

GRADUATE PROGRAM

In **HDFS**, we study development and families in real-world contexts. The interdisciplinary research conducted by our faculty crosses the lifespan and a diverse range of topics including Culture, Early Childhood Education and Care, Health and Well-being, Interpersonal Relations, and Military Families.

CONSIDER HDFS AT PURDUE UNIVERSITY

- Ranked **#13** in HDFS doctoral programs in North America
- **Breadth and depth** of research and practical experience
- Advanced **methodology** and **statistics** training
- Post-bachelor and post-master's students welcome
- Individualized mentorship

INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

- Certificates in Social Policy, Gerontology, Women's Studies, Statistics, and Advanced Methods
- Master of Public Health
- Dual-title PhD in Gerontology
- Certificates in College Teaching

INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH CENTERS

- *Center for Early Learning*
- *Center for Families*
- *Center on Aging and the Life Course*
- *Military Family Research Institute*
- *Miller Child Development Laboratory School*
- *Purdue Autism Research Center*
- *The Methodology Center*

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

- All admitted doctoral students receive funding including a stipend, tuition remission, and health insurance
- Funding available for research and conference travel

HELPFUL LINKS AND INFORMATION

- **Students are encouraged to check out faculty research interests here and reach out to prospective mentors**
- Contact our Graduate Coordinator: hdfsgrad-recruit@purdue.edu
- Visit our website: [here](#)
- View our admissions criteria: [here](#)

Application Deadline:
December 1, 2026

APPLY NOW

FAQs



Department of Human
Development and Family Science

FACULTY AND RESEARCH



Annabelle Atkin
aatkin@purdue.edu
 Racial identity, socialization, discrimination, and mental health of Multiracial and Asian Americans; critical racial consciousness
<https://ariselab.owstow.net/>



Meingold Chan
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 Socioemotional development; emotion socialization; biological embedding of social experiences; epigenetics; family & sociocultural contexts



Sarah Eason
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 Parent-child math interactions; family engagement in early learning; community-based research; early education



Laura Elenbaas
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 Moral development; social identities; social cognition; peer relationships
<https://www.elenbaaslab.com/>



Melissa Franks
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 Interpersonal dynamics in health behavior change and disease management of older adults



Elliot Friedman
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 Psychological and social influences on health in adulthood; biological and behavioral mechanisms; psychological well-being and healthy aging



Anna Hochgraf
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 Youth development; psychological and behavioral health; body image; family relationships; prevention programs



Leanne Niefert
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 Psychosocial impacts of human-animal interaction; PTSD; animal-assisted interventions; service/assistance animals; companion animals



Shelley MacDermid Wadsworth
shelley@purdue.edu
 Families experiencing stress and transition; impacts of workplace and community policies; programs and practices on families
www.mfri.purdue.edu



Leigha MacNeill
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 Social-emotional development; family relationships; biobehavioral methods; translational approaches to early childhood mental health
<https://shinelab.owstow.net>



Kristine Marceau
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 Gene-environment interplay; Developmental psychopathology & adolescent substance use; Methodology
<https://hhs.purdue.edu/biobehavioral-development-lab/>
<https://www.purdue.edu/research/mcap/>



Rebecca Marks
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 Language; reading; dyslexia; ADHD; bilingualism; neurocognitive development; neuroimaging; fMRI
<https://hhs.purdue.edu/marksab>



Cammie McBride
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 Literacy development and impairment; mathematics development and impairment; parenting; online assessment and training



Kameron Moding
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 Temperament; parent-child interactions; infant-toddler feeding practices; obesity risk



Deborah Nichols
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 Cognition, learning, media effects; educational, health, social disparities; translational research, social policy; children, caregivers



Germán Posada
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 Development of child-parent attachment relationships; caregiving; attachment behavior and representations; social competence; culture and SES in attachment research.



David Purpura
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 Academic development; early math and reading; dual language learners; picture books; family- and school-based intervention



Paul Robbins
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 Youth development in sports; academic and health socialization in Black families; health and educational disparities



A.J. Schwichtenberg
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 Sleep, neurodevelopmental and neurodegenerative disorders, Autism, developmental trajectories, family
<https://hhs.purdue.edu/sleep/>



Zoe Taylor
zetaylor@purdue.edu
 Psychosocial stress and health disparities; resilience; minoritized youth and families; immigrant Latine populations; single mothers
<https://centers.purdue.edu/puentes-project/>



Kim Updegraff
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 Latinx youth; parent-child and sibling relationships; child and adolescent development and well-being