

**Join our Baby Navigator[™] collaboration
with the Office of Early Learning Preschool
Development Grant**

About one in three children in the US enter kindergarten unprepared to learn and lacking sufficient communication skills. Despite the federal mandate for early intervention (EI), less than 25% of children who are eligible for special education at school age are receiving EI services before the age of three. Because delays in communication show up long before language delays are evident, measures of early social communication skills offer a viable solution for earlier detection of children with language delays and subsequent educational challenges. FSU Autism Institute has developed an innovative way of addressing the language gap by coordinating with early learning programs to make an impact as soon as babies begin to show small lags in communication utilizing **Baby Navigator[™]** online tools and resources and **Autism Navigator[®]** courses—developed to



bridge the gap between science and community practice using extensive video footage to illustrate effective evidence-based practices. Each tool or course is designed to increase the capacity of educators and families to improve outcomes of children, with a focus on very young children with delays in communication and early signs of autism.

What will we ask you to do?

- Complete two free online courses: 1) Social Communication Development in Infants and Toddlers (SC•DIT) is organized into 5 domains of social communication development—Language, Play, Social Interaction, Emotional Regulation, and Self-Directed Learning, and 2) Autism Navigator About Autism in Toddlers. These self-paced courses have hundreds of video clips to illustrate social communication milestones that develop from 1 to 24 months of age and the early signs of autism in infants and toddlers.
- Attend a total of 7 virtual webinars. The SC•DIT Webinar is a six-week webinar series for early education teachers that is a companion to the SC•DIT course. Participants will learn how social communication development impacts language, communication, challenging behaviors, and social emotional development, and how improving social communication can reduce the “Word Gap” and improve school readiness. The About Autism in Toddlers Webinar is an opportunity to review video clips of early signs of autism.
- Provide periodic feedback about the course and webinars.
- Invite families to join Baby Navigator and encourage them to use the tools to learn how to support and monitor their child's social communication development.

How will you benefit from the study?

- You will gain information on the importance of early social communication development in infants and toddlers and how it impacts language development, social communication delays and early signs of autism, and how to support learning in infants and toddlers to improve school readiness.
- You will learn to help families better support their child's early social communication development.
- You will have access to our new technology-based resources and tools for on-going professional development in early childhood development.
- You will receive financial incentives for your time in the online training and webinars.
- You will also receive a free tablet to use in the study and keep.

Participation is important. Improving early detection of communication delays in babies could enhance language skills, reduce challenging behaviors, and impact school readiness. Training early learning teachers on how to support social communication development in infants and toddlers is key to closing the language gap for low income children.

**AUTISM
INSTITUTE**

The Florida State University
College of Medicine

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