

Who Works in the **Child Language and Literacy Lab?**

Our **lab members** include high school, college, and graduate students.

Most of our **graduate students** are working on their Ph.D., and many are certified, licensed speech-language pathologists. Teachers and parents are most likely to meet the Ph.D. students as they are typically the lab members who work with the children who are participants in our research. We work with children in our playroom at Vanderbilt, at their homes, and at their schools.

Our **undergraduate students** and **masters students** are working on a degree in psychology, education or speech-language pathology.

Our **high school students** study at the Vanderbilt Math and Science School or participate in the Research Experience for High School Students.



HOW TO FIND US

Our playroom is located in the
Vanderbilt Bill Wilkerson Center
on the 10th floor of
Medical Center East, South Tower

PARKING

Use the complimentary Valet Parking
in the East Garage at
Vanderbilt University Medical Center.
Enter the East Garage from 21st Avenue,
valet park, take the elevators to the 10th floor,
look for the waiting room sign.

Vanderbilt Bill Wilkerson Center

CONTACT US

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CHILD LANGUAGE **AND** LITERACY LAB

VANDERBILT  School of Medicine



CHILD LANGUAGE AND LITERACY LAB

The Child Language and Literacy Lab focuses on the study of language and literacy development of children with typical development and children with atypical development. We strive to better understand the language learning difficulties of children, while devising and evaluating new methods of instruction and intervention that can improve the language and literacy skills of all children. A better understanding of typical language and literacy development informs our explorations of language and literacy learning difficulties. In our academic and research training we develop graduate students' abilities to conduct rigorous language and literacy research and provide evidence-based language and literacy interventions.

LAB DIRECTOR



C. Melanie Schuele, Ph.D.

is an associate professor in the Department of Hearing and Speech Sciences. She is a licensed, certified speech-language pathologist and a fellow of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Before completing her PhD at

the University of Kansas, Dr. Schuele provided speech-language services at public schools in Texas, at a child care center at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, and at a pediatric hospital in Missouri. She completed post-doctoral training at Arizona State University. Dr. Schuele regularly provides professional development workshops to speech-language pathologists and teachers. She teaches graduate courses in child language development and disorders. The Child Language and Literacy Lab presents their research findings at local, state, and national conferences.

Research and training in the Child Language and Literacy Lab at the Vanderbilt Bill Wilkerson Center has been supported by the National Institutes of Health: National Institute of Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, the United States Department of Education, and the American Speech-Language-Hearing Foundation. In addition, the lab receives support from the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center.



OUR RESEARCH

Talking, reading, and writing are very interconnected skills. Children who are good talkers tend to be good readers and writers. Children with language learning difficulties tend to have difficulty learning to read and write. Our research is focused on understanding the processes that underlie learning to talk, to read, and to write. Our goal is to conduct research that helps children become better talkers, readers, and writers. Preschool and school-age children participate in our research projects. When parents ask: **What will my child do in your research study?** We answer: **Play, talk, read, and write.**

QUESTIONS

Some of the questions that we are currently asking in our research:

- How quickly do children learn complex syntax? Complex syntax involves putting two ideas into a grammatical, complex sentence (e.g., *I ate the cookies because I was hungry; Mommy remembered that brownies are my favorite dessert.*)
- How can we better teach early literacy skills to children with hearing loss?
- What types of teacher talk in preschool classrooms are beneficial for children learning to talk?

