towards child protection over family preservation. (Anticipated submission: September 2018).

Ocasio, K. An examination of the relationship between public child welfare involvement, motivation for substance abuse treatment, and treatment dropout for mothers of minor children. (Anticipated submission: December 2018).

Ocasio, K. Understanding the effects of coercion on child welfare family engagement: A theory review. (Anticipated submission: November 2018).

Ocasio, K., Killos, L., & Maher, E. Enhancing parent engagement in child welfare services: An experimental study of a casework intervention. (Anticipated submission: April 2019).

Ocasio, K. Maher, E., & Killos, L. A case conferencing approach for young children in child welfare: Results of a process and impact evaluation. (Anticipated submission: April 2019).

Ocasio, K., Van Alst, D., & Bosk, E. Reflective functioning amongst legally free youth waiting for adoption: How a teaming intervention effected youth perspectives on their social networks (Anticipated submission: December 2018).

PEER REVIEWED CONFERENCE PAPERS AND INVITED PRESENTATIONS

Rolock, N., White, K., **Ocasio, K.**, Zhang, L., MacKenzie, M., & Fong, R. (2018, July). *A comparison of foster care reentry after adoption in two large U.S. states*. In N. Rolock (Chair), *An examination of post-adoption experiences of children, young adults, and families in the U.S.* Symposium accepted for the International Conference on Adoption Research 6, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Ocasio, K., Forsythe, M., & Diaz, C. (2018, June). *Psychological Assessment Tools: An Exploration of Usage and Appropriateness for Child Welfare Forensic Evaluations*. Poster presentation accepted for the American Professional Society for Abused Children (APSAC) 25th Annual Colloquium, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Rolock, N., White, K., **Ocasio, K.**, Zhang, L., MacKenzie, M., & Fong, R. (2018, April). *A comparison of foster care reentry after adoption in two large U.S. states*. Poster presentation accepted for the 2018 Rudd Adoption Research New Worlds of Adoption Conference and winner of the "Outstanding Poster Presentation Award".

Ayers, C., **Ocasio, K.**, Fay, K. P., Riley, M., & Kisor, A. (2018, April). *Virginia Children's Services Practice Model Implementation Study*. Paper accepted for the Child Welfare League of America 2018 National Conference, Washington, D.C.

Ocasio, K., White, K. R., Rolock, N., & Fong, R. (2018, January). *Using administrative data to target prevention efforts: A longitudinal examination of outcomes post adoption*. In N. Rolock (Chair), *Using intervention research to improve permanency services for foster children and youth: Initial results from the National Quality Improvement Center for Adoption and Guardianship Support and Preservation Project*. Symposium presented for the Society for Social Work Research Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.

Shpiegel, S. & **Ocasio, K.** (2015, July). *Patterns of functioning among older youth in foster care: A cluster analysis*. Paper presented at the American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children Annual Colloquium, Boston, Massachusetts.

Ocasio, K. & Van Alst, D. (2015, January). *Risk, resiliency, and protective factors: Influences on foster parent retention*. Paper presented at the Society for Social Work Research Annual Conference, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Hubel, G., Klika, B., Lanier, P. J., Maquire-Jack, K., Geiger, J. M., Neugut, T. B., & **Ocasio, K.** (2013, January). *Making the stakes and stakeholders in child maltreatment visible: A discussion of innovative approaches to prevention research design and methodology*. Paper presented at the Society for Social Work Research Annual Conference, San Diego, California.

Ocasio, K. & Morton, C. (2010, October). *Where does the responsibility lie for racial disproportionality in child welfare?* Paper presented at the Council on Social Work Education's 56th Annual Program Meeting, Portland, Oregon.

Van Alst, D. & **Ocasio, K.** (2010, October). *Finding the "Field" in social work research*. Paper presented at the Council on Social Work Education's 56th Annual Program Meeting, Portland, Oregon.

Blake, A., Klena, J. C., & **Ocasio, K.** (2010, April). *Using strategic planning and branding to achieve organizational change: Understanding the role of human behavior*. Paper presented at the 21st Annual Management Institute, New York.

