



PALS NEWSLETTER

A newsletter of the Pittsburgh ADHD Longitudinal Study

Volume 3, Issue 4

November 2007

PALS STUDY TO CONTINUE!

Inside this Issue

PALS Study Continuation	1
Study Update	2
Assessing ADHD in Adults	3
Sudoku Puzzle	4
CHADD of Pittsburgh Upcoming Meetings	5
Holiday Events in Pittsburgh	5

A scientific review panel at the National Institutes of Health recently reviewed the progress and future plans of the Pittsburgh ADHD Longitudinal Study (PALS). We are pleased to report good news. A very high score was awarded, which means that the study is expected to continue for at least another six years. Several factors were considered in evaluating the PALS: the continued high rate of participation (around 90%), the importance of following the participants through early adulthood, the high rate of productivity of the study (presentations at national and international

scientific meetings, scientific publications, and findings that were disseminated to the public through media outlets such as newspapers and quality websites), and the detailed plans for continued adulthood follow-up.

This is an important time to share these new plans with you. Beginning in the fall of 2008, we are planning a large change to the study that follows from your input and from experiences had by other researchers who conduct similar studies.

The first change is that we have decided, beginning in the fall of 2008, to change the frequency of

interviews for participants older than 25. Instead of conducting annual visits for everyone, we will interview participants once between the ages of 26 and 29, once at age 30, and once every five years after that (age 35, age 40, etc.). This interview schedule was chosen principally to reduce cost, but also because we hope that it will be more acceptable as participants settle into their adult lives. We will still conduct annual visits through the age of 25 because many life changes occur often

(Continued on page 2)

WITH SOME CHANGES.....

How often Young Adults will participate:

- Annual visits for young adults through age 25
- One visit for young adults between ages 26-29
- One slightly longer visit at age 30
- Visits once every five years after age 30

What Parents will do:

- Annual visits through your child's visit at age 25
- Briefing, phone and mail participation after that
- Schedule of visits will be the same as your child's (see above)



PALS Study to Continue!

(Continued from Page 1)

in the early 20s (job, school, family and living arrangements, personal goal adjustments, etc.).

Another change follows from the study's emphasis on family-level assessment. As you know, we have always requested parent participation to allow for a full assessment of the family and the perspectives within which the young people in our study reside. However, as our participants age through their 20s, friends and partners become more important in the day-to-day lives of our participants. Thus, we will shift

our assessments accordingly by asking parents of 25+ year olds to complete a much shorter questionnaire and inviting a new participant (a roommate or friend of the participant) to complete a similarly brief questionnaire. We will explain the details of this change and answer any questions when you are contacted for your visit.

As always, we review our questionnaires and procedures once a year to consider important additions or deletions and sometimes important revisions. As the participants in the study approach their late 20s and

early 30s we eagerly look forward to the outcomes of the study, and we always look forward to staying in touch with our participants. If you think of important young adulthood domains that we have missed, please feel free to share your thoughts with us. We are always happy to have input.

We look forward to continued partnership with all of you in the upcoming years. Please feel free to contact us with any questions.

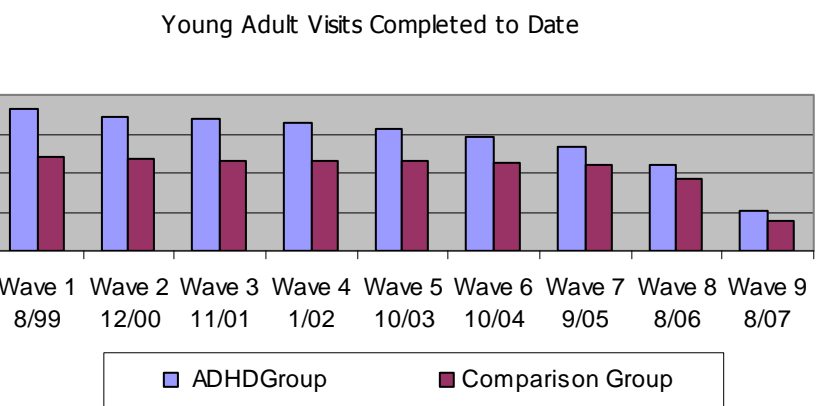
*Brooke Molina, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator,
PALS Study*

Remarks from one Scientific Reviewer....

