

## **BIOGRAPHY**

**Dr. Theresa Betancourt** is Assistant Professor of Child Health and Human Rights in the Department of Global Health and Population at the Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH). Dr. Betancourt is a member of the François-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights (FXB), where she directs the Research Program on Children and Global Adversity (RPGCA). Her central research interests focus on the developmental and psychosocial consequences of concentrated adversity on children and families, resilience and protective processes in child refugee mental health, health and human rights, and applied cross-cultural mental health research. Dr. Betancourt is the Principal Investigator of an ongoing prospective longitudinal study of former child soldiers in Sierra Leone. Future phases of this work include plans for a community-based intervention study to serve war affected youth and their families. She is currently collaborating with Partners in Health Rwanda on a mixed-methods study assessing mental health services needs of HIV/AIDS-affected youth. This work includes the adaptation of evidence-based preventative interventions for children and families to the Rwandan cultural context. In 2004-2005, Dr. Betancourt served as Co-Principal Investigator of a randomized-controlled trial of interventions for the treatment of depression symptoms in northern Ugandan internally-displaced (IDP) youth. Her prior research has also investigated social connectedness and mental health among Chechen IDP youth, the psychosocial aspects of emergency education programs for Chechen IDPs and the relationship between caregiver and youth mental health among Kunama refugees living on the Ethiopia-Eritrea border. Dr. Betancourt graduated summa cum laude in psychology from Linfield College and holds a Master's degree in Expressive Arts Therapy from the University of Louisville. She completed her doctoral work in Maternal and Child Health with concentrations in Psychiatric Epidemiology and Health and Human Rights at the Harvard School of Public Health in 2003. Previously, Dr. Betancourt worked as a mental health clinician in both school and community settings and consulted on global children's mental health issues for various international NGOs and United Nations agencies, including work with the United Nations Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict in 1999. She was recently awarded a K01 Career Development Award from the National Institutes for Mental Health to study modifiable protective processes in the mental health of refugee children and adolescents.