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Distinguished Research: Dr. Susan Davies on Traumatic Brain Injuries

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DISTINGUISHED RESEARCH

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Dr. Susan Davies on Traumatic Brain Injuries

Dr. Susan Davies is an associate professor and coordinator of the school psychology program in the Department of Counselor Education and Human Services. Dr. Davies is one of a few national scholars studying the role of schools in helping children and young adults who have sustained concussions and more severe traumatic brain injuries (TBIs).

Students who have sustained TBIs of all severity levels often experience a range of educational and social-emotional difficulties that require additional educational assistance. Schools can play a crucial role in assessing the educational impact of an injury, facilitating a student's transition back to the educational setting, and providing evidenced-based interventions. Without adequate understanding and support, students may experience significant educational difficulties following a TBI, such as anxiety, executive functioning difficulties, and social problems.

Dr. Davies recently coauthored the book *Working with Traumatic Brain Injury in Schools: Transition, Assessment, and Intervention*. This book met the need for a single comprehensive source to provide guidance about TBI to parents, school-based professionals, and community-based professionals. Dr. Davies is currently writing her second book, *Concussion Management in Schools: A Front-Line Guide to Recognition, Response, and Leadership*. In addition, she has published and coauthored with school psychology students and alumni, 16 articles related to TBI in peer-reviewed journals, as well as two book chapters and a number of articles in professional magazines. Since joining the University of Dayton in 2006, Dr. Davies has conducted many presentations at local, state, national, and international levels. These have included solo presentations, presentations with UD faculty and students, and presentations with school psychology practitioners.

In 2012 Dr. Davies was invited by the Centers for Disease Control to join a panel of fifteen other pediatric concussion experts tasked with writing policy and guidelines to address concussion in schools. She subsequently began conducting



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concussion workshops with local school professionals to increase the competency of school psychologists, counselors, nurses, and building administrators in leading school-based concussion management teams. Last year, Dr. Davies and her research assistant also evaluated the efficacy of training and consultation to improve recognition of and effective response to concussions in college students. This study targeted all college students—not only athletes—by training staff in all UD residence halls and recreation facilities to better recognize and respond to possible concussions.

Dr. Davies was recently awarded a contract from the Ohio Department of Health to develop and implement a *Return to Learn/Concussion* team model that will be piloted in three Ohio school districts. The ultimate outcome of the project will be to develop a recommended Ohio concussion team model, as well as training and implementation materials, that can be extended to all Ohio schools.

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