



PALS NEWSLETTER

A newsletter of the Pittsburgh ADHD Longitudinal Study

Volume 5, Issue 4

November 2009

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Dr. Brooke Molina

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Study Update

We are just finishing up our first full year of age based, rather than annual visits. For the first time since we began in 1999, not everyone was due for a visit this year—only young adults (and a parent) ages 23 or younger, and at about 25, 27, 30, and 35. As the chart details, 330 young adults were eligible for a visit in the past year. 267 visits were completed—and a parent was interviewed for 230 of those. 46 visits are scheduled, pending or partially completed, meaning the young adult has been interviewed, but not the parent, or questionnaires have been sent out in the mail and we are waiting for them to be completed and returned.

A Year in the Life of the PALS Study



**330 Visits Due:
November 2008 - November 2009**

To keep in touch with participants during the years when they weren't due for an interview, we made phone calls to touch base and update contact information with these young adults. Beginning in January, we started the calls, and planned to reach about 300 participants. To date, we have been successful in completing interim phone contacts with about 88% of these. Each month, we send letters out to participants who are due for either a visit or a phone contact—if you receive a letter and are interested in scheduling, please call the PALS line at 412-246-5656!

Lieutenant Mike is Home!

Some of you may remember Lieutenant Mike, a PALS participant who was serving his second tour of duty in Iraq. We are happy to report that he is now home and stopped to visit a few weeks ago. He is off to Alaska, where he will be stationed after getting married at the end of the month. Welcome Home and Congratulations, Lieutenant Mike!



'Tis the Season..... for Target Gift Cards

The PALS staff have started our annual holiday preparations. Be on the lookout for our 2010 PALS calendar and gift card for young adult participants. Our records show that about 75% of our participants cashed in their Target card from last year—if you are in the 25% who DIDN'T use your Target card, take a quick look in your desk drawers to see if it is lying around. They don't expire, so last year's card is good to use! In addition to stores, cards may be redeemed at www.target.com. Card balances are



also available on line. Best wishes from everyone at PALS to you and yours for a wonderful holiday!

PALS

Scheduling Line
(412) 246-5656



Visit our Website

www.youthandfamilyresearch.com

Dr. Molina to speak at local CHADD meeting in January

Brooke Molina, Ph.D. Co-Principal Investigator of the PALS Study will be presenting *Substance Abuse & ADHD Longitudinal Study with Adulthood Outcomes*.

Note:
This month's meeting will be held at Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic in the **Auditorium** located on the 2nd floor.



If you would like more information about Dr. Molina's upcoming presentation, please visit www.pittsburghhadd.org.



Adults with ADD for Pittsburgh & Tri State Area CHADD Chapter #477

No December Meeting

January 28, 2010

Brooke Molina, Ph.D.

Regular Monthly Meetings are held the 4th Thursday of each month at WPIC, Room 292, 3811 O'Hara at DeSoto St in Oakland from 7:00 to 9:30 pm.

Parking is available in the Soldiers & Sailors Parking Garage (Corner of O'Hara St & Bigelow) For more information, please contact Leslie Stone at 412-682-6282 or visit www.pittsburghhadd.org

PALS Interviewer Jason Duin celebrates 10 years with PALS Study!



You know him, you love, you ask for him by name! We recently feted the ever popular PALS interviewer Jason Duin in honor of his 10th anniversary working on the PALS study. Jason joined us in August, 1999 and is an interviewer that many of our participants look forward to seeing year after year. We think his popularity with participants may explain his success at scheduling visits—he is often the interviewer who schedules the most visits month after month! In addition to his power scheduling, Jason is known for taking amazing trips—Africa, Dubai, skiing in the Rockies,

and for having a great fashion sense! Thanks, Jason for a job well done!

PALS staff celebrate with a cake baked and decorated by Dr. Molina

Front Row (Left to Right): Erika Greisenegger, Kendal Kingsley, Kellie Spontak, Joanne Bethune

Second Row (Left to Right): Brooke Molina, Ph.D., Carol Walker, Tara Draper, Tracey Wilson

Last Row (Left to Right): Brian Wymbs, Ph.D., Bev Worley, Jason Duin



Study Findings: ADHD in Girls and Women



ADHD is estimated to occur 2 to 9 times more frequently in boys than in girls. However, despite this difference in prevalence, we know very little about ADHD in females and the long-term outcomes. The small number of studies conducted have found that girls with ADHD struggle in the same areas in which boys with ADHD struggle (e.g. in school, with parents, and with peers), and they point to some additional problems that have not previously been mentioned in studies of boys with ADHD, such as higher rates of depression.

These studies, though informative, have not reported on the young adult outcomes of girls with ADHD. Because of the many demands of young adulthood, including completing school, securing employment, living independently, and negotiating romantic relationships, we believed young adulthood should be examined separately for girls with ADHD. Although the PALS is mostly a study of young men, there are 65 women in the study (38 of them who had ADHD in childhood) who obviously make an important contribution given the limited knowledge about ADHD and women.

In an investigation of the young adult outcomes of these women, we reviewed their data when they were 19 years old on average (the youngest were 15, the oldest were 25). Consistent with our prior reports on other outcomes, and our growing understanding of ADHD as being a syndrome that improves with age for some but not for all, we found difficulties in some areas but not in all. Intrigued by these findings, we continued to explore the outcomes of the women approximately 5 years later, and found a similar pattern of results.

