

Michigan State University Autism Lab



Fall 2024 Newsletter

Welcome to our New Lab Members!!



Meet The Lab:

Left to Right:

Top: Lauren Duvall, Mehreen Hassan, Gokhan Toret, Brooke Ingersoll
Bottom: Isabella Babore, Thuan Tran, Hannah Tokish
Not Pictured: Ana Pomales Ramos

About the Autism Research Lab:

The MSU Autism Lab, directed by Brooke Ingersoll, PhD, focuses on the development, dissemination, and implementation of evidence-based, community-viable interventions for children on the autism spectrum and their families, with the goal of improving meaningful outcomes

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MSU Autism Lab Shout Outs!

Hannah's Master's Thesis Defense (March 2024) and Master's Graduation (May 2024)

Hannah, MA successfully defended her master's thesis, titled "Characterizing Predictors and Moderators of Parent Participation Engagement in Early Autism Intervention", which examined the influence of parent characteristics and provider behaviors on parent participation engagement during early autism intervention sessions. Parent participation engagement (PPE) is associated with improvements in child intervention outcomes but is lacking in community service settings. My results indicated that single parents face greater barriers to in-session active engagement in early intervention sessions and that certain provider parent coaching strategies (e.g., helping parents problem-solve to overcome barriers) may promote engagement for parents of autistic children.

Special shoutout to her Undergraduate RA team for training and completing observational video coding of over 250 videos! Thank you to *Claire Bongiorno, Alyssa Bonikowski, Emily Assemany, Olivia Bowman, and Grace Kim.*



Proposed Doctoral Dissertation

Ana, our sixth year graduate student has proposed her dissertation! The study aims to understand how and why clinicians working in usual care settings make adaptations to Project ImPACT, a parent-mediated intervention for autistic children. The study employs mixed-methods and a user-centered design to explore clinicians' rationale and decision-making process for the adaptations and culturally responsive practices reported at the session-level when working with minoritized families.

Community Involvements

Our graduate students, Ana (president) and Hannah served on the Mid-Michigan Autism Association Board (MMAA) and have done community presentations to increase autism acceptance and awareness of sensory friendly environmental supports. They also helped organize social events for autistic children/teens and their families. This year they were focused on caregiver support, so they organized events like yoga classes and coffee hours for parents to meet and find social support. Ana served as the president of MMAA over the past year!

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Norman Abeles Award

Hannah Tokish, a graduate student, received the Norman Abeles Award for Outstanding Clinical Service. This award is given to a second year student who has most clearly demonstrated clinical skill and growth as a clinician over the course of their first year of practicum.

Farewells!

Diondra S. has completed her clinical internship and is now Post-Doctoral Researcher at the University of Pennsylvania.

Anthuanet E. has transitioned to UC Santa Barbara to pursue a Clinical Psychology Ph.D. She will be working at the Koegel Autism Center with Dr. Ty Vernon where she will gain exposure to different assessment and parental support programs for autistic individuals and their families.

Jessie G. has started a new clinically focused position in Chicago, working with adults with disabilities. Thank you for the 5 amazing, dedicated years!

Isabelle S. has transitioned to California to explore new research avenues. She is excited to remain in the research field and is looking forward to working with a new clinical population!

New Lab Members

Gökhan TÖRET, PhD, is a visiting Postdoctoral Researcher on the RISE study. He is a full-time associate professor at Hacettepe University in Türkiye. He received his PhD in Special Education from the Gazi University in Türkiye and completed his dissertation on the examination of the effectiveness of Reciprocal Imitation Training on social communication of young children with ASD. Clinically, his work has focused on natural behavioral and developmental interventions. His research has focused on the development of social communication among young children with ASD, eye tracking methodology, and social robots and child interaction in ASD.



