

Researcher Spotlight: An Interview with Lisa James



Lisa James, MA is Vice President of Health at Futures Without Violence. As part of a [National Health Initiative on Violence and Trauma](#), Ms. James has collaborated with health care providers, violence prevention advocates, and health policymakers nationwide to develop national and statewide health care responses to violence and trauma through training, health policy reform, and social norms change.

She has also worked internationally with organizational leaders in Russia, Mexico, India, and China to build the capacity of health systems, providers, and community members to help victims in reproductive health settings. She currently is partnering with [UCAAN/ACEs Aware](#) to connect Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) education to resilience-building supports and services available through [CalAIM](#).

CIAPM-Funded Project: The Collaborative Approach to Examining Adversity and building resilience (CARE) Program (UCSF, Lead Principal Investigator: Dr. Neeta Thakur)

1) Why are community partnerships important for health research?

Health research is enhanced by community partnerships at every stage of the project. Community-connected partners can help to ensure outreach is representative and inclusive of that research – especially on a topic as complex as responses to ACEs – and is guided by feedback from the community to uncover culturally-concordant and accessible strategies that build trust and support retention. These partnerships can also result in an improved research design, by aligning the research such that is relevant at a local level. I have found that fostering that collaboration between the researchers and the communities they aim to serve strengthens the program and contributes to sustainable research programs even after studies are completed.

2) How has your background and experience with this CIAPM-funded project impacted your future academic and/or career plans?

Although I've worked in the violence prevention field for nearly 30 years, this has been my first time being involved in a Precision Medicine project! I've learned a lot in the process and am inspired to see that the interventions being studied can help children maintain healthy biomarkers and even interrupt an early aging process. In the future, I would love to apply these lessons to community-led interventions in low-resource settings. I am working towards

identifying sustainable funding sources to continue to provide therapeutic interventions to children and their caregivers in low-resource health settings.

3) What impacts have you seen from this CIAPM-funded project addressing the health impacts of ACEs and advancing health equity?

This project is demonstrating that, in order to see the full potential for interventions, we have to create accessible and trusting environments in which to offer them. We are learning directly from the Family Board members of our project about the most effective strategies and tools to use to introduce ACEs prevention education and resilience-building activities to families from diverse backgrounds. This requires addressing barriers – like limited language access, distrust of health systems, etc., to bridge ongoing services to those in need. I believe we can advance health equity by developing community informed strategies that build trust as well as creating practical tools to help health providers offer accessible interventions and resilience building strategies.