

On April 22-25, William Conwill (Counselor Education/African American Studies) joined Oregon Social Learning Center (OSLC) Senior Scientist Marion Forgatch and members of her staff in meetings with officials from Wayne County, Michigan Departments of Mental Health, Human Services, Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare. OSLC is a collaborative, multidisciplinary center located in Eugene, OR. OSLC is dedicated to increasing the scientific understanding of social and psychological processes related to healthy development and family functioning.

Over the past 35 years, OSLC has developed and tested theory-based interventions to treat and prevent conduct and associated problems in children and youth. This research, which has been supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), has generated a set of intervention programs that are now recognized as evidence-based practices. The basic model underlying these methods is called Parent Management Training – the Oregon model (PMTO). In order to extend these programs to the families who need help, a network of OSLC-affiliated organizations were established.

The first nationwide implementation of PMTO began in 1999 in Norway with a request from the Norwegian government to train a set of PMTO specialists. This project led to the birth of Implementation Sciences International, Inc. (ISII), whose goal since 2001 is to provide professional training in PMTO and PMTO-associated methods to mental health and child welfare professionals both nationally and internationally. Forgatch is also a director of ISII. Since 2001, ISII has been contracted to train professionals in Iceland, the Netherlands, and the State of Michigan. Currently, plans are underway to begin implementing PMTO in Mexico with a team of Latina/o scientists at the University of Minnesota, Utah State University, and the University of Michigan. These clinician/scientists have worked to adapt PMTO for the Latino/a culture.

Conwill joins Forgatch's team in a first-time project studying the fidelity of implementation of PMTO in the African American community. Wayne County/Detroit's African American population, perhaps more so than any other, has been hardest hit by the conditions that characterize post-industrial urban America. Besides graduate clinical supervision courses, Conwill teaches "Domestic Violence in the Black Community: Intersections of Gender, Race and Class," a course that examines the impact of these systems of social inequality on family behavioral health indicators, including violence. Conwill plans to introduce research opportunities for Counselor Education students using PMTO in settings where Black community, social service and school system partnerships have been set up.