

CURRICULUM VITAE
ALEXIS MERCULIEF, PH.D.

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

BALLMER INSTITUTE FOR CHILD BEHAVIORAL HEALTH, UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

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RESEARCH INTERESTS

I investigate risk and resilience factors in the built and social environment, especially cultural and community resilience factors, as promoters of executive function and related skills for children from underserved backgrounds, with a focus on American Indian and Alaska Native communities. I am also passionate about elevating and uplifting Indigenous theory development work in the social sciences.

EDUCATION

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| 2023 | Ph.D., Human Development and Family Studies (Oregon State University) |
| 2019 | M.S., Human Development and Family Studies (Oregon State University) |
| 2012 | B.A., Psychology (Summa Cum Laude, Seattle Pacific University) |

RESEARCH POSITIONS

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| August 2023-2025 | Postdoctoral Fellow, Stanford University Center on Early Childhood Supervisor: Jelena Obradovic, Ph.D. Member of the IES (E3) Equity in Early Childhood Education Postdoctoral Fellowship |
| 2017-2023 | Graduate Research Assistant to Drs. Megan McClelland and Shannon Lipscomb (Oregon State University) Projects: Developing a Measure of Self-Regulation for Children At-Risk; Children's flame retardant exposures measured by passive wristbands |
| 2019-2020 | Graduate Research Assistant to Drs. Megan Pratt and John Geldhof (Oregon State University) Projects: Oregon Early Learning Structural Indicators, Oregon Childcare Research Partnership, Green Chimneys Therapeutic Intervention for Children with Special Needs, Positive Youth Development in a Kenyan Context |
| 2011-2015 | Undergraduate and Post-Baccalaureate Research Assistant Dr. Beverly Wilson (Seattle Pacific University) Projects: self-regulation in children with Autism ages 3-6 years old. |

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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| 2023-2025 | Guest Lecturer (Stanford University, Graduate School of Education) <i>Lectures Taught:</i> Indigenous CBPR and Prevention Science, Ethnic-Racial Socialization in Early Childhood |
| 2020-2021 | Instructor (Oregon State University eCampus) <i>Courses taught:</i> HDFS 361 Research Methods (5 terms) |
| 2017-2019 | Graduate Teaching Assistant (Oregon State University) <i>Courses assisted:</i> Human Sexuality (3 terms; Lectures Taught: Power and Coercion), Child Development (2 terms; Lectures Taught: Teratogens and Prematurity; Emotional and Social Development in Early Childhood), Research Methods (2 terms) |

WORK EXPERIENCE

- 2018** **Graduate Intern, Friends of the Children (FOTC; Portland, Oregon)**
Duties: Revised and implemented annual Alumni survey for youth who graduated from FOTC's youth mentorship program. Managed alumni relations and events. Assisted with the creation of a new Alumni Council at FOTC.
- 2013-2017** **Education Case Manager, Youth Services Manager, Seattle Indian Health Board**
Duties: Supervised four staff and managed four grants (City Levy, SAMHSA, IHS, Seattle Foundation) totaling over \$1.5 million. Provided wrap-around services and education advocacy to enrolled families. Created and taught curriculum for supplemental education programs: "Mathletes" Summer Camp and "Sprouts" After School Reading Program. *Accomplishments:* Earned over \$50,000 in bonus/performance pay and donations for SIHB. Led youth program to score above the national average on the Youth Program Quality Initiative (YPQI) Assessment. Improved school attendance rates for youth by an average of 2% (almost 4 full school days per year).
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GRANT SUPPORT AND FUNDING

Funding Type and Agency: Diversity Supplement Award (Dissertation), National Institutes of Health
Role: PhD Student Researcher (Mentee). Lipscomb, S., McClelland, M. M., & Kile, M. (2021-2023). *Examining Flame Retardant Exposure, Neurocognitive Effects, and Resilience Factors in Children from Underserved Racial/Ethnic Backgrounds in Preschool*. National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. PI: Lipscomb.

