

LEENA TWAL, B.A.

476 Meliora Hall | University of Rochester, Rochester, NY, 14627
ltwal@ur.rochester.edu <https://sas.rochester.edu/psy/research/rcf/>

EDUCATION

University of Rochester, Rochester, NY (*August 2022 - Present*)

Ph.D. Student, Developmental Psychology

Advisor: Melissa Sturge-Apple, Ph.D.

Expected Graduation: May 2027

Oakland University, Rochester Hills, MI (*September 2015 - April 2018*)

B.A., Psychology *Summa Cum Laude*

Minor: French Language

Major GPA: 3.92 | *Overall GPA:* 3.89

PRESENTATIONS

Twal, L. R., Swerbenski, H., Sturge-Apple, M.A. Collective Efficacy Serving as a Protective Buffer Against Effects of Neighborhood Risk on Disciplinary Practices. Poster presented at APS Annual Convention. San Francisco, CA (May 25, 2024).

Swerbenski, H., **Twal, L. R.**, Sturge-Apple, M.A. Expanding Treatment Targets: Meta-Analysis of Attachment-Based Interventions on Caregiver Psychopathology Outcomes. Poster presented at APS Annual Convention. San Francisco, CA (May 25, 2024).

Purcell, D. G., **Twal, L. R.**, & Stewart, A.L. Impact of Facial Affect on Race Judgment. Poster presented at the 60th annual meeting of the Psychonomic Society. Montreal, QC (Nov. 17, 2019).

Purcell, D. G., **Twal, L. R.**, & Stewart, A.L. Affect Congruency With Full Color Angry and Happy Faces. Poster presented at the 59th annual meeting of the Psychonomic Society. New Orleans, LA (Nov. 15, 2018).

Twal, L. R., An Exploration of Facial Affect. Poster presented at Meeting of Minds Conference. Dearborn, MI (May 17, 2018).

Twal, L. R. & Raman, L. Do Children Recognize the Impact of Physical and Sedentary Activities on Weight? Poster Session presented at Meeting of Minds Conference. Dearborn, MI (May 17, 2018).

Twal, L. R. An Exploration of Facial Affect. Oral Presentation presented at National Conference on Undergraduate Research. Edmond, Oklahoma (Apr. 5, 2018).

Twal, L. R. An Exploration of Facial Affect. Poster Session presented at the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters Conference. Central Michigan University, MI (Mar. 2018).

Twal, L. R., An Exploration of Facial Affect: How anger inferiority is influenced by race. Poster presented at Oakland University Undergraduate Research and Scholarship Poster Session. Rochester Hills, MI. (Nov. 2017)

HONORS AND AWARDS

2023	<i>Lisa Flanagan Grossman Memorial Award</i> Recipient, University of Rochester
2018-2015	Oakland University Dean's List
2018-2015	Oakland University Honors College
2018-2015	Oakland University Distinguished Scholar
2018-2017	<i>Honors College Merit Award</i> Recipient, Oakland University
2018-2016	<i>MI Competitive Scholarship</i> Recipient, Oakland University
2016-2015	<i>J Alford Jones Scholarship</i> Recipient, Oakland University

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Project TRAIL [Melissa Sturge-Apple, Ph.D.](#), [Patrick Davies, Ph.D.](#)

University of Rochester, Mt. Hope Family Center

Study Summary: Follow-up study aimed at understanding longitudinal effects of child maltreatment on intercouple relationships and parenting practices

Graduate Research Assistant (2023 - Present)

- Creating and validating new interview measure assessing parents' reactions to children's negative emotionality expressions
- Conducting data collection with parents and children, including administering behavioral tasks and interviews
- Mentoring undergraduate interns on study

Parent Emotion Socialization Coding Project | Project FLIGHT [Melissa Sturge-Apple, Ph.D.](#)
(Families Learning, Interacting, and Growing Healthy Together)

University of Rochester, Rochester Center for Research on Children and Families

Study Summary: A longitudinal study aimed at understanding the impact of interparental conflict on intercouple relationships and children's developmental outcomes

Coding Project Lead (2023 - Present)

- Creating and validating a behavioral coding manual on forms and functionality of parental reactions to their children's negative emotionality
- Training undergraduate coders to reliability, and leading weekly coding meetings

ABC Growing Kids Study [Julie Lumeng, M.D.](#)

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

Study Summary: Longitudinal study examining effects of mother-infant attachment and infant's eating behaviors on child's attachment, temperament, and eating behaviors 5-years later.