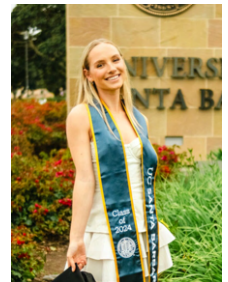
Mehreen Z. Hassan, PhD, is a Postdoctoral Fellow on the RISE Study. She received her PhD in Human Development and Family Science from Purdue University, where she also completed her M.S.Ed. in Applied Behavior Analysis. Mehreen's work focuses on early interventions for children with disabilities, particularly parent-mediated approaches. Her training has centered on providing telehealth parent coaching on social-communication interventions for children with neurodevelopmental disabilities. Mehreen's research interests explore how cultural factors and family characteristics shape the experiences and outcomes of diverse families engaging in early intervention programs.



Lauren Duvall, B.S., is a graduate student in MSU's Clinical Science program. Before joining the MSU Autism Lab, Lauren earned her BS in Psychology and Dance from the University of Alabama. After graduating, she worked as a research assistant and research early interventionist at the Center for Autism Service, Science and Innovation at the Kennedy Krieger Institute. Lauren is interested in studying implementation of parent-mediated early intervention for youth on the autism spectrum and how approaches to caregiver coaching may impact provider and parent self-efficacy, well-being, and parent-child bond. In her free time, Lauren enjoys traveling, working out, and knitting.



Isabella Babore, B.A., is a research assistant at the MSU Autism Lab. She received her B.A. from the University of California, Santa Barbara with a degree in English and Applied Psychology. As an undergraduate, Isabella served as a research assistant for the Koegel Autism Center working with adults and middle schoolers with ASD. Her research interests include studying the efficacy of social skills interventions and its effects on anxiety in children diagnosed with ASD. In the future, she hopes to pursue a PhD in Clinical Psychology. Isabella enjoys cooking, scuba diving and going on walks in her free time.



Thuan Tran, MS, graduated with a BA in psychology from Luther College and an MS in developmental disorders from Nottingham University. She has clinical and research experience working with autistic children. Thuan completed a year of post-baccalaureate work at Stanford University in a neuroimaging lab, where she administered PRT. She aims to further explore early comprehensive autism interventions that are adaptable and feasible for underserved areas, taking into account rural barriers. To balance her work life, she enjoys cooking, working out, and exploring new restaurants.

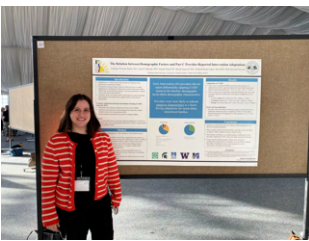


Checkout Our Team's Conference Presentations!

Characterizing disparities in parent participation engagement in early parent-mediated interventions

MSU Researcher(s): **Hannah Tokish, MA** & Brooke Ingersoll, PhD

Conference on Research Innovation in Early Intervention (CRIEI), San Diego, CA



Characterizing disparities in parent participation engagement in early parent-mediated interventions

MSU Researcher(s): **Ana Pomales Ramos, MA** & Brooke Ingersoll, PhD

Conference on Research Innovation in Early Intervention (CRIEI), San Diego, CA

Effects of provider coaching strategies on parent participation engagement (PPE) in early intervention for social communication

MSU Researcher(s): **Hannah Tokish, MA** & Brooke Ingersoll, PhD

Gatlinburg Conference on Research and Theory in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Kansas City, MO



Assessing Quantity of Imitation Opportunities For Behavioral Intervention Strategies

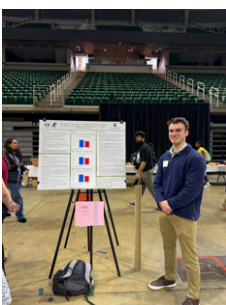
MSU Researcher(s): **Ashley Poothurail, Seth Siskonen** & Brooke Ingersoll, PhD

MID-SURE, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI

The influence of parenting stress on attendance and homework completion in early autism intervention

MSU Researcher(s): **Olivia Bowman**, Hannah Tokish, Jessie Greatorex & Brooke Ingersoll PhD

University of Undergraduate Research and Art Forum, East Lansing, MI



The Impact of Running on Depression, Anxiety, and Stress

MSU Researcher(s): **Joey Gallagher** & Brooke Ingersoll, PhD

University of Undergraduate Research and Art Forum, East Lansing, MI

Invited Speaker: Dr. Brooke Ingersoll



Dr. Brooke Ingersoll
PhD, BCBA-D

Dr. Brooke Ingersoll has been invited to speak at the 1st Annual NDBI Connections Conference. She will be presenting *Project Impact: A parent-mediated approach for improving social communication skills in young children*. Project Impact is one of the few evidence based NDBIs being utilized by providers and parents of autistic children. Within our very own state of Michigan, her previous studies have trained up several Michigan agencies in Project Impact that are currently being used by providers!

