



**IRVINE NETWORK ON
INTERVENTIONS IN DEVELOPMENT**

Keynote Address by Margaret Burchinal, Ph.D.:
**Past Lessons and Future Directions of Developmental
Methodology**

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Abstract

During the past 40 years, developmental methodology has broadened from being primarily focused on experimental designs to encompassing almost all aspects of developmental science. The advent of accessible fast computers and the advances in statistical methods led to a plethora of methodologies that range from item response theory for more precise measurement to structural equation models for representing complex theoretical models. Methods for describing change over time have advanced from very restrictive approaches to very flexible methods within structural equation modeling and hierarchical linear models. Multi-disciplinary teams within developmental research led to increased focus on methods that reduce selection bias in analyzing observational data and on methods that can combine our understanding from both qualitative and quantitative analyses. Examples of how developmental methods have changed will be provided and attempts will be made to discuss past lessons and suggest future directions.