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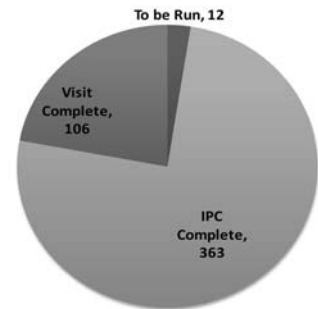


PALS NEWSLETTER

Study Update

~ Year 18 of the PALS study was from 9/1/15-8/31/16. Based on their age, 118 young adult participants were due to be interviewed. 89.8% of these young adults (106) were interviewed. A parent has also been interviewed for 72.1% of these young adults. During this same time period, Interim Phone Contacts (IPCs) were conducted to update address and phone information with an additional 363 young adult participants. During Year 18, we had contact with approximately 79% of the young adult participants.

PALS Progress 9/1/15-8/31/2016



The 19th year of the PALS study began on 9/1/16. In Year 19 (9/1/16-8/31/17), 127 young adult participants are due to be interviewed. As of 5/15/17, 45.7% or 58 young adult participants have been interviewed. A parent has been interviewed for 51.7% of these young adults. Since 9/1/16, we have completed IPCs with 241 young adults.

If you have ever wondered how many phone calls we make in a year's time, we have an answer for you! Between 4/1/16 and 3/31/17, a total of 3,104 telephone calls were made. During this same time period, 211 visits were completed—including those completed with young adults and parents both in the lab and by telephone. *Continued on Page 4*

PARIS- Pittsburgh ADHD Risk in Infancy Study

Dr. Heather Joseph has been a part of our team for the past 4 years. She has been involved in the PALS study and some of you met her while participating in the *PALS Offspring Pilot Study 2*. The *POPS-2* successfully enrolled 30 PALS participants who are fathers and their preschool aged children. Dr. Joseph was recently awarded funding from the Klingenstein Third Generation Foundation to support the start of a new study that will examine attention of infants born to parents with or without ADHD. The results from this study will allow us to determine the possibility of conducting a larger study with the goal of detecting early risk for ADHD.



We will be enrolling parents and their infants under the age of 10 months to participate, and hope to start in July. If you are the parent of an infant or are expecting a child in the coming year and would like to learn more about the PARIS study, please e-mail PARISstudy@upmc.edu or call (412) 246-5656.

Congratulations Dr. Molina!



Brooke Molina received the 2017 University of Pittsburgh Postdoctoral Mentor Award recognizing her outstanding work as a mentor to many trainees and colleagues.



Could Pittsburgh Be the New Hollywood? According to the Post Gazette, the film **Fences** brought \$9.4 million to Pittsburgh and employed more than 900 local workers over the half year of filming. A recent WESA article attributes Pittsburgh's growing film and television industry in part to the Pennsylvania film tax credit. It may be annoying when a street on your commute is clogged with film crew trucks, but the region benefits financially. It helps promote the city and it is fun to look for local landmarks or that friend of a friend who landed a role as an extra. *Some recent Pittsburgh based films and television series to check out:*



Fences, directed by Denzel Washington and based on August Wilson's Pulitzer Prize winning screenplay, has received great critical acclaim. **Fences** was both set in Pittsburgh and filmed in Pittsburgh. It is the story of a father struggling to raise his family in Pittsburgh's Hill District in the 1950's. Despite his prolific catalog of screenplays and his stature as a leading contemporary American playwright, this is the first feature film adaptation of August Wilson's work.

ABC's **Downward Dog** made its debut in May and will air on Tuesday's at 8:00 pm. The creators, Michael Killen and Samm Hodges, are both Pittsburghers. Martin, a dog, narrates vignettes from the life of his owner, Nan.

Concussion stars Will Smith as Dr. Bennet Omalu, the pathologist who became famous for his work on chronic traumatic encephalopathy and its effects on professional football players.

You can't get much more local than **Me, Earl, and the Dying Girl**. The author of the novel on which the film is based grew up in Pittsburgh on the street where the film was shot and includes scenes shot in his childhood home.

Southpaw is a sports drama starring Jake Gyllenhaal and Rachel McAdams. Filmed in Pittsburgh, this story follows the troubled life of a boxer in New York City.

