

Bri Hightower

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Education

Northwestern University	Evanston, IL
PhD Student , Media, Technology, and Society program Expected completion: Spring 2021 Advisor: Dr. Ellen Wartella	2016 – present
Master of Arts , Media, Technology, and Society Thesis: <i>How parents support early math and science learning: The role of media and parent comfort</i> Committee: Drs. Ellen Wartella (chair), Alexis Lauricella (co-chair), and Anne Marie Piper	2017
Bachelor of Arts , Communication Studies, School of Communication Sociology minor, Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences Integrated Marketing Certificate, Medill School of Journalism	2014

Research Interests

children and media, caregiver-child interactions, informal learning, educational technology, low-income families, user experience

Grants and Fellowships

National Science Graduate Research Fellow (GRFP) Three years of graduate fellowship funding awarded upon submitting a research proposal to examine how low-income families can be supported to engage in science talk with their preschool children	2017 – present
Brady Scholars Fellow Additional stipend support awarded for mentoring undergraduate scholars between Fall 2017 – Spring 2020 and teaching cohort seminars during Fall 2019 and Winter 2020 that incorporate involvement in a community service project	2017 – present
Jaharis Family Fellow One year of graduate funding generously provided by the Jaharis family. Selection determined by Media, Technology, and Society faculty based upon academic excellence	2016 – 2017

Research Experience**Center on Media and Human Development | Northwestern** Evanston, IL**Graduate Researcher** 2016 –

Conduct research examining (1) parent attitudes about math and science present

informal learning and media for preschool children through interview and a survey, funded by *NSF Award Number: 1252121*, and (2) adolescent and parent beliefs about encountering, discussing, and viewing depictions of difficult topics in streaming television; supervised by Dr. Ellen Wartella**User Experience (UX) Research | Facebook** Menlo Park, CA**Summer Researcher** 2018

Conducted UX research within Facebook by developing and communicating insights to optimize internal products for the employee experience; supervised by Amir Arabhkeradmand

Inclusive Technology Lab | Northwestern Evanston, IL**Graduate Researcher** 2016 –Assisted with research exploring how young children use haptic features 2017 during digital STEM activities, funded by *NSF Award Number: 1522921*; supervised by Dr. Anne Marie Piper**Center for Children and Technology | EDC** New York, NY**Research Assistant II** 2014 –

Worked on projects funded by the U.S. Department of Education, National 2016

Science Foundation, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Google, and the Heising-Simon Foundation. This includes Ready To Learn, digital professional development for New York City educators, developing digital resources to enhance career mentorship for middle grade students, and understanding spatial concepts and reasoning of preschoolers

Center on Media and Human Development | Northwestern Evanston, IL**Research Assistant** 2013 –

Assisted with projects associated with the analysis of food marketing to 2014 children, reproductive health communication to youth, and moral and gender representations in children's media; supervised by Drs. Ellen Wartella and Alexis Lauricella

Story Pirates New York, NY**Education and Media Intern** 2013

Researched and aided the creation of the company's Kids & Family podcast

Publications

Refereed Journal Articles

Hightower, B., Lovato, S., Davison, J., Wartella, E., & Piper, A. M. (in press). Haptic explorers: Supporting science journaling through mobile haptic feedback displays. *International Journal of Human-Computer Studies*, 122, 103-112. doi: 10.1016/j.ijhcs.2018.09.005

Sheehan, K. J., **Hightower, B.**, Lauricella, A. R., & Wartella, E. (2018). Having a family member in a STEM career and exposure to STEM media as predictors of preschool-aged children's science and math skills. *European Journal of STEM Education*, 3(3), 17. doi: 10.20897/ejsteme/3877

Hurwitz, L. B., Lauricella, A. R., **Hightower, B.**, Sroka, I., Woodruff, T. K., & Wartella, E. (2017). "When you're a baby you don't have puberty": Understanding of puberty and human reproduction in late childhood and early adolescence. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 37(7), 925-947. doi: 10.1177/0272431616642323

Chapters in Edited Works

Wartella, E. A., Lovato, S. B., Pila, S., Lauricella, A. R., Echevarria, R., Evans, J., & **Hightower, B.** (2018). Digital media use by young children: Learning, effects and health outcomes. In C. K. Olson & E. Beresin (Eds.), *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and the Media*.

Conference Presentations

Hightower, B., Sheehan, K., Lauricella, A., & Wartella, E. (2018, May). "How parents support early math and science learning: The role of media and parent comfort." Paper presented at the International Communication Association, Prague, Czech Republic.

