

## WHO WILL ASSIST WITH THIS PROJECT?



**Dr. Monica Jackman** is an occupational therapist and mother of four. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree and a Master of Health Science degree from the University of Florida and a Doctorate in Occupational Therapy from Chatham University. She has served as a multidisciplinary therapy services consultant to state hospitals in California, Louisiana, and Kentucky, where she has provided clinical training, mentoring, compliance monitoring and auditing services. Monica has authored book chapters on mindful engagement and the mindful engagement support model, research papers, and has developed and implemented mindfulness-based training programs and curricula for caregivers, preschoolers, and school-aged children. She currently works in a charter school setting, and also provides in-home therapy for children aged birth to three.

**Carrie L. McPherson** is a speech-language pathologist and holds a Master of Science degree from Western Kentucky University, and is currently enrolled in the Doctor of Health Science program at Nova Southeastern University following the PhD track. She holds a Certificate of Clinical Competency in



Speech-Language Pathology. Carrie has served as a therapy consultant in the state of Arizona and currently provides SLP services in Kentucky. She has provided clinical training and assisted in the development and implementation of mindfulness-based practices to promote wellness and quality of life through habilitation and rehabilitation services. Carrie is the mother of two young children, ages four and five. Both she and her children practice meditation and have experienced life changing effects.

## PROJECT GOALS

- 1 To increase the competency of children who participate in the program in the areas of developing positive interpersonal relationships, self-regulating behavior and learning readiness in a manner that can be objectively measured.
- 2 To provide Head Start parents with additional skills in positive parenting despite living with significant stress due to poverty and associated factors, and to demonstrate the change with objective data.
- 3 To increase Head Start teachers' capacity to manage stress associated with their responsibilities and increase their skill in promoting positive child well-being, emotional control and readiness to learn.

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JFCAC HEAD START PROGRAM  
Is Proud to Announce  
A New Groundbreaking Opportunity  
for the Children and Families  
in our Program



## The Building Resilience Program



Jefferson Franklin  
COMMUNITY ACTION CORPORATION

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## WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

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Resilience is a characteristic that helps children be able to cope with adverse events in a manner that promotes emotional stability, the ability to form positive social relationships and to self-regulate behaviors. It allows the child to recover from difficult life experiences in a way that reduces long term emotional and behavioral problems.

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## WHAT IS THE BUILDING RESILIENCE PROJECT?

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An evidence-based five year project that will assist teachers and parents to better manage the stress associated with caring for children who have emotional & behavior problems and to help children better self-regulate their behaviors.

A curriculum that includes basic mindfulness breathing, yoga, self-regulation exercises, and Social Emotional Learning (SEL) will be implemented with parents, teachers, and children within JFCAC's Head Start Program. This project will use a randomized controlled trial design to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Building Resilience Program. The project data will be published in peer-reviewed journals and presented at international conferences. The Building Resilience Program curriculum will be published, with associated program materials, and be available to other Head Start programs and community programs for infants and children up to the age of 5 years. Implementation of these materials will assist in reducing the array of risk factors associated with children living in poverty, and make them more resilient as they grow up.

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## WHAT DOES THE PROJECT ENTAIL?

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The total project will continue over a five year period beginning January 2016. The project will be based on two new curricula developed by Dr. Singh and his team of experts. The curricula are a blend of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and Mindfulness – one for 3-5 year olds and one for 0-3 year old. Both interventions have been the subject of much research and there is clear evidence that their use with children of all ages, including pre-school children, contributes to positive outcomes both in terms of the capacity to achieve in school and in emotional/behavioral stability.

All children, parents, and teachers will be randomly assigned to be part of either an intervention group or a control group and will participate in special assessments that measure stress and well-being. The children, parents, and teachers in the intervention group will be trained on the newly created SEL Mindfulness Curriculum. This will occur prior to the beginning of the 2016/2017 school year for teachers and parents. The control group children, parents, and teachers will also be offered that same training at a later time.

During the school year, the intervention groups will receive coaching and support from the research team in the implementation of the program. Both groups – intervention and control- will participate in periodic follow-up assessments.

A statistician will be involved in the project and will analyze and monitor the statistical significance of the data obtained from the assessments that are periodically completed on both the experimental and control groups.

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The project will be implemented under the direction of Dr. Nirbhay Singh and his team of experts—Dr. Monica Jackman and Carrie L. McPherson in collaboration with JFCAC Head Start.



**Dr. Nirbhay N. Singh** is a Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and Health Behavior at the Medical College of Georgia, Georgia Regents University, Augusta, GA and CEO of MacTavish Behavioral Health, in Raleigh, NC. Prior to his current appointments, he was a Professor of Psychiatry, Pediatrics and Psychology at the Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine and Director of the Commonwealth Institute for Child and Family Studies, Richmond, Virginia. He has worked with families and children with intellectual and developmental disabilities, early intervention, homeless families, the elderly, and people with Alzheimer's disease, post-coma, dementia, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis and multiple sclerosis.

Nirbhay has practiced, researched and taught meditation practices, and is the developer of Meditation on the Soles of the Feet procedure for anger management and Mindfulness-Based Positive Behavior Support for parents, teachers and staff. He has implemented social emotional learning programs with infants, children and adolescents in preschool, school and community settings.

**“Life doesn't get easier or more forgiving, we get stronger and more resilient.”**

**~ Steve Maraboli**