PUBLICATIONS

- Merculief, A., Omar, J., Aguilar, G., Steyer, L., & Obradovic, J.** (In press). Early childhood educator stress, burnout, and racism and inequity beliefs. *Early Childhood Education Journal*.
- DeJoseph, M., **Merculief, A.**, Sulik, M.J., & Obradovic, J. (In press). Understanding learning variability in early childhood: An equity-centered assessment of cognitive regulation among diverse preschool children. *Early Education and Development*.
- Merculief, A., McClelland, M.M., Foster, S.A., Geldhof, G.J., Lipscomb, S.T., Anderson, K., & Kile, M.** (2025). Socioeconomic and racial-ethnic disparities in flame retardant exposure and executive function skills in preschool children. *Environmental Health*, 24(46). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12940-025-01200-8>
- Merculief, A., Tsethlikai, M., & Muniz, F.** (2024). Applying an Indigenous connectedness framework to examine environmental risk and protective factors for urban American Indian children's executive function development. *Behavioral Sciences*, 14(12). <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs14121202>
- Lipscomb, S.T., **Merculief, A.**, & Phelps, B. (2025). Measuring resilience in young children: The Child and Youth Resilience Measure- Early Childhood (CYRM-EC). *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 70, 347-357. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2024.11.004>
- Merculief A., Lipscomb S.T., McClelland M.M., Geldhof G.J., & Tsethlikai, M.** (2023) Nurturing resilience in American Indian/Alaska Native preschool children: the role of cultural socialization, executive function, and neighborhood risk. *Front. Psychol.* 14:1279336. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1279336
- Martin, T., **Merculief, A.**, Young, R.I., White, L., Marshall, S.M., Waubanasum, C., White, E.J., & Russette, H. (2023). Striving to be Pono (balanced, just, fair, & hopeful): Conceptualizing an indigenous writing process from a Native Hawaiian cultural perspective. *Adversity & Resilience Science*, 4, 435-458.

Gonzales, C., **Mercurief, A.**, Ghetti, S., & McClelland, M.M. (2022). Longitudinal relations between uncertainty monitoring, executive functioning and academic achievement during the transition to kindergarten. *Child Development*, 93(2), 1-16.

McClelland, M.M., Gonzales, C.R., Cameron, C., Geldhof, G.J., Bowles, R., Nancarrow, A., **Mercurief, A.**, & Tracy, A. (2021). The head-toes-knees-shoulders revised (HTKS-R): Links to academic outcomes and measures of EF in young children. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 1-14.

MANUSCRIPTS IN PREPARATION

Mercurief, A., Richardson, M., & Quiroz Sierra, V. Indigenous Theories and Frameworks of Human Development: A Scoping Review. [Manuscript in preparation.] Graduate School of Education, Stanford University.

Mercurief, A., et al. Network Analysis of Individual, Family, and Community Stressors: Relations with Child Behavioral Health and Parent Narratives. [Manuscript in preparation]. Graduate School of Education, Stanford University.

Mercurief, A., & Aguilar, G., & Omar, J. Weaving together ethnicity, race, and culture: The ethnic-racial and cultural socialization quilt. [manuscript in preparation]. Graduate School of Education, Stanford University.

Foster, S.A., Kile, M.L., Geldhof, G.J., **Mercurief, A.**, Lipscomb, S.T., MacDonald, M., McClelland, M.M., Anderson, K., Chang, S., Megowan, M., & DeRuyter, T. Have flame retardant chemical exposures changed over time? An exposure assessment using silicone wristbands among Oregonian preschool-aged children before and during the COVID-19 pandemic [Manuscript in preparation]. College of Public Health, Oregon State University.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Mercurief, A., Richardson, M., & Quiroz Sierra, V. (2025). Elevating Indigenous Theories and Frameworks of Human Development. [Paper Symposium]. Native Children's Research Exchange Conference, Denver, CO.

Mercurief, A., Tsethlikai, M.T., & Muniz, F. (2025). Environmental Risk and Protective Factors for Urban American Indian Children's Executive Function: Emphasizing Connectedness. In: Waters, S. (Chair), *Elevating Kinship and Cultural Connectedness in Supporting Indigenous Child Development*. [Paper Symposium]. Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting, Minneapolis, MN.

Mercurief, A., McClelland, M.M., Kile, M., Geldhof, G.J., & Lipscomb, S.T., (2023). *Disparities in PBDE and OPFR flame retardant exposure: Influences on early childhood executive function and community resilience-promoting factors* [Poster presentation]. American Public Health Association, Atlanta, GA.

Mercurief, A., Lipscomb, S.T., & McClelland, M.M. (2022). Examining risk and resilience in the built and social neighborhood environment for American Indian/Alaska Native preschool children. In Tsethlikai, M. (Chair), *Exploring Protective Factors to Promote Cognitive Development and Well-being in Indigenous Children in the Midst of Economic, Environmental, and Social Stressors* [Paper Symposium]. Society for Research in Child Development, Salt Lake City, UT.

Mercurief, A.; Chen, Q., Foster, S.A.; Ozenbaugh, I.; Bradetich, A.; Carlson, S., Braithwaite, P., Lipscomb, S.T., & McClelland, M.M. (2022). *Early childhood teacher experiences of workplace support and self-reported distress during the COVID-19 pandemic*. [Poster presentation]. National Research Conference on Early Childhood. Virtual Conference.

Ahmadi, A., **Mercurief, A.**, & Ozenbaugh, I. (2022). *Training Executive Function in Young Children: Effects on Working Memory and Basic Math Skills*. [Poster presentation]. Society for Research in Child Development Special Topics Meeting, St. Louis, Missouri.

