



Mount Sinai

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## CHILD BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND SCIENCE CENTER

# news

SPRING 2015

## Division of ADHD and Learning Disorders

### MISSION

The Division of Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Learning Disorders at Mount Sinai is dedicated to transforming world-class scientific research into the finest quality care for children, adolescents, and adults with ADHD, learning disorders and related conditions.

### Clinical Program

The Division's clinical program offers a variety of assessment and treatment services, including: 1) psychoeducational assessments, which evaluate individual strengths and weaknesses in learning, and whether a learning disorder is present; 2) comprehensive neuropsychological assessments, which evaluate all areas of cognitive, executive and personality functioning – including academic, intellectual, executive functioning, memory, social perception, emotional functioning, fine motor strength and control, and phonological processing skills; and 3) assessments for ADHD and other psychiatric disorders.

Treatment services utilize a variety of psychosocial and pharmacologic approaches, including organizational skills training for children and adolescents, parent behavior management training (typically for children with ADHD and/or related behavior disorders), ADHD skills training for teens and adults,



Ami Norris-Brilliant, PsyD  
Clinical Director

and individual psychotherapy for children and adults. Short and longer term medication treatments are also available.

For information about psychological or psychiatric services contact Ami Norris-Brilliant, PsyD (212-241-4423; [ami.norris-brilliant@mssm.edu](mailto:ami.norris-brilliant@mssm.edu)), or Juan Pedraza, MD (212-241-9559; [juan.pedraza@mssm.edu](mailto:juan.pedraza@mssm.edu)).

### Research Program

The Division's research objectives are to better understand heterogeneity in the clinical presentation and treatment of ADHD, and to develop an individualized approach to diagnosis and treatment selection, in keeping with Mount Sinai's emphasis on personalized medicine. We have a number of ongoing and soon-to-begin projects, and several exciting recent findings.

The recently completed "Methylpheniate-Atomoxetine Crossover Study (MACRO)" was a large two-site clinical trial conducted at Mount Sinai and University of Illinois at Chicago



Jeffrey H. Newcorn, MD  
Chief

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## The Parent-Infant Center

Infants and toddlers are the most at-risk for child abuse and neglect. A significant number of children are victims of maltreatment and one-third are under four years old. The development of a healthy parent-infant attachment has been shown to serve as a protective factor against the risk of child abuse. A growing body of research has shown the profound effects of parenting, the parent-child relationship, and early intervention on a child's development. In light of these findings, the Parent-Infant Center (PIC) at Mount Sinai was founded in 2005. Although the need for programs focusing on young children's mental health is great, the PIC program is only one of a relatively small number of such programs in the New York City metropolitan area.

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## Division of ADHD and Learning Disorders CONTINUED

(Mark Stein, PhD). The MACRO Study assessed comparative effectiveness of OROS methylphenidate (MPH; stimulant) and atomoxetine (ATX; non-stimulant) in a design which approximated “real-world” conditions, and examined the relationship between the clinical trial results and patient preference for treatment. MACRO is one of the largest comparator crossover trials ever attempted in children and adolescents (n = 235, with 199 children completing treatment with both medications). At the end of the trial, more of the families chose to continue treatment with MPH (approximately half of those who completed the trial), but a large minority also chose ATX (approximately one-third of completers). This research suggests that non-stimulant medications can be used successfully by a large number of children with ADHD, and that there is a reasonably high degree of satisfaction with treatment (and desire to continue) in families who experience a positive response.

Another study examined Neurobiological Mechanisms of Response to MPH and ATX, and fMRI Predictors of Treatment Response. We found that MPH and ATX treatment have both common and unique effects as seen on fMRI (*Schulz et al. Arch Gen Psychiatry, 2012*), and that the fMRI profile obtained off medication can predict better response to MPH over ATX with a high degree of accuracy. These are very exciting findings that we are currently pursuing with ongoing funding from the National Institute of Mental Health.

We are currently extending our work to study unique clinical presentations of ADHD and the possible utility of non-traditional treatment approaches. Two studies have recently been funded and are about to begin: 1) “Efficacy of Lisdexamfetamine in Adults with ADHD and Sluggish Cognitive Tempo” (summer 2015) will examine characteristics of adults with ADHD and sluggish cognitive tempo (possibly a variant of the inattentive ADHD clinical presentation),

and whether lisdexamfetamine (Vyvanse; stimulant) is potentially useful in treating this condition; and 2) “Neurobiological Basis of Response to Vayarin in Adults with ADHD: an fMRI Study of Brain Activation Pre and Post Treatment” will examine mechanisms of action of a currently available medical food (Vayarin), and the biological basis of its effects on ADHD symptoms and mood regulation. Study participants will be recruited from clinical trials being conducted at New York University and the Medical Research Network.

