

Alex Bettis, Ph.D.

Licensed Clinical Psychologist

abettis@alexbettisphd.com | alexbettisphd.com

Professional Experience

Alex Bettis, PhD, PLLC | Therapy Practice, Owner

Licensed clinical psychologist | Tennessee license #3747, Washington license #PY61661512, and PSYPACT | 2020 – present

- Provide evidence-based diagnostic assessment and psychotherapy for children, adolescents, and young adults, including CBT-, DBT- and ACT-informed psychotherapy for depression, anxiety, suicidality and self-harm, and OCD.
- Provide parent coaching to support parents in managing their child's big emotions, challenging behaviors, anxiety, and media time.

Research Consultant | 2024 – Present

Provide research consultation on NIH-funded projects focused on parents and caregivers of high-risk youth, suicide and mental health among children and teens, and emotion regulation processes.

- Helping Guardians Navigate Youth Suicide Risk: Development and Piloting of a Brief Digital Intervention | NIMH-funded R34 grant
- Developing and testing a text-messaging intervention to support parents after their child's psychiatric emergency | NIMH-funded R34 grant
- Measuring and Mapping Trajectories of Risk and Resilience for Suicidal Thoughts and Behaviors in Sexual and Gender Minority Preteens | NIMH-funded R01 grant

Mental Health Consultant | 2024 – Present

Evaluating Generative AI Responses About Mental Health

Served as a psychological consultant for a Google project through Medcase that was evaluating generative AI responses to mental health related prompts.

- Evaluated generative AI responses to a broad range of mental health topics, including suicide, self-harm, depression, anxiety, and substance use.
- Evaluated responses based on clinical accuracy and medical consensus, potential for harm, and completeness.

Evaluating Mental Health Related Video Content

Served as a psychological consultant for project through Medcase that was evaluating mental health video content on YouTube.

- Reviewed and evaluated informational Youtube video content for clinical accuracy and medical consensus, potential harm, and teen engagement.

Clinical Briefings on Mental Health Research

- Completed a clinical briefing literature review through Medcase describing the literature examining the link between mental health, physical health, and perseverative cognition.
- Completed a clinical briefing literature review through Medcase describing the literature on interventions targeting perseverative cognition (e.g., worry, rumination).

Vanderbilt University Medical Center, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences |

Assistant Professor, Director of the Regulating Emotions and Stress in Teens Lab | 2020 – 2024

Clinical Voluntary Appointment | 2024 – Present

- Conducted grant-funded clinical research on risk for and prevention of suicide, self-injury, and depression in children and adolescents, including digital health intervention development and testing.

- Oversaw all aspects of the research program, including IRB and regulatory approvals, hiring, training and supervision of staff, protocol development and implementation, data collection, management and analysis, and managing safety and risk protocols.
- Employed quantitative and qualitative methodologies to answer complex research questions, including clinical interviews, longitudinal surveys, ecological momentary assessment, qualitative interviews and focus groups, and digital mental health intervention platforms.
- Synthesized research literature and translate clinical findings for key stakeholders, including community members, patients and patients' families, academic researchers, and grant funders.
- Published high quality peer-reviewed manuscripts in adolescent mental health, present as an expert in family mental health at academic and clinical conferences, and secure NIH and foundation grant funding to support clinical research efforts.
- Built and sustained relationships with key stakeholders, including community partners, corporate partners, parents, youth, and funders.
- Participated in interdisciplinary collaborations and community partnerships focused on mental health and wellness.

Recognizing and Enhancing Adolescent and Community Health (REACH) Youth Advisory Board | Co-Founder, Leadership Board Member | 2022 – Present

- Collaborate with youth with lived experiences of suicidality, self-harm, and depression to inform clinical research in adolescent mental health.
- Discuss issues related to safety, digital health, social media, and mental health from teens' perspectives.
- Published a peer-reviewed editorial (Bettis et al., 2023, *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*) with board members and leadership highlighting the role of youth with lived experience at each stage in the clinical science process.
- Co-developed a digital resource with youth board members to guide researchers on how to develop and sustain a youth-driven advisory board.
- Co-lead all board activities with other leadership members, including recruitment of youth board members, sustaining youth involvement, and co-facilitating board meetings.

