

Tenesha Littleton, PhD, LCSW

The University of Alabama
School of Social Work
Box 870314
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487
(205) 348-0049
tlittleton@ua.edu

EDUCATION

2021	T32 Postdoctoral Fellow, Pennsylvania State University, Child Maltreatment Solutions Network
2020	PhD, School of Social Work, University of Georgia, Athens, GA Dissertation title: <i>The Relationship between Affordable Housing and Neighborhood Child Maltreatment Rates: A Geospatial Analysis</i>
2006	Master of Social Work, School of Social Work, University of Georgia, Athens, GA
2004	Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, Tulane University, New Orleans, LA Honors: Cum Laude

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENT

2021-Present	Assistant Professor University of Alabama, School of Social Work, Tuscaloosa, AL
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AREAS OF INTERESTS

Child Maltreatment	Housing
Poverty & Inequality	Neighborhood Effects
Child and Family Social Policy	Parenting

PUBLICATIONS

Journal Articles

1. Font, S., Kennedy, R., & Littleton, T. (2023). Child welfare systems involvement and exclusionary school discipline. *Child Development*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13941>
2. LaBrenz, C., Littleton, T., Shipe, S., Bai, R., & Stargel, L. (2023). State policies on child maltreatment and racial disproportionality. *Children and Youth Services Review*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2023.107048>
3. LaBrenz, C., Kim, Y., Baiden, P., Shipe, S., Littleton, T., Cho, M. J., Bai, R., & Stargel, L. (2022). State child maltreatment policies and disparities in substantiation: A study of state-administered child welfare systems in the U.S. *Child Maltreatment*.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/10775595221143136>

4. Potter, M.H., **Littleton, T.**, & Font, S.A. (2022). State support policies and children's living arrangements. *Child Abuse & Neglect*.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2022.105873>
5. Lee, M., Jennings-McGarity, P., **Littleton, T.**, & Caplan, M. (2022). The teaching of social work history and the inclusion of African American contributors: Implications for social work educators. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/15313204.2022.2137717>
6. Saasa, S., Okech, D., Choi, Y.J., Nackerud, L. & **Littleton, T.** (2021). Social exclusion, mental health, and social well-being among African immigrants in the United States. *International Social Work*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020872820963425>
7. **Littleton, T.**, Choi, Y.J., & McGarity, S.V. (2020). Psychological and social correlates of HIV stigma among people living with HIV. *Journal of HIV/AIDS & Social Services*, 19(1), 74-89. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15381501.2019.1699486>
8. McPherson, J., Jennings, P.F., Arnold, B., **Littleton, T.**, & Lee, M. (2020). Creating global scholars: Experiential learning and reflection transform an international conference into a short-term study abroad. *Journal of Social Work Education*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10437797.2020.1770641>
9. Bae, J., Jennings, P.F., Hardeman, C., Kim, E., Lee, M., **Littleton, T.**, & Saasa, S. (2019). Compassion satisfaction among social work practitioners: The role of work-life balance. *Journal of Social Service Research*.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01488376.2019.1566195>
10. Campbell, R. D. & **Littleton, T.** (2018). Mental health counseling in the Black American church: Reflections and recommendations from counselors serving in a counseling ministry. *Mental Health, Religion, and Culture*, 21(4), 336-352.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13674676.2018.1494704>.
11. Mowbray, O., Jennings, P.F., **Littleton, T.**, Grinnell-Davis, C., & O'Shields, J. (2018). Caregiver depression and trajectories of behavioral health among child welfare involved youth. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 79, 445-453.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2018.03.001>.

Book Chapters

1. **Littleton, T.**, Lee, M., & Cornelius, L. J. (2018). Analyzing the problem: Disparities in behavioral and mental health for people of color and Latinos. In C. Moniz and S. Gorin (Eds.), *Mental Health Care Policy and Practice. A Biopsychosocial Perspective*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Book Reviews

1. **Littleton, T.** (2015). Review of the book *Working with Homeless and Vulnerable People: Basic Skills and Practice* by Jeannette Waegemakers Schiff. *Journal of Human Behavior and the Social Environment*, 26(6), 561-561. DOI: 10.1080/10911359.2015.1122430.

MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW/IN REVISION

1. **Littleton, T.** & Freisthler, B. (under review). Affordable housing and neighborhood child maltreatment reports. *Child Maltreatment*.
2. **Littleton, T.**, Luo, Y., Abura-Meerdink, G. & Lee, H.Y. (under review). Associations between the social determinants of health and risk of interpersonal violence among Black Americans in rural Alabama. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*.
3. Palmer, L., **Littleton, T.**, & Font, S. (under review). Beyond child abuse: The array of family problems brought to the child welfare system. *Child Maltreatment*.

MANUSCRIPTS IN PROGRESS

1. Giorgio Cosenzo, L., **Littleton, T.**, Johnson, K., Albright, D., Lee, H.Y. (in preparation). Transportation-related geographic isolation, social connectedness, and depressive symptoms among adults living in the Black Belt Region of Alabama. A moderation analysis. *Public Health*.
2. **Littleton, T.**, Freisthler, B., Boyd, R., Smith, A., & Barboza, G. (in preparation). Historical redlining, neighborhood disadvantage, and reports of child maltreatment in a large urban county. *Child Abuse & Neglect*.
3. **Littleton, T.** & Font, S. (in preparation). Racial segregation and county-level disparities in child protective services reports and substantiations. *International Journal of Child Maltreatment: Research, Policy, and Practice*.

RESEARCH FUNDING

Funded:

2021 Protecting Children in Alabama's Black Belt: The Role of Social Support Networks
University of Alabama, Office of Research and Economic Development
Role: Principal Investigator
2022-2024; \$5970

Unfunded

2022 Capstone Centers for Multidisciplinary Research on Child Abuse and Neglect
P50 NIH NICHD
Role: Co-Investigator, Research Component

- 2022 Addressing the Mental Health of Black Youth in a Rural Alabama County
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Minority Health
Role: Co-Investigator
- 2021 Neighborhood Environment and Racial Inequality during Transition to
Adulthood: Pathways through Childhood Adversity and Institutional
Involvement.
NIH National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (R21)
Role: Co-Investigator

PRESENTATIONS

Referred

1. **Littleton, T.**, Barboza, G., Boyd, R., & Freisthler, B. (2023; January). *Historical redlining, neighborhood disadvantage, and reports of child maltreatment in a large urban county* [paper presentation]. Society for Social Work Research Annual Conference, Phoenix, AZ.
2. **Littleton, T.**, Font, S., Boyd, R. (2023; January). *County-level racial disparities and the wellbeing of Black children placed in foster care* [paper presentation]. Society for Social Work Research Annual Conference, Phoenix, AZ.
3. **Littleton, T.** Luo, Y., & Lee, H. (2023; January). *Associations between social determinants of health and threats to interpersonal safety among African Americans living in the rural South* [poster presentation]. Society for Social Work Research Annual Conference, Phoenix, AZ.
4. LaBrenz, C., Kim, Y., Baiden, P., Shipe, S., **Littleton, T.**, Choi, M. (2023; January). *State Child Maltreatment Policies and Disparities in Substantiation: A Study of State-Administered Child Welfare Systems in the U.S* [paper presentation]. Society for Social Work Research Annual Conference, Phoenix, AZ.
5. Smith, B. D., Wang, K., **Littleton, T.** (2023; January). Are county-level child welfare risk and protective factors associated with child maltreatment reporting?: A multi-level investigation of child welfare equity. Society for Social Work Research Annual Conference. Phoenix, AZ.
6. **Littleton, T.**, Kubanga, K.P., Smith, B.D. (2022; January). *Intersectionality at the macro level: Challenges facing rural, majority Black Southeastern counties* [paper presentation]. Society for Social Work Research Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
7. Saasa, S. & **Littleton, T.** (2022; March). *Examining factors linking adverse childhood experiences to mental health and social exclusion among African immigrants* [poster presentation]. Hawaii International Summit on Preventing, Assessing, and Treating Trauma Across the Lifespan, Honolulu, HI.

