



Children's National: CASD CHAT

Research Report

CASD Brings Neuropsychology to the People

In February, members of the Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders (CASD) research team attended the International Neuropsychological Society (INS) 46th Annual Meeting in Washington, DC. CASD's Director, Dr. Lauren Kenworthy served as the panel chair for the panel session, titled, "Bringing Neuropsychology to the People: Transforming Our Knowledge of Executive Function Phenotypes into Effective Community-based Interventions for Children" and presented "Cross-Diagnosis Efficacy of School-Based Unstuck and On Target EF Intervention in Low Income Communities". Dr. John Strang, (top photo, left) neuropsychologist and Director of the Gender and Autism Program presented "Improving Autistic Adolescent EF Skills: Development and Evaluation of the On Target for Life School Curriculum". CASD Collaborator, Dr. Kristina Hardy, (top photo, second from the left), a pediatric psychologist within the Division of Neuropsychology at Children's National Health presented, "Development and Efficacy of CBM Strategies to Treat Cognitive Inflexibility in Children with ADHD and ASD."





Dr. Allison Ratto (middle row, third from the left), clinical psychologist and CASD faculty member, Dr. Srishti Rau (middle row, right), CASD's postdoctoral fellow, and CASD Research Coordinators, Mary Skapek (middle row, left) and Meredith Powers (middle row, second from the left), participated in poster sessions at INS. The titles of the posters are listed below:

- "Anxiety Relates to Interference Associated With Planning and Flexibility Weaknesses in Youth with ASD" - Mary Skapek, 1st Author
- "Comparing the Diagnostic Discriminability of the ADHD Rating Scale and Achenbach Checklists to Capture Comorbid ADHD Symptoms in ASD" - Dr. Srishti Rau, 1st Author
- "Differential Effects of Dual Language Exposure on Language and Nonverbal Problem-Solving in Children with ASD and ADHD" - Dr. Allison Ratto, 1st Author
- "Linguistic Diversity in Neurodevelopmental Disorders: Dual Language Exposure Relates to Flexibility in Children with ASD but Not ADHD" - Meredith Powers, 1st Author

If you are interested in learning more about CASD Research Opportunities, please be sure to visit our [CASD Research Page](#).

Gender Differences in Autism, from the Brain to the Lived Experience



Lauren Kenworthy, PhD

Approximately 4 boys are identified with autism for every girl who receives the diagnosis. This imbalance reflects a combination of biological and cultural differences, as well as limitations in current diagnostic tools, which were primarily developed with boys. Understanding autistic females better, from their biology to their daily experience, improves knowledge of the cause of and mechanisms underlying autism and the ability to identify and treat autistic people across the gender spectrum.

During a presentation at the Children's National Grands Rounds, CASD's Director, Dr. Lauren Kenworthy and George Washington University's Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders Institute's Carbonell Family Professor & Director, Dr. Kevin Pelphrey presented data from their own and others' research documenting gender differences in brain function and behavioral presentation.



Kevin Pelphrey, PhD

To watch the presentation, please visit here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JQA9NkhBB-o>

CASD in the Community Autism Resource Fair

On February 8th, CASD's Community Outreach Coordinator, Yetta Myrick participated in the inaugural Children's National Autism Resource Fair. Organized by the Autism Behavior Communication Support (ABCs) Team at the Main Hospital, the fair provided Children's National providers and staff with various resources offered within the Health Care System to exchange information and learn about programs and support for families of autistic children receiving in-patient medical care. In addition to ABCs and CASD, the fair included representatives from the following departments: Neurology, Developmental Pediatrics, Child Development, Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Child Life, Creative and Therapeutic Arts, and Volunteer Services.



Yetta Myrick at the Autism Resource Fair

To learn more about the ABCs Team please visit: <https://childrensnational.org/careers-and-training/employee-stories/autism-support-team>

The ABCs Team has also created materials to assist in the preparation for medical care, and can be viewed [here](#).

CASD Cares

Summer Camp Options?

It is March, and the summer months are approaching quickly. While many autistic children may be eligible for Extended School Year services through their school systems, families are often faced with the challenges of finding appropriate summer camp options for their children. CASD would like to provide a few resources that may make summer camp planning a little easier.

1. Check out [Brainy Camps at Children's National!](#) There is an autism specific sleep-away camp, [Camp Connect ASD](#) for children and teens ages 9-18.
2. If your children have access to services through private clinics, ask about their summer camp options. Many social skills, speech, occupational, and physical therapy clinics in the area offer therapeutic summer camp options, (i.e., [Take2Camp](#)).
3. Explore your local Parks and Recreation Summer Programs. Most cities and counties offer Therapeutic Recreation programs, (i.e., [DC](#), [Arlington County](#), and [Montgomery County](#)), and could provide low cost camp options.