We examined education and employment outcomes. We found that young adult women with ADHD were more likely to have a history of being in special education classes, have a history of being retained a grade, and have lower achievement scores in mathematics, spelling, and reading, compared to women without ADHD. However, we found that disciplinary problems, such as detentions and suspensions, which have been commonly found among males with ADHD, were not a problem for young adult women with ADHD. In addition, it did not appear that women with ADHD were experiencing difficulties at work, at least by age 19. In our follow-up study at age 24, however, women with ADHD appeared to experience more difficulties at work and

held lower level jobs compared to women without ADHD.

We examined relationships with key people in the young women's lives, because some children with ADHD have relationship problems. We wanted to know if this difficulty continued into adulthood. We found that women with ADHD experienced more conflict with their parents, siblings, and peers in adulthood, but we did not find that young adult women had particularly problematic romantic relationships. In the follow-up five years later, we found evidence that impairment with family and peers continues into adulthood and romantic relationships emerge as a difficulty for some women with ADHD.

We examined symptoms of depression because research has shown that women are at higher lifetime risk of depression beginning in adolescence. Childhood ADHD has been thought to be a risk factor for depression but for studies of boys the results have been variable. In the PALS, we found that 45% of the women reported levels of depression symptoms that were clinically meaningful, versus 26% of the women without the ADHD history. When we conducted another examination of the data at an average age of 24, the results were similar, suggesting in our small sample of females that depression may be an important outcome for women with ADHD in childhood.

Thus, our findings on the outcomes of girls with ADHD suggest that ADHD is a syndrome that improves with age for some but not for all females. The majority of the outcomes that we explored appear to be similar to what we know about the outcomes of ADHD in males, with the exception of the emergence of depression as a particular problem for some women with ADHD. Thus, our work in conjunction with the emerging literature on girls with ADHD underscores the importance of continued efforts to identify, understand, and treat ADHD in females.



*Dara Babinsky
University at Buffalo
The State University of New York*



Holiday Happenings around Town

Candlelight Evenings at Phipps Escape the winter chill and stroll through a world of lush foliage and spritely Fräbel glasswork, enhanced with beautiful holiday lights. Starting December 7, the original Victorian Glasshouse at Phipps will have candle lit pathways and will stay open from 6:00 until 10:00 pm each night until New Years Eve.

Hartwood Celebration Of Lights is an outdoor illuminated light display along a 3.2 mile stretch of roadway leading up to the stunning mansion at Hartwood. More than two million lights are used to illuminate the holiday-themed displays standing 3- to 40-feet tall. The event is sponsored by Rite Aid and Allegheny County and is enjoyed by more than 600,000 people each year! Enjoy over 400 holiday light displays from the comfort of your car. For more information, call (877) 548-3874.

Miniature Railroad & Village 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. A one-of-a-kind, hand-built scale model of Forbes Field is the latest gem added to this historic display. For the 2009 holiday season, they will unveil a scale replica of Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater - referred to as the most unique home in the world!

The Rink at PPG Place The PPG Plaza in downtown is home to an outdoor ice skating rink. The Rink has an ice surface of 104' x 104', more than 2,000 sq. ft. larger than the rink at Rockefeller Center. During the holiday season, the rink incorporates the plaza's traditional 60-foot tree.

First Night: Welcome 2010 First Night® Pittsburgh is a unique, family-friendly New Year's Eve celebration focused on the arts. Held in more than 200 cities worldwide, the festival is a wonderful way to bring in the New Year in a uplifting, alcohol-free atmosphere. Centered in the Cultural District, First Night Pittsburgh has something for everyone, from children's activities and performances by nationally-known musicians, to installations by local artists and a spectacular fireworks finale. A schedule of events for First Night 2009 is available online at www.firstnightpgh.org.

Carnegie Museum of Art Each holiday season, five fancifully decorated 20-foot trees grace the grand Hall of Architecture at the Carnegie Museum of Art in Oakland. Nearby, in the Hall of Sculpture, the Neapolitan Presepio is an elaborate recreation of the nativity scene, one of the finest and most complete examples of its kind.

Nationality Rooms - Cathedral of Learning Celebrate Christmas around the world between mid-November and mid-January as the Nationality Classrooms are decorated in the traditional holiday styles of the countries they represent. The 26 rooms depict Pittsburgh's diverse ethnic heritage with examples from Eastern and Western Europe, Scandinavia, the Middle East, Asia and Africa.

Pittsburgh Crèche Each holiday season, from Light Up Night in November through Epiphany in January, the Pittsburgh Crèche delights visitors to downtown Pittsburgh. The Pittsburgh Crèche, a larger-than-life nativity scene, is the world's only authorized replica of the Vatican's Christmas crèche on display in St. Peter's Square in Rome.



PALS Interviewer Bev Worley gets married!



Bev Worley, PALS interviewer was married on October 3, 2009 to Jonathan Brady at the historic Gettysburg Hotel. Jonathan had been our program's work study student from 2001 to 2005, helping with administrative jobs while completing his undergraduate degree in geology at Pitt. Before leaving our lab to take a "real job" as a geologist, he introduced us to his girlfriend who had just completed her bachelor's degree in Social Work. Bev has been an interviewer on PALS since 2005, and completed her MSW at Pitt last spring. Congratulations Bev and Jonathan!

Members of PALS staff celebrate Bev and Jonathan's wedding: Erika Greisenegger, Bev Brady, Jason Duin and Kellie Spontak.

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