Assessing Trauma's Effects on Children

"Children who are exposed to adverse experiences early in life may not think, feel or behave the same way that typically developing children do," says **Kirby L. Wycoff, PsyD**, associate professor of counseling and behavioral health and director of Jefferson's Community and Trauma Counseling program. "If behavioral health professionals are not cognizant of the effects of trauma in the lives of children, they may actually be providing ineffective and inefficient care—and doing a disservice to the children and their families."

"

> Complex trauma can alter brain structure and function and throw children off a normal developmental trajectory, resulting in myriad negative outcomes."

Kirby L. Wycoff, PsyD

Dr. Wycoff is co-author of *Essentials of Trauma-Informed Assessment and Intervention in School and Community Settings*, a book that offers step-by-step guidelines for health professionals conducting trauma-informed assessments and interventions. Drawing on Dr. Wycoff's extensive experience working with children, adolescents and families in community and school settings, the book provides detailed coverage of how early experiences of trauma and toxic stress can put children at risk for academic, social-emotional, behavioral, neuropsychological and mental health problems. And it presents expert guidance on incorporating a trauma-informed, resiliency-focused perspective into practice for assessment, consultation and evidence-based interventions.

"Complex trauma can alter brain structure and function and throw children off a normal developmental trajectory, resulting in myriad negative outcomes," Dr. Wycoff explains. "We wrote the book to promote a deeper understanding of the use of assessment data to inform interventions in practice. It's designed to help busy practitioners and school psychologists quickly acquire the knowledge and skills they need to make optimal use of major psychological assessment instruments." ∎