



# PARTICIPATING CENTERS 2019–2020

*Much of the research described in this newsletter has been made possible by many parents, children, schools, centers, programs, teachers and staff. We thank these schools and centers for their participation.*



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# COMPLETED STUDIES



## Valuing Appearance in Early Childhood

Throughout childhood, young girls are often encouraged to value their physical appearance by ensuring that they are always looking pretty. To gain more understanding about the development of this value on appearances, one-on-one interviews with 168 ethnically diverse 3- to 5-year-old children were conducted. Girls preferred more appearance-related occupations (e.g., model, hair stylist) than boys. Further, girls who more strongly identified with their gender (e.g., those who considered being a girl to be very important and positive) preferred appearance-related occupations more than girls who less strongly identified with their gender. Girls were also more likely to associate their gender with caring about appearance compared to boys. These findings suggest that gender differences in placing importance on beauty and physical appearance may begin at early ages. Moreover, children's sensitivity to gender stereotypes and the emergence of a gender identity may contribute to the cultivation of valuing physical appearances. A heavy emphasis on a girl's physical appearance throughout her formative years may have implications for health, low self-esteem, and avoidance of male-dominated occupations.



## Valuing Strength in Early Childhood

Influential media, like superhero movies and fairytales, and society at large convey the idea that boys are strong and girls are weak, possibly leading many young boys to place great importance on being strong. To assess the early development of valuing strength, using the same sample as above, we asked questions relating to gender and physical strength. We generally found that boys valued physical strength more than girls: (1) when directly asked whether they thought it was important to be strong; and (2) when asked their preferences for strength-related occupations (e.g., firefighter, sports athlete). Additionally, older versus younger children demonstrated greater knowledge of the stereotype that boys care about being strong. Older girls were less likely to associate being a girl with being strong than younger girls. Overall, results suggest that valuing physical strength starts early, and gender differences in valuing strength are evident at the eve of gender identity development. Findings have potential implications for boys' later body image concerns or exaggerated self-reliance (e.g., refusing to ask for help when needed).

*CSULB Undergraduate Students: Dylan Sakamoto, Yvette Apatiga, Kaelyn Echave, Keila Hirokawa, Olivia Massey, Crystal Sanchez, Sachiko Tawa*

## Family Messages About the Comparative Worth of Women and Men Conveyed to Latina Women

We were interested in what young Latina women have learned from their family members during childhood about how women and men are comparatively valued. We asked 52 Latina university students to write about different messages they recalled from an influential family member on how much women and men were valued. Of the family members participants wrote about, about half valued women and men equally; about 41% valued men more than women; and 7% valued women more than men. For



Latinas who reported that their family member valued women and men equally, 47% discussed how their family member treated siblings and cousins equally regardless of gender. For those who reported that their family member valued men over women, 69% reported that their family member pointed out differing social status and power between women and men. Lastly, for those who reported that their family member valued women over men, all mentioned receiving messages about strong women who could “do it all” without help from men. The development of beliefs about the worth of women and men may have implications for gender bias and feelings of self-worth.

*CSULB Undergraduate Students: Mark Ortiz-Payne, Brenda Gutierrez (alum), Yvette Apatiga, Jocelyn Borrego, Eliza Derfelt, Kevin Han, Keila Hirokawa, Daniella Ramirez, Katherine Van Tol*  
*Collaborator: Dr. Campbell Leaper, UC Santa Cruz*

## Psychological Distress Among African American and Latina Immigrant Mothers and Links to Their Children's Physical Health

Following childbirth, many mothers experience psychological distress that not only affects the mother, but has potentially detrimental consequences on her child as well. For instance, mothers with psychological distress may be less likely to engage in preventative health measures (e.g., providing healthy foods, making doctor appointments), which can lead to poor overall health concerns for their child. Ethnic minoritized families that lack quality health services may be especially at risk, yet their experiences have been understudied. To address these concerns, researchers interviewed African American, Mexican immigrant, and Dominican immigrant mothers annually from when their children were 6 months old until they entered the 1st grade. We found that mothers' psychological distress predicted poorer overall health for their children one year later between the ages of 2 to 4 years old. These findings reinforce the importance of supporting the mental health of mothers, as it has implications for both mother's and children's well-being.

