



In the **Measuring Autism Potential** project we are exploring how children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) who have very limited verbal skills process language, and how their potential for understanding speech can be reliably measured. Our broader goals are to **develop novel methods of assessing children's receptive language skills** that don't rely on traditional measures (such as pointing), and innovative intervention techniques that are especially suited to enhancing language comprehension in older children with ASD.

Who can participate?

Children (age 5-17) and young adults (age 18-21) with no or limited verbal ability and who have a diagnosis of autism are invited to participate.

What is involved?

The study involves several experiments at the computer, during which the child will look at pictures and hear words or sentences played out of speakers. They will be asked to watch the computer screen and through a completely non-invasive eye-tracking system, we measure where they look as a way of interpreting how they understand the sentences. We will also collect event related brain potentials (ERPs) via a non-invasive method for looking at brain activity by placing a net on your child's head. Pictures, phrases and sentences will be presented to your child and their brain activity will be recorded as he/she watches/listens to the video. Additionally, short standardized tests for language and general cognitive ability will be administered, as well as a play-based assessment for autism symptoms. Breaks and reinforcers will be included as needed.



What is the time commitment?

Participants will be invited to our Lab at Boston University for several visits – depending on the child's tolerance for the net used to record ERPs and willingness to complete the assessments. To make sure the child is comfortable wearing the stretchy ERP net we may schedule several training sessions before running the experimental tasks. We anticipate that children will be invited to the lab for 2 to 5 sessions over the course of several weeks.



How are participating families compensated?

Travel and parking are fully covered. We will also compensate you for your time (\$50 at completion of study) and provide small gifts for your children at each visit.

Who is conducting the project?

Our researchers are highly trained staff at Boston University and Children's Hospital Boston. We are funded by The National Institutes of Health.

Where does the study take place?

The visits take place at the Boston University Charles River Campus at the **Research On Autism and other Developmental Disorders** laboratory (ROADD)

For more information about participating in this research project, please contact Daniela:



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