The faculty and students in the Developmental Psychology PhD program aim to understand and improve the lives of infants, children, adolescents, young adults and of those entering the late-life years. Through the innovative combination of community-embedded basic science and interventions, as well as experimental methods, the Developmental Psychology program offers unique opportunities for students to build both skills and relationships across the university and local communities.

Research Labs

@Heart Lab (Ha)** We aim to better understand how romantic relationship experiences contribute to adolescents’ emotional and behavioral health. Our newest research focuses on how adolescents use social media in their romantic relationships and friendships.

Learning and Development Lab (Benitez) Our studies focus on understanding how attention, prediction, and memory processes play a role in young children’s monolingual and bilingual word learning.

Emerging Minds Lab (Lucca)** Research in the lab explores how infants and young children learn about the world around them. Current research areas include the development of curiosity, social cognition, and communication, as well as the role of social and cultural factors in shaping early cognitive development.

Adolescent Stress and Emotion Lab (Doane) We use culturally and genetically informed designs to understand the dynamic daily interplay between socioemotional experiences (e.g., loneliness, coping) and indicators of health and well-being (including physiological stress processes and sleep) in the prediction of subsequent psychopathology, physical health and academic achievement.

Genes, Environment, and Youth Development (Su)** We seek to understand how genetic and environmental factors contribute to the development of alcohol use disorders and related health outcomes in diverse populations.

Child Emotion Center (Lemery-Chalfant)** Genetically-informed designs (both quantitative twin studies and molecular genetic studies) are used to understand risk and resilient developmental processes from infancy through young adulthood in the prediction of later mental and physical health.

Courage Lab (Pina) We study factors responsible for the developmental course of anxiety in children and adolescents and developing interventions that test theoretical mechanisms implicated in child and family change.

Lifespan Development Lab (Infurna)** Our lab’s research interests and projects focus on examining resilience to major life stressors and psychosocial predictors of healthy aging in adulthood and old age.

Theory of Mind/Father and Divorce Labs (Fabricius) I investigate how young children construct their concepts of the mental world (theory of mind) and the physical world (object permanence). I am also interested in the impact of father-child relationships on children’s long term physical health, and in changing social policy for divorced fathers and children.

**Accepting students for the 2022-2023 academic year