

MEGAN PAXTON, PH.D.

CLINICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST



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linkedin.com/DrMeganPaxton

PROFILE

Clinical Psychologist with a specialization in Industrial and Organizational Psychology and leadership experience across diverse roles. Over 12 years of experience in psychology and behavioral health, including 5+ years in management. Adept at applying psychological principles to solve complex personnel, administrative, and management challenges. Proven ability to translate data into actionable, sustainable strategic plans. A natural communicator and storyteller, skilled in promoting initiatives, engaging stakeholders, and driving positive change. Ready to tackle new challenges with a balance of expertise and creativity.

RECENT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Director of Professional Affairs

Kentucky Psychological Association

August 2024 – Present

- Advocate for KPA members by liaising with professional and legislative bodies, supporting practice-related issues, and coordinating continuing education opportunities
- Develop and implement strategies to enhance member engagement, retention, and professional growth, while representing KPA in external partnerships and policy discussions

Vice President of Clinical Effectiveness

Home of the Innocents, Louisville KY

May 2023 – Present

- Lead encounters operations and major initiatives to ensure optimal encounter submissions performance, compliance, and adherence to regulatory standards
- Implement strategies to improve program effectiveness, streamline operations, and enhance patient care
- Collaborate with executive peers and internal teams to drive system-wide improvements and achieve organizational goals
- Held Clinical Director licenses for Residential Treatment & Emergency Shelter and Therapeutic Foster Care & Adoption programs

Vice President • Outpatient Behavioral Health

Home of the Innocents, Louisville KY

December 2020 – July 2023

- Restructured outpatient clinic operations to improve staff retention and program culture, resulting in an 88% retention rate
- Analyzed program budgets and identified opportunities for revenue enhancement, resulting in an 84% improvement in net income over two fiscal years
- Established community partnerships to increased program utilization by 150% and renegotiated reimbursement rates for psychological testing

EDUCATION

Ph.D., 2016

Clinical Psychology
Vanderbilt University

M.A., 2011

Clinical Psychology
Vanderbilt University

B.A., High Honors, 2009

Psychology; Religious Studies
University of Virginia

CERTIFICATIONS

Licensed Psychologist

KY Board of Psychological Examiners
License #242370, Exp 08/2027

SHRM-Certified Professional

Society for Human Resource Management

Parent-Child Interaction Therapy

Certified Therapist

PCIT International

AWARDS

2025 Health Care Hero

Health Equity Champion
Louisville Business First

Alice Houston Women's

Leadership Program Inductee

Leadership Louisville
Inaugural Class of 2023

Core Award

Home of the Innocents
Oct. 2023

COMMITTEES

American College of Health Executives

(ACHE)

Kentucky Chapter

National Association for Children's

Behavioral Health (NACBH)

Society for Industrial &

Organizational Psychologists (SIOP)

Elected Member Feb 2023

Unit Manager • Psychological Testing and Assessment

Centerstone of Kentucky/Seven Counties Services, Louisville KY

July 2018 – December 2020

- Established and managed a psychological testing division, generating a waitlist of over 300 clients within the first year
- Implements creative solutions to offset reimbursement rate cuts and navigate challenges posed by COVID-19 closures, resulting in positive net income
- Supervised and trained staff to ensure the delivery of high-quality testing services and compliance with regulatory requirements

Clinical Training Director • Jefferson County Internship Consortium

Centerstone of Kentucky/Seven Counties Services, Louisville KY

September 2018 – December 2020

- Directed training programs for doctoral interns across multiple sites, ensuring compliance with accreditation standards and rigorous training requirements
- Collaborated with accreditation boards and maintained compliance despite challenges posed by COVID-19 closures

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Social Psychology

Cognitive Psychology

Abnormal Psychology

Introduction to Psychology

Health Psychology

Human Sexuality

PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

Invited Speaker

Behavioral Health – Past, Present, & Future

2025 AMFP Kentucky Healthcare Summit • Association of Medical Facility Professionals • January 2025

Community Mental Health Centers – The Social Justice League of Psychology

Department of Psychology Grand Rounds • Vanderbilt University • Nashville, TN • March 2023

Assessment of Disgust Sensitivity in Youth: Initial Psychometric Properties of the Child Disgust Scale

Annual Meeting of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies • Chicago, IL • November 2015

Unique Effects of Repeated Exposure to Threat-Relevant Stimuli in Multiple Contexts on Fear Renewal in Blood-Injection-Injury Phobia

Annual Meeting of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies • Chicago, IL • November 2015

Effects of Disgust Exposure in Multiple Contexts on Blood-Injection-Injury Phobia

Annual Meeting of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies • Philadelphia, PA • November 2014

Publications

Chapters

Knowles, K.A., Viar-Paxton, M., & Olatunji, B.O. (In Progress). Psychological Assessment of Disgust. In McKay, D., & Olatunji, B. O. (Eds). *The Cambridge Handbook of Disgust: Assessment, Clinical Manifestations, and Treatment*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Knowles, K.A., Viar-Paxton, M., & Olatunji, B.O. (2021). Measurement of Disgust Proneness. In H. L. Meiselman (Ed.) *Emotion Measurement (Second Edition)*. Woodhead Publishing. (pp. 795-829).