Ocasio, K. (2010, January). *An examination of the relationship between public child welfare involvement, motivation for substance abuse treatment, and treatment dropout for mothers of minor children.* Paper presented at the Society for Social Work Research Annual Conference, San Francisco, California.

Ocasio, K., Morton, C., & Blake, A. (2009, November). *Disproportionality in child welfare: Examining inequity in a racially diverse state.* Paper presented at the Council on Social Work Education's 55th Annual Program Meeting, San Antonio, Texas.

TECHNICAL AND BRIEF REPORTS

Ocasio, K. & Van Alst, D. (2017). *Virginia Children's Services Practice Model Implementation Study: Staff reflections on implementation of the practice profiles.* Report prepared for the Virginia Department of Social Services. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work.

Ocasio, K. & Van Alst, D. (2017). *Virginia Children's Services Practice Model Implementation Study: Implementation readiness and variation by agency and individual staff characteristics.* Report prepared for the Virginia Department of Social Services. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work.

Ocasio, K. (2017). *Improving Outcomes for Families and Young Children: Brief report.* Report prepared for New Jersey's Department of Children and Families and Casey Family Programs. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work.

Ocasio, K. (2016). *Improving Outcomes for Families and Young Children: Short- and intermediate outcomes report.* Report prepared for New Jersey's Department of Children and Families and Casey Family Programs. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work.

Ocasio, K. (2016). *Improving Outcomes for Families and Young Children: Focus group results from community partners and CPP caseworkers, supervisors, and leadership engaged in the pilot project.* Report prepared for New Jersey's Department of Children and Families and Casey Family Programs. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work.

Ocasio, K. (2016). *The Protective Factors Framework in child protective service and community-based practice: Implementation of training and impact on practice and collaboration.* Report prepared for New Jersey's Department of Children and Families and Casey Family Programs. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work.

Ocasio, K. & Van Alst, D. (2016). *The New Jersey collaborative adoption recruitment education and support project: Promoting permanent connections and adoption opportunities for New Jersey's longest waiting youth.* Report prepared for New Jersey's Department of Children and Families for submission to the Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau, under Grant #90CO1123.

Ocasio, K. & Van Alst, D. (2015). *Batterers Intervention Program: Intervention evaluation.* Report prepared for New Jersey's Department of Children and Families. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work, Second Year Report.

Van Alst, D. & **Ocasio, K.** (2015). *NJ's Family Success Centers: An exploration of service use and outcomes.* Report prepared for New Jersey's Department of Children and Families. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work.

Ocasio, K., & Van Alst, D. (2015). *Resource parent perspectives*. Report prepared for New Jersey's Department of Children and Families. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work, Second Year Report.

Simmel, C., Forenza, B., Kim, S., Phillips, A., Sapiro, B., & Ocasio, K. (2015). *Compendium Report on the Comprehensive Needs Assessment of DCF-Involved Youth*. Rutgers University School of Social Work, Office of Child Welfare Research. Report prepared for the New Jersey Department of Children and Families, Office of Adolescent Services. Trenton, NJ.

Abramson, D., Van Alst, D., Merdjanoff, A., Piltch-Loeb, R., Beedasy, J., Findley, P., Peek, L., Mordy, M. Moroso, S., **Ocasio, K.**, Park, Y.S., Sury, J., and Tobin-Gurley, J. (2015). *The PEOPLE Report: Sandy Child & Family Health Study (S-CAFH)*. Rutgers University School of Social Work, New York University Global Institute of Public Health, National Center for Disaster Preparedness at Columbia University, Colorado State University, Briefing Report 2015_1.

Abramson, D., Van Alst, D., Merdjanoff, A., Piltch-Loeb, R., Beedasy, J., Findley, P., Peek, L., Mordy, M. Moroso, S., **Ocasio, K.**, Park, Y.S., Sury, J., and Tobin-Gurley, J. (2015). *The PLACE Report: Sandy Child & Family Health Study (S-CAFH)*. Rutgers University School of Social Work, New York University Global Institute of Public Health, National Center for Disaster Preparedness at Columbia University, Colorado State University, Briefing Report 2015_2.

