

Cynthia Zierhut Ursu, Ph.D.

Licensed Clinical Psychologist (CA PSY19810)

Personal Information

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Educational History

- 1992 University of Colorado at Boulder, *Bachelor of Arts*
Major: Psychology & Sociology
Honors: Cum Laude with honors
- 1997 Vanderbilt University; Nashville, Tennessee. *Master of Science*
Major: Child Clinical Psychology
Minor: Developmental Psychology
- 2001 University of California Los Angeles, *Doctor of Philosophy*
Major: Developmental Psychology
Minor: Experimental Psychopathology
Dissertation: Facilitative factors of the home environments of young children with autism.

Clinical Experience

2018-Current President, Every Child, a Not for Profit Corporation, Folsom, California
Every Child Educational Conference, 2017, 2018 in San Francisco, California

2004-Current President, Early Days Autism Center, Incorporated. Folsom, California.
Applied Behavior Analysis, ESDM program for children ages infants to 48 months with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Specializing in parent-coaching, facilitating playgroups, and preschool implementation (G-ESDM).
Certified *Early Start Denver Model Lead trainer*, provided trainings to professionals from Australia, Europe, Thailand, Mexico and US.

Psychological Practice established in 2004. Psychological assessments for children with psychological, behavioral, emotional, and learning issues. Specializing in assessment of Autism Spectrum Disorder for children zero to three. Proficient on a wide variety of neuropsychological assessments. Individual psychotherapy, social and relationship skill based groups and parenting consultations.

6/13-2/17 Psychologist II, Department of Psychiatry, University of California, Davis M.I.N.D. Institute. Project Manager and Lead Trainer ESDM Training

Program

- 2009-2011 Psychologist II, Department of Psychiatry, University of California, Davis M.I.N.D. Institute. Clinician, Infant Sibling Study (IS). Principal Investigator Sally Ozonoff, Ph.D. The IS is part of an International consortium of studies investigating the very earliest manifestations of autism in infancy, using prospective methods to track the onset of symptoms and better understand underlying mechanism that might put infants at risk of developing autism. Duties include providing clinical and diagnostic determination for subjects ages 6 – 24 months of age.
- 2005-2007 Psychologist II, M.I.N.D. Institute, University of California, Davis Research psychologist conducting behavioral assessments of all children (ages 2-5 years) participating in the Autism Phenome Project (APP). Principal Investigator: David Amaral, Ph.D. Project management which included oversight of staff who conduct data management of behavioral project under the supervision of Dr. Sally Rogers. Family Support Lead investigator for APP providing supervision for Family Support Liason.
- 2004-2005 Staff Therapist, Child and Family Center. Outpatient and school based mental health psychotherapist for children, adolescents, and their families in large non-profit community mental health center. Other duties included providing supervision to interns in psychological testing practicum, teaching parenting class for parents of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders, and program development for broadening services to individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders.
- 2004-2005 Counselor, College of the Canyons. Responsible for providing brief individual psychotherapy to college students.

Specialized Training

Early Start Denver Model – Trainer. Trained by Dr. Sally Rogers, developer of early intervention model for toddlers and preschoolers with Autism.

Executive Coaching (18 Hours) - College of Executive Coaching: The Leader in Coach Training for Professionals with Graduate Degrees

Autism Diagnostic Interview- Revised
Autism Diagnostic Observation Scale (all modules)
Broader Phenotype Autism Symptom Scale (research tool)
Autism Observation Scale for Infants (research tool)
Mullen Scales of Early Learning
Bayley Scales of Infant Development- III
Wechsler Scales of Intelligence (all)

Clinical Research Management

- 5/12-17 Psychologist II, Department of Psychiatry, University of California, Davis M.I.N.D. Institute. Project Manager PATH Study (Strengthening the effects of parent-implemented early intervention to improve symptoms of ASD) Principal Investigator Sally Rogers, Ph.D. The PATH study is a multi-site randomized control trial examining the efficacy of the parent training program for the Early Start Denver Model for children at risk for autism ages 12- 30 months. Duties included providing clinical oversight for the parent training supervision of the interdisciplinary clinical team
- 3/11 - 5/12 Clinical Manager, Margot Prior Wing -Autism Specific Early Learning and Care Centre, La Trobe University. The MPW is a 20 place group therapeutic setting for very young children with ASD utilizing the Early Start Denver Model (ESDM), the first to evaluate the efficacy of the ESDM in a preschool environment. Duties include clinical oversight to the program including supervision of allied health, teaching staff (2 psychologists, speech-language pathologist, occupational therapist, 4 educators and 4 assistants) and intern program. Training staff and parents in the ESDM and oversight of clinical evaluation and research efforts.
- 2007-2011 Psychologist II, Department of Psychiatry, University of California, Davis M.I.N.D. Institute. Clinical Supervisor, Early Steps Study (ESS), Principal Investigator Sally Rogers, Ph.D. The ESS is a multi-site randomized control trial examining the efficacy of the Early Start Denver Model as a treatment approach for children at risk for autism ages 12- 24 months. Duties included providing clinical oversight for the parent training and in-home treatment for the children in the treatment group, supervision of the interdisciplinary clinical team (social worker, two team leaders, 10 interventionists, speech and language therapist, an occupational therapist and the scheduler on the team), and project management that included institutional review board and clinical trial management, and hiring new staff.

