



JOHNS HOPKINS

SCHOOL *of* NURSING

The Inaugural Eleanor Stokes Szanton Lecturer

BRENDA JONES HARDEN is the Ruth Harris Ottman Professor of Child and Family Welfare at the Columbia University School of Social Work and Professor Emerita of Human Development at the University of Maryland.

She directs the Prevention and Early Adversity Research Laboratory, through which she and her team examine the developmental and mental health needs of children and youth who have experienced early adversity and toxic stress, particularly those who have been maltreated, are in foster care, or have experienced other forms of trauma.

She is currently a Principal Investigator of a large, longitudinal study investigating brain and behavioral development of children exposed to substances and environmental adversity from the prenatal period through middle childhood.

Dr. Jones Harden is a scientist-practitioner who uses research to improve the quality and effectiveness of child and family services and to inform child and family policy, especially in the areas of home visiting, early care and education, mental health, and child welfare. She is the immediate past-president of Zero to Three, and serves on a variety of federal government, local program, and foundation advisory boards.

She received a PhD in developmental and clinical psychology from Yale University, a Master's in Social Work from New York University, and a Bachelor's degree in Spanish and Social Science from Fordham University.





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Eleanor Stokes Szanton

ELEANOR STOKES SZANTON was born in 1935 into a committed Quaker family in Philadelphia. Eight years younger than her nearest sibling, Ellie absorbed everything around her and strained to keep up with her elders—an experience that shaped a lifelong conviction that children begin learning far earlier than most adults recognize.

Her mother, Frances Elkinton Stokes, adored her daughter and modeled a life of service to others. Her father, Joseph Stokes Jr., was a research scientist and Physician in Chief at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, where he pioneered vaccines for influenza and measles.

Two questions would drive Ellie's entire professional life: How do infants and toddlers think? And how can we best help them learn?

In the summer of 1966, she helped run a Head Start program in Washington, D.C. There, she witnessed stark inequities in language acquisition and became intensely curious in how society can help children who fall behind. She enrolled in a PhD program in Human Development at the University of Maryland, and in 1979 became the founding executive director of ZERO TO THREE.

Under her leadership, the organization became a bridge between cutting-edge science and the people who needed it most: policymakers and parents. What began as a two-person operation grew into a leading national force in early childhood development by her retirement in 1993.

Ellie then moved to Baltimore with her beloved husband, Peter. True to form, she spent some of her later years volunteering weekly as a teacher's aide, helping first graders learn to read at Margaret Brent Elementary School.