The Perks of Being a Wallflower includes a scene in which the characters take the iconic ride through the Fort Pitt Tunnel to reveal the city skyline. Even if coming of age films are not your forte, this scene alone makes it worth the watch.

In **Out of the Furnace** a steel mill worker and his brother get caught up in a crime ring with memorable performances from a star-studded cast including Woody Harrelson, Casey Affleck, and Christian Bale.

Any fan of Kennywood Park must see **Adventureland**. This quirky teen romance is set in the park and features many favorite rides.

While the popular TV family drama **This is Us** is set in Pittsburgh, it wasn't filmed here.

Those who Kill is a forensic crime drama set and filmed in Pittsburgh and starring Chloe Sevigny.

Outsiders, filmed in Pittsburgh but set in Kentucky, is the region's first locally produced prime-time series. It is the story of a family living in seclusion in Appalachia and their resistance against outside forces.

Reality TV has also hit the 'Burgh with episodes of **Undercover Boss**, **Four Weddings**, **Kitchen Nightmares**, **Doomsday Preppers**, **Diners Drive-ins & Diners**, and the infamous **Godfather of Pittsburgh** and **Dance Moms**.

The FBI-serial killer-crime drama, **Mindhunter**, is set to air in October 2017.

Later this year, keep an eye out for **Gone** on NBC- another crime drama based on the Chelsea Cain novel *One Kick*.

Last Flag Flying, directed by Bryan Cranston began filming in November 2016 is a family dramedy based on the Richard Linklater screenplay adaptation of the Darryl Ponicsan 2005 novel.



Tara Draper
PALS Interviewer

Study Findings: Overcoming ADHD: Resilience in the Face of Adversity



Researchers who study ADHD often focus on understanding the negative outcomes of growing up with ADHD – how ADHD symptoms negatively impact children’s adjustment and how we can prevent those outcomes. This type of research is important so that individuals with ADHD and their parents know what areas of life may be most challenging, such as academics, employment, and substance use. But it is also important to understand the positive outcomes, or what is going well for individuals growing up with ADHD.

This shift from a negative lens to a positive one underlies the concept of resilience: “positive adaptation despite experiences of significant adversity” (Luthar, Lyman, & Crossman, 2014). In the field of psychology, the term “resilience” describes an individual’s positive functioning in the face of stress or adversity, not the individual him- or herself (in other words, just because one person has more success than another does not mean it is because he or she is a more “resilient” person). In fact, a primary motivation for studying resilience is to design effective interventions for those facing adversity. By understanding which protective factors in an individual’s life help him or her to be successful in the most challenging situations, we can promote these same factors in others facing similar challenges to maximize everyone’s success.

Most research on resilience has focused on positive adaptation among children who have grown up amidst severe adversity in their environments, such as extreme poverty, trauma, or maltreatment. Only recently have researchers begun studying resilience in the context of ADHD. In many ways, growing up with ADHD represents an especially challenging form of adversity for many individuals: it is a neurodevelopmental disorder that is out of the individual’s control, it creates problems in many different domains of life that then spill over into other domains (e.g., school, social, family, work, health, financial, quality of life), and it is often ongoing over the life course, triggering new challenges to be overcome at different life transitions (e.g., transition to high school, entering the workforce, getting married). Understanding what makes PALS participants resilient in the face of ADHD is therefore an important priority.

In a recent article (2016), psychology researchers Melissa R. Dvorsky and Dr. Joshua M. Langberg at Virginia Commonwealth University summarized findings from the small number of research studies that have examined resilience in children with ADHD. They identified only 21 studies of resilience in ADHD, which highlights that much more research in this area is needed. Of these, 10 studies were longitudinal like the PALS – aspects of individuals’ functioning and ADHD symptoms were measured multiple times over the course of childhood instead of at one time point only – which provides the most comprehensive picture of how resilience develops over time. Each study included children of different ages, ranging from 3-year-olds to teenagers.