Conference Details:

Dates: October 3-4th, 2024

Location: Virtual

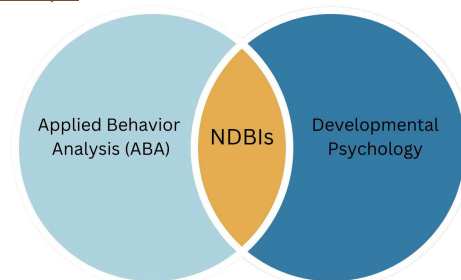
Dr. Ingersoll is a professor of clinical science and the director of the Autism Research Lab at Michigan State University. Dr. Ingersoll's research focuses on the development of community-viable interventions for autistic children and their families. Dr. Ingersoll has published more than 100 articles and book chapters on autism, and is the co-author of Teaching Social Communication to Children with Autism & Other Developmental Delays. She will be talking about Project IMPACT: A parent-mediated approach for improving social communication skills in young children.

LEARN MORE >>

NDBI Connections Conference
<https://behaviorlive.com/conferences/ndbi/home>

What is Naturalistic Developmental Behavioral Interventions (NDBIs)?

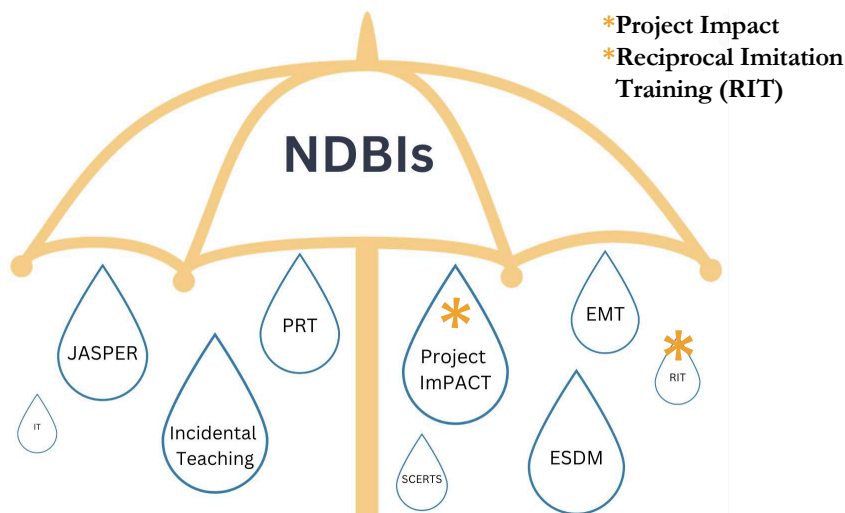
It is an intervention approach combining applied behavior analysis (ABA) and developmental science principles to create comprehensive and individualized strategies children with developmental delays in social, communication, and cognitive skills. These interventions are often used with children on the autism spectrum.



Core Principals:

- Naturalistic Settings
- Developmentally Appropriate Practices
- Behavioral Techniques
- Family Involvement

Dr. Ingersoll developed and oversees training for 2 well-known NDBIs!



Interested in Attending??

