Dr Dan Cloney is a Research Fellow in the Education Policy and Practice Program and a Member of the Centre for Global Education Monitoring at the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER). Dan's expertise is in early education, cognitive development, and academic achievement.

Dan's research program focuses on the potential for high-quality early childhood education and care programs to support all children to flourish and to reduce development gaps caused by inequality. Current studies include the Overcoming Disadvantage in Early Childhood study (in partnership with the Australian Literacy & Numeracy Foundation) evaluating the effectiveness of the Early Language & Literacy program in New South Wales, and the Modelling of Universal Pre-Primary Education Study (in partnership with UNICEF) evaluating the effectiveness of pre-primary programs in Bogor, Indonesia.

Dan is also an Honorary Research Associate at the Murdoch Children’s Research Institute (MCRI) and the Melbourne Graduate School of Education (MGSE). His recent publications can be found at https://works.bepress.com/dan-cloney/.

Measuring social and emotional skills to support children’s growth

Abstract

Social and emotional (SE) skills are an important developmental progression in their own right: children learn to work in social settings and to navigate conflict. These skills also support the acquisition of other cognitive and non-cognitive skills.

In recognition of the importance of SE skills, many countries' early childhood education and care (ECEC) programs and policy are increasingly oriented towards promoting SE skills. This includes naming these skills as key outcome domains in curriculum and policy documents and supporting the development of pedagogies that promote positive and supportive emotional climates.

It is unclear, however, how educators can communicate their success in supporting all children's growth in SE skills, or how policy makers produce evidence that the ECEC system is effective in delivering growth for all children. This session will: (1) present evidence from a literature review about the assessment tools available to educators, researchers, and policy makers to measure SE skills, (2) present quantitative evidence of the developmental progression these assessment tools describe. A focus of the session will be on how contemporary measurement theory can support more nuanced measurement of children’s growth in SE skills.

This session will conclude that while there are SE assessment tools available, they tend to focus on problem behaviours and fail to describe a developmental progression useful in describing growth. There is a need to develop new tools, that are available and useful to educators, that establish a common language to describe what growth in SE skills looks like, supports individual planning and programming for children, and that supports the ECEC sector to quantify its success.

Date: August 19, 2019

Time: 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Location: OISE, 252 Bloor Street West, 12th Floor, Room 12-199

Please RSVP stacey.mudie@utoronto.ca

Space is limited