



An Interview with [Jeff Kretschmar](#)...

What brought you to the Begun Center?

After graduate school, I accepted a tenure-track Assistant Professor of Psychology position at Wesley College in Delaware. While I loved the job, I didn't feel connected to the location, and decided to return home to the Cleveland area. In November 2004, I accepted a Postdoctoral Fellow position working with Dan Flannery at the Institute for the Study and Prevention of Violence (ISPV) at Kent State University (KSU). I stayed on at ISPV after my Postdoc to become a Project Director and have been with the team ever since. In 2011, ISPV moved from KSU to Case Western Reserve University, and became the Begun Center. I'm currently the Managing Director and Senior Research Associate with the Begun Center and Research Assistant Professor in the Jack, Joseph, and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences.

Talk about some of your research.

We work with many juvenile courts around Ohio to evaluate programs that divert justice-involved youth with behavioral health issues away from incarceration and into evidence-based behavioral health treatment, where they are able to get more comprehensive care than what is available in most justice facilities. We collect data from participants on their mental health functioning, substance use, trauma symptoms, educational attainment, and future delinquency and create reports and manuscripts that highlight the successes and challenges of these programs. In general, these programs produce positive outcomes for kids and families and are more cost-effective than incarceration.

Are you working on anything new?

We serve as evaluation partner for the Cuyahoga County Domestic Violence Homicide Prevention Initiative, funded by the Department of Justice. Cuyahoga County was awarded this grant to implement a domestic violence High Risk Team (HRT) in Cleveland. Starting in October 2016, law enforcement officers and local DV service providers began utilizing screening tools to identify DV victims who were at high risk for being killed. These high risk cases are then discussed at meetings with partners from law enforcement, prosecution, probation, parole, and victim advocacy. The HRT holds regular meetings to discuss new cases, review current cases, and develop intervention plans for victims. At the meetings, the team shares risk assessment and other relevant information among partner agencies to assist with intervention planning for the victim as well as to inform criminal charges, bail, and conditions of release for the perpetrator. The HRT seeks to help keep the victim safe and hold the perpetrator accountable.

What do you like to do when you're not working?

I try to get to the gym 4-5 times a week. It's good for my physically, and even better for me mentally. I enjoy being outside, so I can be tempted with just about any outdoor activity (running, biking, kayaking). I'm currently teaching myself how to play the piano, with varying degrees of success. I really like Netflix. And I'm always up for good food and happy hour (preferably on a patio).

If you were given \$1,000 and you had to spend it on something fun for yourself, what would you buy?

Are new kitchen countertops fun? Probably not. Maybe a stand up paddle board. And if there is any money left, some tacos... because tacos are the best.