Dvorsky and Langberg categorized the types of factors that promoted resilience across the studies into 3 categories: social-community factors, family factors, and individual factors. They identified the following strongest protective factors in each of those domains:

- 1) Social-community:** Children with ADHD who experienced social acceptance and friendship intimacy attained higher grades in school and were more socially adept – despite the challenges of having ADHD. These protective factors were primarily studied in elementary-aged children, but the authors noted that they may be even more important in adolescence, when social relationships are most salient.
- 2) Family:** Positive parenting practices, such as providing emotional support, affection, and clear expectations, appear especially important when youth with ADHD are young to promote a range of positive outcomes (e.g., positive peer relations, compliant behavior). Family cohesion/support was most important in adolescence. The authors concluded that positive parenting may model for children appropriate behaviors and may also help youth work through challenging situations they face related to their ADHD symptoms.
- 3) Individual:** There was only weak evidence for individual-level protective factors that promoted resilience in the context of ADHD.

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Study Findings: Overcoming ADHD

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Specifically, positive self-perception (i.e., one’s view of one’s competencies) protected against the development of depression and anxiety, and it was related to better quality of life overall. This finding may seem to contradict prior evidence that children with ADHD tend to have a “positive illusory bias” – a tendency to view their own actions and behavior more positively than others view them. Although more research is needed, this finding suggests that children’s well-being may not completely depend on whether their self-perceptions are accurate, only whether they are positive.

Based on the ADHD resilience research to date, the PALS investigators have identified several next steps to understand resilience among PALS participants and individuals with ADHD more generally. First, we are interested in extending the research on childhood resilience by examining it in adulthood, after individuals have learned to grow up with ADHD. We would like to know whether additional protective factors in the social-community, family, and individual domains promote resilience among adults, and whether additional domains may exist. Second, we hope to more precisely define “resilience” among adults who had ADHD as children. There is much debate in the field of psychology about what qualifies as resilience: some researchers claim that the absence of negative outcomes counts as resilience, whereas others maintain that only especially positive or successful adjustment in the face of adversity are considered resilient outcomes. Moreover, because the study of resilience in ADHD is so limited and virtually absent among adults, much more research is needed to understand what resilience looks like among adults who grew up with ADHD. Finally, we are eager to translate the protective factors we identify into practical resources and interventions for youth growing up with ADHD to maximize their success and well-being. We are beginning to review the thoughts provided at the end of the PALS interviews to fuel our thinking about this and look forward to learning from you.

How would you define “resilience” for someone with ADHD? You may have a chance to share your opinion, as you may be asked in your next PALS interview what has been going well for you. We look forward to hearing your thoughts!

*Traci Kennedy, PhD
University of Pittsburgh
Postdoctoral Scholar*

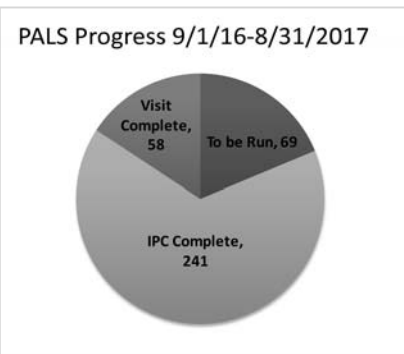


Study Update ~ New Reporters: Beginning in March, 2014, with the

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young adult’s permission, we began inviting other important people in their life to participate in PALS. Since we began this process, almost all of the young adults we have interviewed have given permission for us to contact a friend/partner. We have requested friends/partners information for 345 of our participants and to date, have received questionnaires back for 230 (66.7%) of them. The information that we ask for is quite brief and may be done electronically—we email a link that takes them to the confidential on-line questionnaires. Friends are paid \$20 for participating and romantic partners, who have a few extra questionnaires to answer, are paid \$25.

PALS Neuromaging: In January, 2015, we began the PALS Neuroimaging Study. To date, 139 PALS participants have participated, or about 5-6 per month. We attempt to scan participants close to their regularly schedule PALS visit. Introductory letters are sent, followed by a brief telephone screen to determine eligibility. Participation in the project involves one six-hour visit to Oakland: the first half involves an MRI scan at the MR Research Center at Presbyterian University Hospital; the second half is completed in our offices and consists of completing questionnaires and computer tasks. Participants may earn up to \$300.



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