

# Corso di Dottorato in Psychological Sciences

2024 School Meeting Series *Special Event\**

## School meeting

Thursday June 20th, 2024 – 10:00

Room DPSS1 – ground floor PSICO 1 Building – Via Venezia, 8

**Jonas Miller**

*Professor of Psychological Science at the  
University of Connecticut, USA*

### ***Vulnerability and Resilience to Adversity: Neurodevelopmental and Social Pathways in Children and Adolescents***

**Abstract:** Young people face several pervasive public health threats, such as stressful life events, growing levels of environmental pollution, and - during the COVID-19 pandemic – uncertainty and disruptions to daily routines. In my research I am finding that these adversities are associated with altered stress biology, brain structure and function, as well as social, emotional, and cognitive difficulties. However, not all young people who are exposed to these threats go on to develop problems. In fact, a large proportion of individuals demonstrate resilience in the context of adversity, and many of the alterations that follow from adversity may be adaptations. In this talk, I present work examining different processes that support vulnerability versus resilience in the face of various adversities. Specifically, I will discuss research with children and adolescents suggesting that (1) stressful life events are associated with accelerated neurodevelopment; (2) resilience factors can buffer and offset intergenerational transmission of risk; and (3) prosociality is a key component of resilience and positive development.

**Speaker:** Jonas Miller is an Assistant Professor of Psychological Sciences at the University of Connecticut, where he serves as the director of the Biobehavioral Adjustment and Neurodevelopment Lab (BANDLab). His research focuses on understanding how different kinds of early life experiences and exposures are connected to patterns of brain and social-emotional development, and why some children are vulnerable versus resilient in the context of risk. To study these topics, Jonas integrates methods from developmental psychology and neuroscience to measure different aspects of children and their environments.

*\*participation will be considered within the School Meeting attendance record.*