Abstract: I will present a history of our brain imaging lab efforts over the past decade. We started focusing on fMRI studies that would corroborate the international literature on the neural underpinnings of early literacy and reading difficulties. Our pro-bono reading clinic for the diagnosis of developmental dyslexia (DD), lead to establishing a brain imaging bank of DD and the first brain imaging study of DD in Latin America, which showed a significant difference in resting-state network connectivity in DD children for the left occipitotemporal region. I will also present unpublished results from a longitudinal study of early reading and math, which suggests activation in posterior regions of the brain are associated with good reading and math skills.

Next, I will present an unexpected turn taken by our lab. Owing to an interaction with an international development bank, we carried out a multisite, cross-sectional study of exposure to violence and brain function, in Brazilian and Honduran adolescents. Finally, I will present ongoing studies that aim to make inroads with early literacy practices, and which lead up to my move to UCONN.