*CSULB Graduate Student: Alisha Osornio; Collaborator: Dr. Sean Lane (Purdue University)*  
*Data collected at New York University Steinhardt Center for Research on Culture, Development, and Education*

## Influence of Center-Based Care on Gender Development



In 2016, nearly half of all children aged 3-5 years in the U.S. were enrolled in center-based care (i.e. daycare). Daycare settings might provide children with multiple sources of information about how society defines what is appropriate for girls and boys through interactions with teachers, staff, and other children. Over the course of 4 years, researchers annually interviewed 232 African American, Mexican-immigrant, and Dominican-immigrant mothers and also interviewed and observed their children. In general, children who enrolled in

in daycare at ages 2 and 3 showed earlier gender-stereotypicality (e.g., greater percentage of same-gender friends at earlier ages, earlier engagement in gender-stereotypical play, and earlier avoidance of counter-stereotypical play) than children who enrolled at age 4 or 5. While there are numerous benefits of center-based care, such as enhancing school readiness and the development of language, socioemotional, and cognitive skills, these findings also highlight the need to consider what children are learning about gender in these environments.

## Influence of Older Siblings on Gender Development

From the first years of life, children with older siblings avidly watch and emulate them. How does having an older brother, an older sister, or having no older siblings affect gender development? Interviewing the above sample, mothers reported how often their child played with gender-stereotypical and

counter-stereotypical toys. At a university lab, their children were also given female-stereotyped (baby doll), male-stereotyped (toy truck), and neutral toys to play with (e.g., nesting cups). Results found that children without older siblings spent more time playing with counter-stereotypical toys in the lab, and their mothers' reports indicated similar behavior over the past month (e.g., a girl playing with toy vehicles and balls; a boy playing with toy kitchen sets and dolls) than children with older siblings. Further, children with at least one other-gender sibling (e.g., a girl with an older brother) played more frequently with counter-stereotypical toys compared to children with only same-gender siblings (e.g., a girl with only older sisters). As play can foster spatial, language, and socioemotional skills, such early interactions around toys may have cascading effects on later math and literacy abilities and interpersonal skills.



*Collaborators: Dr. Yana Kuchirko (Brooklyn College), Anna Bennet (New York University), Dr. Philip Costanzo (Duke University), and Dr. Diane Ruble (New York University). Data was collected at New York University Steinhardt Center for Research on Culture, Development, and Education*





## Gender and Racial/Ethnic Attitudes Across the U.S.

People may have positive or negative attitudes towards girls, boys, women, men, and people from different gender and racial/ethnic groups. How do people come to have these attitudes, and when do these attitudes start to develop? To answer these questions, our collective research team recently completed interviewing 725 4- to 6-year-old children (African American, Asian American, Latinx, Non-Hispanic White, multiethnic) across five different regions in the United States (Hawaii, Washington, North Carolina, Connecticut, and California). Using an assortment of questions and tasks (e.g. “This kid is sitting here. Where do you want to sit?”, “Who do you think is in charge?”, “Who do you want to give this eraser to?”) we assessed these children’s developing attitudes towards and perceptions of other girls, boys, and children from various racial/ethnic backgrounds. In the next year, we plan to fully analyze the aggregate data and will keep you informed of the results. As recent protests have underscored the importance of understanding the roots of prejudice, we look forward to sharing findings to advance the conversation and promote social justice.

