

Michigan State University Autism Lab



Winter 2025 Newsletter



Happy New Year from the MSU Autism Lab!

Meet the Lab:

Back Row: Gökhan Töret (RISE Study Postdoctoral Researcher)

Middle Row (Left to Right): Lauren Duvall (Graduate Student), Mehreen Z. Hassan (RISE Study Postdoctoral Fellow), and Dr. Brooke Ingersoll (PI)

Bottom Row (Left to Right): Isabella Babore (RISE Study Caregiver Liaison), Thuan Tran (RISE Study Provider Liaison), and Hannah Tokish (Graduate Student)

Not Pictured: Ana Pomales Ramos (Graduate Student)

About the Autism Research Lab

The MSU Autism Research Lab, directed by Dr. Brooke Ingersoll, PhD, focuses on the development and implementation of evidence based, community viable, interventions for young children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and their families.

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Lab Member Shout Outs



Congratulations to our first year graduate student Lauren Duvall for receiving The John and Margo Reisman Award! This award helps recruit exceptional students of unusual promise, who in turn have the potential to elevate the MSU Clinical Psychology Program to new levels of excellence. The annual scholarship provides additional funding, over and above what could otherwise be offered, to one top applicant in each admissions class.



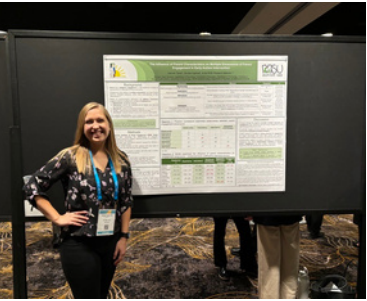
Great work to our undergraduate research assistants! A group of undergraduate research assistants have been working diligently to prepare conference presentations for various MSU conferences. This year, we will have students presenting at the Diversity Research Showcase (DRS) and University Undergraduate Research and Arts Forum (UURAF) examining disparities in access to early intervention for children with social communication related challenges.



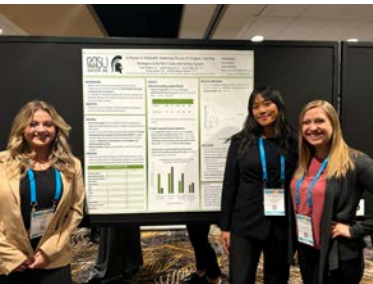
Back in October our lab was featured in the Engaged Scholar E-Newsletter! The article highlights the aims and objectives of the RISE study. It also incorporates diverse perspectives from the providers participating in the study! If you want to learn more about the work being done in our lab for the RISE Study, you can check out the article here: <https://engagedscholar.msu.edu/enewsletter/volume17/issue1/default.aspx>

Research Highlights

In November, we had multiple lab members travel to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to present at the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies (ABCT). Check out some of their posters below!



One of our graduate students, Hannah Tokish, MA, presented her project “The Influence of Parent Characteristics on Multiple Dimensions of Parent Engagement in Early Autism Intervention.” Her study examined the interrelations of engagement measures and their association with parent characteristics to inform provider training in the assessment and promotion of active parent engagement.



Two of our former lab members, Jessie Greatorex and Isabelle Saligumba along with graduate student, Hannah Tokish, presented a project titled “In-person vs. Telehealth: Examining the session structure of parent coaching sessions in the Part C EI System.” The project aimed to characterize the content and quality of parent coaching sessions conducted via telehealth vs in person.



MSU graduate student, Ana Pomales Ramos, MA, and Dr. Sarah Edmunds, PhD, from the RISE Research Network presented a project titled, “The relation between demographic factors and Augmenting and Reducing Adaptations.” The poster aimed to examine differences in augmenting vs reducing adaptations based on demographic variables. The poster was presented at the ABCT conference and the ASD-Special Interest Group poster exhibit.



Hannah Tokish, MA, presented at the [Michigan Autism Conference!](#) Her presentation, “Engaging Parents in Early Naturalistic Developmental Behavioral Interventions,” discussed evidence-based parent coaching strategies that providers may use to promote parent engagement in Naturalistic Developmental Behavioral Interventions. If you want to learn more, check out her slides by scanning the QR code below.



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 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 <https://www.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 at tranhua@msu.edu or 517-258-1394

Michigan Families/Parents: Contact Isabella Babore 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.

Current Studies

Exploring Culturally Responsive Adaptations to Project ImPACT in Community Settings

We are recruiting clinicians for an online study that examines how and why clinicians adapt Project ImPACT for minoritized families in community settings. Previous studies of adaptations have primarily relied on retrospective reports, limiting our understanding of the contextual factors that prompt a particular adaptation. To address this gap, her study employs the 'Think Aloud' methodology, a cognitive interviewing technique that prompts clinicians to vocalize their thoughts while observing a recording of a session in which they delivered the intervention. This approach will offer insight into the decision-making process for adapting parent mediated interventions to enhance cultural relevance and address contextual factors at the session level.

Ana is currently recruiting clinicians who have delivered Project ImPACT! If you are interested in learning more about the study or participating, please don't hesitate to reach out (pomalesr@msu.edu).

TELL US ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH PROJECT IMPACT

We are seeking clinicians who use Project ImPACT in their practice to participate in a study focused on the delivery and adaptation of this program.

Complete Online Survey

- Complete a **20-minute online survey** about your experience delivering Project ImPACT with children and families in your practice.

Compensation: \$15 Amazon Gift Card

After the survey, eligible clinicians will be invited to participate in a follow up interview.



Session Recording and Zoom Interview

- Share how you deliver and individualize Project ImPACT for **racially, ethnoculturally, and linguistically minoritized families**.

Compensation: \$65 Amazon Gift Card



<https://forms.gle/TWSdLUNnRBknkd46>

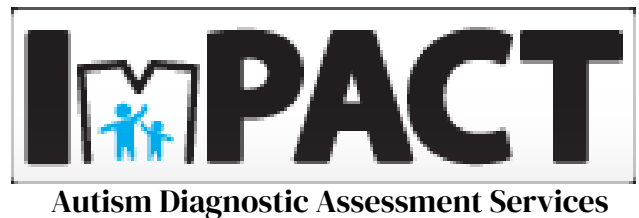
INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING?

Please contact pomalesr@msu.edu or use the QR Code to request a link to our online survey!

PEACE 4 ImPACT (RISE):

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@penmedicine.upenn.edu.

MSU Psychological Clinic Services:



Autism Diagnostic Assessment and 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.

The MSU Psychological Clinic provides low-cost services on a sliding fee scale and cost reduction applications may be available.

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

Stay Connected!

Visit our Website:



For more information on upcoming projects, research, workshops, and more, visit our website:

<https://autismlab.psy.msu.edu/>

Contact Us:



Email Us at: autlab@msu.edu



Give us a call at [517-432-8031](tel:517-432-8031)

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