"This very significant landmark project has contributed many seminal findings to our understanding of how ADHD continues to affect the lives of both adolescents/young adults with ADHD, and their families".

Study Update

Our ninth annual assessments are continuing. To date, almost 370 young adults and parents have completed their ninth assessment. Letters are now going out to everyone whose last visit was before March, 2007. We will be adding a structured interview with young adults who are now between the ages of 29 and 31. We expect their total interview will take less than four hours,



and they will be paid \$200. The length of everyone else's interview will remain the same. If you have received a letter, and know when you would like to come in, please call us at 412-246-5656. The table details the number of visits participants have completed at each wave. **In total, 9,941 visits have been completed since the study began in August, 1999!**

STUDY FINDINGS

Assessing ADHD in Adults



Between 50% and 80% of children diagnosed with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) will continue to experience ADHD symptoms and associated functional impairment into adulthood, with as many as 36.3% of adults continuing to meet full diagnostic criteria. In spite of this prevalence, little research has examined how to best diagnose ADHD in adults. As part of a larger study at the University of Maryland, Kat Belendiuk, Tana Clarke, Andrea Chronis-Tuscano, and Veronica Raggi set out to determine how methods that are often used to diagnose ADHD in children (e.g. use of parent reports) are related to evaluating ADHD symptoms in adults.

In this study, 69 mothers of ADHD children were evaluated for both current (adulthood) and past (childhood) ADHD symptoms. Additionally, 51 collateral reporters (significant others, friends, or siblings of the participants) rated the participants' current ADHD symptoms. Further, 45 collateral reporters (parents, older siblings, family friends or extended family members of the participants) provided retrospective reports of the participants' childhood ADHD symptoms.

Results indicated that the reports provided by the participants and collateral reporters were related for both the current and past ADHD symptoms. Additionally, participants and collateral reporters provided similar reports

about inattentive and hyperactive/impulsive symptoms. Although the information provided by participants and collateral reporters was related, the participants reported more current symptoms of inattention and more past symptoms of inattention and hyperactivity/impulsivity than did the collateral reporters. Furthermore, this study used both paper-and-pencil questionnaires and diagnostic interviews to evaluate ADHD symptoms in the participants. It was determined that participants provided similar information about their inattentive and hyperactive/impulsive symptoms, regardless of assessment type.

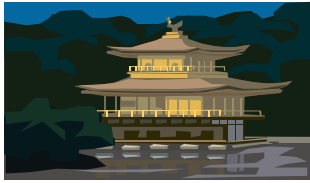
These results demonstrate that both participants and those around them are generally aware of the participant's ADHD symptoms. However, in general, participants reported more symptoms than collateral reporters. It is possible that this result is due to the fact that the collateral reporters in the current study do not regularly observe participants in a structured environment, such as the workplace, where ADHD symptoms may be most obvious and impairing. It is also possible that participants are more aware of their ADHD symptoms than collateral

reporters because they have been impacted by their symptoms throughout the lifespan. Lastly, in regard to the methods of measuring ADHD symptoms (questionnaires and interviews), the findings from the current study suggest that questionnaires may be used for preliminary screening purposes. However, diagnostic interviews should still be used as part of an assessment battery since they may assess different symptoms or areas of impairment than questionnaires.

Importantly, an ADHD diagnosis in adulthood has yet to be validated, and some symptoms that are needed for a diagnosis may not be appropriate for adults (e.g. "often runs or climbs"), and adults may have unique symptoms (e.g. recklessly spending money, risky driving). Therefore, although research that determines the most accurate way to measure ADHD in adults is indicated, it is important to first understand the nature of ADHD in adulthood so that a diagnostic system can be validated in this population.