*Collaborators: Dr. Yarrow Dunham (Yale), Dr. Sarah Gaither (Duke), Dr. Kristina Olson (Princeton), and Dr. Kristin Pauker (University of Hawaii). This study is supported by the National Science Foundation.*

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## STUDIES ON HOLD

### Play and Learning Across a Year

Infant behavior is important to the study of development; however, recently the study of infant behavior has often been either overlooked or only conducted in structured lab settings. At this age, infants’ and toddlers’ movement abilities, language, object manipulation, and social interactions are changing rapidly. To better examine infant behavior, we and several other researchers will observe the behavior of infants and toddlers with their mothers in natural play at home. Videos will be taken of the natural play and home settings to examine infant behavior in a manner that reflects real-time development. These videos will later be combined into a large database contributed to by 60+ experts from across the U.S., with our site representing Southern California. This project will be the first of its kind. With this large-scale project, we can achieve a better understanding of infant behavior and answer questions related to the influence of environment and experience on infants’ learning and development.

*Principal Investigators: Dr. Karen Adolph (New York University), Dr. Catherine Tamis-LeMonda (New York University), and Dr. Rick Gilmore (Penn State University). This study is supported by the National Institutes of Health for Child Health and Human Development, Fisher-Price, and The LEGO Foundation.*



# RESEARCH DISSEMINATION

## Talks

- **Halim, M. D. (September 2019). Introduction to gender development: What changes and why gender matters**, Lindbergh Child Development Center
- **Halim, M. D. (March 2020). The development of gender intergroup attitudes among ethnically diverse children**, Western Washington University Center for Cross-Cultural Research
- **Halim, M. D. (March 2020). Observing psychological phenomena across cultures: Tips for creating reliable and valid coding systems**, Western Washington University Center for Cross-Cultural Research
- **Halim, M.D. (December 2020). Understanding prejudice from a psychological perspective: Challenges and Potential Solutions**, Northern Plains Ethics Institute, North Dakota State University

## Conferences

- **California State University, Long Beach, Psychology Day**, Long Beach, CA
- **Western Psychological Association**, San Francisco, CA (presented virtually)
- **Society for Research on Adolescence**, San Diego, CA (accepted, but postponed)

## Media



CNN



NBC NEWS

- Halim, M. D., & Gaither, S. (2020, June 28). *How to raise anti-racist babies, according to psychology*. NBC Think. <https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/how-raise-anti-racist-babies-according-psychology-ncna1232031>
- Davis, L. S. (2020, June 6). *Children aren't born racist. Here's how parents can stop them from being racist*. CNN. <https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/06/health/kids-raised-with-bias-wellness/index.html>

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- Halim, M. D., Martin, C. L., Andrews, N., Zosuls, K. M., & Ruble, D. N. (in press). Enjoying each other's company: Gaining other-gender friendships promotes positive other-gender attitudes among ethnically diverse children. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*.
- Bennet, A., Kuchirko, Y., Halim, M. D., Costanzo, P. R., & Ruble, D. N. (2020, Online first). The influence of center-based care on young children's gender development. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 69, 101157. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2020.101157>
- Majeno, A.\* , Urizar, G., Halim, M. D., Nguyen, S. T., & Gonzalez, A. (2020, Online). Examining the role of ethnic microaggressions and ethnicity on cortisol responses to an acute stressor among young adults. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cdp0000401>
- Gutierrez, B. C.\* , Halim, M. D., & Leaper, C. (2019, Online first). Variations in recalled familial messages about gender in relation to emerging adults' gender, ethnic background, and gender attitudes. *Journal of Family Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13229400.2019.1685562>

\*denotes current or former CSULB undergraduate or graduate students



# STUDENT AWARDS & HONORS

- **CSULB Office of Research and Sponsored Programs Student Summer Research Award:**  
*Dylan Sakamoto*
- **CSULB Psychology Most Outstanding Senior in Psychology Award:** *Dylan Sakamoto*
- **CSULB Psychology Outstanding Senior in Psychology Award (2020-2021):** *Kevin Han, Mark Ortiz-Payne, Dylan Sakamoto*
- **CSULB Psychology Outstanding Senior in Psychology Award (2019-2020):** *Kaelyn Echave, Daniella Ramirez, Sachiko Tawa*
- **CSULB Psychology Poster Competition – 1st place:** *Mark Ortiz-Payne, Yvette Apatiga, Katherine Van Tol, Jocelyn Borrego, Eliza Derfelt, Kevin Han*