8. **Littleton, T.** (2021; January). *The relationship between affordable housing and neighborhood child maltreatment rates: A geospatial analysis* [paper presentation]. Society for Social Work Research Annual Conference, Virtual.
9. **Littleton, T.**, Jennings, P.F., Lee, M., & Caplan, M. (2019; October). *Beyond inclusion: Strategies for centering anti-oppressive social work history in course content* [conference session]. Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting, Denver, CO.
10. **Littleton, T.**, Jennings, P.F., Ellet, A., & Ellet, C. (2019; January). *A statewide mixed methods study of a child welfare employee selection protocol: Implications for policy and practice* [poster presentation]. Society for Social Work Research Annual Conference, San Francisco, CA.
11. **Littleton, T.**, Jennings, P.F., Saturday, J., & Ellett, A. (2018; November). *A mixed-methods implementation study for selecting child welfare professionals* [conference session]. Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting, Orlando, FL.
12. Jennings, P., McPherson, J., Arnold, B. H, Lee, M., & **Littleton, T.** (2018; July). *Using an international conference to engage US social work doctoral students with sustainability and the SDGs* [poster presentation]. Joint World Conference on Social Work, Education, and Social Development (SWSD), Dublin, IRL.
13. **Littleton, T.** (2018; January). *Coping, trauma, and service utilization as predictors of arrest among youth experiencing childhood maltreatment* [poster presentation]. Society for Social Work Research Annual Conference, Washington, DC.
14. **Littleton, T.** & Miller, S.E. (2018; January). *A trauma-informed conceptual framework for understanding adjustment to special needs adoption* [poster presentation]. Society for Social Work Research Annual Conference, Washington, DC.
15. **Littleton, T.**, Jennings, P.F., Lee, M., Arnold, B. & McPherson, J. (2017; July). *The purpose and scope of post-graduate education in social work: Implications for the advancement of social development* [conference session]. Biennale International Consortium for Social Development, Zagreb, Croatia.
16. Lee, M. & **Littleton, T.** (2017; July). *Shifting paradigms: Approaches to ensure well-being among children in the United States* [conference session]. Biennale International Consortium for Social Development, Zagreb, Croatia.
17. Choi, Y.J. & **Littleton, T.** (2017; October). *Psychological and social correlates of HIV stigma among people living with HIV* [paper presentation]. Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting, Dallas, TX.
18. Lee, M. & **Littleton, T.** (2017; October). *Teaching social development and social investments as policy strategies to promote child well-being* [conference session]. An oral

presentation at the Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting, Dallas, TX.

19. **Littleton, T.,** Jennings, P.F., & Lee, M. (2016; November). *The inclusion of African American voices in the teaching of social work history* [poster presentation]. Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting, Atlanta, GA.
20. **Littleton, T.** (2016; April). *Effective clinical practice with children adopted from the foster care system.* [poster presentation]. University of Memphis Social Work Symposium, Memphis, TN.

AWARDS

2023	University of Alabama, Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Professional Development Award
2022	Institute for Research on Poverty, National Center on Poverty and Economic Mobility, Early Career Mentoring Institute
2020	Postdoctoral training fellowship NICHD, T32 Training Program in Child Maltreatment Science Awarded to Pennsylvania State University, Child Maltreatment Solutions Network
2019	Graduate Education Advancement Board Fellowship, University of Georgia, Graduate School, \$2500
2019	Haruv Institute PhD International Workshop on Child Maltreatment, The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel, \$1200
2018	Summer Dissertation Proposal Workshop, University of Wisconsin-Madison Institute for Research on Poverty, Howard University Center on Race and Wealth, \$1000
2018	Freshman College Summer Experience Graduate Assistantship, University of Georgia, Division of Academic Enhancement, \$1750
2017	PhD Student of the Year, University of Georgia, School of Social Work
2016—2019	Southern Regional Education Board Doctoral Scholars Fellowship, \$60,000
2016	Program for Research on Black Americans Training Workshop, University of Michigan, School of Social Work, \$1000
2015—2016	Dean's Research Assistantship Award, University of Georgia, School of Social Work, \$40,000
2015	University of Georgia Gateway to Graduate School Award, \$5000