Research

Secured over \$1.5 million in external independent grant funding focused on adolescent and family mental health as Principal Investigator. Select grants funded (5 of 14 funded grants):

- **National Institute of Mental Health K23 Grant**, Principal Investigator | "Emotion Regulation Flexibility and Suicide Risk" | 2021 – 2024
- **National Institute of Mental Health R34 Grant**, Principal Investigator | "Developing and testing a text-messaging intervention to support parents after their child's psychiatric emergency" | 2024
- **National Institute of Mental Health R21 Grant**, Co-Investigator | "Multimodal Dynamics of Parent-Child Interactions and Suicide Risk" | 2022 – 2024
- **National Institute of Mental Health R01 Grant**, Co-Investigator | "Reward Valuation and Suicidal Behavior in High-Risk Adolescents" | 2023 – 2024
- **Mental Research Institute**, Co-Investigator | "Understanding Parent Reactions to their Child's Suicide-Related Disclosures" | 2021 – 2023

Select peer-reviewed manuscripts (5 of 55 peer-reviewed publications; [Google Scholar](#)):

- **Bettis, A. H., Burke, T. A., Scott, S. R., Bedock, C. Ambriano, C. Parrish, J., Marsh, D., & Fox, K. (2024).** Disclosures of self-injurious thoughts and behaviors to parents in the context of therapy: A qualitative investigation. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 80(3), 537-558.
- **Bettis, A. H., Vaughn-Coaxum, R. A., Lawrence, R., Hamilton, J. L., Fox, K. R., Augsberger, A., & The REACH Youth Advisory Board (2023).** Editorial: Key Challenges and Potential

Strategies for Engaging Youth with Lived Experience in Clinical Science. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, 1-14.

- **Bettis**, A. H., Burke, T. A., Nesi, J., & Liu, R. Y. (2021). Digital Technologies for Emotion Regulation Assessment and Intervention: A Conceptual Review. *Clinical Psychological Science*, 21677026211011982.
- **Bettis**, A. H., Liu, R. L., Walsh, B., & Klonsky, D. (2020). Treatments for self-injurious thoughts and behaviors in youth: Progress and challenges. *Evidence-Based Practice in Child and Adolescent Mental Health*. 5(3), 354-364.
- Liu R.T., **Bettis** A.H., Lawrence H.R., Walsh R.F.L., Sheehan A.E., Pollak O.H., Stephenson A.R., Kautz M.M., Marlowe R.M. (in press). Measures of suicidal thoughts and behaviors in children and adolescents: A systematic review and recommendations for use in clinical and research settings. *Assessment*.

Ad hoc journal reviewer for over 15 scientific journals, including *JAMA Psychiatry*, *Clinical Psychological Science*, *Journal of Clinical and Consulting Psychology*, and *Pediatrics*.

Grant Reviewer, NIMH and NSF, 2022 – Present

Clinical Practice and Leadership

Clinical Training Lead and Supervisor: Suicide Risk Assessment and Lifetime History

Interviews, multiple NIH-funded research projects

- Train and supervise research coordinators and graduate students on the C-SSRS and SITBI-R suicide and self-injury lifetime history interviews
- Train and supervise research coordinators and graduate students on study risk assessment procedures

Clinical Training Lead: Safety Planning for Suicide Prevention

- Developed training and protocols for implementing the Safety Planning Intervention across inpatient and outpatient clinics at Vanderbilt Psychiatric Hospital
- Provide ongoing trainings and support in safety planning for psychology and psychiatry residency and fellowship programs

Clinical Supervisor, Vanderbilt Psychiatric Hospital Adolescent Partial Hospital Program

- Supervise pre-doctoral clinical psychology residents as group therapists in the partial hospitalization program utilizing DBT- and CBT-based skills

Invited Clinical Presentations:

- Suicide Prevention in Children and Adolescents, Vanderbilt University Center of Excellence, *March 2021*
- Association for Ambulatory Behavioral Health, Invited Speaker
 - Safety Planning for Suicide Prevention, *April 2022*
 - Leveraging Measurement-Based Care and Electronic Health Record Data to Examine Patient Characteristics and Symptom Change in an Adolescent Partial Hospital Program, *April 2024*
- COE Training Series for the Tennessee Department of Children's Services, Suicide Prevention, *May 2023*
- Vanderbilt University, Psychology Department Clinical Brown Bag Series Speaker
 - Initial Development of a Text-Messaging Intervention to Support Parents of High-Risk Youth, *March 2021*
 - Leveraging Digital Monitoring Tools to Support Parents in Responding to Their Child's Suicide Risk, *November 2023*

- Tennessee Association of School Social Workers 2023 Annual Conference, Invited Speaker, Suicide Prevention in Children and Adolescents, *September 2023*
- Vanderbilt/NAMI Educational Session Speaker, Suicide Prevention: From Identification and Assessment to Intervention, *January 2024*
- Vanderbilt Psychiatry Department Grant Rounds Speaker, Supporting Youth in Crisis: Engaging Parents and Caregivers, *February 2024*
- Vanderbilt School-Based Programs Training, Suicide Prevention: From Identification and Assessment to Intervention, *March 2024*

Clinical Training

Clinical modalities: CBT, CBT with ERP, TF-CBT, DBT skills, mindfulness and ACT informed intervention, CAMS-4Teens, safety planning for suicide

Psychology Resident, UCLA Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior

- Clinical rotations included providing individual and family therapy in the UCLA Resnick Adolescent Inpatient Unit and Adolescent Partial Hospital Programs, assessment and therapy in the Youth Stress and Mood Program and the Child Anxiety and OCD Outpatient Clinic, co-leading DBT multi-family skills groups for adolescents in the Youth Stress and Mood Program, and consultation-liaison support for the UCLA Children's Hospital.

Group Therapist, Youth Pride Inc. Rhode Island

Individual Therapist, Rhode Island Hospital/Brown Medical School Mood Disorders Clinic

Individual Therapist, Vanderbilt Child and Adolescent Outpatient Clinic

Assessment Lead, Vanderbilt Center of Excellence for Children in State Custody

Individual Therapist, Nashville OCD and Anxiety Treatment Center

School-Based Therapist, Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools

Group Facilitator, Family Depression Prevention Project

Clinical Interviewer, Family Depression Prevention Project

Select clinical trainings (attended):

- CAMS-4Teens, Interactive Online Training
- Counseling on Access to Lethal Means, Online Training
- Suicide Prevention Resource Center, Safety Planning for Youth Suicide Prevention Online Training
- COE Trauma and Welfare Academy: TF-CBT, In-Person Training
- COE Trauma and Welfare Academy: Attachment, Regulation, and Competency, In-Person Training
- Resilience and Coping in Transgender and Gender Diverse Clients, Live Webinar

Honors and Awards

Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA) Ailes Muskin Career Development Leadership Program, Research Track Awardee, 2019

NIMH Child Intervention, Prevention and Services Fellowship, 2019

ADAA Emerging Leader Award, 2021

NIH mHealth Training Institute Scholar, 2024

Board and Committee Membership

Mental Health IO Professional Advisory Board, Consulting Board Member, 2021 – 2023

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, Member, VUMC Psychiatry, 2020 – Present

Suicide Prevention Stakeholder Taskforce, Member, Tennessee Department of Health, 2021 – Present

PEQC Suicide Subgroup Committee, Member, VUMC Psychiatry, 2022 – Present

Academic Psychiatry Day Committee, Member, VUMC Psychiatry, 2022 – Present
ADAA Ailes Muskin Career Development Leadership Program, Research Track Co-Chair, 2022 – 2023
ADAA Suicide and Self-Injury Special Interest Group, Co-Founder and Co-Chair, 2022 – 2024
Youth Suicide Research Consortium, Conference Co-Chair, 2023
Nashville Psychological Association, Secretary, 2025

Education and Training

Alpert Medical School of Brown University, NIMH T32 Post-Doctoral Fellowship
UCLA Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior, Pre-Doctoral Psychology Residency, Child Clinical Track
Vanderbilt University, Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Psychological Science
Vanderbilt University, Bachelor of Science in Psychology, European History