

Caitlin Ryan

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Professional Overview

Caitlin Ryan, founder of *The Invested Nest*, is an early childhood educator, researcher, and trainer dedicated to strengthening the quality of in-home care. Holding dual master's degrees in child development and psychology, she is completing a PhD in International Psychology with a research emphasis in supporting teachers' mental health. Caitlin's dissertation examines the relationship between empowerment and burnout in the early childhood education workforce, using the global Montessori educational community as a model for developing professional development strategies to support educator well-being. Her background includes guest lecturing in the Child Development Program and serving as adjunct faculty in the Early Childhood Education Program at California State University, Sacramento.

Building on this foundation, through her business, *The Invested Nest*, Caitlin offers a research-based professional development program that integrates foundational child development theory and evidence-based best practices with practical, family-centered applications. Her employer-sponsored, cross-disciplinary training model provides nannies the opportunity to grow in confidence and competence with families—enhancing emotional attunement, fostering cultural responsiveness, and creating consistent, developmentally meaningful experiences for children.

Education

PhD, International Psychology	(Exp. 2025)	The Chicago School	Washington, D.C
MA, Psychology	2013-2015	Alliant University	Sacramento, CA
MA, Child Development	2008-2010	Sacramento State University	Sacramento, CA
BA, Child Development	2003-2005	California State University, Chico	Chico, CA
AA, General Education	2001-2003	Shasta Community College	Redding, CA

Higher Education Instruction & Curriculum Design

January 2023-Present	Founder Family-Caregiver Bridging Sessions Caregiver-Child Interaction Assessment 1:1 Cross-Disciplinary Nanny Training CDA Credential (Informed) Early Years Parent Consulting	<i>The Invested Nest, LLC</i> Washington, D.C.
July 2012-August 2013	Adjunct Faculty — Child Development Taught 6 Upper Division Courses Program for Working Professionals 3 Consecutive Semesters	<i>Sacramento State University</i> <i>College of Continuing Education</i> Sacramento, CA
August 2010-August 2011	Fellowship Teacher Co-Lead Teacher Infants & Toddlers Undergraduate Child Development Student Supervisor Trainer & Mentor	<i>Sacramento State Children's Center</i> <i>(NAEYC Accredited)</i> Sacramento, CA
December 2009	Guest Lecturer — Child Development (Various Topics)	<i>Sacramento State University</i> Sacramento, CA

September 2009- December 2009	Teaching Assistant Child Development (CHDV 242) <i>Theoretical Approaches to Child Development</i> Course	<i>Sacramento State University</i> Sacramento, CA
August 2008- August 2010	Student Supervisor III Teacher, Trainer, Mentor Infant — Toddler Classroom	<i>Sacramento State Children's Center</i> (NAEYC Accredited) Sacramento, CA
Applied Early Childhood Practice		
May 2025- Present	Developmental Family Support Per family request, provided tailored education-focused support for children, emphasizing intentional, developmentally informed engagement across diverse households	<i>Various Families</i> Washington, D.C. Virginia Maryland
November 2024- February 2005	Family Household Manager, Caregiver	<i>Private Family</i> Washington, D.C.
January 2021- November 2024	Private Caregiver Early Childhood Educator	<i>Private Family</i> Washington, D.C.
October 2020- December 2020	Private Caregiver Early Childhood Educator	<i>Private Family</i> Sacramento, CA
November 2018- July 2020	Early Childhood Educator 0-5 Years	<i>Shalom School (NAEYC Accredited)</i> Sacramento, CA
June 2018- November 2018	Early Childhood Educator 0-2	<i>Discovery Tree School</i> Sacramento, CA
September 2011- January 2012	Early Childhood Educator 0-2	<i>Head Start</i> Sacramento, CA
June 2009- August 2012	Private Caregiver Family Assistant School-age	<i>Private Family</i> Sacramento, CA
December 2004- January 2005	Early Childhood Educator Infants Toddlers Preschool	<i>U.S. Army Garrison-Italy</i> Vicenza, Italy
August 2003- May 2005	Early Childhood Educator Preschool	<i>Chico State University Children's Center</i> (NAEYC Accredited) Chico, CA
January 2002- May 2003	Early Childhood Educator Preschool	<i>Shasta Community College</i> (NAEYC Accredited) Redding, CA