Ocasio, K., Van Alst, D., Ray, A., Koivunen, J., Pirozzolo, K., & Terry, A. (2015). *Batterers' Intervention Program: Male participant attitudes and service engagement*. Report prepared for New Jersey's Department of Children and Families. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work, First Year Report.

Ocasio, K., Van Alst, D., Pirozzolo, K., Terry, A., & Mayo, M. (2014). *Resource parent perspectives*. Report prepared for New Jersey's Department of Children and Families. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work, First Year Report.

New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect. (2014). *New Jersey standards for prevention programs: Building success through family support*. Trenton, NJ: Author. White paper prepared by ad-hoc committee; chaired by **K. Ocasio**.

Ocasio, K., Van Alst, D., Koivunen, J., Pirozzolo, K., Terry, A. (2013). *DCP&P domestic violence attitudes and case practice*. Report prepared for New Jersey's Department of Children and Families. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work, Baseline Report.

Ocasio, K. (2013). *New Jersey's family success centers: Exploring implementation of the "movement"*. Report prepared for New Jersey's Department of Children and Families. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work.

Simmel, C., **Ocasio, K.**, Redcay, A., Forenza, B., Murshid, N.S., & Kim, S. (2012). *Reflections on case practice in New Jersey's Division of Youth and Family Services*. Report prepared for New Jersey's Department of Children and Families. Rutgers University School of Social Work.

Ocasio, K. (2011). *Adolescent services strategic plan: Striving for success in transitions to adulthood: 2011-2014*. Strategic plan prepared for New Jersey's Department of Children and Families, Office of Adolescent Services. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work.

Ocasio, K., Williams, D., Bergacs, K.M., & Johnson, H. (2010). *Family preservation services: An essential partner in the public child welfare system.* Brief Report. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work.

Ocasio, K., Koivunen, J., Van Alst, D., & Allegra, C. (2010). *The early childhood mental health promotion and access initiative: A model for addressing and preventing mental health and behavioral problems in young children.* Brief Report. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work.

Ocasio, K., Vizcaino, J., & Bergacs, K.M. (2010). *Breaking the cycle of low educational achievement in impoverished families and communities: The importance of the family in early childhood education.* Brief Report. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work.

Blake, A., Huang, C.C., Van Alst, D., Koivunen, J.M., Allegra, C., & **Ocasio, K. (2010).** *Cross-site evaluation of the early childhood mental health promotion and access initiative: Final report.* Report prepared for the Health Care Foundation of New Jersey. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work.

Ocasio, K., Koivunen, J., Van Alst, D., & Allegra, C. (2009). *The early childhood mental health promotion and access initiative: A model for addressing and preventing mental health and behavioral problems in young children: Preliminary Report.* Report prepared for the Health Care Foundation of New Jersey. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work.

Ocasio, K., Staats, A., & Van Alst, D. (2009). *Keys to achieving resilient transitions: A program to reduce substance use and promote resiliency in youth aging-out of foster care.* Brief Report. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work.

Jou, M.K., Liu, C.W., & **Ocasio, K. (2009).** *The New Jersey Child Support Institute: Promoting self-sufficiency and ensuring economic and medical support for children.* Brief Report. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work.

Ocasio, K. & Morton, C. (2009). *Disproportionality and disparity in New Jersey's public child welfare system: An examination of inequity in a racially diverse state.* Brief Report. Institute for Families, Rutgers School of Social Work.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

2017 - 2018 **Evaluation Coach/Consultant, Sibling Connections Initiative.** Contracted by the Capacity Building Center for States for the New Mexico Children, Youth & Families Department. (\$55,000)

2016 - 2018 **Principal Investigator, The Virginia Children's Services Practice Model Implementation Study.** Funded by Casey Family Programs in partnership with the Virginia Department of Social Services. (\$244,000)

2016 - 2018 **Principal Investigator, The New Jersey Coordination Center for Child Abuse and Neglect Forensic Evaluation and Treatment.** Funded by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families. (Annual grant = \$400,000)

