Student Accomplishments

- Jessica Vaughn-Jensen was recently awarded the Pearson/Trainers of School Psychology Professional Development Scholarship at their annual conference in Philadelphia, PA.
- Ryne Pulido, Rebecca Winters, Jenny Marshall, Allana Dillworth, and Amanda Joslin’s poster on the perceived self-concept and popularity of children in a Hispanic/African American sample was accepted for presentation at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association in August of 2012.

Other News

- Dynamic classrooms study receives news coverage! http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lr8gj6FBDU8&feature=youtube_gdata_player
- Funding available for undergraduate student travel to conferences. For more information see, funding awards Dr. Blake.
Current & Upcoming Projects

Stand Up Against Bullying
Dr. Blake in collaboration with Drs. Stephenson and Hughes and community youth development programs in Bryan-College Station have teamed up to conduct a pilot study on factors that influence bystander intervention in bullying situations. The first part of this study to pilot a drama-based bullying prevention program that aims to reinforce bystander intervention in bullying situations was completed in the fall semester. We are not beginning data collection on the second aspect of the study to assess what factors influence bystanders’ willingness to intervene in a bullying situation. Data collection for the second phase of the study will begin March 5th in out-of-school time programs in the College Station community. This study is funded by a grant from the Society for the Study of School Psychology awarded to Drs. Blake & Stephenson.

Early Development of Relational Aggression
Limited research has controlled for other gender-linked behaviors or characteristics that might explain gender differences in childhood aggression such as gender socialization practices and biological factors. Thus, in collaboration with Drs. Gerianne Alexander and Jeffrey Liew, we are examining whether gender differences in relational aggression persist among preschool children after controlling for other gender-linked behaviors. Data collection began in the fall of 2011 with preschools in the Bryan-College Station area and is still underway.

Dynamic Classrooms
In the fall of 2012, the PRA lab will team with Dr. Mark Benden (Principal Investigator) and faculty in the School Rural Public Health and Center for Community Health Development to examine the academic and health impacts of replacing traditional desks with standing desks in local classrooms. Previous research and pilot studies have suggested that the use of these desks may have a beneficial effect on children’s health, academic performance, and behavior. We anticipate that findings from this study will contribute to school-based interventions to reduce childhood obesity. This study is funded by a grant from the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute on Child Health and Human Development awarded to Drs. Benden, Blake, Wendell & Zhou.
Lab Spotlight

Marie Casanova is an undergraduate research assistant in the PRA Lab from San Antonio, TX. She recently began working with us and has been a great help with recruiting participants for the Stand Up Against Bullying study. Marie has also assisted in preparing scripts and assessments for the study. She is currently studying psychology at Texas A&M and will graduate in May! Her plans for after graduation include finding employment in a psychology-related field and preparing to apply to graduate school next year. Marie’s research interests are centered around prejudice and stereotyping, and she is particularly interested in GLBT issues. We are thankful for Marie’s hard work and wish her the best of luck in her future endeavors!

Dissertation Corner

Lab member Jessica Vaughn-Jensen is beginning her dissertation research, which will explore predictors of interpersonal violence. She will be examining the association between experiencing child abuse and exhibiting aggressive behavior or being victimized in peer relationships, how these variables may relate to one’s risk of experiencing intimate partner violence later in life, and if teacher support may reduce the negative impact for interpersonal violence in young adults. Good Luck, Jessica!!

The PRA Lab Members in Action

Dr. Blake and an undergraduate RA, Gilbert Yguerabide working with students at the Lincoln Center during filming of Stand Up Against bullying videos.

Dr. Hughes practicing lines with students at the Lincoln Center for Stand Up Against bullying videos.

Undergraduate RAs, Marie Casanova and Kaylee Franklin recruiting study participants for the Stand Up Against Bullying study.

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Free Money—Awards and Grants!

TAMU School Psychology Student Travel Awards

School Psychology students who present at professional conferences may be eligible to receive up to $300 in travel reimbursement! All students may apply, even if they already receive funding from other sources. Please note that application materials must be submitted both before and after attending the conference! Award decisions are made in January and July.

Travel Award for Undergraduate RAs in the PRA Lab

Dr. Blake will offer small travel stipends to Undergrad RAs in the lab who are presenting at a national conference. Undergrad RAs may be eligible to receive up to $300 in travel reimbursement for conference attendance. Dr. Blake will be using the Montague-Center for Teaching Excellence Award funds she received in Fall of 2011 to support undergraduate students involvement in research. Please contact Dr. Blake 3 months before your conference to inquire more about this opportunity.

Paul E. Henkin School Psychology Travel Grant

This grant provides up to $1000 to defer costs of attending the annual APA convention. Students must be a member of division 16. The application deadline is April 15. For more information please visit: www.apa.org/apf/funding/henkin.aspx

Upcoming Conferences

- National Association of School Psychologists,
  - February 12-16, 2013, Seattle, WA
  - Proposal submission deadline: June 2012
- Society for Research in Child Development
  - April 18-20, 2013, Seattle, WA
  - Proposal submission deadline: September 20, 2012
- American Educational Research Association
  - April 27-May 1, 2013, San Francisco, CA
- American Psychological Association
  - August 2-5, 2012, Orlando FL
  - July 31-August 4, Honolulu, HI

Lab Spotlight

Amanda Joslin has been a member of the PRA Lab since August of 2011. She earned a B.A. in Psychology from the University of South Florida, and is currently a first year student in the School Psychology program. Amanda’s hometown is Ft. Meyers, FL, and prior to attending Texas A&M, she spent three years researching suicide prevention and the therapeutic alliance at USF. Amanda is the project manager of the Stand Up Against Bullying study, and she has worked extremely hard to bring it to fruition! Her research interests include teacher and parent roles in peer relations, motivation, and the effects of technology on peer relations. Her goal for the future is to become a school psychologist and work for a school district. Amanda’s diligence and contributions to the lab are greatly appreciated!