

# Maria Abdul-Masih

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## **Education**

2022 - 2026

### ***The Ohio State University***

Doctor of Philosophy in Human Development and Family  
Sciences (conferred May 2026)

Graduate interdisciplinary specialization: Quantitative Research  
Methods

Graduate minor: Public Policy and Management

Dissertation: “The Role of Early Head Start and Head Start in  
Connecting Families to Needed Resources: Staff Practices  
Utilized and Barriers Faced”

2019 - 2021

### ***Villanova University***

Masters of Science in Psychology

Thesis: “Mutual Responsiveness Supporting the Developmental  
Competence of Infants Experiencing Family Homelessness”

2016 - 2019

### ***Villanova University***

Bachelors of Science in Psychology

Concentration: Cognitive Science

## **Research Interests**

Child development, poverty, access to resources, early child care and education, protective factors, housing insecurity/homelessness, food insecurity, government assistance programs, health and wellbeing, academic achievement, policy and practice, community-engaged research, mixed-method research, implementation and evaluation

## **Professional Employment and Internships**

2021 –2022

Senior Research Assistant in the Early Child Development team at Child  
Trends (promoted to Research Analyst in July 2022)

2021

Policy Analyst and Advocacy Intern at HopePHL (formerly People’s  
Emergency Center)

2016 – 2017

Concussion Clinic Intern, Nemours Alfred I. DuPont Hospital for  
Children

## **Honors, Awards, and Grants**

|                  |                                                                                             |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2026             | Department of Human Sciences Distinguished Dissertation Award                               |
| 2025             | Outreach and Engagement Graduate Student Engaged Scholar Seed Grant (award amount: \$5,000) |
| 2025             | Phi Upsilon Omicron Founder's Fellowship (award amount: \$1,000)                            |
| 2023, 2024, 2025 | Jane Shanely Phi Upsilon Omicron Graduate Scholarship                                       |
| 2023             | Dorothy Scott Scholarship                                                                   |
| 2023             | Inducted into Phi Upsilon Omicron National Honor Society in Family and Consumer Sciences    |
| 2022             | Lucile and Roland Kennedy Scholarship in Human Ecology                                      |
| 2020             | Graduate Summer Research Fellowship (award amount: \$3,000)                                 |
| 2020             | Inducted into Psi Chi Psychology Honor Society                                              |
| 2019             | Two-year Graduate Student Tuition Scholarship                                               |
| 2019             | Villanova University Dean's List                                                            |
| 2015, 2016       | University of Delaware Dean's List                                                          |
| 2015             | Delaware Scholar Award                                                                      |

## **Peer-Reviewed Publications and Theses**

Bratsch-Hines, M., Kuhn, L., Witte, A., Franco-Jenkins, X., **Abdul-Masih, M.**, Ansari, A., Koziol, N., Lin, T-J., Purtell, K., McCormick, M., & the Early Learning Network Key Investigators. (2026). Associations of distal elementary school characteristics with prekindergarten student achievement. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, 103. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2026.101928>

- Link to preregistration: <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/H9RKA>

**Abdul-Masih, M. Y.**, Ansari, A., & Purtell, K. M. (2025). National insights into the stress and well-being of Early Head Start families before and after the COVID-19 pandemic. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 176. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5026642>

- Link to preregistration: <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/UEQH2>

Herbers, J. E., **Abdul-Masih, M.**, Buccelli, A. R., Torre, N., Pintarelli, E. M., & Cutuli, J.J. (2025). Developmental screening and family resilience for infants and toddlers in homeless shelters. *Infancy*, 30(2), e70019. <https://doi.org/10.1111/infa.70019>

Buckley, M. N., **Abdul-Masih, M.**, Yang, Q., Ansari, A., Purtell, K. M. (2023). The cumulative and timing-specific effects of residential mobility on high school truancy. *The High School Journal*, 106(4), 240-253. <https://doi.org/10.1353/hsj.2023.a930438>

- Link to preregistration: <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/ZSWYD>

**Abdul-Masih, M.** (2021). *Mutual responsiveness supporting the developmental competence of infants experiencing family homelessness* (Publication No. 28649948) [Master's thesis, Villanova University].