Research Technician (2020 - 2022)

- Creating study protocol manual, including adapting protocols to be done remotely over Zoom during the COVID-19 Pandemic

- Assisting with IRB application submission and maintenance of REDCap pages,
- Participant recruitment and scheduling, as well as study retention plan
- Administering virtual Zoom visits (consenting participants, collecting anthropometric measurements, running behavioral protocols over Zoom, using data collection software including ADA24)
- Training new research associates, overseeing and reviewing data collection

Simply Dinner Study [Julie Lumeng, M.D.](#), [Holly Brophy-Herb, Ph.D.](#)

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

Study Summary: Longitudinal study examining effects of parenting stress and financial insecurity on children's temperament and eating behaviors.

Research Technician Associate (2019 - 2020)

- Participant recruitment, scheduling, and retention
- Running detailed at-home visits with children ages 3-5 and their parent (consenting and assenting, administering questionnaires, collecting parent and child anthropometric measurements)
- Training interns and new research associates
- Transcribing and coding video recordings

Michigan Twin Neurogenetics Study [Luke Hyde, Ph.D.](#), [Elizabeth Burt, Ph.D.](#)

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

Study Summary: Longitudinal study utilizing Michigan State University Twin Registry to research gene-environment interactions in a sample of families living in disadvantaged neighborhoods

Volunteer Postbac Research Assistant (2019)

- Assisting lab managers and post-doctoral researchers with data entry and revision
- Transcribing video recordings of mother-twin triads
- Checking structural and functional MRI image alignment

Race and Facial Affect Study [Dean Purcell, Ph.D.](#)

Oakland University, Rochester Hills, MI

Study Summary: An extension of Dr. Purcell's previous work, this study examines the interaction between race and facial affect on reaction time and accuracy of participant responses.

Undergraduate Thesis Project (2017 - 2018)

- Completing the IRB application and revisions
- Writing and administering participant consent and debriefing forms
- Writing all protocol manuals and training research assistants for administration
- Administering experiment protocol with participants
- Reviewing and coding data, completing all statistical analyses of data

Child Development Laboratory [Lakshmi Raman, Ph.D.](#)

Oakland University, Rochester Hills, MI

Research Summary: Researching children's understanding of exercise on physical health

Volunteer Research Assistant (2017 - 2018)

- Writing vignettes and administering experiment sessions with both college students and preschool children ages 3-4

- Contacting daycare directors to plan data collection time
- Transcribing data collection sessions and coding data

Facial Affect Laboratory [Dean Purcell, Ph.D.](#)

Oakland University, Rochester Hills, MI

Research Summary: Researching effect of angry stimuli on participants' task performance, also known as Anger Inferiority

Undergraduate Research Assistant (2016 - 2017)

- Recruiting participants through SONA
- Administering the experiment protocol with participants (college students)
- Assisting with data coding and analysis, attending weekly lab meetings
- Conducting literature reviews

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Psychology of Parenting *Department of Psychology, Vanessa Cao, M.S.*

University of Rochester, Rochester, NY (Fall, 2024)

Invited Guest Lecturer: At-Risk Parenting and Child Maltreatment

Introduction to Psychology *Department of Psychology, Anetta Snell, M.S.*

University of Rochester, Rochester, NY (Spring, 2024)

Invited Guest Lecturer: Overview of Developmental Psychology

Psychology of Human Motivation *Department of Psychology, Chris Niemiec, Ph.D.*

University of Rochester, Rochester, NY (Spring, 2023)

Graduate Teaching Assistant: Holds weekly office hours, leads weekly discussion-sections, grades papers for upper-level writing section of course, grades weekly reflection papers, grades exams, assists students with studying and writing papers

Social and Emotional Development *Department of Psychology, Laura Elenbaas, Ph.D.*

University of Rochester, Rochester, NY (Fall, 2022)

Graduate Teaching Assistant: Holds weekly office hours, grades exams, grades papers for upper-level writing section of course, assists students with studying and writing papers

Psychological Statistics *Department of Psychology, Rebecca Malatesta, Ph.D.*

Oakland University, Rochester Hills, MI (Winter, 2017)

Teaching Assistant: Holds weekly office hours, assists students with homework and SPSS use, organizes and leads review sessions, grades homework, creates study guides

CERTIFICATIONS

2024 *NYS Mandated Reporter Certification, NYS Office of Children and Family Services*

2018 *Behavior Analyst Certification Board Registered Behavioral Technician*

2018 *Crisis Prevention Institute, INC. Nonviolent Crisis Intervention*

2015 *Mental Health First Aid USA Mental Health First Aid Training*

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

Autism Home Support Services *Ann Arbor, MI (2018-2019)*

ABA (Applied Behavioral Analysis) Therapy Registered Behavioral Technician:

- Provides one-on-one therapy to children of all ages on the ASD spectrum, engages in approved therapy techniques to enhance social, educational, and communication skills, communicates with family members of children, as well as with the Board Certified Behavioral Analyst (BCBA), to complete individualized therapy plan best suited for children, performs data collection to study effectiveness of each treatment, and works in-home with clients adapting to each household's unique home environment

MORC, Inc. *Troy, MI (2018)*

ABA Therapy Behavioral Technician Aide:

- Undergoes extensive training to become certified in working one-on-one with children on the ASD spectrum, engages in approved therapy techniques to teach skills for children, communicates with family members, as well as with the BCBA, to complete therapy plan best suited for children, completes payments and documents client charges into company system, performs data collection to document effectiveness of each treatment, works with clients and at a center, engaging with other staff and clients in group activities, but has experience conducting therapy sessions in-home with clients

RELEVANT VOLUNTEER AND LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Psychology Department DEI Committee Co-Chair *University of Rochester (2024-present)*

- Student co-chair of the Psychology department's DEI committee. Roles include planning and leading meetings and presenting on initiatives within the department.