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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| 2017 | <p>Research Assistant. <i>Evaluation of the Georgia DFCS Employee Selection Protocol.</i> Principal Investigators: Alberta Ellet, PhD & Chad Ellet, PhD, University of Georgia, School of Social Work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluated hiring protocols of state child welfare agency to determine if retention and turnover improved; Conducted focus groups; analyzed qualitative and survey data |
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2016—2017

Graduate Research Assistant. *Disparities in behavioral and mental health for people of color and Latinos.* Principal Investigator: Llewellyn Cornelius, PhD, LCSW, University of Georgia, School of Social Work.

- Conducted a scoping review of the literature on mental health disparities among people of color
- Analyzed federal policies and their efficacy and limitations in reducing behavioral and mental health disparities

2015—2016

Graduate Research Assistant. *Psychological and social correlates of HIV stigma among people living with HIV.* Principal Investigator: Y. Joon Choi, PhD, MSW, MA, University of Georgia, School of Social Work.

- Spearheaded research project examining data collected from a community-based agency; Managed and cleaned large data set; developed research questions and conducted data analysis

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor, SOWK 411: Human Behavior in Social Environment II, University of Alabama, School of Social Work, Spring Semester, 2023

Instructor, SOWK 510: Human Behavior in Social Environment I, University of Alabama, School of Social Work, Fall Semester, 2022

Instructor, SOWK 511: Human Behavior in Social Environment II, University of Alabama, School of Social Work, Spring Semester, 2022

Instructor, SOWK 510: Human Behavior in Social Environment I, University of Alabama, School of Social Work, Fall Semester, 2021

Instructor, SOWK 5845: Practicum in Social Work II, University of Georgia, School of Social Work, Spring Semester, 2020.

Instructor, SOWK 5846: Integrative Seminar II in Generalist Social Work Practice, University of Georgia, School of Social Work, Spring Semester, 2020.

Instructor, SOWK 5835: Practicum in Social Work I, University of Georgia, School of Social Work, Fall Semester, 2019.

Instructor, SOWK 5836: Integrative Seminar I in Generalist Social Work Practice, University of Georgia, School of Social Work, Fall Semester, 2019.

Instructor, SOWK 5845: Practicum in Social Work II, University of Georgia, School of Social Work, Spring Semester, 2019.

Instructor, SOWK 5846: Integrative Seminar II in Generalist Social Work Practice, University of Georgia, School of Social Work, Spring Semester, 2019.

Instructor, SOWK 5835: Practicum in Social Work I, University of Georgia, School of Social Work, Fall Semester, 2018.

Instructor, SOWK 5836: Integrative Seminar I in Generalist Social Work Practice, University of Georgia, School of Social Work, Fall Semester, 2018.

Teaching Assistant, UNIV 1201S: Learning for Success at the University, University of Georgia, Division of Academic Enhancement, Summer Semester, 2018.

Co-Instructor, SOWK 7222: Assessment and Psychopathology, University of Georgia, School of Social Work, Spring Semester 2017. Supervised by Orion Mowbray, PhD.

Guest Lecturer, “Social policy for vulnerable children and families.” HDFS 8040: Developmental Psychopathology in Family Systems, University of Georgia, College of Family and Consumer Sciences, March, 2017.

Guest Lecturer, “Historical Foundations and Future Directions for Child Welfare Policy.” SOWK 6011: Social Welfare Policy, University of Georgia, School of Social Work, March 2017.

Guest Lecturer, “Historical Foundations and Future Directions for Child Welfare Policy.” SOWK 6011: Social Welfare Policy and the Social Work Profession, University of Georgia, School of Social Work, November 2016.

Guest Lecturer, “The Inclusion of African American Voices in the Teaching of Social Work History.” SOWK 6011: Social Welfare Policy and the Social Work Profession, University of Georgia, School of Social Work, October 2016.

Guest Lecturer, “Mental Health and Social Work”, SOWK 2154: The Profession of Social Work, University of Georgia, School of Social Work, April 2016.