<https://media.proquest.com/media/hms/PFT/2/EEGiK?s=XNpM4XTiAVdgaP5Mz5wtkmyWhqU%3D>

## **Publications Under Review**

Zimmermann, K., **Abdul-Masih, M.**, Yang, Q., Buckley, M.N., Ansari, A., & Purtell, K. (R&R at Early Childhood Research Quarterly). Children's classroom experiences in pre-K and their social-emotional development.

- Link to preregistration: <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/GT7RY>

Fox, E.G., Purtell, K.M., Schachter, R.E., **Abdul-Masih, M.**, Napoli, A.R., & Joo, Y. (R&R at Early Childhood Education Journal). Examining differences in teachers' beliefs about play in rural, suburban, and urban settings.

## **Publications In Preparation**

**Abdul-Masih, M.**, Purtell, K.M. (in preparation). A Qualitative Investigation of Early Head Start and Head Start Staff Practices Utilized and Barriers Faced When Connecting Families to Resources.

**Abdul-Masih, M.**, Ansari, A., Purtell, K.M. (in preparation). Supporting Families through Early Head Start: Understanding Home Visiting Services Pre- and Post- COVID-19.

Purtell, K., Schachter, R., Joo, Y., **Abdul-Masih, M.**, Fox, E., & Napoli, A. (in preparation) Understanding Alignment in Children's Play-Based Learning in Preschool and Early Elementary School.

Boros, A.D., **Abdul-Masih, M.**, Purtell, K.M., Ansari, A. (in preparation). Parental Perspectives on Supports and Barriers to School Attendance in K-12 Education.

Yang, Q., Zimmermann, K., **Abdul-Masih, M.**, Ansari, A., & Purtell, K. (in preparation). Alignment between preschool and kindergarten classroom experiences: Associations with social and behavioral development.

- Link to preregistration: <https://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/CYED7>

## **Research Reports, Briefs, and White Papers**

**Abdul-Masih, M.**, Purtell, K.M., & Ansari, A. (2025). *The stress and well-being of Early Head Start families before and after COVID-19: A nationally representative investigation*. Columbus, Ohio: Crane Center for Early Childhood Research and Policy & The Ohio State University.

Hirilall, A., Lloyd, C. M., **Abdul-Masih, M.**, & Tout, K. (2022). *Considerations for the Rise Early Learning Center's program model*. Bethesda, MD. Child Trends.

Lloyd, C. M., Shaw, S., Sanders, M., **Abdul-Masih, M.**, & Schaefer, C. (2022). *Reimagining Black families' cultural assets can inform policies and practices that enhance their well-being*. Bethesda, MD. Child Trends.  
<https://www.childtrends.org/publications/reimagining-black-families-cultural-assets-can-inform-policies-and-practices-that-enhance-their-well-being>

LaForett, D.R., Falletta, K., Huz, I., Padilla, C. M., Sapp, A., & **Abdul-Masih, M.** (2021). *Year 1 implementation evaluation summative report: September 30, 2020 –September 29, 2021*. National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (NCPFCE). Bethesda, MD. Child Trends.

**Abdul-Masih, M.** (2021). *Benefits and recommendations related to transitional housing for youth and young people experiencing homelessness*. Research summary created for People's Emergency Center and community partners.

**Abdul-Masih, M.** (2021). *Counts of Pennsylvania's children and youth identified as homeless in fiscal years '18-'20*. Research summary created for People's Emergency Center and community partners.

## **Conference Presentations**

Liu, Y., Lee, J., Piasta, S. B., Hagge, J., Ceviren, A. B., Dore., R., **Abdul-Masih, M.**, Raines, R. M. & Day, N. (2026, February). *Investigating the use and challenges of technology in school-based research*. Oral presentation at the College of Education and Human Ecology Research Forum, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, United States.

Liu, Y., Piasta, S.B., Dore, R., Hagge, J., Raines, R.M., Bunger, A., **Abdul-Masih, M.**, Ceviren, A.B., Lee, J., & Day, N. (2026, February). *Technology in school-based research: Researchers' practices and insights*. Poster presentation at the Pacific Coast Research Conference, Long Beach, CA, United States.

**Abdul-Masih, M.**, Purtell, K.M., Sutton, S., Fuzer, D., & Soria, G. (2025, November 21). *A qualitative investigation of Early Head Start and Head Start staff practices utilized and barriers faced when connecting families to resources: A community-engaged investigation*. Poster presentation at The Ohio State University 2025 Outreach and Engagement Graduate Student Poster Competition, Columbus, OH, United States.