**For more information about our research or to volunteer for a study, contact Beth Krone, PhD (212-241-8012; [beth.krone@mssm.edu](mailto:beth.krone@mssm.edu)), or Erica Pazmino, MA (212-241-5411; [erica.pazmino@mssm.edu](mailto:erica.pazmino@mssm.edu)).**



Juan Pedraza, MD  
Assistant Professor of  
Psychiatry

## The Parent-Infant Center CONTINUED

The PIC is a therapeutic early intervention, prevention and treatment program. Our aim is to decrease the risk and/or repetition of child abuse and neglect by facilitating the development of a secure attachment between caregivers and their infants/toddlers, as well as promoting healthy parent and child development. The goal is to identify high-risk families and to intervene as early as possible with pregnant women as well as primary caregivers of young children from birth to four years old. The PIC works with high-risk caregivers, including those with a history of trauma, depression and other mental health problems, and pregnant/parenting teens. We see families in which children are exhibiting social-emotional/behavioral problems, developmental delays and/or need placement in foster care.

Attending to the mental health needs of infants and toddlers is a relatively new field. The term “infant mental health” was coined by Selma Fraiberg in the late 1960s and she also developed an intervention called “infant-parent psychotherapy” to address mental health problems for young children. Infant-parent psychotherapy

treats psychological conflicts in the parent that are revealed through difficulties in the parent-infant relationship. These conflicts arise as a result of past traumatic experiences and relationships, and the impact of these experiences on the child were described by Fraiberg as “ghosts in the nursery,” or the repetition of the past in the present. The “ghosts” appear in the young children in the form of sleep and feeding difficulties, tantrums, and posttraumatic stress.

The PIC offers multiple modalities of therapy to best support the unique needs of each family. These modalities include Child-Parent Psychotherapy, individual therapy for parents and pregnant women, and psychopharmacology for parents struggling with depression and other mental health problems. Home-based services are provided to some families with significant barriers to clinic-based treatment. Many families are involved in multiple forms of treatment and are seen several times each week.

The PIC is committed to developing collaborative relationships in order to expand the breadth of services and

resources available to our families. One such collaboration is with Baby Buggy, a nonprofit organization, which has provided the PIC with cribs, diapers, and clothing.

We also collaborate with community-based organizations, such as the Center for Family Representation, and we work closely with the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Mount Sinai St. Luke’s and Mount Sinai Roosevelt Hospitals, which have been referring families since the PIC began.

We are deeply appreciative of the support of generous donors including Sotheby’s, Bessemer Trust Company, Pauline Arama Olsten, and Fiduciary Trust, and we are extremely grateful to the families for trusting the PIC with their care.

**For more information, please contact Wendie Klapper, PhD (212-523-3071; [wklapper@chpnet.org](mailto:wklapper@chpnet.org)).**



Wendie Klapper, PhD  
Director

# Center of Excellence in Eating and Weight Disorders

The Mount Sinai Center of Excellence in Eating and Weight Disorders (CEEWD) develops innovative science and applies empirical evidence for identification, prevention, and treatment of the broad spectrum of psychiatric conditions that affect eating and weight. Our mission is to integrate the leading scientific understanding of these problems directly into the care of each individual and family seeking help for difficulties related to disordered eating or excess weight. We serve as local, national, and international experts in the developmental risks associated with disordered eating and body image disturbance and in the use of early interventions for at risk populations. We support the use of the family as a resource in recovery as well as the need for parents and loved ones to develop skills for dealing with these problems.

## EXPANDING THE CONTINUUM OF CARE

### Family Friendly Intensive Outpatient Treatment

The CEEWD will be opening a family-based intensive outpatient program for children, adolescents, young adults and their families this summer. This program will bring together our expertise in the medical and psychiatric management of these disorders by providing a treatment option in Manhattan for those patients discharged from residential or inpatient hospital settings or who need stabilization during outpatient treatment. Families will learn how to manage the course of recovery and gain skills in dealing with both eating-specific and general psychiatric problems encountered by sufferers.

### Community Prevention Efforts

Dr. Rebecca Greif, Co-Director of Clinical Services, has led our team in partnership with other organizations including National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA) and Global Federation of Eating Disorders (GFED). These community efforts provide education to parents and adolescents in high school about the value of early identification and intervention as well as formal adoption of the Body Project, an empirically supported peer-led eating disorder prevention program for adolescents and young adults.

### Bariatric Surgery for Youth

Dr. Robyn Sysko is the most recent addition to the CEEWD faculty and has begun developing an integrated research and clinical program to better predict and intervene with youth seeking surgical weight loss procedures. Her work has been integral to understanding the psychological outcomes associated with surgery in adolescents and she is developing a program to address the special needs of this population.

## NOVEL THERAPEUTICS

### Mirrors and Antibiotics for Body Image Disturbance

Our group, led by Eva Naumann, is looking to advance our knowledge of how body image treatments work, including a novel intervention that involves using mirrors to decrease judgmental thinking and negative emotions associated with appearance, through combined administration of an antibiotic which acts as a glutamate receptor modulator and mirror exposure therapy.

