



PALS NEWSLETTER

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PALS Scheduling Line (412) 246-5656



Study Overview: The Big Picture

September 1, 2017 began the 20th year of the PALS study. The study began in the fall of 1998, and we spent much of the first year locating families from the Summer Treatment Program, developing a battery of questionnaires, and hiring and training interviewers. Our first participant was interviewed on August 24, 1999.

Over the course of the first few years, we enrolled 364 participants from our Summer Treatment Program. In the past several years, we added 46 more for a total of 410. At the first follow-up interview of the PALS, 99% of these participants were between the ages of 11-25.

Our entire sample reached 650 with the addition of a comparison group of 240 participants who do not have a childhood history of ADHD. These participants were matched demographically to the ADHD group, and were recruited through local pediatric practices, advertisements in local newspapers and the university hospital staff newsletter, local universities and colleges, and the Pittsburgh Public Schools.

As of today, 91% of the participants remain active in the study (592). 37 participants have dropped out of the study and sadly, 21 have died. As you know, we are committed to keeping track of everyone in the study. One of the ways we do this is to conduct annual phone contacts with any participant who is not due for a study visit. This has been helpful-- over the past two years, 271 participants have changed addresses and 234 have changed telephone numbers, and these regular phone calls allow us to keep up to date contact information. (NOTE: if you move or change your phone number, please call 412-246-5656 and let us know!)

In each of our quarterly newsletters, we try to provide an update of the number of visits that are due each year, and how many of those we have conducted. Another way of evaluating our productivity is to look at the number of participants who have finished multiple assessments over the course of the study. Between ages 18 and 29, 91% of our ADHD group and 96% of our nonADHD group had 4+ assessments. We are now wrapping up collection of age 29 data, with only 16 participants remaining who have either not reached that age or who have not yet been interviewed. Of those who are eligible, 88% of the ADHD and 89% of the nonADHD group have had an age 29 assessment. The table shows the number of interviews by age for the entire sample since the study's inception.

Maintaining a large portion of the entire group for close to 20 years helps to make the PALS Study unique and important in many ways. Be sure to read Dr. Molina's article in this newsletter about our thoughts and plans for the future. While our staff work very hard to find people and to schedule and conduct interviews, it is your continued interest and cooperation that allows us to be successful. We greatly appreciate that.

Table I Interviews to Date		
Age	ADHD	NonADHD
11	7	6
12	22	19
13	40	34
14	64	55
15	95	78
16	116	96
17	143	118
18	195	149
19	225	176
20	235	193
21	265	202
22	282	201
23	276	213
25	329	223
27	321	217
29	328	203
35	199	121
39	37	16

How to Give Better Gifts: What Science Says about Gift-Giving

With the holidays rapidly approaching, many people are beginning to think about holiday gifting. It can be very difficult to find the perfect gift for everyone on your list, but thankfully, researchers at Carnegie Mellon University and Indiana University are making gift-giving easier! In an article published last year (2016), researchers Jeff Galak, Julian Givi, and Elanor F. Williams reviewed research on types or errors that often occur in gift-giving. These researchers typically study marketing and consumer behavior, but in this article, they discussed what kinds of gifts people like to *give* versus what people like to *receive* and recommended ways to give better gifts. Some of the results were pretty surprising!



Useful Gifts > Impressive Ones ~ First, gift givers like to give gifts that “wow”, but recipients like gifts that will be useful. To givers, a good gift is one that is fun, desirable, and dazzling, but in order to get value out of a gift, the recipient likes to be able to actually use it. For example, a book lover may prefer a standard edition of a favorite book rather than an antique copy that is too fragile to be read. When shopping, try to think about how useful a gift will be, rather than how impressive it will look when opened.

Requested Gifts > Surprises ~ Next, gift givers like to surprise and delight, but recipients prefer gifts that they have asked for. In a series of studies by researchers Francesca Gino and Francis Flynn (2011) gift recipients consistently reported appreciating requested gifts more than surprises. If you enjoy giving surprise gifts, you can try pairing an item from a list with a thoughtful companion gift. For example, if someone on your list asks for a cookbook, you could pair it with a nice apron. Most people have already put a lot of thought into what items they put on their list, so don't be afraid to stick to it!

Experiential Gifts > Material Ones ~ Finally, gift givers like to give tangible things, but recipients report getting more happiness out of experiential gifts. Galak, Givi & Williams believe that people like to give tangible gifts because they can be used immediately. However, recipients prefer experiential gifts, so this year, try giving experiences instead of material items. For example, instead of buying a new mug for a friend, you could gift them a pottery class so they could learn to make their own! Experiential gifts like tickets to a show or sporting event are both thoughtful and personal, and they'll be sure to please.

Why do gift givers and gift receivers seem to have different opinions on what makes a good gift? The researchers suggested it may be because gift givers focus on the moment the gift is opened, while gift recipients think about the entire time that they'll own the gift. Think about the best gift you've ever received – why did you enjoy it? Was it useful? Did you ask for it? Was it an experience or a material item? Generally, people prefer to receive useful gifts over impressive ones, gifts they've asked for over surprises, and experiences over material things. Hopefully, if you keep these simple tips in mind, your holiday shopping will be easier, and everyone on your list will be pleased!

References

Galak, J., Givi, J., & Williams, E.F. (2016). Why Certain Gifts Are Great to Give but Not to Get. Current Directions in Psychological Science, 25(6), 380-385. doi:10.1177/0963721416656937

Gino, F., & Flynn, F.J. (2011). Give them what they want: The benefits of explicitness in gift exchange. Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 47(5), 915-922. doi:10.1016/j.jesp.2011.03.015



Michelle Wilson
PALS Interviewer

Should PALS continue?

