



The Orchid and the Dandelion: Why Some Children Struggle and How All Can Thrive

W. Thomas Boyce, MD

Lisa and John Pritzker Distinguished Professor of Developmental and Behavioral Health, University of California, San Francisco.
Co-Director, Child and Brain Development Program, Canadian Institute for Advanced Research.
Author, *The Orchid and the Dandelion: Why Some Children Struggle and How All Can Thrive.*

Tuesday, February 19, 2019, 7:00 PM

Grand Rounds Presentation:

“Gene-Environment Interplay and the Biology of Misfortune”

Wednesday, February 20, 2019, 9:00 AM

CEU Registration: bit.ly/BoyceFAN

Both events, New Trier High School/Northfield, Cornog Auditorium, 7 Happ Rd., Northfield

**Presented by Family Action Network (FAN),
in partnership with Family Service Center, Foundation 65, Fusion Academy, and the Wolcott School.**

These events are free and open to the public; both will be taped. Suitable for youth 12+. INFO: familyactionnetwork.net

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: W. THOMAS BOYCE, MD – TWO EVENTS

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EVENT 1: Tuesday, February 19, 2019, 7:00 PM, The Orchid and the Dandelion: Why Some Children Struggle and How All Can Thrive, New Trier High School, Northfield Campus, Cornog Auditorium, 7 Happ Rd., Northfield, IL 60093. Trained as a developmental pediatrician and an epidemiologist, **W. Thomas Boyce, MD**, in his new book, *The Orchid and the Dandelion: Why Some Children Struggle and How All Can Thrive*, lays out argument showing that children vary greatly in their development, and the cause is a deft interplay of genes and environment. These interactions begin in utero, since mother and unborn child are influenced by myriad factors – the mother’s stress levels, nutrition, and sleep hygiene, for example. Once born, children raised in the same family aren’t all alike by nature, and aren’t raised alike, either; the same conditions that may work well for one child may be deleterious for another.

80-85% of children are “dandelions,” healthy, sturdy, transplantable survivors who can grow in most environments. 15-20% of children are “orchids,” highly-sensitive, fragile, shy, and susceptible and permeable to the relationships that encircle and sustain them. Orchid children are far more susceptible to stress and adversity, have far greater health challenges, and may suffer in school due to social hierarchies. But planted in the proper warm, close, nurturing environment, both at home and at school, orchid children have the greatest promise and resilience, creative futures, and deeper relationships all made possible through the “alchemy of nurturing families and communities and transformative care,” to quote Dr. Boyce.

EVENT 2: Wednesday, February 20, 2019, 9:00 AM, GRAND ROUNDS: Gene-Environment Interplay and the Biology of Misfortune, New Trier High School, Northfield Campus, Cornog Auditorium, 7 Happ Rd., Northfield, IL 60093. CEU registration: www.bit.ly/BoyceFAN First, rapidly gathering evidence suggests that early exposures to poverty, adversity and trauma become embodied within neurobiological processes that bias development toward psychiatric and physical morbidities. Such systematic shifts in health risk occur not only concurrently, within childhood itself, but also longitudinally, within lifetime trajectories of disease and disability. Second, these adversity-related health risks are highly variable from child to child and are influenced by even the most proximate, immediate experiences of social subordination. And third, recent findings indicate that lifelong accumulations of ill health are the consequences of neither genetic nor environmental variation in isolation, but rather are attributable to molecular level interactions between genes and aversive social contexts.

Dr. Boyce is the **Lisa and John Pritzker Distinguished Professor of Developmental and Behavioral Health, University of California, San Francisco**, and **Co-Director, Child and Brain Development Program, Canadian Institute for Advanced Research**. Previously, Dr. Boyce was **Associate Dean for Research in the UC Berkeley School of Public Health** and the **BC Leadership Chair in Child Development at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver**.

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