SOPHIA BETAR

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EDUCATION

Tufts University   Expected 2029
Ph.D. Child Study and Human Development
Advisor: Dr. Christine McWayne

The University of Texas at Austin   May 2022
B.S. Human Development and Family Sciences
Concentration in Early Childhood; GPA 3.70

PUBLICATIONS

Xiao, N., Betar, S., McWayne C. M. (Manuscript under review). *Home-School Dynamics Predicting Young, Low-income Children's Classroom Engagement and Emergent Science Knowledge at the end of their Head Start Year*.

Vasilyeva, M., Laski, E. V., Casey, B., Konstantopoulos, S., Lu, L., Ban, J., Betar, S., Cho, H. Y., & Wang, M. (2025). Recruiting spatial-numerical representations to increase arithmetic fluency in low-income students. *Developmental Psychology, 61*(6), 1152–1165. https://doi.org/10.1037/dev0001921

Aviles, A. I., Betar, S. K., Cline, S. M., Tian, Z., Jacobvitz, D. B., & Nicholson, J. S. (2024). Parenting young children during COVID-19: Parenting stress trajectories, parental mental health, and child problem behaviors. *Journal of Family Psychology, 38*(2), 296-308. https://doi.org/10.1037/fam0001181

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Tufts University   August 2024 – Present
Doctoral Research Assistant, ExCELS Lab
Principal Investigator: Dr. Christine McWayne
- Assist in the Readiness through Integrative Science and Engineering (RISE) Project
- Coordinate research related tasks between the teams at Tufts University and the University of California, Irvine
- Attend and assist the series of professional development sessions with preschool teachers
- Participate in planning meetings about study design and data collection
- Keep track of and organize participant's consent status, incentives, and attendance
- Maintain IRB protocol
- Oversee a team of master's and undergraduate students
- Organize and participate in weekly lab meetings

Boston College   August 2022 – July 2024
Lab Manager, Math Learning Lab
Principal Investigators: Dr. Marina Vasilyeva and Dr. Elida Laski
- Upkept a well-organized and efficient research lab conducting a large, multi-year, IES funded project
- Assisted in and created intervention and assessment design and materials
- Contributed to several manuscripts

- Coordinated and trained 13 undergraduate and 6 graduate students
- Recruited and corresponded with 17 schools in the greater Boston area and built strong relationships with teachers and administrators
- Kept up to date on IRB protocol
- Administered and oversaw in-school testing and intervention sessions of over 350 first grade students
- Coded participant assessments with coding scheme and trained others on how to accurately code data
- Maintained, cleaned, and contributed to multiple data sets
- Ran preliminary analyses and converted results into easily digestible graphs and tables
- Organized and participated in lab meetings and trainings

The University of Texas at Austin   January 2021 – June 2022
Research Assistant
Principal Investigators: Dr. Nancy Hazen-Swann and Dr. Deborah Jacobvitz
- Direct Supervisor: Dr. Ashleigh I. Aviles
- Worked on projects including (1) meta-analysis on child psychological abuse and somatization (2) the effects of childhood psychological maltreatment on coparenting ability and perception of relationships and (3) independent research paper on the effects of parenting stress on child behavioral issues during COVID-19
- Conducted literature reviews
- Maintained project sources through citation manager software
- Strategically narrowed down the most relevant studies, and accurately coded selected articles
- Analyzed, cleaned, and managed large datasets
- Concluded semesters with capstone projects presented at conferences

Harvard University   June 2021 – August 2021
Research Assistant
Principal Investigator: Dr. Elizabeth Spelke
- Summer member of the Spelke Lab working with Dr. Elizabeth Spelke and graduate students
- Engaged in research focused on the learning differences between infants and non-human primates
- Accurately coded preferential looking and single stimulus videos on Datavyu, jHab, and R
- Collaborated with graduate mentor on research topics and ideas
- Conducted literature reviews
- Compiled questions for an empirical survey
- Efficiently recruited children for studies
- Maintained an accurate database using FileMaker Pro
- Shadowed mentor while running studies
- Created and presented a research poster on infant laughter in response to surprising events and parents repeating actions