- Carlson S. L., Elliot A., Karing J., Bradetich A., **Merculief A.**, Ozenbaugh I., Ahmadi A., & McClelland M. M. (2022). *The relationship between parent stress and preschool children's self-regulation in families with low-income*. [Poster presentation]. International Society for the Study of Behavioral Development, Athens, Greece.
- Merculief, A.**, Blodgett, J., Bolding, C.W., Asige Lawrence, M., Orucho, J., Esokomi, A., Omuse, D., & Onyiko, K. (2021). *Seeking harmony: The juxtaposition between positive and negative community influences for Kenyan youth*. [Poster presentation]. Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting, Virtual Conference.
- Geldhof, G.J., Blodgett, J., Chandler, K., Bowers, E.P., Onyiko, K., Allen, L., Bolding, C.W., McQuillin, S., **Merculief, A.**, & Thompson, D. (2021). Positive youth development across three Kenyan contexts: An inductive approach. In: Thomas, K. (Chair), *Contextual Influences on Youth Character Development: Evidence from Kenya, Brazil, and Canada*. [Paper Symposium]. Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting, Virtual Conference.
- Gonzales, C., **Merculief, A.**, Ghetti, S., & McClelland, M.M. (2021). *Longitudinal Relations between uncertainty monitoring, executive functioning and academic achievement during the transition to kindergarten*. [Poster presentation]. Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting, Virtual Conference.
- Merculief, A.**, & McClelland, M.M. (2019). *English proficiency and executive function in dual language learners enrolled in Head Start*. [Poster presentation]. Society for the Study of Human Development, Portland, OR.
- Gonzales, C., **Merculief, A.**, Sciuto, I., Tracy, A., Karing, J., & McClelland, M. (2019). *Uncertainty monitoring predicts academic achievement at the transition to kindergarten*. [Paper Symposium]. Cognitive Development Society, Louisville, KY.
- Merculief, A.**, Sciuto, I., Alonso, J., Finders, J. & McClelland, M. (2018). *Cumulative family resources and children's self-regulation: Where does change occur?* [Poster presentation]. Oregon Parenting Educators Conference, Corvallis, OR.
- Merculief, A.** & Paddock, M. (2017). *From isolation to belonging: Fostering resilience in Native American youth*. Oral presentation by former colleagues at Washington State Public Health Association Conference, Wenatchee, WA.
- Merculief, A.**; Wilson, B; Miller, H. & Murray, R. (2013). *Spontaneous mimicry: Reflection of facial expression in children with autism*. [Poster presentation]. Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Conference, Seattle, WA.

AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

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| 2021-2023 | Native Children's Research Exchange, Cohort 10 Scholar Selected for 18-month fellowship program in Native Children's Research. Received cultural and academic mentorship and tailored career development training. |
| 2019 | Certificate, Early Childhood Research Summer Institute (Johns Hopkins University: Center for American Indian Health) Attended the 2019 Tribal Early Childhood Research Summer Institute for graduate credit as a scholarship recipient. July 14-19, 2019, Baltimore, M.D. |
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PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD)**, Indigenous Caucus Member
- American Public Health Association (APHA)**
- Society for the Study of Human Development (SSHD)**

Native Children Research Exchange (NCRE)

SERVICE & VOLUNTEER

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| 2025- present | Oregon Department of Education/Department of Early Learning and Care's Kindergarten Assessment Advisory Panel member |
| 2023-present | Founding member, Society for Research in Child Development's Indigenous Caucus |
| 2025 | Peer Review, <i>International Journal of Adolescence</i> |
| 2024 | Peer Review, <i>Developmental Science</i> |
| 2023 | Reviewer, Robert Wood Johnson Evidence 4 Action Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Served as community peer reviewer for CFP and grant applications |
| 2023 | Graduate Student Peer Reviewer, <i>Journal of Adolescence</i> Supervising Faculty: John Geldhof, Ph.D. |
| 2019-2023 | Founding Member, Anti-Racism Student Group Member of the student-led, collaborative group dedicated to exploring topics surrounding anti-racism in academia, centered in Dr. John Geldhof's DepTH lab. Collaboratively wrote a statement of belonging for the DepTH Lab: (https://health.oregonstate.edu/labs/DePTh/statement-of-belonging). |
| 2019-2021 | Representative, College of Public Health and Human Sciences Graduate Council (Oregon State University) <i>Duties:</i> Student representative for the Human Development and Family Studies program. Increased departmental collaboration via quarterly meetings and events including the Fall Harvest Social and Annual CPHHS Research Poster Symposium. |
| 2020 | Graduate Student Representative for Human Development and Family Studies Instructor Search Committee (Oregon State University) <i>Duties:</i> Helped to create qualification matrix, screen candidates, conduct interviews, and select a new full-time Instructor for the department. |
| 2019 | Graduate Student Mentor, "Yes, I Am" Student Club (Oregon State University) <i>Duties:</i> Graduate student mentor for undergraduate student club focused on self-efficacy, positivity, and mental health. Workshops taught: Stress and Coping Mechanisms (November, 2019). |