PRACTICE EXPERIENCE

2016

Psychiatric Social Worker/PRN Social Worker

Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta

- Completed comprehensive psychosocial assessments to identify strengths and potential barriers across the continuum of care. Identified appropriate level of care and referred for psychiatric treatment. Assisted families in accessing resources to achieve and/or maintain stabilization and self-sufficiency. Assessed children and families for safety, abuse, and neglect concerns.

- 2014—2015 **Trainer**
ComPsych, Atlanta, GA
- Facilitated personal development and wellness seminars in the workplace as a part of EAP services.
- 2014—2015 **Behavioral Health Case Manager,**
Amerigroup Georgia Families 360°, Anthem, Inc., Atlanta, GA
- Provided care coordination services to youth adopted from the foster care system with complex behavioral and physical health needs. Developed individualized care plans. Facilitated family team meetings. Participated in behavioral health rounds and provided clinical recommendations regarding youth's treatment.
- 2013—2014 **Social Worker**
Anthem, Inc., Atlanta, GA
- Assisted participants to change self-efficacy behaviors and to locate and access formal and informal supports to improve their ability to manage their health. Provided telephonic health coaching and consultation to individuals to address psychosocial barriers to managing health conditions. Developed resource database.
- 2013—2014 **Therapist**
Jefferson Psychological Solutions, Atlanta, GA
- Provided individual and family therapy to children diagnosed with mental illness utilizing evidence based treatment models.
- 2012—2013; 2014 **Crisis Call Center Clinician**
Behavioral Health Link, Atlanta, GA
- Completed brief clinical screening and triage, determined appropriate level of care, and coordinated treatment linkage for individuals experiencing mental health/substance abuse/developmental disability crisis in a fast paced call center environment. Utilized Motivational Interviewing and collaborative problem solving to engage individuals in treatment linkage process. Conducted suicide risk assessments and implemented crisis intervention protocols.
- 2011—2012 **Mental Health Therapist**
Families Ties, Atlanta, GA
- Provided community based individual and family therapy to children and adolescents with mental illness and addressed

issues related to symptom management, parenting, communication skills, problem solving, self-esteem, and anger management. Developed individualized treatment plans/MICPs/clinical authorizations. Utilized evidence based treatment models.

2008—2011

Program Coordinator

Communities In Schools of Atlanta, Atlanta, GA

- Developed intervention programs that addressed the social and academic needs of at-risk students as a part of a national dropout prevention program. Served as a member of the school’s Leadership Team and made recommendations regarding improving students’ academic performance. Analyzed evaluation data to determine effectiveness of interventions.

2008—2014

Part-time Adoption Specialist

Families First, Atlanta, GA

- Wrote adoption home studies (biopsychosocial assessments) evaluating potential adoptive parents’ ability to successfully parent special needs children. Provided post placement supervision services to adoptive families, which included completing monthly home visits, counseling parents, and writing monthly reports. Conducted presentations at community events to recruit foster and adoptive parents.

2006—2008

Foster Care Case Manager

Families First, Atlanta, GA

- Provided case management services to foster children ages 0-18 years old. Trained foster parents on topics such as child development and behavior management. Conducted annual evaluations of foster parents and made recommendations regarding their skills and continued retention within the foster care program.

SERVICE

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| 2022 | Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research Early Career Reviewer |
| 2022 | Social Currents, Ad-hoc reviewer |
| 2022 | Journal of Public Child Welfare, Ad-hoc reviewer |
| 2021 | APSAC Advisor, Ad-hoc reviewer |
| 2020 | Children and Youth Services, Ad-hoc reviewer |
| 2018 | Child Welfare Journal, Ad-hoc reviewer |

2017 Mentor, University of Georgia, Gateway to Graduate School
2016—2018 Volunteer, Society Social Work and Research Annual Conference
2016 Volunteer, Council on Social Work Education Annual Program Meeting
2016—2017 Editorial Associate, Journal of Poverty
2015—2017 Doctoral Program Student Representative (selected), University of Georgia, School of Social Work

LICENSURE

2011—Present Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Georgia License No: CSW0004467

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

2016—Present Council on Social Work Education (CSWE)
2015—Present Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR)