

Cara L. Kelly

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. Human Development and Family Sciences; May 2024

University of Delaware, Newark, DE

Dissertation Title: *Investigating Classroom Quality in a Head Start Context: A Mixed Methods Approach*

Committee: Dr. Jason T. Hustedt (chair), Dr. Rena A. Hallam, Dr. Anamarie A. Whitaker, Dr. Laura L. Brock

Master of Education in Teaching, Learning, and Advocacy; December 2016

College of Charleston, Charleston, SC

Bachelor of Science in Psychology; May 2012

College of Charleston, Charleston, SC

EMPLOYMENT

2025-present *Senior Research Associate*, Early Childhood Education Institute, University of Oklahoma-Tulsa

2024-2025 *Postdoctoral Research Fellow*, Early Childhood Education Institute, University of Oklahoma-Tulsa

2019-2024 *Graduate Research Assistant*, Department of Human Development and Family Sciences, University of Delaware

2017-2019 *Program Evaluator*, Department of Teacher Education, College of Charleston

2016-2017 *Research Specialist*, Department of Teacher Education, College of Charleston

2012-2017 *Research Associate*, Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning, University of Virginia

GRANTS AND CONTRACTS

2026-2027 Community Action Project-Tulsa (CAP-Tulsa). Child Assessment Research Project (\$199,981). PI: Gallagher, Co-PI: **Kelly**

2026-2027 Community Action Project-Tulsa (CAP-Tulsa). Oklahoma Early Childhood Partnership Study (\$105,841). PI: Gallagher, Co-PI: **Kelly**

- 2026 The American Electric Power Foundation. “Building Capacity for Early Childhood Mental Health Support in a PSO Community” (\$25,000). PI: Gallagher, Co-PI: **Kelly**
- 2025-2026 Society for Research in Child Development, Small Grants for Early Career Scholars “Quality Matters: Exploring Families’ Perceptions of Infant and Toddler Care” (\$5,376). PI: **Kelly**
- 2025-2026 Educare Tulsa. Educare Implementation Study (\$377,637). PI: Gallagher, Co-PI: **Kelly**
- 2025-2026 Community Action Project-Tulsa (CAP-Tulsa). Child Assessment Research Project (\$196,000). PI: Gallagher, Co-PI: **Kelly**
- 2025-2026 Community Action Project-Tulsa (CAP-Tulsa). Oklahoma Early Childhood Partnership Study (\$105,926). PI: Gallagher, Co-PI: **Kelly**
- 2025 Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness. “Accessing Quality: Examining Experiences of Families Waitlisted for Infant and Toddler Care” (\$200,000). PI: Gallagher, Co-PI: **Kelly**
- 2024-2026 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Child and Families, Secondary Analyses of Head Start Data Grant. “A Systematic Examination of Historical Changes in Head Start’s Population and Developmental Trajectories: A Secondary Data Analysis of the Family and Child Experiences Survey Data Sets” (\$100,000). PI: Whitaker, Co-PI: **Kelly**

AWARDS AND HONORS

- Spring 2026 Early Career Awardee, Research and Creative Activity Awards, Office of the Vice President for Research and Partnerships, University of Oklahoma
- Fall 2025 Third place poster award, Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR) conference (\$300)
- Spring 2025 AERA Early Education/Child Development SIG’s Outstanding Dissertation Award (\$500)
- Fall 2024 Third place poster award, Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR) conference (\$300)
- Summer 2024 National Research Center on Poverty and Economic Mobility Early-Career Mentoring Institute (ECMI) selected participant, Institute for Research on Poverty, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- Spring 2024 Strattner-Gregory Child Advocacy Graduate Award, Human Development and Family Sciences Department, University of Delaware (\$2,500)
- Spring 2024 AERA Early Education/Child Development SIG Graduate Student Travel Grant (\$300)
- Summer 2023 Summer Doctoral Fellowship, Graduate College, University of Delaware (\$7,333)
- Spring 2023 Amy Rextrew Graduate Award, Human Development and Family Sciences Department, University of Delaware (\$2,500)

- Spring 2023 AERA Early Education/Child Development SIG Graduate Student Travel Grant (\$500)
- Spring 2023 SRCD Graduate Student Travel Award (\$300)
- Fall 2022 Human Development and Family Sciences Dissertation Support Grant, Human Development and Family Sciences Department, University of Delaware (\$500)
- Fall 2016 Outstanding Graduate Student Award, Department of Teacher Education, College of Charleston

PEER REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

- Slicker, G., **Kelly, C. L.**, & Hustedt, J. T. (2026). State policy predictors of child care centers' utilization of subsidies for children from underserved groups. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 188, 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2026.109090>
- Kelly, C. L.**, Horm, D. M., Ruvalcaba, D. V., & Van Pay, C. K. (2026). Exploring pathways of quality in a statewide center-based infant and toddler initiative. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 76(3), 135-146. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2026.02.005>
- Kelly, C. L.**, Whitaker, A. A., Burchinal, M., Jenkins, J. M., & Vandell, D. (2026). Testing the structure-process-outcome model across different early care and education policy contexts. *Developmental Psychology*, 62(2), 442-461. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1037/dev0002018>
- Hustedt, J. T., Slicker, G., & **Kelly, C. L.** (2025). Populations served by child care centers accepting subsidies and linkages with state subsidy policies. *Early Education and Development*, 37(1), 107-129. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10409289.2025.2537462>
- Slicker, G., Hustedt, J. T., Stoffers, M., & **Kelly, C. L.** (2025). Enrollment practices in early education centers: Examining implementation in the Arkansas state pre-k program. *AERA Open*, 11(1), 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23328584251357591>
- Slicker, G., Fauchaux, A., Hustedt, J. T., & **Kelly, C. L.** (2024). Access to early care and education for the historically underserved: Characteristics of programs that enroll children from prioritized populations. *International Journal of Early Childhood Education*, 30(2), 51-74. <http://dx.doi.org/10.18023/ijece.2024.30.2.003>
- Kelly, C. L.**, & Hustedt, J. T. (2024). Teachers' perceptions of quality in Head Start. *Child & Youth Care Forum*, 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10566-024-09844-2>
- Tang, J., Pic, A., **Kelly, C. L.**, & Hallam, R. A. (2024). Parents' perspectives on child care search processes and consumer education resources. *International Journal of Early Childhood*, 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13158-024-00389-y>
- Kelly, C. L.**, Slicker, G., & Hustedt, J. T. (2024). Family characteristics, parenting behaviors, and infants' and toddlers' social-emotional skills. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 52, 603-615. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-022-01425-z>

- Stoffers, M., **Kelly, C. L.**, Whitaker, A. A., & Barnes, T. (2023). Long-term associations between parental warmth and social-emotional well-being for children with disabilities. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 69(4), 368-416.
- Kelly, C. L.**, Brock, L. L., Swanson, J. D., & Russell, L. (2022). Teacher engagement scale for professional development. *Journal of Educational Issues*, 8(1), 261-278.
<https://doi.org/10.5296/jei.v8i1.19636>
- Tang, J., **Kelly, C. L.**, & Pic, A. (2021). Latent profile analysis of toddler parents' perceptions of early care and education arrangements. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 129, 106206. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2021.106206>
- Slicker, G., Tang, J., & **Kelly, C. L.** (2020). Workforce-, classroom-, and program-level predictors of quality in infant and toddler programs: How subsidized programs compare with other center-based programs. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 119, 1-11.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105675>
- Brock, L. L., Kim, H., **Kelly, C. L.**, Mashburn, A., & Grissmer, D. (2019). Theory of mind directly and indirectly facilitates kindergarten adjustment via verbal ability, executive function, and emotion knowledge. *Psychology in Schools*, 56, 176-193.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.22216>
- Kim, H., Cameron, C. E., **Kelly, C. L.**, West, H., Mashburn, A., & Grissmer, D. (2018). Using an individualized observational measure to understand children's interactions in low-income kindergarten classrooms. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*, 37(8), 935-956. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0734282918819579>

MANUSCRIPTS IN REVISION

- Kelly, C. L.**, Stoffers, M., & Hustedt, J. T. (revise & resubmit). Educators' experiences with children with disabilities and behaviors that are challenging in Head Start. *Journal of Early Intervention*.
- Kelly, C. L.**, Stoffers, M., Whitaker, A. A., Barnes, T. N., & Rutherford, T. (revise & resubmit). Classroom quality and child outcomes for children with and without disabilities in Head Start programs. *Exceptional Children*.
- Park, Y. R., Jang, W., Horm, D. M., **Kelly, C. L.**, Trentman, A., Acton, M. S., & Gallagher, K. C. (revise & resubmit). Parent-teacher cocaring and child development: The mediating role of parent-child relationships. *Early Education and Development*.
- Stoffers, M., **Kelly, C. L.**, Lee, J. H., Hooper, A., & Slicker, G. (revise & resubmit). Social-emotional profiles of students with disabilities and their relationship to social, behavioral, and academic outcomes. *Exceptional Children*.

MANUSCRIPTS UNDER REVIEW

Kelly, C. L., & Whitaker, A. A. (under review). Two decades of change: Historical trends in the characteristics and school readiness skills of children entering Head Start.

Kelly, C. L., Whitaker, A. A., Burchinal, M., & Hustedt, J. T. (under review). Examining high stakes accountability measures in Head Start: A mixed methods approach.

Slicker, G., Hustedt, J. T., Lewis, S., Hallam, R. A., **Kelly, C. L., & Buell, M.** (under review). Expectations and transition supports for entering kindergarteners: Profiles of Delaware kindergarten teachers.

Whitaker, A. A., **Kelly, C. L., Watts, T. W., Lipsey, M., Cristancho, J. C., Jenkins, J. M., Bailey, D., Duncan, G. J., Botvin, C., Cordero, T. M. C., Stoffers, M., & Rosengarten, M.** (under review). A systematic review of research designs used to evaluate state and locally funded pre-k programs.

MANUSCRIPTS IN PROGRESS

Kelly, C. L., Gallagher, K. C., Van Pay, C. K., Pic, A., Pan, Y., Ssentuuwa, R., & Lee, H. (in progress). Families navigating infant-toddler care: Pathways, barriers, and supports to access.

Kelly, C. L., Fischer, R., Whitaker, A. A., Markowitz, A., Jenkins, J. M., Vandell, D. L., Sadowski, K., Greenberg, E., Guerrero-Rosada, P., Purtell, K., Burchinal, M. R., & Hirsh-Pasek, K. (invited proposal – in progress). At what cost? The systemic risks of child care deregulation.

BOOK CHAPTERS

Gutshall, C. A., & **Kelly, C. L.** (2021). Noncognitive influences on talent development. In J. D. Swanson & M. Van Sickle (Eds.), *Talent development in school: An educator's guide to implementing a culturally responsive talent identification and development program* (1st ed., pp. 203-216). Prufrock Press Inc.

Kelly, C. L., & Brock, L. L. (2021). Assessing the impact of teacher learning. In J. D. Swanson & M. Van Sickle (Eds.), *Talent development in school: An educator's guide to implementing a culturally responsive talent identification and development program* (1st ed., pp. 261-279). Prufrock Press Inc.

RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL REPORTS

Kelly, C. L., & Gallagher, K. C. (2025). *Family-centered solutions for child care access: Insights from families and system leaders*. Early Childhood Education Institute.
https://www.ou.edu/content/dam/Tulsa/ecei/docs/2026/Accessing%20Quality%20Policy%20Brief_FINAL.pdf

- Gallagher, K. C., **Kelly, C. L.**, Gonzalez, L., Van Pay, C. K., Lee, H., & Ssentuuwa, R. (2025). *Supporting families' access to quality care for infants and toddlers: A systems approach*. Early Childhood Education Institute. https://www.ou.edu/content/dam/Tulsa/ecei/docs/2026/Accessing%20Quality%20Report_FINAL.pdf
- Kelly, C. L.**, Hustedt, J. T., & Slicker, G. (2024). *Enrollment of children from historically underserved backgrounds in center-based child care programs*. Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood. <https://www.dieec.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Enrollment-of-Children-From-Historically-Underserved-Backgrounds-in-Center-Based-Child-Care-Programs.pdf>
- Kelly, C. L.**, Hustedt, J. T., Slicker, G., & Fauchaux, A. (2024). *Demographic diversity and enrollment of priority populations in early childhood centers*. Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood. <https://www.dieec.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/CCDF-Brief-6.pdf>
- Stoffers, M., **Kelly, C. L.**, Hustedt, J. T., & Francis, J. (2021). *Demographic trends on access to professional development during the COVID-19 pandemic*. Delaware Institute for Excellence in Early Childhood. <https://www.dieec.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Research-Snapshots-Demographic-Trends-on-Access-to-PD-during-the-COVID-19-pandemic-11-21.pdf>
- Adams, C. L.***, Blodgett, J., Brewer, A., Brock, L., Cameron, C., Cordier, A., Cottone, E., Deutsch, N., Dormal, J., Duran, C., Grissmer, D., Jiranek, P., Kim, H., Lieberman, S., Lorick, B., Mashburn, A., Murrah, W., Thomas, J., Walker, K., Warne, R., & West, H. (2017). *Evaluating and improving the WINGS for kids after-school social and emotional learning program*, Edna McConnell Clark Foundation. https://americorps.gov/sites/default/files/evidenceexchange/WINGS_FinalReport_update_d_May2019_508_1.pdf (*authors in alphabetical order)

WORKING PAPERS

- Whitaker, A. A., **Kelly, C. L.**, Watts, T. W., Lipsey, M., Cristancho, J. C., Jenkins, J. M., Bailey, D., Duncan, G. J., Botvin, C., Cordero, T. M. C., Stoffers, M., & Rosengarten, M. (2026). A systematic review of research designs used to evaluate state and locally funded pre-k programs. (EdWorkingPaper: 26-1545). Annenberg Institute at Brown University: <https://doi.org/10.26300/ebc6-je24>. Under Review.

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

- Jang, W., Gallagher, K. C., **Kelly, C. L.**, & Acton, M. (2025, May). *Raising children together: Parent-teacher relationships and children's development*. Invited presentation at the Educare Network Meeting, Flint, Michigan.

Hustedt, J. T., & **Kelly, C. L.** (2024, September). *The family factor of social emotional development: A look at the evidence on the impact of family functioning, stress, and parenting behaviors on social emotional skills and functioning of Early Head Start children*. Invited speaker on the Evidence for Education podcast, University of Delaware Partnership for Public Education.

Kelly, C. L. (2023, October). *Understanding quality in early care and education*. Invited speaker at Nemours Children's Hospital Junior Investigators Network, Newark, Delaware.

Kelly, C. L. (2023, September). *Quality: What matters in early care and education?* Invited speaker at the 2023 Spark! Symposium, Newark, Delaware.

Kelly, C. L. (2023, March). *Academic and behavioral outcomes among children with developmental disabilities*. Moderator for flash talk session conducted at the biennial conference of the Society for Research in Child Development, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Kelly, C. L. (2023, March). *Early care and education quality indicators, implementation, and policy*. Chair for symposium conducted at the biennial conference of the Society for Research in Child Development, Salt Lake City, Utah.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Kelly, C. L., & Whitaker, A. A. (2026, September). *Historical changes in Head Start: Classroom quality and children's achievement*. Paper presentation at the 2026 meeting of Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness (SREE), September 23rd–26th, Baltimore, Maryland.

Gallagher, K. C., **Kelly, C. L.**, Gonzalez, L. & Van Pay, C. K. (2026, June). *Families navigating access to quality infant-toddler programs: A systems approach*. Poster presentation at the 2026 meeting of the Administration for Children and Families' National Research Conference on Early Childhood (NRCEC), June 22nd–24th, Arlington, Virginia.

Gallagher, K. C., Jang, W., & **Kelly, C. L.** (2026, June). *Early Head Start classroom language support and child development in the transition to preschool*. Poster presentation at the 2026 meeting of the Administration for Children and Families' National Research Conference on Early Childhood (NRCEC), June 22nd–24th, Arlington, Virginia.

Kelly, C. L., & Whitaker, A. A. (2026, March). *Demographic and entry level skill trends in a shifting policy context: A systematic evaluation of historical changes in Head Start's population*. Paper presentation at the 2026 meeting of Association for Education Finance and Policy (AEFP), March 19th–21st, Chicago, Illinois.

Jang, W., Gallagher, K. C., & **Kelly, C. L.** (2026). *Raising children together: Building inclusive family-teacher relationships in Head Start settings*. Poster presentation at the 2026 meeting of the Conference on Research Innovations in Early Intervention (CRIEI), February 19th–21st, San Diego, California.

- Kelly, C. L.,** Horm, D. M., Ruvalcaba, D. V., & Van Pay, C. K. (2025, November). *Investigating quality in a statewide center-based infant and toddler initiative*. Paper presentation at the 2025 meeting of the Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management (APPAM), November 13th-15th, Seattle, Washington.
- Kelly, C. L.,** Brock, L. L., & Curby, T. W. (2025, May). *Assessing the long-term effects of a professional development intervention on teachers' beliefs and classroom practices*. Paper presentation at the 2025 meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), May 1st-3rd, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
- Whitaker, A. A., & **Kelly, C. L.** (2025, May). *A systematic evaluation of historical changes in Head Start's population*. Paper presentation at the 2025 meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), May 1st-3rd, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
- Slicker, G., Hustedt, J. T., & **Kelly, C. L.** (2025, April). *Linking state-level subsidy policies and the enrollment of CCDF's priority populations in early childhood centers*. Paper presentation at the 2025 meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), April 23rd-27th, Denver, Colorado.
- Stoffers, M., **Kelly, C. L.,** Lee, J., Hooper, A., Slicker, G., & Whitaker, A. A. (2025, April). *Social-emotional profiles of students with disabilities and their association with teacher-student relationships*. Paper presentation at the 2025 meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), April 23rd-27th, Denver, Colorado.
- Kelly, C. L.,** Van Pay, C. K., Horm, D. M., & Ruvalcaba, D. V. (2025, March). *Exploring pathways of quality in a statewide center-based infant and toddler initiative*. Paper presentation at the 2025 meeting of the Association for Education Finance and Policy (AEFP), March 13th-15th, Washington DC.
- Kelly, C. L.,** Whitaker, A. A., Burchinal, M., Jenkins, J. M., & Vandell, D. (2024, November). *Testing the early care and education structure-process-outcome model*. Paper presentation at the 2024 meeting of the Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management (APPAM), November 21st-23rd, National Harbor, Maryland.
- Kelly, C. L.,** Whitaker, A. A., Burchinal, M., & Hustedt, J. T. (2024, November). *Examining high stakes accountability measures in Head Start: A mixed methods approach*. Paper presentation at the 2024 meeting of the Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management (APPAM), November 21st-23rd, National Harbor, Maryland.
- Slicker, G., Fauchaux, A., Hustedt, J. T., & **Kelly, C. L.** (2024, June). *Access to early care and education for the historically underserved: Characteristics of programs that enroll children from prioritized populations*. Paper presentation at the 2024 meeting of the Administration for Children and Families' National Research Conference on Early Childhood (NRCEC), June 24th-26th, Arlington, Virginia.

- Kelly, C. L.** (2024, April). *Investigating classroom quality in a Head Start context: A mixed methods approach*. Roundtable presentation at the 2024 meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), April 11th-14th, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- Hustedt, J. T., Slicker, G., **Kelly, C. L.**, & Faucheux, A. (2024, April). *Enrollment of priority populations and child demographic diversity profiles: Links with state subsidy policies*. Paper presentation at the 2024 meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), April 11th-14th, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- Slicker, G., **Kelly, C. L.**, & Hustedt, J. T. (2023, April). *Comparing early education center enrollment priorities based on participation in Arkansas's state pre-k program*. Paper presentation at the 2023 meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), April 13th-16th, Chicago, Illinois.
- Stoffers, M., **Kelly, C. L.**, Whitaker, A. A., & Barnes, T. N. (2023, April). *Examining classroom quality and academic and behavioral outcomes for children with and without disabilities*. Paper presentation at the 2023 meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), April 13th-16th, Chicago, Illinois.
- Kelly, C. L.**, Whitaker, A. A., & Burchinal, M. (2023, March). *An empirical examination of the structure-process-outcomes model within Head Start programs*. Paper presentation at the 2023 meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), March 23rd-25th, Salt Lake City, Utah.
- Kelly, C. L.**, Stoffers, M., Whitaker, A. A., Barnes, T. N., & Rutherford, T. (2023, March). *Relationship between classroom quality and children with and without disabilities' academic and behavioral outcomes*. Flash talk presentation at the 2023 meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), March 23rd-25th, Salt Lake City, Utah.
- Hustedt, J. T., Slicker, G., Stoffers, M., & **Kelly, C. L.** (2023, March). *Enrollment practices and child diversity in state pre-k, Head Start, and other early childhood centers*. Poster presentation at the 2023 meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), March 23rd-25th, Salt Lake City, Utah.
- Whitaker, A. A., Watts, T., Bailey, D., Duncan, G., Jenkins, J., Lipsey, M., Amaya, J. C., Botvin, C., Cordero, T., **Kelly, C. L.**, & Stoffers, M. (2022, November). *Reviewing the research methods used to evaluate pre-k programs*. Paper presentation at the 2022 meeting of the Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management (APPAM), November 17th-19th, Washington, DC.
- Kelly, C. L.**, Whitaker, A. A., & Burchinal, M. (2022, September). *An empirical examination of the structure-process-outcomes model in early care and education*. Paper presentation at the 2022 meeting of the Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness (SREE), September 21st-24th, Arlington, Virginia.

