



Information for Prospective Doctoral Students

Resilience, Equity, And Child Health (REACH) Lab
Faculty Director: Nada Goodrum, Ph.D.

Thank you for your interest in applying for the Clinical-Community Psychology Ph.D. program at USC! Here are some answers to frequently asked questions about our program and my lab that might be helpful.

Are you taking a student for fall 2027?

Yes! I do plan to take a student this cycle.

What does your lab focus on?

- The Resilience, Equity, And Child Health (REACH) lab is committed to improving quality of life and reducing health inequities for children and families dealing with stress. We do this through high-quality, community-engaged research seeking to understand risk and protective factors for child health and trauma-informed prevention and intervention efforts.
- Some broad areas that we study include:
 - How parenting and family relationships influence children's well-being
 - How parents navigate their own life challenges while balancing parenting responsibilities
 - How, and through what mechanisms, parental stress impacts children
 - Sources of resilience for children and families affected by adversity
 - How to leverage parent-child relationships to prevent child difficulties and promote well-being for children, parents, and families
 - How to address health inequities through family-based prevention and intervention
 - How to prevent intergenerational transmission of risk for mental health difficulties, traumatic stress, substance misuse, and HIV/STIs
- Methods we use in our lab include:
 - Quantitative measurement, including interviews and surveys with parents and children
 - Qualitative methods, including focus groups and individual semi-structured interviews with parents and children
 - Ecological momentary assessment (EMA)
 - Actigraphy, which involves having children and/or parents wear a wrist-worn accelerometer that measures their physical activity and sleep

- Clinical trials to evaluate preventive interventions
- Secondary data analyses using publicly available data

What are your lab's values?

- We strive to maintain a lab culture grounded in:
 - Mutual respect
 - A sense of community
 - Cultural humility and social justice
 - Intellectual curiosity
 - Openness to feedback
 - Collaboration and shared success
 - Enthusiasm and passion for our shared mission to serve families affected by adversity

What are some examples of projects your lab has been working on?

- **ImPACT Study:** We recently completed data collection for a pilot randomized controlled trial to evaluate a parent-based prevention program that seeks to address parental stress, enhance positive parenting, and promote children's social-emotional and lifestyle behavior health. This was an NIH-funded project and was focused on parents who have children aged 3-9 and who are dealing with major life stressors (parental trauma, mental health difficulties, substance misuse, HIV/chronic illness, racial discrimination, and/or financial strain).
- **Real-Time Parenting Study:** We are conducting a study with parents who have experienced traumatic events and who have a child aged 5-6 years old, to assess the feasibility and acceptability of using ecological momentary assessment (EMA) and actigraphy to measure daily parent-child interactions in the context of traumatic stress. We are almost finished with data collection for this study.
- **Teen Dating Violence Program Evaluation:** In collaboration with one of our community partners, Sistercare, we are conducting a community-engaged program evaluation of a teen dating violence prevention program.
- **Family Stress and Well-Being Study:** We are using online data collection with parents of children ages 2-12 to evaluate latent profiles of major parental stressors and their associations with child and family functioning.
- I am also open to supporting new projects initiated by students as long as they are within the general umbrella of what we study.

What do you look for in a graduate student applicant?

- Here are a few of the main factors I consider when evaluating graduate student applications:
 - Research fit: One of the most important factors is showing a strong fit between your interests/experiences and the work that we do. You don't have to have research experience in the exact topic that we work on, but it's

helpful to show how and why your interests and goals align with what we do as a lab and the program at USC more generally.

- Commitment to and interest in conducting research: USC is a research-focused program, and being interested in community-engaged/clinical research is an important factor for my lab.
- Commitment to community engagement: Our research is community engaged, meaning we strive to conduct research that is in line with the goals, desires, needs, and strengths of the communities we work with. Applicants who have an interest in engaging and partnering directly with families would be a good fit. Having experience working in the community in some capacity is one way (but not the only way) to show this commitment.
- Commitment to equity and dismantling racism: Equity, cultural humility, and antiracism are values that guide our lab's work. I don't see these as an endpoint but rather a constant work in progress that requires us each to continually learn, grow, and hold one another accountable. Being committed to these values, dedicated to taking action to dismantle racism through our work, and open to growth and accountability are key.
- Motivation/perseverance/autonomy: It's helpful to show an ability to learn new things, persevere through challenging tasks/situations, be self-directed and autonomous (e.g., able to take initiative, able to work through challenges, with mentor support), and have a high level of motivation.
- Keep in mind that you can demonstrate these characteristics in lots of different ways! There is not a one-size-fits-all way to get to grad school and I expect that students will be coming in with varied backgrounds, experiences, and strengths.
- I ask that you please **do not use artificial intelligence (AI) tools in your application materials.** I would like to learn about you in your own voice.
- I especially encourage applications from prospective students from historically marginalized or under-represented backgrounds.

What is your mentoring style?

- Mentoring grad students is a highlight of my job. In general, my role as a mentor is to create a structured, supportive environment where students can develop the skills they need to become clinical-community psychologists; and to help students navigate and successfully move through the milestones and requirements of our doctoral program. To that end, I am committed to providing students with rich opportunities that will help them grow and learn, and with regular feedback and guidance as they gain new skills. I am also here to support students and be a coach & cheerleader through the ups and downs of grad school. This includes prioritizing and supporting students' personal well-being in and out of grad school. Much of our work together will center on research, but I am also here to help students navigate their training more holistically. My goal is not to foster just one type of career path, but rather to ensure that students finish grad school with a robust set of skills that will prepare them for a range of careers in psychology.

- My approach can be described as “high expectations, high support.” I hold high standards for my students, and I provide a lot of hands-on guidance to help students meet those standards.

Where can I learn more about the work you do?

- My faculty page is here:
https://sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/artsandsciences/psychology/our_people/directory/goodrum_nada.php
- Our lab website is here: <https://uscreachlab.com/>
- My website is here: <https://nadagoodrum.com/>
- My google scholar page is here:
https://scholar.google.com/citations?hl=en&user=xVI1CSEAAAJ&view_op=list_works&sortby=pubdate
- The USC Clinical Community Psychology program page is here:
https://sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/artsandsciences/psychology/study/graduate/clinical_community/index.php

What should I do if I have more questions?

- Please feel free to email me! ngoodrum@mailbox.sc.edu