Website: <https://behaviorlive.com/conferences/ndbi/home>

Registration Options

Virtual Conference Professional + CEUs (BACB, QABA, IBAO)	\$275.00
Virtual Conference Professional (No CEUs)	\$250.00
Virtual Conference Student	\$125.00

Current Studies

Reciprocal Imitation and Social Engagement (RISE):



Michigan State University's Autism Research Lab is recruiting organizations for a multi-site clinical trial examining effective early intervention methods for toddlers with early signs of autism. This multi-site study investigates the effectiveness of Reciprocal Imitation Training (RIT) in publicly funded early intervention programs in four states. The project will provide information on the effectiveness of parent-mediated RIT when delivered in community settings and may find moderators of outcomes and other factors that influence the quality of intervention. Participation in RISE is only available to families with an Early Intervention (EI) provider that is already enrolled in the study. If applicable, your EI provider will discuss your potential participation and connect you with a local research site. Participation lasts about 9 months from the first assessment to the third and final assessment. Visit our website at riseresearchnetwork.com for more information and go to riseresearchnetwork.com/Contact to learn more about the RISE study at our other research sites.

If you would like more information on the RISE Study within the state of Michigan, please contact the following individuals:

- Michigan EI Providers: Contact [Thuan Tran](mailto:tranthua@msu.edu) at tranthua@msu.edu or 517-258-1394
- Michigan Families/Parents: Contact [Isabella Babore](mailto:baborei1@msu.edu) at baborei1@msu.edu or 248-403-8395



The RISE Project involves researchers from around the country. The MSU Autism Lab collaborates with researchers from the University of Washington, Rush University Medical Center, the University of Massachusetts Boston, and Boston University.

PEACE 4 ImPACT (RISE):

A collaborative study between Michigan State University and the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia focusing on their Early Intervention System. The study will evaluate the impact of the PEACE implementation toolkit and determine the level of support needed to improve early intervention providers' use of caregiver coaching with families of young children. Families receiving caregiver coaching will be assessed for both caregiver and child outcomes, as well as the cost-effectiveness of the implementation toolkit. The study aims to enhance the services provided to families of young children with developmental delays and improve their long-term outcomes. To learn more, email peace4impact@penncmedicine.upenn.edu.

Naturalistic	Developmental	Behavioral
Teaching occurs during play and daily routines	Supports the caregiver-child relationship	Uses ABA teaching and learning techniques

What can Caregiver's expect from Project ImPACT

- Work with your coach to set individualized goals for your child and learn strategies to work on those goals.
- You and your child meet with your coach to learn and practice the strategies.
- Practice what you learn daily during play or routines.

What are the Benefits of Parent Coaching?

- ImPACT promotes caregiver involvement which helps to increase the likelihood that your child will learn the strategies.
- Helps you feel more confident in supporting your child
- Improves the parent-child relationship and decrease parenting stress

The PEACE for ImPACT study is evaluating how Project ImPACT is being implemented in Philadelphia Early Intervention.

- The study is following families who are receiving Project ImPACT from their Early Intervention providers for 6 months.
- Families receive ImPACT during their normal EI sessions.
- Families complete a few surveys about their child's background and development when they first enroll in the study and then after 6 mos. Families are paid to complete the surveys.
- Three EI sessions are video recorded with each family and their provider.

Visit Project ImPACT's website to learn more: <https://www.project-impact.org/>

For questions please reach out to PEACE4ImPACT@Penncmedicine.upenn.edu

MSU Psychological Clinic Services

Project ImPACT Intervention



The MSU Psychological Clinic offers autism assessment services and Project ImPACT intervention services for young children with autism and related social communication delays. Project ImPACT is an evidence-based parent coaching program where caregivers can learn how to use intervention strategies with their child to support social engagement, communication, imitation, and play skills. Project ImPACT is recognized as one of the most effective programs for parents of young children on the autism spectrum or with social communication delays!

The parent-coaching program is designed to be completed in 12 weeks, featuring weekly 1-hour appointments. Throughout the sessions, a clinician will guide you in establishing personalized social-communication goals for your child based on their developmental stage. They will also demonstrate how to use the strategies directly with your child, while simultaneously explaining/coaching you on how and why they are implementing these strategies. With your clinician's support and guidance, you will also be able to practice the strategies with your child. Lastly, you and the clinician will be able to create a practice plan in order to translate the use of these strategies to different settings.