- Whitaker, A. A., Watts, T., Bailey, D., Duncan, G., Jenkins, J., Lipsey, M., Amaya, J. C., Botvin, C., Cordero, T., **Kelly, C. L.**, & Stoffers, M. (2022, September). *A systematic review of research methods used to evaluate state and local pre-kindergarten programs*. Paper presentation at the 2022 meeting of the Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness (SREE), September 21st–24th, Arlington, Virginia.
- Kelly, C. L.** & Whitaker, A. A. (2022, June). *Do curriculum and coaching supports in Head Start classrooms predict classroom and child outcomes?*. Poster presentation at the 2022 meeting of the Administration for Children and Families' National Research Conference on Early Childhood (NRCEC), June 27th-29th, virtual conference.
- Stoffers, M., **Kelly, C. L.**, Hustedt, J. T., & Francis, J. (2022, June). *Demographic trends on access to professional development during the COVID-19 pandemic*. Poster presentation at the 2022 meeting of the Administration for Children and Families' National Research Conference on Early Childhood (NRCEC), June 27th-29th, virtual conference.
- Kelly, C. L.**, Stoffers, M., Whitaker, A. A., & Barnes, T. N. (2022, April). *Understanding the relationship between parental warmth and social-emotional well-being for children with and without disabilities*. Paper presentation at the 2022 meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), April 21st-26th, San Diego, California.
- Kelly, C. L.**, Slicker, G., & Hustedt, J. T. (2021, November). *Examining associations between family characteristics, parenting behaviors, and infants' and toddlers' social-emotional skills*. Poster session at the 2021 meeting of the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR), November 2nd-5th, virtual conference.
- Kelly, C. L.**, Slicker, G., & Hustedt, J. T. (2021, April). *Contributions of mothers' parenting behaviors to infants' and toddlers' social-emotional development*. Poster session at the 2021 meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), April 7th-9th, virtual conference.
- Tang, J., **Kelly, C. L.**, & Pic, A. (2021, April). *Latent profile analysis of toddler parents' perceptions of child care arrangements*. Poster session at the 2021 meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), April 7th-9th, virtual conference.
- Slicker, G., Tang, J., & **Kelly, C. L.** (2021, April). *Workforce and program features of quality: How does Early Head Start compare to other programs?* Paper presentation at the 2021 meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), April 7th-9th, virtual conference.
- Slicker, G., Tang, J., & **Kelly, C. L.** (2021, April). *Comparing predictors of quality in infant and toddler early education programs operating in lower-income areas*. Paper presentation at the 2021 meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), April 9th-12th, virtual conference.