Viar-Paxton, M. A., & Olatunji, B. O. (2016). Measurement of disgust proneness. In H. L. Meiselman (Ed.) *Emotion Measurement*. Elsevier Ltd. (pp. 513-535).

SKILLS

Data Modeling (e.g., Tableau)

Workforce Analytics

Human Resource management

Personnel assessment

Psychometrics

Measurement development

Team building

Training curriculums

Experience with data analytic software (SPSS, SAS, R)

Project management

Strong verbal and written communication

“Out of the box” creative thinker

Takes initiative

Database collections (PsycInfo)

Advanced Microsoft Office

Viar-Paxton, M. A., & Olatunji, B. O. (2015). Disgust sensitivity. In R. McCabe & I. Milosevic (Eds.) *Phobias: The Psychology of Irrational Fear, An Encyclopedia*. (pp. 112-114). Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO

Wolitzky-Taylor, K. B., **Viar-Paxton, M. A., & Olatunji, B. O. (2012).** Ethical issues when considering exposure. In T. Davis, T. Ollendick, & L-G. Öst (Eds.) *Intensive Treatment of Specific Phobias: One-Session Treatment* (pp. 195 – 208). New York: Springer Press. PMID: 20161063

Journal Articles

Jessup, S.C., Tomarken, A., **Viar-Paxton, M.A., & Olatunji, B.O. (2020).** Effects of Repeated Exposure to Fearful and Disgusting Stimuli on Fear Renewal in Blood-Injection-Injury Phobia. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, 74, 102272.

Olatunji, B.O., & **Viar-Paxton, M. (2020).** Effects of “Dirty” Information on Disgust Responding to an Unknown Animal in Children: The Moderating Role of Maternal Disgust Proneness. *Behavior Therapy*, 51(4), 634-645.

Nadeau, J. M., De Nadai, A. S., **Viar-Paxton, M., Olatunji, B. O., Jacobi, D. M., Eken, S. C., ... & Storch, E. A. (2017).** Further Psychometric Evaluation of the Child Disgust Scale. *Child Psychiatry & Human Development*, 1-8.

Knowles, K.A., **Viar-Paxton, M.A., Riemann, B.C., Jacobi, D.M., & Olatunji, B.O. (2016).** Is Disgust Proneness Sensitive to Treatment for OCD Among Youth? Examination of Diagnostic Specificity and Symptom Correlates. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, 44, 47-54.

Olatunji, B., Sarawgi, S., & **Viar-Paxton, M. (2016).** An Initial Test of Reconsolidation in Disgust-Related Learning and Extinction. *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy*, 30(3), 190-202.

Viar-Paxton, M. A., Ebesutani, C., Kim, E. H., Ollendick, T. H., Young, J., & Olatunji, B. O. (2015). Development and initial validation of the Child Disgust Scale. *Psychological Assessment*, 27(3), 1082-1096.

Viar-Paxton, M. A., Tomarken, A. J., Pemble, M. K., & Olatunji, B. O. (2014). The role of domain-specific disgust propensity in behavioral avoidance and self-reported fainting symptoms in blood-injection-injury phobia. *Journal of Experimental Psychopathology*, 5, 123-133.

Viar-Paxton, M. A., & Olatunji, B. O. (2012). Context effects on habituation to disgust-relevant stimuli. *Behavior Modification*, 5, 705-722. PMID: 22619396

Olatunji, B. O., Ciesielski, B. G., Wolitzky-Taylor, K. B., Wentworth, B. J., & **Viar, M. A. (2012).** Effects of experienced disgust on habituation during repeated exposure to threat-relevant stimuli in blood-injection-injury phobia. *Behavior Therapy*, 43, 132-141. PMID: 22304885

Viar, M. A., Bilsky, S. A., Armstrong, T., & Olatunji, B. O. (2011). Obsessive beliefs and obsessive-compulsive disorder: An examination of specific associations. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 35, 108-117.

Viar, M. A., Etzel, E., Ciesielski, B. G., & Olatunji, B. O. (2010). Disgust, anxiety, and vasovagal syncope sensations: A comparison of injection fearful and nonfearful blood donors. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, 24, 941-945. PMID: 20667690

Theses

Dissertation

Viar-Paxton, M. (2016). Measurement, Mechanisms, and Modification of Disgust: Implications for Anxiety-Related Disorders. Vanderbilt University.

<https://ir.vanderbilt.edu/bitstream/handle/1803/14159/Paxton.pdf?sequence=1>

Master's Thesis

Viar-Paxton, M. (2011). The Effect of Context on Disgust Habituation: Implications for the Treatment of Blood-Injection-Injury Phobia. Vanderbilt University.

<https://ir.vanderbilt.edu/bitstream/handle/1803/13164/PaxtonMastersThesis.pdf?sequence=1>

Honor's Thesis

Viar, M.A. (2009). Threat or Challenge? Self-Focused Attention and Evaluation on Performance in Social Anxiety. University of Virginia. (pp. 2-7)

<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.399.9174&rep=rep1&type=pdf>