Boros, A.D., **Abdul-Masih, M.**, Purtell, K.M., Ansari, A. (2025, October 16). *Parental perspectives on supports and barriers to school attendance in K-12 education*. Poster presentation at the Crane Center for Early Childhood Research and Policy Symposium on Children, Columbus, OH, United States.

**Abdul-Masih, M.**, Ansari, A., & Purtell, K. (2025, May 1-3). *The continuity and change of Early Head Start families' well-being and stress pre- and post-COVID-19*. Paper presentation at The Society for Research on Child Development Biennial Meeting, Minneapolis, MN, United States.

**Abdul-Masih, M.**, Buccelli, A. R., Cutuli, J. J., Herbers, J. E. (2025, May 1-3). *Infants and toddlers experiencing homelessness: Developmental screening and family protective factors*. Paper presentation at The Society for Research on Child Development Biennial Meeting, Minneapolis, MN, United States.

Purtell, K.M., Ansari, A., Wilberforce, W., Donnally, E., **Abdul-Masih, M.** (2025, May 1-3). *Age composition and children's development in preschool: The role of teacher perspectives and practices*. Oral presentation at The Society for Research on Child Development Biennial Meeting, Minneapolis, MN, United States.

Mehta, S., Liu, Y., **Abdul-Masih, M.**, Ceviren, B., Day, N., Dore, R., Piasta, S.B. (2025, March) *PK-G5 teachers' use of technology in their classrooms, technology self-efficacy, and associations with teacher characteristics*. Poster presentation at the Ohio State University Denman Undergraduate Research Forum, Columbus, OH, United States.

**Abdul-Masih, M.**, Ansari, A., & Purtell, K. (2025, February 20). *The continuity and change of Early Head Start families' well-being and stress pre- and post-COVID-19*. Poster presentation at The Ohio State University College of Education and Human Ecology Research Forum, Columbus, OH, United States.

**Abdul-Masih, M.**, Ansari, A., & Purtell, K. (2024, June 24-26). *National insights into the well-being and stress of Early Head Start families pre- and post-COVID-19*. Poster presented at The Administration for Children and Families' National Research Conference on Early Childhood, Washington, D.C., United States.

Ansari, A., Purtell, K., & **Abdul-Masih, M.** (2024, June 24-26). *The stress and well-being of Early Head Start families before and after COVID-19: A nationally representative investigation*. Oral presentation at The Administration for Children and Families' National Research Conference on Early Childhood, Washington, D.C., United States.

Purtell, K., Schachter, R., Joo, Y. **Abdul-Masih, M.**, Fox, E. & Napoli, A. (2024, June 24-26). *Alignment of classroom play in preschool and early elementary schools: Understanding teacher perspectives*. Poster presented at The Administration for Children and Families' National Research Conference on Early Childhood, Washington, D.C., United States.

**Abdul-Masih, M.**, Purtell, K., Schachter, R., & Joo, Y. (2024, February 22). *Predictors of preschool teachers' provision of play in the classroom*. Poster presented at The Ohio State University College of Education and Human Ecology Research Forum, Columbus, OH, United States.

**Abdul-Masih, M.**, Fox, E., Purtell, K., Lang, S. (2023, March 23-25). *Predictors of TANF receipt in families with young children*. Poster presented at the Society for Research on Child Development Biennial Meeting, Salt Lake City, UT, United States.

**Abdul-Masih, M.**, Fox, E., Purtell, K., Lang, S. (2023, February 16). *Predictors of TANF receipt in families with young children*. Poster presented at The Ohio State University College of Education and Human Ecology Research Forum, Columbus, OH, United States.

**Abdul-Masih, M.Y.**, Keane, J.N., & Herbers, J.E. (2021, May 26-27). *Food insecurity, sleep behaviors, and measures of cognitive function*. Poster presented at the Association for Psychological Science Virtual Convention and Poster Showcase, virtual.

Herbers, J.A., Jennings, K., Cutuli, J.J., **Abdul-Masih, M.Y.**, & Bodas, A. (2021, April 7-9) *Parent-child relationship quality among dyads with infants and toddlers experiencing family homelessness*. Paper Symposium presentation, Society for Research on Child Development Biennial Meeting, virtual.