Research Experience

September 2016	Research Presenter: Doctoral Dissertation <i>Civilian Perceptions of Combat PTSD as it Relates to Stigma & Social Support</i>	<i>Sacramento Valley Psychological Association Student Research Conference</i> Sacramento, CA
September 2016	Psychology Conference Panelist International Early Childhood Research	<i>Sacramento Valley Psychological Association Student Research Conference</i> Sacramento, CA
March 2016	Co-Research Presenter Rural Health Psychology Research in Vietnam	<i>Sacramento Psychological Association Student Research Conference</i> Sacramento, CA
September 2015	Research Presenter: Hûe, Vietnam <i>Baby Formula Advertising Exposure Breastfeeding Practices in Vietnam</i>	<i>Greater Mekong Delta Countries on Public Health Conference</i> Hûe, Vietnam
September 2014- February 2015	Researcher: Hûe, Vietnam Children & Mothers' Rural Health Education	<i>Alliant University</i> Sacramento, CA
September 2013- February 2014	Researcher: Hûe, Vietnam Children's Rural Health Education	<i>Alliant University</i> Sacramento, CA
December 2010	Research Presenter: Master's Thesis <i>Teachers' Perceptions of Children's Temperament Based on Their First Names</i>	<i>National Head Start Conference</i> Virginia Beach, VA
June 2009- August 2009	Research Assistant: Anti-Bullying <i>Fresno Schools S.A.F.E. Project</i>	<i>Sacramento State University</i> Sacramento, CA

Selected Publications & Presentations

- **Ryan, C. Q.** (2010). *Teachers' Perceptions of Children's Temperament Based on Their First Names* (Master's thesis, California State University, Sacramento). Sacramento State ScholarWorks. <https://hdl.handle.net/10211.9/853>
- **Ryan, C. Q.** (2010). Children's names: Understanding potential name bias within the classroom setting. *National Head Start Association Annual Parent Conference*, Virginia Beach, VA.
- **Ryan, C. Q.**, Petersen, S. (2016). Civilian perceptions of combat-related PTSD as it relates to stigma and social support. *Sacramento Valley Psychological Association (SVPA) Conference*, Sacramento, CA.
- **Ryan, C. Q.**, Petersen, S., Maeyama, M. (2015). Media Exposure and Breastfeeding Practices in Vietnam. *Greater Mekong Delta Public Health Conference*, Hue, Vietnam.
- **Ryan, C. Q.**, Cerney, J., Khatibijah, L., Malakouti, N., Petersen, S. (2015). Breastfeeding and attachment in Vietnamese mothers. *Greater Mekong Delta Public Health Conference*, Hue, Vietnam.

Practicum & Clinical Experience

August 2015- May 2015	Practicum Forensic Treatment <i>Focus: Psychological testing and community mental health recovery, emphasizing relapse and recidivism prevention for formerly incarcerated individuals with either single or dual-diagnosis mental health disorders.</i>	<i>Solono County Fairfield, CA</i>
June 2014- May 2015	Practicum Community Counseling <i>Focus: Child & Family Therapy</i> Treatment areas: PTSD, ADHD, depression, anxiety, bereavement, and domestic violence; parent-child communication and attachment support	<i>Kids First Community Counseling Center Roseville, CA</i>
February 2014- May 2014	Practicum School Psychology <i>Preschool Intervention Program</i> Psychoeducational assessment, classroom observation, diagnosis, and IEP report preparation	<i>Yuba City School District Yuba City, CA</i>
June 2008- August 2008	Hospital Play Specialist Intern (168 hours) <i>Paediatrics</i> Site visits: Great Ormond Street, St. Mary's, and Kingston Hospitals	<i>Boston University Child Life Program University College London Hospital London, England</i>
February 2008- May 2008	Child Life Specialist Intern (560 hours) <i>Pediatrics</i> Rotations: Hematology/Oncology, Pre-Operative, Medical/Surgical, Pediatric Intensive Care (PICU), Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), Emergency Departments	<i>Sutter Medical Center Sacramento, CA</i>
February 2005- May 2005	Child Life Volunteer (100 hours) Shadowed Child Life Specialists providing medical preparation and psycho-social support for pediatric patients during hospitalization; facilitated therapeutic play for children receiving orthopedic, surgical and burn treatment at the Neil Reitman Pediatric Burn Institute	<i>Shriners Hospital for Children Northern California Sacramento, CA</i>

Memberships & Affiliations

2025	American Montessori Society (AMS) Member
2021-Present	National Association of the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
2014-2018	American Psychological Association

Honors & Awards

2010	Phi Kappa Phi Honors Society
2005, 2009	University Achievement Awards: California State University System