

New tool to evaluate the impact of spending on preventive interventions

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Convincing policymakers to make meaningful investments in children and families may become less arduous for researchers with a new framework that considers the value of prevention across multiple public

systems that currently offer support.

According to a new study just released in the March issue of *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, a new measurement strategy can aid policymakers and researchers alike in assessing multi-system service utilization, including public education, social services, criminal justice, healthcare, and tax systems.

"We've sought to formalize a process for understanding how scaling effective [prevention](#) strategies can help [children](#) and families and reduce the need for public support downstream, thus saving costs for additional resources," said Max Crowley.

Crowley is an assistant professor of human development and [family](#) studies and faculty affiliate of the Edna Bennett Pierce Prevention Research Center (PRC) who co-authored the article along with colleague Damon Jones, research assistant professor and senior research associate at the PRC.

The article, "A Framework for Valuing Investments in a Nurturing Society: Opportunities for Prevention Research," reviews current public spending on children and families and describes how to quantify and monetize the impact of preventive interventions.

Crowley and Jones introduce the Valuing Multisystem Utilization (VMU) framework, a tool for organizing information about service utilization and monetizing the value of each service by using a simplified formula.

"This work ultimately seeks to accelerate benefit-cost analyses of interventions for children and families by encouraging researchers to think broadly about how children interact with [public](#) systems," said Crowley.

More information: 10.1007/s10567-017-0228-3 Max Crowley et al. A Framework for Valuing Investments in a Nurturing Society: Opportunities for Prevention Research, *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review* (2017). [DOI: 10.1007/s10567-017-0228-3](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10567-017-0228-3)

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