Michael J. Yedidia (Ph.D., Brandeis University; M.P.H., Yale University) is a Research Professor and Senior Medical Sociologist at the Center for State Health Policy. Trained in sociology and public health, his research focuses on health professions education, prevention of childhood obesity, population health, caring for vulnerable populations, patient perspectives on health and illness, and quality improvement. He currently leads two NIH-funded studies of environmental determinants of childhood obesity: One follows a panel of low-income children in four NJ cities over five years to assess the impact of aspects of the food and physical activity environment on weight status; the other follows a panel of public schools to study the role of changes in the environment on declines in obesity rates among school children. He also directs a project providing support for promoting a culture of health to 20 community coalitions in New Jersey. He has conducted numerous evaluation studies of health professions education programs including two multi-site, controlled evaluations of curricular interventions, one in undergraduate medical education (teaching communications competencies at three medical schools) and the other in graduate medical and nursing education. He was also national program director for Evaluating Innovations in Nursing Education, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's national initiative to support evaluation of interventions addressing the nurse faculty shortage. Prior to joining the faculty at Rutgers, Dr. Yedidia was a senior health services researcher at NYU's Wagner Graduate School of Public Service and taught medical sociology, health policy, and research methods at the Department of Sociology and the Medical Education Program at Brown University.