*Kat Belendiuk,
Clinical and Developmental
Psychology Graduate Student
This research was supported by
National Institute of Mental Health
R03MH070666-1
to Dr. Chronis-Tuscano.*

Before coming to Pitt, Kat was involved in this study while at the University of Maryland working with **Dr. Andrea Chronis-Tuscano**. Some of you may remember Andrea when she was an undergraduate counselor in the **1996 STP**. She was a student of **Dr. Pelham's** at SUNY Buffalo, completing her PhD in Clinical Psychology in 2002. She is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of Maryland and the Director of the Maryland ADHD Program.



SUDOKU CLASSIC

Sudoku is the Japanese word combining "number" and "single". Its origin stems from an 18th century game by a Swiss mathematician. His game was named "Latin Squares". This is truly an international game.

	2	4	3	8				
				6				7
	5	8			4			
4				1				
			7		5			
				2				8
		1				6	7	
3			5					
				4	9	2	1	

GAMEPLAY The object of the game is to fill all the blank squares with the correct numbers. Several of the 9 x 9 grid squares already contain numbers -- you cannot change these. To work the puzzle, fill in the empty squares of the grid with the numerals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9. The puzzle is solved when each **ROW** and each **COLUMN**, and each **3 x 3** square within the puzzle contain the numerals 1 through 9 with each numeral appearing only once. **Good Luck!**



If you need to change or cancel your study appointment, please call the PALS scheduling line at 412-246-5656.

Don't forget to check our program website!



Visit us at www.youthandfamilyresearch.com

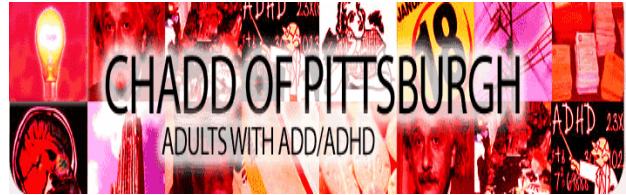
Not only can you find information about the Youth and Family Research Program and our Staff, you can:

- Get directions to our office and information on parking
- Contact a Youth and Family Research Program staff member
- Find information about community resources
- Find out about **new** research projects that are currently accepting participants



Care Packages for Military Overseas

Again this year, we plan to send care packages to our participants who are serving overseas in the military. We try to keep track of this information and don't want to miss anybody! If you know of someone who is currently serving overseas, please call 412-246-5656 to provide us with their mailing address.



**Adults with ADD for Pittsburgh & Tri State Area
CHADD International Chapter #477
Upcoming Meetings**

No December Meeting

January 31, 2008

"Sharing Tips about What Works & Frustrations about What Doesn't!"
Breaking into Focus Groups

Regular Meetings are held the 4th Thursday of each month at Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, Room 292, 3811 O'Hara St. at DeSoto St. in Oakland from 7:00 to 9:30 pm. For additional information or for a complete listing of 2008 meetings, contact Leslie Stone, Chapter Coordinator at 412-682-6282 or please visit www.pittsburghadd.org.

Holiday Events in Pittsburgh



Hartwood

Celebration of Lights

The Hartwood Celebration of Lights is a breathtaking 3.2 mile stretch of holiday light displays leading up to the stunning mansion at Hartwood.

Now in its fifteenth year, the Hartwood Celebration of Lights helps raise money for The Salvation Army's Project Bundle-Up, which provides new coats, gloves and other cold-weather clothing to children and senior citizens. More than two million lights are used to illuminate the holiday-themed displays standing 3- to 40-feet tall. Enjoy over 400 holiday light displays from the comfort of your car.

Buhl Science Center

Take a walking tour of western Pennsylvania at the legendary Miniature Railroad & Village®, open for its 88th season. Hundreds of wonderfully realistic animated scenes bring the turn of the 20th century to life.

First night Pittsburgh 2008

Pittsburgh's biggest New Year's Eve celebration! Join in for the grand First Night parade and an eclectic showcase of live music, dance and entertainment in the Cultural District. Folks both young and old will delight in a wide array of festive activities. The evening concludes with a spectacular fireworks display and an exciting First Night finale, courtesy of Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield.

If you have moved, plan on moving or have changed your telephone number, please contact our office at (412) 246-5656 to provide us with updated information.



PALS Study-Molina 03816
University of Pittsburgh
200 Meyran Building
Suite 400
3811 O'Hara St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Paste Label Here

Address Correction Requested