2015 - 2019 **Co-Principal Investigator, Promoting Adoption and Guardianship Stability in NJ (PAGS-NJ).** Funded by the Quality Improvement Center for Adoption & Guardianship Support & Preservation, located at Spaulding for Children and in partnership with the University of Texas at Austin, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and University of North Carolina at

Chapel Hill. (Total base grant = \$400,000 over four years, \$160,000 funds for short-term projects)

- 2016 - 2017** **Principal Investigator, *Transitions for Former Foster Youth Enrolled in Higher Education***
Investigator initiated pilot study.
- 2015 - 2016** **Principal Investigator, *Training for the New Jersey Standards for Prevention Programs: Building Success Through Family Support***. Funded by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families. (\$75,000)
- 2015 - 2016** **Principal Investigator, *Improving Outcomes for Families of Infants and Young Children: Integrating Best Practices of Child Protection and Early Childhood***. Funded by Casey Family Programs, in partnership with the New Jersey Department of Children and Families. (\$100,000)
- 2014 - 2015** **Co-Principal Investigator, *Family Success Center Study***. Funded by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families. (\$15,000)
- 2014 - 2016** **Co- Principal Investigator, *NJ Collaborative Adoption Recruitment, Education and Support (NJ CARES)***. Funded by the U.S. Administration for Children and Families via the New Jersey Department of Children and Families, through a joint competitive submission. (Total grant = \$400,000, research portion = \$75,000)
- 2014 - 2015** **Project Coordinator, *Sandy Child and Family Health Study (S-CAFH)***
Institute for Families, Rutgers University School of Social Work
PI: Drs. David Abramson, Donna Van Alst, Patricia Findley, and Lori Peek
- 2013 – 2015** **Co- Principal Investigator, *Batterers’ Intervention Program (BIP) Evaluation***. Funded by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families. (\$80,000)
- 2013 – 2015** **Co- Principal Investigator, *New Jersey Resource Family Perspectives***. Funded by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families. (\$100,000)
- 2012 – 2014** **Principal Investigator, *Engagement in Child Welfare: Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect through a Family Resource and Support Program***. Funded by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families (\$25,000) and through the Doris Duke Fellowship for the Promotion of Child Well-being.
- 2012 – 2013** **Senior Research Associate/Project Coordinator, *Implementing the School Based Youth Services Program (SBYSP) in Middle Schools***
Rutgers University School of Social Work
PI: Dr. Cassandra Simmel
- 2012 – 2013** **Senior Research Associate, *Family Success Center - Family Development Credential Training Evaluation***
Institute for Families, Rutgers University School of Social Work
PI: Julissa Vizcaino

- 2010 – 2012** **Senior Research Associate/Project Coordinator**, *Engagement in Child Welfare: A Study of Case Practice in New Jersey's Division of Youth and Family Services*.
Rutgers University School of Social Work
PI: Dr. Cassandra Simmel
- 2009 – 2012** **Graduate Research Assistant**, *Cross-site Evaluation of the Preschool Mental Health Initiative*
Institute for Families, Rutgers University School of Social Work
PI: Dr. Allison Blake

HONORS AND AWARDS

- 2015** Dean's Dissertation Award, School of Social Work, Rutgers University
- 2011 – 2013** Doris Duke Fellowship for the Promotion of Child Well-being: Seeking innovations to prevent child abuse and neglect, Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago. Policy mentor - Dr. Allison Blake, Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Children and Families. Academic mentor – Dr. Cassandra Simmel, Rutgers University School of Social Work.
- 2008** Nicholas J. Langenfeld Outstanding Master's Thesis Award, Fordham University.
- 2008** IRIS Award for Outstanding Annual Report for the Institute for Families 2008 Annual Report. Responsibilities included general concept, content choices, writing, and photography.

