

Center for Children (CYC) Fact Sheet: Guidelines for Conducting Research

Building 381 Valley Drive, College Park, MD

<http://www.education.umd.edu/CYC/>

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Hours: Monday through Friday from 7:45 am to 5:30 pm

The CYC is a research laboratory preschool which provides exceptional developmental support and care for young children, trains early childhood education teachers, provides opportunities for students in college courses to observe children, and enables faculty researchers in child development to conduct research on children's social, cognitive, linguistic, motoric, and emotional development. The CYC is housed in the Department of Human Development and Quantitative Methodology in the College of Education at the University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP). Faculty members from the field of developmental science and other fields conduct research at the center and are from various departments around campus. Graduate and undergraduate research assistants participate on these research projects.

This document, *Guidelines for Research*, provides the expectations and instructions for faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students when conducting research at the CYC. A separate document, *Rules and Etiquette*, is a more general document for all visitors to the CYC.

The process for conducting research at the CYC is as follows:

1. Contact the Director of the CYC about forthcoming research. Initially faculty must contact the Director of the CYC by email, phone, or in person about forthcoming research.
2. Send a draft of the IRB including the research protocol to the Director. The Director will need to provide a letter indicating that the study can be done at CYC for IRB approval.
3. Once the study is approved by IRB, send both the Consent for Research Form and the IRB approval letter to the Director.
4. Since there is only one research room, the initial date of contact with the Director will be the determining factor in scheduling research. Researchers will be accommodated on a first-come first-served basis.
5. Criminal background checks are required for anyone who will be working with a child at the CYC. Please contact the Research Specialist for the procedures. As long as an RA has a clear background check (whether they have the clearance initiated through CYC or whether they have the clearance somewhere else) and it falls within the 365 day acceptance period, then the RA will not need to do another background check for as long as they are continuously doing research at the CYC. If the RA had a background check elsewhere, they will need to fill out paperwork to have that background check released to the CYC. At the end of each Academic year, faculty will inform the CYC Research Specialist of any RAs who have left the UMCP and/or have no plans to conduct any further research while at UMCP. At this point, their names will be removed from state paperwork. This means that RAs should remain on the list for as long as they will conduct research at the CYC, or for their time at UMCP.
6. RAs will distribute parent consent forms as instructed by the Research Specialist. Consent forms will be placed in the children's mailboxes outside of the classroom.

Returned forms will be placed in a folder labeled "Research" across from the front office desk. The Research Specialist will sort consent forms into individual study folders that will be stored in the Research Room. RAs may pick up signed parental forms during CYC business hours. When feasible, it is preferred that RAs present a brief description of their research project to the Research Specialist. The Research Specialist can then highlight specific studies and/or research labs at parent Open School Night.

7. RAs will contact the CYC Research Specialist to make an appointment to visit each classroom where the consent forms are distributed. The Research Specialist will consult the classroom schedule and request the RA's schedule to assist with scheduling these visits. The RAs will spend 5 minutes describing the study to the children and what will be done, and will then spend about 20 minutes joining the classroom activity in an informal manner. Teachers will help RAs identify children who will participate.
8. The Research Room may be scheduled for the semester. The Research Specialist will check in with the labs at the mid-point of the semester to ensure studies are still ongoing and to request researchers release holds for sessions that are no longer needed. Researchers should contact the Research Specialist who will use the Google Calendar for the Research Room schedule. Researchers will update the schedule with their sessions, but it is expected that the Research Specialist will oversee the schedule. The maximum amount that any one faculty member can have access to the Research Room is 3 sessions per week (with a maximum of two morning sessions per week). In consultation with the Research Specialist, faculty can request more time if the room is not being used on another day. If there is a conflict with timing, the CYC encourages RAs to reach out to one another, and to consult with the Research Specialist if a resolution cannot be reached. It is mandatory that PIs and RAs inform the CYC when the project is over or the Research Room will not be used. If researchers require a larger space than what can be provided by the Research Room, they should reach out to the Research Specialist about the possibility of reserving another space in advance (i.e. Conference Room). Use of the conference room is not a guarantee.
9. Research during the academic year begins after October 1st and should be completed by the end of May each school year. Initiating research can begin 2 weeks prior to the start of data collection (mid-September for the fall, and mid-January for the spring). Initiating a project includes distributing parental consent forms, meeting with the teachers, and setting up the Research room schedule.
10. Summer research: If existing research approved during the year is continuing then the RAs will contact the CYC camp coordinators during the staff orientation week to explain the project to the staff. If new research is requested then steps 1 -6 above apply (submitting materials to the Director for review prior to Orientation week). Contact the Program Specialist (301-405-3168) for scheduling visits and research during orientation week.
11. Researchers MUST log in their interactions with each specific child in the log book provided in the research room. The Research Specialist or research aide will be responsible for signing the child in/out of the classroom when participating in research.
12. Any issues or concerns regarding research activities that arise will be shared with the RA's and the supervising faculty member in charge of the project in a timely manner.

13. It is expected that all researchers will send a short report (one page) to the Director and the parents at the conclusion of the study. Parents and staff at the CYC are interested in the results of a study. Summaries can be drafted in parent-friendly text to provide general feedback (see webpage under Research for past examples).

We look forward to continued research from faculty and students. To add your project to the CYC web page under Research, please contact the Director at the contact information above.

(Revised January 31, 2018)