Learn more about Project ImPACT here: <https://www.project-impact.org/>

Learn more about the MSU Psychological Clinic here: <https://psychology.msu.edu/clinic/>

General Clinic Information:

The MSU Psychological Clinic aims to be:

1. a state-of-the-art training facility that provides high quality evidence-based care
2. accessible & reliable for those seeking mental health services in Greater Lansing
3. a distinguished referral source for our colleagues in the community



MSU clinical psychology doctoral students, as well as other trainees or students enrolled in practicum, receive intensive and specialized training through the Clinic. The MSU clinical psychology doctoral program believes in providing its trainees opportunities to work with clients from diverse backgrounds (e.g., ethnic/racial/economic/religious/sexual) across the lifespan (child/adult). Clinicians treat and assess clients with a range of specific disorders and problems. Individual, family, and group interventions are taught. Students also receive exposure to different theoretical orientations and multiple therapeutic techniques.

All trainees are supervised by licensed psychologists who are also faculty at Michigan State University.

Our clinicians are trained in multiple treatments, including:

- Acceptance Commitment Therapy
- Behavior Therapy
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
- Emotion Focused Therapy
- Family Systems Treatment
- Parent Training/Coaching
- Psychodynamic Psychotherapy

Contact Information

Phone: 517-355-9564

Fax: 517-353-5437

Email: clinic@msu.edu

Recent Publications

Ingersoll, B., Frost, K. M., Straiton, D., **Ramos, A. P.,** & Casagrande, K. (2024). Telehealth coaching in Project ImPACT indirectly affects children's expressive language ability through parent intervention strategy use and child intentional communication: An RCT. *Autism Research*. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/aur.3230>

Ingersoll, B., Espinel, A., Nauman, J., Broder-Fingert, S., Carter, A. S., Sheldrick, R. C., Stone, W. L., & Wainer, A. L. (2024). Using virtual multiteam systems to conduct a multisite randomized clinical trial in the Part C Early Intervention System: Benefits, challenges, and lessons learned. *Contemporary Clinical Trials*, 143, 107585.

Frost, K. M. & **Ingersoll, B.** (2024). Mapping the active ingredients and mechanisms of change of a naturalistic developmental behavioral intervention using mixed methods. *Journal of Early Intervention*, 46, 155-173.

Ingersoll, B., Douglas, S., Brodhead, M., Barber, A., & Kaczmarek, L. (2024). Interdisciplinary competencies for implementing NDBIs with young children with ASD. *Journal of Early Intervention*, 46, 138-154.

Frost, K., **Pomales-Ramos, A.,** & **Ingersoll, B.** (2024). Brief report: Response to joint attention and object imitation as predictors of expressive and receptive language growth rate in young children on the autism spectrum. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 54, 1212-1220.

Pecunia-Rivera*, R., & **Pomales-Ramos, A.** (2023) Intervención Mediante el Entrenamiento a Familias: Traducción al Español del Proyecto “ImPACT.” In Oliveras-Rentas, R., Vega, M., Rodríguez-Irizarry, W. (Eds.) *El Espectro del Autismo: Una guía actualizada para la práctica efectiva y la intervención basada en la evidencia con la población hispanoparlante*. Giunti Psychometrics.

Straiton, D., Pomales - Ramos, A., Broder-Fingert, S. (2024). Health Equity and Rising Autism Prevalence: Progress and Future Research Priorities. *Pediatrics*.

Tschida, J. E., Lee, J. D., **Pomales - Ramos, A.,** & Koo, V.* (2024). Reported quality indicators and implementation outcomes of community partnership in autism intervention research: A systematic review. *Autism Research*.

Pomales-Ramos, A., Tokish, H., Howard, M., Straiton, D., & **Ingersoll, B.** (2023). A mixed-methods examination of clinicians' perceived barriers to telehealth delivered applied behavior analysis. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 1173644.

Ingersoll, B., Frost, K. M., **Straiton, D., Pomales - Ramos, A.,** & **Howard, M.** (2023). Relative Efficacy of Self-directed and Therapist-assisted Telehealth Models of a Parent-mediated Intervention for Autism: Examining Effects on Parent Intervention Fidelity, Well-being, and Program Engagement. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 1-15.

Visit Our Website:



For more information on upcoming projects, research, workshops, and more, visit our website: <https://autismlab.psy.msu.edu/>

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