Keane, J.N., **Abdul-Masih, M.Y.**, Shelleby, E.C., Awada, S.R., Herbers, J.E., Banks, B.I. (2021, April 7-9). *Homelessness and residential mobility: Risks for later academic achievement*. Poster presented at the Society for Research on Child Development Biennial Meeting, virtual.

Kan, I.P., Mikkelsen, E.J.V., Drummey, A.B., Andrew, K., **Abdul-Masih, M.** (2019, November 14-17). *An Examination of the Factors that Contribute to the Continued Influence of Misinformation*. Poster presented at the Annual meeting of Psychonomic Society, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

## **Research Experience**

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| 2022 – Present | <p>Graduate Research Associate at The Crane Center for Early Childhood Research and Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Preschooler’s Experiences and Activities in Childcare (PEACh)</li><li>• Understanding the Needs and Experiences of Early Head Start Children and Families Before and After COVID-19: A Nationally Representative Investigation</li><li>• Collaborating Researchers &amp; Educators Apply Technology to Establish Evidence-Based Practices (CREATE-EBP)</li><li>• Reducing Chronic Absenteeism in Columbus City Schools: A School District-University Partnership</li><li>• A Big Idea for Little Learners: Leveraging Teacher Wage Increases to Improve Preschool Quality</li><li>• Summer Success at Home</li><li>• Preschooler’s Language and use of Media (PLUM)</li><li>• School Characteristics, Classroom Processes, and PK-1 Learning and Development</li><li>• Focus on Learning, Interaction, and Play (FLIP) at Recess</li></ul> |
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|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2017 – 2021 | Research Assistant, Villanova University <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adversity and Resilience in Development lab</li> <li>• Cognitive Neuroscience of Memory lab</li> <li>• Comparative Cognition lab</li> </ul>           |
| 2016 – 2017 | Research Assistant, Nemours Alfred I. DuPont Hospital for Children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Psychology Department</li> <li>• Psychology Pediatric Rehabilitation Department</li> <li>• Cardiology Department</li> </ul> |

## **Teaching Experience**

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|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2019 – 2021 | Teaching Assistant, Villanova University <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cognitive Psychology</li> <li>• Research Methods</li> </ul> |
| 2018 – 2019 | Writing Center Tutor, Villanova University                                                                                                    |
| 2016 – 2017 | Tutor, Boys and Girls Club of Wissahickon                                                                                                     |

## **Service**

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|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2023 – 2026            | Service Chair of Human Development and Family Sciences Graduate Student Organization, The Ohio State University                                            |
| 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026 | Panelist for the Human Development and Family Sciences Graduate Program Informational Session for prospective graduate students, The Ohio State University |
| 2022 –2023             | Social Co-Chair of Human Development and Family Sciences Graduate Student Organization, The Ohio State University                                          |
| 2022                   | Vice Chair of Social Committee, Child Trends                                                                                                               |
| 2020 – 2021            | Vice President of Villanova’s chapter of Psi Chi National Honor Society in Psychology                                                                      |
| 2020                   | System Administrator for the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences research subject pool, Villanova University                                    |
| 2019, 2020             | Panelist for Graduate Programs Informational Session for prospective graduate students, Villanova University                                               |
| 2018 – 2019            | Member of Registration Committee for Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service, Villanova University                                                           |

## **Professional Skills and Values**

- \* Advanced training in conducting and overseeing quantitative and qualitative research methods (e.g., large longitudinal secondary datasets, surveys, interviews, classroom observations, focus groups)
- \* Proficient in the use of data management and analysis software (e.g., Qualtrics, RedCAP, SPSS, Stata, MPlus, Dedoose)
- \* Strong writing ability for wide audiences
- \* Strong project management and leadership abilities
- \* Experienced in building partnerships with community organizations
- \* Proficient in the Microsoft Office Suite (e.g., Excel, Word, PowerPoint, Outlook, Teams, OneDrive)
- \* Works diligently and efficiently when balancing multiple priorities
- \* Strong grant-writing abilities
- \* Passionate about supporting the lives of children and families
- \* Strong interpersonal skills
- \* Organized
- \* Excellent collaboration skills
- \* Goal-oriented
- \* High attention to detail

## **Professional Memberships**

Society for Research in Child Development (Graduate Student Member since January 2021)  
American Psychological Association (Graduate Student Member since September 2021)