## SPECIAL SHOUT-OUTS

It has been a wonderful year of accomplishments for students in our lab! Congratulations:

- **Yvette Apatiga** for her acceptance into California State University, Long Beach's Master of Science Program for Human Factors
- **Emerald Lee** for her acceptance into California State University, Fullerton's Master of Social Work Program
- **Daniella Ramirez** for her acceptance into California State University, Fullerton's Master of Arts Program for Psychological Research
- **Julyssa Juarez (alum)** for her acceptance into Chapman University's Master of Arts Program for School Psychology
- **Elaine Scenters-Zapico (alum)** for her acceptance in to California State University, Long Beach's Educational Specialist program for School Psychology
  
- For graduating with her Master of Arts in Psychological Research: **Alisha Osornio**
- For graduating with a B.A. in Psychology:
  - **Kaelyn Echave, Megan Fisher, Emerald Lee, Mark Ortiz-Payne, Daniella Ramirez, Dylan Sakamoto, Sachiko Tawa**

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **1. Tell me about your lab.**

- We are researchers from the psychology department at California State University, Long Beach. Dr. May Ling Halim is the director of the lab and the principal investigator. Our research focuses on children's social identity (gender, race/ethnicity) development. All researchers are graduate and undergraduate students that were screened through a competitive application process and were selected by Dr. Halim. They have all been trained specifically to work with children by Dr. Halim. They have also completed IRB ethics training.

## **2. My child has already participated in one (or more) of your studies, should I still participate this year?**

- In-person research is currently on hiatus because of the pandemic.

## **3. I know of a center that would be interested in your research. Is there a way to put you in contact with each other?**

- Yes! We are always interested in working with different institutions and would appreciate a referral. You can send information about the center and your name to [CLA-ChildDev.research@csulb.edu](mailto:CLA-ChildDev.research@csulb.edu).

## **4. How can I learn more/participate in your studies?**

- For more information about our studies and participation please email us at [CLA-ChildDev.research@csulb.edu](mailto:CLA-ChildDev.research@csulb.edu). You may also visit our website at <http://web.csulb.edu/~mhalim/index.html>.

## **5. Where can I find the results of the study?**

- For past studies, if you'd like to be put on a list for notification of publication, email us at [CLA-ChildDev.research@csulb.edu](mailto:CLA-ChildDev.research@csulb.edu) or inform a research assistant. You may also ask to subscribe to our newsletter to keep up-to-date with our research studies. It also allows you to be informed of studies during the research process. For current studies, we are still collecting data. When data collection is complete, we then interpret our data and results. Then comes publication. This may take a long time, as it involves writing, reviewing, editing, and rewriting.

# RESOURCES

COVID-19 Job and Income Loss Jeopardize Child Well-Being: Income Support Policies Can Help  
[https://www.srcd.org/sites/default/files/resources/FINAL\\_SRCDCCEB-JobLoss.pdf](https://www.srcd.org/sites/default/files/resources/FINAL_SRCDCCEB-JobLoss.pdf)

Addressing Inequities in Education During the COVID-19 Pandemic: How Education Policy and Schools Can Support Historically and Currently Marginalized Children and Youth  
<https://www.srcd.org/research/briefs-fact-sheets/statements-evidence>

A Kid's Guide to Coronavirus by Rebecca Grove and Julia Burch (free e-book)  
<https://www.apa.org/pubs/magination/kids-guide-coronavirus-ebook.pdf>

Parenting and Caregiving During COVID-19  
<https://www.apa.org/topics/covid-19/parenting-caregiving>

## 2019–2020 LAB MEMBERS

Yvette Apatiga  
Jocelyn Borrego  
Eliza Derfelt  
Kaelyn Echave

Megan Fisher  
Kevin Han  
Keila Hirokawa  
Emerald Lee

Olivia Massey  
Mark Ortiz-Payne  
Alisha Osornio  
Daniella Ramirez

Dylan Sakamoto  
Crystal Sanchez  
Sachiko Tawa  
Katherine Van Tol



Pre-Pandemic

Zoom-ing