- Kelly, C. L., Brock, L. L., & Swanson, J. D.** (2020, April). *Measuring teacher growth in beliefs and behaviors during a sustained professional development experience*. Paper presentation at the 2020 meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), April 17th-21st, San Francisco, California. (Conference canceled)
- Brock, L. L., Kim, H., & **Adams, C. L.** (2017, April). *Longitudinal associations among executive function, visuomotor integration, and achievement: Timing is everything*. Paper presentation at the 2017 meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), San Antonio, Texas.
- Brock, L. L., Kim, H., & **Adams, C. L.** (2017, April). *Mental representation, theory of mind, and social skills: Cross-lagged associations across kindergarten and first grade*. Poster session at the 2017 meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), San Antonio, Texas.
- Brock, L. L., Kim, H., & **Adams, C. L.** (2017, April). *The development of theory of mind: Predictors and moderators of improvement in kindergarten*. Paper presentation at the 2017 meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), San Antonio, Texas.
- Brock, L. L., Kim, H., **Adams, C. L.**, Mashburn, A. J., & Grissmer, D. (2017, April). *Self-regulation, perspective-taking, and student-teacher relationships in kindergarten*. Paper presentation at the 2017 meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), April 6th-8th, Austin, Texas.
- West, H., **Adams, C. L.**, & Kim, H. (2017, April). *Classroom quality as a predictor of classroom behavior in a sample of socio-demographically at-risk students*. Poster session at the 2017 meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), April 6th-8th, Austin, Texas.
- Kim, H., Cameron, C. E., **Adams, C. L.**, & West, H. (2016, April). *Validating an individualized child observational measure in low-income kindergarten classrooms*. Paper presented in B. L. Alford (chair), Classroom observations: Instruments, application, and findings, 2016 American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.
- Cameron, C. E., Kim, H., Mashburn, A., **Adams, C. L.**, West, H., & Grissmer, D. (2015, March). *Classroom conditions to consider when testing the impacts of an after-school SEL program on kindergarteners' classroom engagement*. Paper symposium at the 2015 meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), March 18th - 22nd, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- Brock, L. L., Kim, H., & **Adams, C. L.** (2015, March). *Theory of mind as an indicator of school readiness: The role of perspective taking*. Poster presented at the 2015 meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), March 18th - 22nd, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

STATE AND LOCAL CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Kelly, C. L. (2026). *Bridging the gap: Supporting inclusion for children with disabilities in Head Start classrooms*. Session at the Region VI Head Start Association 2026 Southwest Fall Conference, October 13th-16th, Norman, Oklahoma.

Kelly, C. L., & Gallagher, K. C. (2026). *Using data to strengthen infant-toddler quality, workforce supports, and child outcomes*. Session at the Region VI Head Start Association 2026 Southwest Fall Conference, October 13th-16th, Norman, Oklahoma.

Ssentuuwa, R., Gallagher, K. C., & **Kelly, C. L.** (2026, April). *Oklahoma families' experiences in accessing quality care for their infants and toddlers*. Poster presentation at the 2026 REACH-OUT Conference, April 29th, Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Gallagher, K. C., & **Kelly, C. L.** (2025, October). *Supporting families' access to quality care for infants and toddlers: A systems approach*. Poster presentation at the 2025 Oklahoma Early Childhood Research Symposium, October 7th-8th, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Kelly, C. L., Acton, M., & Gallagher, K. C. (2025, October). *Boosting early literacy through enhanced Head Start programs: The role of attendance and home environments*. Poster presentation at the 2025 Oklahoma Early Childhood Research Symposium, October 7th-8th, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Kelly, C. L., Horm, D. M., Ruvalcaba, D. V., & Van Pay, C. K. (2025, October). *Examining infant-toddler care quality: Insights from a statewide early childhood program*. Poster presentation at the 2025 Oklahoma Early Childhood Research Symposium, October 7th-8th, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Ruvalcaba, D. V., Gallagher, K. C., & **Kelly, C. L.** (2025, October). *Child characteristics and self-regulation shaping classroom interactions*. Poster presentation at the 2025 Oklahoma Early Childhood Research Symposium, October 7th-8th, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Kelly, C. L. (2024, September). *Head Start teachers' perceptions of quality: Promoting high-quality environments*. Poster presentation at the 2024 Oklahoma Early Childhood Research Symposium, September 23rd-24th, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Kelly, C. L., & Hustedt, J. T. (2024, May). *Teachers' perceptions of accountability tools used in Head Start: A mixed methods approach*. Paper session at the 2024 Cross University Collaborative Mentoring Conference (CUCMC), May 31st, New York City, New York.

Kelly, C. L. (2023, April). *Investigating classroom quality in a Head Start context: Preliminary findings*. Paper session at the 2023 Marion Steele Research Symposium, April 28th, Newark, Delaware.

Kelly, C. L. (2022, April). *Features of quality as a predictor of children's outcomes: Examining the structural-process quality pathway*. Paper session at the 2022 Marion Steele Research Symposium, April 29th, Newark, Delaware.