Rosenfeld, D., **Hightower, B.**, Llorente, C., & Hupert, N. (2016, July). "Supports for teachers, parents, and children in the use of digital media for mathematics learning." Poster presented at the Administration for Children and Families National Research Conference on Early Childhood, Washington, D.C.

Bookser, B., Gerard, S. N., Gutierrez, J., **Hightower, B.**, & Sharifnia, E. (2016, July). "Texting to support early learning opportunities at home." Session presented at the Administration for Children and Families National Research Conference on Early Childhood, Washington, D.C.

Hightower, B., Gutierrez, J., & Sharifnia, E. (2015, December). "Conducting a home study: Successful family engagement methods." Session presented at the National Head Start Parent & Family Engagement Conference, San Diego, CA.

Hurwitz, L. B., **Hightower, B.**, Lauricella, A. R., & Wartella, E. (2015, March). "When you're a baby you don't have puberty: Understanding of puberty and human reproduction in late childhood and early adolescence." Poster presented at the Society for Research on Child Development Biennial Meeting, Philadelphia, PA.

Rosenfeld, D., Hupert, N., Llorente, C., Moorthy, S., Jo, I. Y., Gerard, S., Kamdar, D., & **Hightower, B.** (2015, March). "Media-supported early math learning: Results of a randomized control trial." Poster presented at the Society for Research on Child Development Biennial Meeting, Philadelphia, PA.

Gutierrez, J., **Hightower, B.**, Bookser, B., & Lemley, B. (2015, March). "Pre-school centered design: Creating and selecting websites to suit the cognitive development of preschoolers." Poster presented at the Society for Information Technology and Teacher Education Meeting, Las Vegas, NV.

Online

Sheehan, K., & **Hightower, B.** (2018, February 14). How parents can use media to support their children's STEM learning [Web log post]. Retrieved from <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/parenting4digitalfuture/2018/02/14/using-media-to-support-childrens-stem-learning/>

Hightower, B. (2015, November 19). Using texting to encourage participant engagement and retention [Web log post]. Retrieved from <http://ltd.edc.org/using-texting-encourage-participant-engagement-and-retention>.

Teaching Experience

Teaching Certificate Program | Northwestern Evanston, IL
Participant 2018

During this yearlong program I will critically reflect on teaching practices and classroom instruction. I will develop an implementable course design project that I will teach during the 2019-2020 academic year.

Health Communication | Northwestern Evanston, IL
Guest Lecturer 2018

Created the lesson plan and delivered the lectures for two graduate classes. Lectures topics included (1) Media Effects and Health and (2) Healthcare Teams, Organizations, and Systems.

Sexual Health and Assault Peer Education | Northwestern Evanston, IL
Instructor 2012 –

Taught undergraduate peer educators how to facilitate programs and discussions about sexual health and education on a college campus 2014

School of Education and Social Policy | Northwestern

Evanston, IL

Instructor

2012 –

Developed the curriculum for and taught an accredited, undergraduate course about the history of HIV in America

2013

Service to the Academy**Reviewer | International Communication Association**

2017 –

Review conference submissions for the International Communication Association's conference, division of Children and Adolescent Media

present

Volunteer | Brady Conference on Ethics and Civic Life

2018

Volunteer | InfoSocial Conference

2017

Service to the University**DevSci Cluster Member**

2018

Involved with a graduate student cluster within the Institute for Innovations in Developmental Sciences

Community and Culture Committee Member

2016 –

Plan events and support for students within the Media, Technology, and Society doctoral program as part of the graduate student steering committee

present

Undergraduate Mentor | Brady Program

2017 –

Mentor undergraduate students within the Brady Program to encourage community engagement and design of service projects

present

Research Assistant Training and Mentoring

Students are listed by their education level and academic pursuits when they worked with me.

Abigail Blum, B.A. student studying Psychology and English

2017 – 2018

Elizabeth Diamond, B.A. student studying Education and Social Policy

2017

Janet Lee, B.A. student studying Communication Studies

2017

Consulting Experience**Redscout**

2017

Undergraduate Recognition

Elizabeth W. Arnold Scholarship | Northwestern 2012 – 2014

A full academic scholarship awarded to 3 - 4 undergraduate women yearly

Departmental Recognition of Excellence | Northwestern 2014

Awarded by the School of Communication

Summer Internship Grant Program (SIGP) Fellowship | Northwestern 2013

Awarded funding for an internship at Story Pirates during Summer 2013

Lambda Pi Eta Honorary Society 2011 – 2014

The National Communication Association's official honor society

Dean's List | Northwestern 2011 – 2014

McKinney Education Foundation Excellence Scholarship 2010 – 2014

Awarded by McKinney ISD where I completed secondary education