

Congratulations to Andrea Anushko and Aelesia Piscielli on receiving Riecken Fellowship dissertation awards from the Foundation for Child Development!

Andrea Anushko's dissertation is entitled: MULTIDOMAIN PREDICTORS OF TRAJECTORIES OF LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

My study will address some of the broader questions regarding the rate and course of expressive and receptive language development in young children from 12 months of age to Kindergarten and will focus on specific factors that may influence these trajectories, specifically gender, sociodemographic predictors, early social-emotional functioning, and language exposure. Advanced longitudinal growth modeling will be used to both understand average or typical language development, as well as the degree of variability around that average, providing a more complete picture of the variability in language development in typically developing children. Examining expressive and receptive language individually will give a clearer understanding of the paths these separate but related aspects of language may take over the course of early development and how different factors may influence these trajectories in unique ways.

Aelesia Piscielli's dissertation is titled: ESTIMATING EFFECTS OF PARTICIPATION IN PARENTAL LEAVE ON CHILDREN'S AND MOTHER'S WELL-BEING.

My study is an investigation of the impact in children's development of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993, with particular attention paid to identifying which factors predict participation in parental leave policies and the barriers that deter working mothers from taking leave. Using propensity scores as an indicator of a person's likelihood to take leave, this study extends the post-FMLA literature by providing an unbiased estimate of the impact of the use of parental leave on key maternal and child outcomes, operationally as mother-child relationships at 2 years, children's social-emotional development at 9 months and 2 years, and maternal depressive symptomatology at 9 months. Results from this study have policy implications, as it will help to explain the proximal impacts in children and mother children relationships of mother's early return to work and the FMLA leave policy.