GLC - DEI Subcommittee Member *University of Rochester (2022-2024)*

- Student-led organization that meets monthly to discuss issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion within the psychology department. Co-chair of the Fundraising Subcommittee, where students plan events to raise money for different DEI-related initiatives
- Co-organized a virtual fundraiser for Rochester's Center for Youth organization. Together, the fundraiser collected over \$500 to go towards aiding local youth in need.

GLC - Welcome/Social Committee Co-Chair *University of Rochester (2022-2023)*

- Student-led organization that meets monthly to plan events and initiatives within the psychology department.
- As co-chair, organized social events for the department and planned welcome events for incoming first-year students.

Psychology Department DEI Committee Member *University of Rochester (2022-2023)*

- Member of the Psychology department's DEI committee, where issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion within the department are discussed. Active voting member

Independent Fundraiser for Detroit Rescue Mission *Self-led (2020)*

- Independently fundraised over \$600 through social media to purchase clothing for a men's homeless shelter in Detroit.

International Allies Secretary *Oakland University (2016-2018)*

- Secretary of the student-run organization that helps connect international students with domestic students. Roles include helping to organize monthly meetings, planning events for club members, communicating with club members, designing event flyers, and coordinating with other student-run organizations

Student Program Board *Oakland University (2017-2018)*

- Member of the University-run organization that enhances campus life by planning campus-wide events for all Oakland University students

Basic Social Skills Program Volunteer through OUCares *Oakland University (2018)*

- Helps children (ages 5-12) with ASD interact with peers, work on patience and focus, and have fun making arts and crafts

Assistant Yoga Instructor through OUCares *Oakland University (2017)*

- Aids and encourages children and adults who have various special needs (ages 8+) to engage in yoga activities, with an emphasis placed on teaching social skills while children learn the important of health and fitness

The Social Club through Birmingham Family YMCA *Birmingham, MI (2017)*

- Helps adults with various special needs interact in a social setting, chaperones field trips that help members engage with strangers and practice social skills outside of the YMCA, assists with running movie nights, supervises adults swimming in the pool

Student Liaison for Psi Chi *Oakland University (2015-2016)*

- Roles include helping to organize monthly meetings, communicating with club members, making announcements to different psychology classes, and communicating with different professors in the department

RELEVANT SKILLS

- Experience teaching young children, high school students, and college-age students in both formal classroom settings as well as social and informal settings
- Formal training in *SPSS* and *R* computer statistical program
- Experience with ASA24, dietary food recall program
- Experience using REDCap as a data entry system
- Experience writing academic theses and literature reviews
- Experience presenting poster sessions and oral sessions at local, state-wide, and national level conferences
- Familiarity with many psychological research methods

REFERENCES

Melissa Sturge-Apple, Ph.D., Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education for University of Rochester's Arts, Sciences, & Engineering Department, Professor of Child Development, Co-Director of *Rochester Center for Research on Children and Families (RCRCF)*; *University of Rochester, Phone: 585-275-8711, Email: melissa.sturge-apple@rochester.edu*

Julie Lumeng, M.D., Associate Dean for Research for University of Michigan Medical School, Assistant Vice President for Research-Clinical and Human Subjects Research at University of Michigan, Executive Director for Michigan Institute for Clinical and Health Research (MICHR), Thomas P. Borders Family Research Professor of Child Behavior and Development, Professor of Paediatrics, Former Associate Chair for research in Department of Paediatrics, and Former Director of Center for Human Growth and Development;
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Phone: 734-936-4185, Email: jlumeng@umich.edu

Holly Brophy-Herb, Ph.D., Professor at Michigan State University, Associate Editor of the Infant Mental Health Journal, recipient of Extension's Key Partner award, co-founder of the Michigan Infant-Toddler Research Exchange, Department of Human Development and Family Studies at Michigan State University
Michigan State University, East Lansing, Phone: 517-355-3397 Email: hbrophy@msu.edu

Dean Purcell, Ph.D., Professor at Oakland University, Studies Visual Perception and Psychology, Honors College Thesis Advisor
Oakland University, Rochester Hills, Phone: 248-421-4056, Email: purcell@oakland.edu