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE
The University of Texas at Austin   August 2021 – June 2022
Undergraduate Teaching Assistant of Research Methods
- Oversaw classes of 50 students over the course of two semester
- Collaborated with professor in the development of activities and assignments
- Assisted professor in clerical work such as emails, uploading data, and grading assignments
- Clarified material and answered questions from students
- Guided students through running Excel tests including regression, T test, and ANOVA

- Facilitated and upheld a positive learning environment
- Summarized student performance and engagement to instructor

Priscilla Pond Flawn Child and Family Laboratory   August 2021 – December 2021
Student teacher
- Assisted in a kindergarten class with 17 children ages 5 and 6
- Led small group activities to promote literacy and math skills
- Used positive guidance strategies to solve issues and encourage development
- Participate in pre- and post-conferences and contributed valuable anecdotes
- Brainstormed solutions to classroom issues with lead teacher
- Contribute to an encouraging and comfortable learning environment
- Maintained a clean and efficient classroom

The University of Texas at Austin   August 2020 – June 2021
Undergraduate Teaching Assistant of Child Development
- Oversaw two classes over the course of two semesters: one of 30 students and one of 80
- Collaborated with professors in the development of activities and assignments
- Directed review sessions
- Assisted professors in clerical work such as emails, uploading data, and grading assignments
- Clarified material and answered questions from students
- Facilitated and upheld a positive learning environment
- Summarized student performance and engagement to instructor

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Data Science: R Basics Course   July 2021-August 2021
- Online edX course taught by Dr. Rafael Irizarry of Harvard Applied Statistics
- Learned R basics, functions, and datatypes, vectors and sorting, indexing, data manipulation and plots, and the basics of programming
- Practiced reading, extracting, and creating datasets in R
- Performed a variety of operations and analyses on datasets

NYU Psychology Summer Research Program   July 2021
- Invited to attend multiple workshops, panels, and conferences geared towards development of research and graduate school skills
- Networked and discussed future plans and current skills with other students, professors, and graduate students
- Learned and considered the issues of racial discrimination in academia and the importance of diversity

Harvard Women in Psychology: Advanced Crash Course in R   June 2021
- Attended virtual R crash course focusing on tidyverse and language perspective
- Learned general functions of R, R Markdown and ggplot 2, Text Analysis, Data collection, R Shiny applications, and writing reproducible codes

CONFERENCES

Betar, S., Minah, K., McWayne, C. M. (2025, May 23). *Children's classroom engagement and primary caregiver-teacher communication quality in urban Head Start classrooms* [Paper symposium]. Cross University Collaborative Mentorship Conference. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States.

Betar, S., Minah, K., McWayne, C. M. (2025, April 24). *Children's classroom engagement and primary caregiver-teacher communication quality in urban Head Start classrooms* [Working roundtable presentation]. American Educational Research Association. Denver, Colorado, United States.

Betar, S. (2022, March). *The effects of parenting stress on child behavioral issues during the COVID-19 pandemic* [Poster presentation]. Capital of Texas Undergraduate Research Conference. Austin, Texas, United States.

Betar, S. (2021, April). *Child maltreatment & psychosomatic symptoms: A meta-analysis* [Poster presentation]. The University of Texas Undergraduate Research Forum. Austin, Texas, United States.

INVITED LECTURES

Betar, S. (2021, December & 2022, May). Undergraduate Research Experience. Research Methods in Human Development and Family Sciences, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX.

Betar, S. (2020, December & 2021, May). The Cost of Raising a Child. Child Development, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX.

ACADEMIC AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

Students Expanding Austin Literacy (SEAL)   September 2019 – March 2020
Member and Volunteer
- University organization aiming to assist elementary school students with necessary reading skills
- Worked with students grades 1st through 6th
- Assisted and guide students through homework
- Maintained student engagement in reading and learning
- Fostered trusting relationships with students

Odyssey School   January 2019 – June 2019
Volunteer
- Assisted teachers with general classroom procedures such as distributing work and facilitating transitions
- Answered student questions
- Guided students through problem solving
- Facilitated development of emotion regulation and academic skills
- Discussed students' needs and progress with teacher

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Computer Skills: Microsoft Office, Filemaker Pro, Canvas, SPSS, and Zotero
                    Beginner knowledge of Quickbooks and R

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Educational Research Association