### “There Is an App for That”

The CEEWD is collaborating with Noom, Inc. to test the efficacy of a smartphone application (Noom Monitor) in conjunction with cognitive behavioral therapy to increase acceptability and transportability of treatment to individuals who suffer from binge eating and related disorders.

## NEUROBIOLOGY OF RELAPSE

### Using your Body’s Natural Marijuana

Dr. Tom Hildebrandt, Director of the CEEWD, has led recent efforts to characterize dysregulation in the endocannabinoid (eCB) system in patients recently recovered from anorexia nervosa in efforts to better understand why relapse rates are so high. The eCB system is the biological target marijuana triggers to achieve its anxiolytic and pleasurable effects. Using novel imaging methods, we have identified significant disturbances in the eCB system, which regulate appetite and anxiety, and may leave patients in early recovery from anorexia vulnerable to relapse.



Thomas Hildebrandt, PsyD  
Director

**The CEEWD aims to develop new methods – nutritional and pharmacological – to help patients achieve sustained recovery.**

**For more information about CEEWD, please call 212-659-8724.**

# Announcements

- The Division of ADHD and Learning Disorders is offering Organizational Skills Training for children who have difficulty with planning, time management, and organizational skills. The groups will begin in July and are for children entering fourth through sixth grades. Please contact Maria Edman at 212-241-5420.
- The Obsessive-Compulsive (OCD) and Related Disorders Program at Mount Sinai is excited to announce two free summer programs for children with OCD. In order to determine eligibility for the programs, a consultation with a child psychologist will be completed at no cost. See below for specific programs.

## *Group Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) for Pediatric OCD*

WHO: Children ages 8-12 years diagnosed with OCD  
WHEN: June 2015-August 2015, 5PM-6:30PM  
(12 sessions; start date to be determined)  
WHERE: 1428 Madison Avenue at 99th Street,  
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai  
COST: FREE

## *OCD Day Camp at Mount Sinai*

WHO: Children ages 9-13 years diagnosed with OCD  
WHEN: July 20-24, 2015  
WHERE: 1428 Madison Avenue at 99th Street,  
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai  
COST: FREE

For more information about child CBT programs, please contact Ariz Rojas, PhD, at [ariz.rojas@mssm.edu](mailto:ariz.rojas@mssm.edu).

# Congratulations to:

**Ben Angarita, MD**, Child Psychiatry Fellow, for winning the Laughlin Fellowship, a highly prestigious award where Fellows are chosen from an elite pool of applicants deemed likely to make a significant contribution to the field of psychiatry.

**Christopher Branson, PhD**, for receiving an NIMH K23 grant entitled "Implementing PTSD Treatment in the Juvenile Justice System."

The Tics and Tourette's Clinical and Research Program, headed by **Barbara Coffey, MD**, for being awarded a Center of Excellence designation. In collaboration with three other New York institutions, the Mount Sinai Center will establish a New York State Tourette Syndrome Association (TSA) Centers of Excellence Consortium.

**Georgia Gaveras, DO**, Director of Education and Training at Mount Sinai St. Luke's and Mount Sinai Roosevelt, for being named Editor-in-Chief of *The Carlat Child Psychiatry Report*. Dr. Gaveras also received the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) Annual Meeting Junior Scholar Award, and she was named the new regional representative for Region II of the American Association of Directors of Psychiatric Residency Training. She will serve for three years.

**Allison Mahon**, a first year medical student at Mount Sinai, for receiving the 2015 Summer Research Fellowship by AACAP to study "The Impact of Workplace Social Skills Training on Job Readiness for Young Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder."

**Jeffrey Newcorn, MD**, Chief of the Division of ADHD and Learning Disorders and Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics, and **Jeffrey Halperin, PhD**, Professorial Lecturer in Psychiatry for being inducted into the Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (CHADD) Hall of Fame for accomplishments in research and education in ADHD.

**Jeffrey Newcorn, MD**, for receiving a grant from Shire Pharmaceuticals for an investigator initiated study of the "Efficacy of Lisdexamfetamine in Adults with ADHD and Sluggish Cognitive Tempo."

**Deepak Penesetti, MD**, Triple Board Resident, for receiving the 2015-2016 American Psychiatric Association/Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Fellowship.

CONGRATULATIONS AND WELCOME TO ALL TRAINEES IN PSYCHIATRY, PSYCHOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK!



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## THE CHILD BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND SCIENCE CENTER NEWSLETTER

brings you timely updates about new developments related to the treatment and research of childhood mental health disorders, as well as activities at the Child Behavioral Health and Science Center.

To be placed on our email list, please contact  
[childbehavioralhealth@mssm.edu](mailto:childbehavioralhealth@mssm.edu).

Our phone number is (212) 659-8705 and our website is [www.mountsinai.org/childbehavioralhealth](http://www.mountsinai.org/childbehavioralhealth).