CLASSROOM TEACHING, LECTURING, AND FIELD INSTRUCTION

Rutgers University, School of Social Work

- Fall 2017** Instructor: SW 595, Methods of Social Work Research II (Hybrid format)
- Spring 2017** Instructor: SW 595, Methods of Social Work Research II (Hybrid format)
- Spring 2015** Instructor: SW 585, Social Welfare Policy and Services II (Hybrid format)
- Fall 2014** Instructor: SW 504, Social Welfare Policy and Services I (Hybrid format)
- Spring 2014** Instructor: SW 534, Child Welfare Management (Traditional format)
- Spring 2013** Instructor: SW 585, Social Welfare Policy and Services II (Hybrid format)
- Fall 2012** Instructor: SW 585, Social Welfare Policy and Services II (Hybrid format)
- Spring 2012** Instructor: SW 608, Theories of Non-Profit Management and Strategic Planning (2 sections) (Hybrid format)
- Fall 2011** Instructor: SW 595, Methods of Social Work Research II (Hybrid format)
- Spring 2011** Instructor: SW 585, Social Welfare Policy and Services II: Children and Families (Traditional format)
- Spring 2011** Faculty Field Instructor
- Fall 2010** Instructor: SW 608, Theories of Non-Profit Management and Strategic Planning (Hybrid format)

Montclair State University

Spring 2013 Co-Instructor: CHAD210, Child Abuse and Neglect (Traditional format)

SERVICE AND COMMITTEES

2017 - 2018	School of Social Work Assessment Committee
2015 - 2017	Chair. Ad hoc Workgroup, Prevention Committee of the New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect; charged with develop a multi-disciplinary curriculum guide for child maltreatment prevention coursework.
2015 - 2016	Chair, Grants Committee at the Institute for Families.
2012 – 2014	Chair. Ad hoc Workgroup, Prevention Committee of the New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect; charged with revising the Standards for Prevention Programs.
2011	Abstract Reviewer. Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting 2011. Mentored by Cassandra Simmel, Ph.D.
2009 – 2010	Appointed Student Member. Doctoral Program Executive Committee, Rutgers University School of Social Work.
2008 – 2009	Member. Strategic Partnerships Subcommittee and Public Policy Subcommittee, Positioning Public Child Welfare Guidance: Strengthening Families in the 21 st Century.
2001 – 2004	Member. Prevention Subcommittee, New Jersey Task Force on Child Abuse and Neglect.
Journal Reviews:	Ad hoc reviewer for Journal of Public Child Welfare, International Social Work, and Children and Youth Services Review.

POLICY, PLANNING, AND DIRECT SERVICE EXPERIENCE

2007	Resource Development Specialist New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services, Morris County Local Offices Provided resource/contract service linkages and consultation to over 100 CPS staff and educated the community regarding child abuse and neglect reporting.
2004 – 2006	Family Services Specialist I (Permanency Caseworker and Investigator) New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services, Morris County Local Offices Provided direct services to families involved with CPS, including participation in Family Drug Court pilot project.
2004	Director, Community Education and Public Policy Family Promise, Summit, NJ Developed public policy platform for national, volunteer-based organization.

2001 – 2004 Lobbyist and Policy Analyst

Advocates for Children of New Jersey, Newark, NJ

Managed two “Campaign for Kids” initiatives and Annie E. Casey School Readiness Indicators Initiative, provided written and oral testimony on proposed legislation, analyzed state policies related to early care and education and child abuse and neglect prevention.

2000 – 2001 Program Specialist

Prevent Child Abuse - New Jersey, Newark, NJ

Provided training and technical assistance to Parents as Teachers (PAT) sites throughout New Jersey, served as State Coordinator for PAT National, and expanded PAT from 15 sites to all “Abbott” contracted child care centers.

1997 – 2000 Parent Educator

Prevent Child Abuse – New Jersey, Newark, NJ

Provided direct services to 30+ teen parents per year, through the Parents as Teachers (PAT) program, worked with the Responsible Fatherhood Initiative in Newark to address the needs of fathers in the PAT program and provide expertise to other fatherhood programs in the city, and provided direct services to adult parents through the EPIC (Every Person Influences Children) program, conducting six-week series group meetings at Newark elementary schools. Maintained a PAT certification for five years.