We just submitted an application to continue the PALS study for another five years. Many considerations were made:



- ◆ What continues to be the purpose?
- ◆ Are enough people continuing to participate to make it worthwhile?
- ◆ How to collect information so that it can be compared across the years yet be relevant to peoples' lives now?
- ◆ How to contain the cost?

These are some examples of the many discussions that we had over the past year as we thought about whether or not to continue. In the end, we decided to apply for funding.

1) Although research on adult ADHD has exploded over the past twenty years, the PALS remains unique. Its' size and retention rate allow us to examine a wide range of outcomes and it is the only longitudinal study of its size to follow children with well-documented diagnoses of ADHD into mid-adulthood.

2) Most people who have enrolled in the PALS have continued to participate (91%, in fact). For this, we are grateful because it means that the published findings are not biased by drop-out. If you are interested in reading about PALS findings and activities, we post this information in our newsletters online:

<http://www.yfrp.pitt.edu/pals/newsletter>

3) We proposed interviews at ages 35, 37, 39, and for older participants, at age 45. We also proposed a new type of data collection in which participants answer questions several times a day on smart phones for 17 days. This method, as you might imagine, avoids the problem of having to remember feelings, behaviors, and events occurring over months and years since the last visit. Co-Investigator Sarah Pedersen, who joined the PALS team 8 years ago and some of you may have met, is an expert in this method of learning about people's' lives. Although it would be informative to gather this information multiple times, we propose to gather this information only at the 37 year old assessment. This decision, in addition to interviewing less than annually, contains cost.



Sarah Pedersen, PhD

We appreciate the investment all of you have made in PALS, and an important consideration in our future plans is that your participation be as convenient as possible. This includes use of electronic questionnaires where possible, shortening the parent interview as we have added new reporters, and compensating you fairly for the time commitment required. Many questionnaires have to be retained to compare outcomes over time, but we also make sure that age-appropriate ones are added (e.g., the physical health checklist that was added not long ago).

We have often talked about other ways of learning from all of you including, as you know, continuing the brief involvement of your friends and family to stay with our more inclusive approach of looking at functioning from all perspectives. In recent years we added new questions at the end of the interview that are set up as a discussion—not like the usual questions with numbered responses that we have collected all along. Those discussions, so far, appear to be pretty short so they may need to be modified if they are to prove useful.

We've often talked about conducting focus groups of participants for various purposes. We did this at the beginning of PALS and it was very helpful. We may do this again.

In all, we came to believe that, as the longest-running study of its type in the United States, that PALS should continue. The results have continued to provide important information to professionals and families in ways that influence treatment guidelines and policy. Whether the current funding climate will support this endeavor is an open question but we are optimistic.

If you would like to offer any opinions about the PALS study or ideas for the future, please feel free to email us. While we can never guarantee, within the constraints of established scientific rigor and cost, that we can implement them, your ideas and feedback over the years have many times proven fruitful and guided our efforts in multiple ways. For this we are very appreciative.

Brooke Molina, PhD
PALS Principal Investigator



Holiday Events Around Town



Highmark First Night 2018: Make plans to ring in 2018 with Pittsburgh's favorite New Year's Eve celebration - Highmark First Night! This arts-focused event takes place in the city's vibrant Cultural District and features live music, art performances and a wide array of family-friendly activities. Join the nearly 50,000 revelers who annually celebrate First Night together and explore more than 150 events throughout Downtown at the region's largest single-day celebration. Midnight's raising of the Future of Pittsburgh ball marks the culmination of the celebration.



Carnegie Science Center Miniature Railroad & Village: This beloved display features hundreds of wonderfully realistic animated scenes that illustrate how people lived, worked, and played in our region during the 1880s to the late 1930s. A replica of Crawford Grill, the renowned Hill District jazz club from 1937 to 1951, is the latest gem added to this extraordinary display.



Holiday Performances

Enjoy holiday magic on stage from annual favorites like the [Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre's production of The Nutcracker](#), [Pittsburgh CLO's Musical Christmas Carol](#) and a new take on a holiday classic, [PNC Broadway in Pittsburgh's Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas! The Musical](#).

Downtown Tours

Explore Downtown with unique, free tours! Whether you're looking to jump on a Holly Trolley or enjoy a [horse-drawn carriage tour](#) of downtown decorations, there are plenty of ways to explore the holidays in Pittsburgh.

Dazzling Light Displays

Along with the city's downtown decorations, you can also see sparkle and shine at Kennywood's Holiday Lights, featuring more than one million lights and a Gingerbread Express ride. For botanic fun, head to Phipps Conservatory's Flower show and Winter Light Garden. Visit the Carnegie Museum of Art Hall of Architecture filled with several towering Colorado spruce trees, each with handcrafted ornaments. The trees flank the museum's exquisite 18th-century Neapolitan presepio Nativity scene.

Holiday Greetings in the mail soon!

In December, we will be sending out our PALS holiday calendar and gift cards to participants. A WePay debit card with cash out instructions will be included with the calendar (the same payment cards that you receive after a visit or phone contact update). This is a small token of our appreciation for your continued participation in the study and to wish you and yours a happy, healthy holiday season! If you have recently had a visit or IPC, please be sure to keep the cards separate as they will be for different amounts and have different PIN numbers.

We also encourage you to cash out your UPMC payment cards as soon as possible! If the card isn't used by its expiration date ("Valid Thru" date on front of card), funds will be lost.



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