Kelly, C. L., & Brock, L. L. (2021, April). *Validating a teacher engagement scale for professional development*. Paper session at the 2021 Marion Steele Research Symposium, April 23rd, Newark, Delaware.

Adams, C. L., & Brock, L. L. (2014, March). *Theory of mind as an indicator of school readiness*. Paper presentation at the 2014 meeting of the Southeastern Psychological Association (SEPA), March 5th -8th, Nashville, Tennessee.

Adams, C. L., & Kolak, A. M. (2013, March). *Contributions of child characteristics and parenting behavior to toddlers' self-regulation*. Poster presentation at the 2013 meeting of the Southeastern Psychological Association (SEPA), March 12th – 15th, Atlanta, Georgia.

TEACHING

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|-------------|---|
| Fall 2025 | <i>Instructor</i> , HDFS 402: Child and Family Policy, Department of Human Development and Family Sciences, University of Delaware |
| Spring 2025 | <i>Instructor</i> , HDFS 402: Child and Family Policy, Department of Human Development and Family Sciences, University of Delaware |
| Spring 2024 | <i>Guest Lecturer</i> , HDFS 402: Child and Family Policy, Department of Human Development and Family Sciences, University of Delaware |
| Fall 2023 | <i>Guest Lecturer</i> , HDFS 402: Child and Family Policy, Department of Human Development and Family Sciences, University of Delaware |
| Fall 2023 | <i>Guest Lecturer</i> , ECE 709: Investigations in Early Childhood Education, Department of Early Childhood, Multilingual, and Special Education, University of Nevada, Las Vegas |
| Spring 2023 | <i>Guest Lecturer</i> , ECE 709: Investigations in Early Childhood Education, Department of Early Childhood, Multilingual, and Special Education, University of Nevada, Las Vegas |
| Spring 2022 | <i>Co-Instructor</i> , HDFS 220: Child Development I: Ages Prenatal to Age 3, Department of Human Development and Family Sciences, University of Delaware |
| Spring 2022 | <i>Guest Lecturer</i> , HDFS 221: Child Development II: Ages 3 to 10, Department of Human Development and Family Sciences, University of Delaware |
| Spring 2022 | <i>Guest Lecturer</i> , HDFS 402: Child and Family Policy, Department of Human Development and Family Sciences, University of Delaware |
| Fall 2021 | <i>Guest Lecturer</i> , HDFS 402: Child and Family Policy, Department of Human Development and Family Sciences, University of Delaware |
| Fall 2020 | <i>Guest Lecturer</i> , HDFS 615: Research Methods, Department of Human Development and Family Sciences, University of Delaware |

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Board Member

Crosstown Learning Center, 2025-present

Advisory Committee

Oklahoma's SoonerStart Early Intervention Program, 2025-present

Student and Early Career Council Representative, Science and Social Policy Committee
Society for Research in Child Development, 2025-2029

Planning Committee

Cross University Collaborative Mentoring Conference, 2024

Graduate Student Representative for the Early Education and Child Development SIG
American Educational Research Association, 2023-2024

Vice President of the Education Graduate Association
University of Delaware, 2020-2022

Treasurer of the Human Development and Family Sciences Graduate Association
University of Delaware, 2021-2022

Delaware Days Annual Volunteer
University of Delaware, 2020-2024

Ad Hoc Journal Manuscript Reviewer

Child Development, Early Childhood Education Journal, Early Childhood Research Quarterly, Infant and Child Development, International Journal of Early Childhood Education, Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, and Journal of Early Childhood Research, 2022-present

Ad Hoc Conference Reviewer

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) National Research Conference in Early Childhood (NRCEC), the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM), the Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), and the Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness (SREE), 2019-present

CERTIFICATIONS

University of Michigan's MAXQDA Workshop (2024)

ICPSR's Multilevel and Longitudinal Models Using Stata Summer Program (2024)

University of Michigan's Designing and Conducting a Mixed Methods Dissertation or Thesis Workshop (2021)

Certificate of Complete of College of Charleston's Distance Readiness Course (2020)

Certificate of Completion of the University of Delaware's Summer Institute on Teaching (2020)

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Association for Education Finance and Policy
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management
Society for Research in Child Development