CASD in the Media

In our [January 2018 CASD Chat](#), we shared that CASD researchers, led by Dr. Allison Ratto, and collaborators at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, the Autistic Self Advocacy Network, Virginia Tech University, and the National Institute of Mental Health reported that there is growing evidence of a camouflaging effect among females with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), in the article, "[What About the Girls? Sex-Based Differences in Autistic Traits and Adaptive Skills](#)", featured in the *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*. This article has generated a great deal of interest in the community, and Dr. Ratto was recently featured in a Spectrum News Podcast, "[Spectrum Stories: Camouflaging autism traits](#)."

Calendar of Events

March 2018

Kids in Action: Friday Night Fever

The HSC Pediatric Center

Washington, DC

Friday, March 9th at 7pm

Join Kids in Action for Friday Night Fever, a chance for teens with disabilities to hang out with their peers. Designed for teens ages 11 and older, the program provides opportunities to participate in social events and make new friends. Activities vary month to month and include: teen dances, karaoke night, movies, game night, ice cream socials, various educational topics and more! Advance registration required. Email Robyn Winston-Cohen, CTRS at RWinston@Hshealth.org or call 202-557-1851. For

more information, please visit, <http://www.hschealth.org/medical-programs-therapy/services-programs/adaptive-sports>

AMC Sensory Friendly Films: Black Panther

AMC Theatres Nationwide

Saturday, March 10th

The program provides a special opportunity for families to enjoy their favorite films in a safe and accepting environment. The auditoriums dedicated to the program have their lights up, the sound turned down and audience members are invited to get up and dance, walk, shout, or sing! Please check your local theatre listings for specific show times. For more information, please visit, www.amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films

Kid in Action: Only Make Believe

The HSC Pediatric Center

Washington, DC

Saturday, March 10th at 10am

Join Kids in Action as they host Only Make Believe, a non-profit organization that creates and performs interactive theatre for children in hospitals and care facilities. Performances at The HSC Pediatric Center are designed for children with varying abilities. Only Make Believe allows participants to take a break from their everyday obstacles, express themselves in their own way, and "let loose" in a safe environment. Advance registration required. Email Robyn Jenn Preyers, CTRS at jpreyers@hschealth.org. For more information, please visit, <http://www.hschealth.org/medical-programs-therapy/services-programs/adaptive-sports>

AMC Sensory Friendly Films: A Wrinkle in Time

AMC Theatres Nationwide

Tuesday, March 13th

The program provides a special opportunity for families to enjoy their favorite films in a safe and accepting environment. The auditoriums dedicated to the program have their lights up, the sound turned down and audience members are invited to get up and dance, walk, shout, or sing! Please check your local theatre listings for specific show times. For more information, please visit, www.amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films

AJE Special Education Thursdays

What to Consider When Looking at a Special Education School or Nonpublic Placement for a Student with a Disability

Guest: Piper Phillips, CEO of PHILLIPS Programs for Children and Families

Thursday, February 15th at 12:30pm

These 30 minute sessions are available online one Thursday a month to give parents and professionals: information, education and a better understanding of DC special education issues in a "bite-size" format. For more information, please visit, <http://www.aje-dc.org/programs-3/special-education-thursdays/>

AMC Sensory Friendly Films: A Wrinkle in Time

AMC Theatres Nationwide

Saturday, March 24th

The program provides a special opportunity for families to enjoy their favorite films in a safe and accepting environment. The auditoriums dedicated to the program have their lights up, the sound turned down and audience members are invited to get up and dance, walk, shout, or sing! Please check your local theatre listings for specific show times. For more information, please visit, www.amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films

My Way Matinee: Sherlock Gnomes

Regal Theatres Nationwide

Saturday, March 24th at 10:30am

The program is sensory friendly, with the sound lowered and lights brighter. For more information, please visit, <http://www.regmovies.com/MyWayMatinee>

AMC Sensory Friendly Films: Tomb Raider

AMC Theatres Nationwide

Tuesday, March 27th

The program provides a special opportunity for families to enjoy their favorite films in a safe and accepting environment. The auditoriums dedicated to the program have their lights up, the sound turned down and audience members are invited to get up and dance, walk, shout, or sing! Please check your local theatre listings for specific show times. For more information, please visit, www.amctheatres.com/programs/sensory-friendly-films



6th Annual

IVYMOUNT SPECIAL NEEDS RESOURCE FAIR

**SUNDAY, MARCH 11, 2018
NOON - 3 P.M.**

**IVYMOUNT'S SIXTH ANNUAL RESOURCE FAIR
WILL HOST OVER 50 EXHIBITORS WHOSE
ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDE A VARIETY OF
SERVICES AND RESOURCES TO CHILDREN
AND YOUNG ADULTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS
AND THEIR FAMILIES IN THE DC
METROPOLITAN AREA.**

**THE IVYMOUNT SCHOOL
11614 SEVEN LOCKS ROAD, ROCKVILLE, MD
THIS EVENT IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**



Children's National, Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders,
15245 Shady Grove Road, Suite 350, Rockville, MD 20850

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