

# The Center for Youth Mental Health at NewYork-Presbyterian 2026 Clinician Education Series

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**Core Components of School  
Avoidance Assessment  
and Treatment for Youth**

**02/26/2026  
12pm-1pm ET  
Live Online**



Co-sponsored by the Academy for Behavioral Health and Continuing Education

**CE Credit:**

1 CE credit hour available for FREE to Psychologists, Social Workers and Mental Health Counselors licensed in New York State and to Psychologists licensed in states that accept American Psychological Association (APA) CE credit. See CE requirements and information below.

**Instructional Level:**

This event is intended for Psychologists, Social Workers, and Mental Health Counselors at all levels (introductory, intermediate, and advanced). This content is also appropriate for MDs; however, CME credits are not available for this event.



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## **Event Abstract:**

School avoidance, defined as missing school due to anxiety, depression, or other mental health concerns, is increasingly prevalent among youth. When left untreated, school avoidance may contribute to worsened mental health, family conflict and stress, poor academic functioning, social struggles, and delayed independence. Treatment for school avoidance is comprehensive and is based on a functional assessment of school-related anxiety and avoidance. Based on this assessment, interventions typically incorporate cognitive-behavioral strategies for mental health symptoms, caregiver support, and collaboration with a youth's school. This webinar will review the key components of evidence-based assessment and treatment for school avoidance, special considerations for working with this population, and strategies to address treatment barriers.

## **Learning Objectives:**

1. Identify the four primary functions of school avoidance behavior in youth.
2. Describe one child-focused and one caregiver-focused intervention to address school avoidance behavior.
3. List one school-based support to improve school attendance for school avoidance youth.

## **References:**

1. Elliott, J. G., & Place, M. (2017). Practitioner review: school refusal: developments in conceptualisation and treatment since 2000. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 60(1), 4–15. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jcpp.12848>
2. Heyne, D., & Brouwer-Borghuis, M. (2022). Signposts for school refusal interventions, based on the views of stakeholders. *Continuity in Education*, 3(1), 25–40. <https://doi.org/10.5334/cie.42>
3. Kearney, C.A., & Albano, A.M. (2018). When children refuse school: A cognitive-behavioral therapy approach/Therapist's guide (3rd ed.). *New York: Oxford University Press*.
4. Chockalingam, M., Skinner, K., Melvin, G., & Yap, M. B. H. (2022). Modifiable Parent Factors Associated with Child and Adolescent School Refusal: A Systematic Review. *Child Psychiatry & Human Development*, 54(5), 1459–1475. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10578-022-01358-z>

## Speakers:



### **Stephanie Rohrig, PhD**

Stephanie Rohrig, Ph.D., is an assistant professor of Psychology in Clinical Psychiatry at Weill Cornell Medicine. She serves as the attending psychologist in the adolescent and adult Partial Hospitalization Programs with support from the Center for Youth Mental Health at NewYork-Presbyterian. Dr. Rohrig collaborates on program development and clinical training for psychology and psychiatry trainees and specializes in CBT and DBT for adolescents and young adults with anxiety, depression, emotion dysregulation, school avoidance, and related mental health concerns. Her research focuses on school avoidance in youth, and she is developing a treatment guide for intensive, group-based interventions for school avoidance in youth.



### **Anthony Puliafico, PhD**

Anthony Puliafico, Ph.D. is an associate professor of medical psychology (in Psychiatry) in the Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at Columbia University Irving Medical Center (CUIMC). He is an attending psychologist at CUIMC, with support from the Center for Youth Mental Health at NewYork-Presbyterian, and co-chairs the CYMH Clinical Committee. Dr. Puliafico serves as the director of the Columbia University Clinic for Anxiety and Related Disorders (CUCARD) Westchester, an outpatient clinic in Tarrytown, NY, specializing in the treatment of anxiety and related disorders. Dr. Puliafico also directs CUCARD Westchester's Anxiety Day Program, which provides daily treatment programming for adolescents with anxiety, OCD, and school avoidance. Dr. Puliafico is an expert in the assessment and cognitive behavioral treatment of anxiety, mood, and externalizing disorders. His clinical work and research have focused on the treatment of pediatric OCD, school avoidance, adapting treatments for young children with anxiety, and mental health issues in the context of climate change.

## Financial Disclosures:

Stephanie Rohrig, Ph.D, has no relevant financial relationship(s) with ineligible companies to disclose and DOES NOT INTEND to discuss off-label or investigational use of products or services.

Anthony Puliafico, PhD, receives royalties from UpToDate. He DOES NOT INTEND to discuss off-label or investigational use of products or services.

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1 CE credit hour available for FREE to psychologists, social workers and mental health counselors licensed in New York State as well as Psychologists licensed in states accepting American Psychological Association (APA) credit. Live attendance is required for CE credit. CEs will be awarded to those who attend the entire event, sign into EEDS with a code provided at the start of the event, and complete the evaluation within 30 days of the event. Certificates will be available following completion of the CE survey. No partial credit will be granted for attending only part of the event. Please contact **WCMpsychiatryCE@med.cornell.edu** for additional CE information.

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For information regarding the CE program, please visit the WCM CE website: [psychiatry.weill.cornell.edu/education-training/continuing-education](http://psychiatry.weill.cornell.edu/education-training/continuing-education).

Please note the upcoming events in this education series, including\*:

- **May 2026:** Social Media and Mental Health
- **September 2026:** Suicide Prevention
- **October 2026:** Managing Youth Substance Abuse

Co-sponsored by The Center for Youth Mental Health at NewYork-Presbyterian and the Academy for Behavioral Health and Continuing Education at Weill Cornell Medicine - Department of Psychiatry.

\*Specific dates to follow.