Teaching Experience

Developmental Psychology:

- 2000-2005 Lecturer, Department of Psychology, University of California, Los Angeles. Applied Developmental Psychology Minor (courses below, 8 quarters)
- 2003- 2005 Instructor, Chapman College, Interim University Center – College of the Canyons Psychology Department (2 quarters, 2 courses scheduled 2005)
2001. Teaching Assistant, Department of Psychology, UCLA

Applied Developmental Psychology Minor (courses below 2 quarters)
Psychology Major (course below, 1 quarter)

Courses include:

Applied Developmental Psychology
Child in the Family and Community
Children with Special Needs
Culture and Human Development
Infant Development
General Psychology Seminar
Theories of Personality

Professional Memberships

American Psychological Association
Autism Society of America
International Society of Autism Research

Service

Access Coaching: *Opening Doors to Inclusion*, Founder, Sacramento, CA: *Current*
Capital Christian Center- Evening of Dreams: Founding Director, Sacramento, CA 2010
Capital Christian Center, Special Needs Ministry Founding Director, 2005-2010
Capital Christian School, Board of Trustees. Sacramento, California: 2006-2010
Child Educational Center, Board of Trustees. La Canada, CA 2000-2003

Publications

Rogers SJ, Estes A, Vismara L, Munson J, **Zierhut C**, Greenson J, Dawson G, Rocha M, Sugar C, Senturk D, Whelan F, and Talbott M. Enhancing Low-Intensity Coaching in Parent Implemented Early Start Denver Model Intervention for Early Autism: A Randomized Comparison Treatment Trial. (2019) Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders.

Vivanti G, Dissanayake C, **Zierhut C**, Rogers SJ; Victorian ASELCC Team. Brief Report: Predictors of Outcomes in the Early Start Denver Model Delivered in a Group Setting (2012). Journal of Autism Developmental Disorders.

Nordahl, C. W., Simon, T., **Zierhut, C.**, Solomon, M., Rogers, S., & Amaral, D., (2008) Methods for acquiring Structural MRI data in 2 – 4 year old children without the use of sedation. Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders

Sigman, M., Ruskin, E., Arbelle., Corona, R., Dissanayake., Espinosa, M., Kim, N., Lopez, A., & **Zierhut, C.** (1999) Social competence in children with autism, down syndrome, and other developmental delays: A longitudinal study. Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development.

Stone, W., Ousley, O.Y., & **Littleford, C.** (1998). Motor imitation in young children with autism: What's the object?. Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology.

Presentations:

Zierhut, C, Vivanti, G, Dissanayake, C & Rogers, S. (2013) Sustainable implementation of early intensive behavioural intervention in the community: the Victorian ASELCC program. Toddler Treatment Network Meeting, Autism Speaks

Dissanayake, C, Zierhut, C & Vivanti, G (2013) Beyond the RCT: Extending Delivery of the Early Start Denver Model in the Real World to Foster Best Practice. International Meeting for Autism Research

Zierhut, C. (2011& 2009) Early Start Denver Model Introductory & Advanced Workshop, Irabina, Melbourne Australia.

Zierhut, C & Vivanti, G. (2011) Treatment gains in children receiving the Early Start Denver Model in a Group Setting. The Australia Asia Pacific Autism Conference.

Rogers, S., Vismara, L., Winter, J., Zierhut, C. (2012 & 2010) Early Start Denver Model Introductory & Advanced Workshop. The Summer Institute on Neurodevelopmental Disorders, Sacramento, California

Zierhut,C., Rogers, S., Hessel, D., Green, C., McCormick, C (2007) Sensory Responsivity: A Cross Measure Comparison. Poster presented at the International Meeting for Autism Research.

Hessel, D., Zierhut, C., McCormick, C., Green,C., Rogers, S. (2007) Electrodermal Responses to Sensory Stimuli in Children with Autism. Poster presented at the International Meeting for Autism Research.

Jimenez, E., Siller, M., Zierhut, C., Rozga, A., & Sigman, M. (2006). Maternal Synchronization: Understanding the Nature of Individual Differences in Maternal Behaviors during Play. Poster presented at the International Meeting for Autism Research.

Zierhut, C. (2002, November). Facilitative factors of the home environments of children with autism. Poster presented at the International Meeting for Autism Research.

References

Cheryl Dissanayake, Ph.D. Olga Tennison Autism Research Centre (03) 9479 1162
email: c.dissanayake@latrobe.edu.au

Sally Rogers, Ph.D. 2825 50th Street, Sacramento, California 95817 (916) 703-0264.
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Sally Ozonoff, Ph.D. 2825 50th Street, Sacramento, California 95817 (916)
703-0259. email: sally.ozonoff@ucdmc.ucdavis.edu

David Amaral, Ph.D. 2825 50th Street, Sacramento, California 95817 (916) 703-0225
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