

DEVELOPMENTAL & BEHAVIORAL PEDIATRICS RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS



A bi-annual newsletter highlighting research efforts at the Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics (DBP) at Boston Medical Center

Recently Presented

Lauren Bartolotti, MA and Belinda O'Hagan, MA recently presented two abstracts at the Pediatric Academic Societies (PAS) conference in Denver, CO and International Society for Autism Research (INSAR) conference in Austin, TX. Titles of their poster presentations are (1) Elucidating the perspectives of autistic youth about their healthcare experiences and (2) Examining the experiences of autistic and non-autistic adolescents in a teen mentoring program during the COVID-19 pandemic: A qualitative focus group study.



Grants

Jocelyn Kuhn, PhD received a research grant from the Joel and Barbara Alpert Endowment for The Children of the City to study a novel service designed to support autistic patients and their families during their hospital visits. The study is being conducted in collaboration with the Autism Program. It utilizes a single-subject study design, in which the research team observes participants throughout six visits and recorded instances/duration of distressed behaviors.

Sarah Canale, MD received a BMC Quality Improvement Grant to study the rates and trends of sedatives and restraints used in autistic patients seen in the emergency department and inpatient unit between 2015 and 2021. The study is being conducted in collaboration with the Autism Program and the Clinical Data Warehouse. This study will provide the foundation of quality and progress monitoring for the larger Autism Friendly Initiative, which aims to improve the hospital experiences of autistic patients and their families.

Genevieve Preer, MD and Elizabeth Egan, MPH, LICSW recently submitted a proposal for the Health Equity Accelerator Seed Fund to examine the characteristics of BMC patients with DCF (Department of Children and Families) involvement.

Mei Elansary, MD, MPhil was awarded with the Integrated Pilot Grant Award Program from the Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) at Boston University. In collaboration with the SOFAR (Supporting Our Families through Addiction and Recovery) Clinic, the team will work to track the experiences of mothers in recovery and their young children. This work will elucidate the short- and long-term risk and resiliency factors for further longitudinal study and intervention development.

Recently Published and Submitted

Belinda O'Hagan, MA recently published an article in the Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders about a teen mentoring program for autistic adolescents that have been implemented by the Autism Program since 2015. The study covered findings from five years of annual focus groups held with the program participants and their caregivers. Citation: O'Hagan, B., Sonikar, P., Grace, R., Castillo, D., Chen, E., Agrawal, M., Dufresne, S., Rossetti, Z., Bartolotti, L., & Krauss, S. (2022). Youth and Caregivers' Perspective on Teens Engaged as Mentors (TEAM): An Inclusive Peer Mentoring Program for Autistic Adolescents. Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-022-05543-w>

Mona Doss, DO recently submitted a quality improvement article to the Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics titled Developmentally Trained - Primary Care Pediatricians: A Pipeline to Improved Access?

Quality Improvement Projects

The Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics (DBP) division has recently undertaken several quality improvement projects to enhance the developmental evaluations at BMC. These projects are conducted in collaboration with **Jocelyn Kuhn, PhD, Emily Feinberg, ScD, CPNP**, and several Boston University practicum students. Examples of specific goals of these quality improvement projects include reducing wait times and no-show rates, as well as identifying clinical protocols that lead to these desired outcomes.

About This Newsletter

This research highlights newsletter is brought to you by the Division of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics. If there are DBP staff members who would like to have their recent research efforts featured in the next issue, please contact our junior research scientist, Belinda O'Hagan, at belinda.ohagan@bmc.org.