



RESEARCH CENTER NEWSLETTER

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Welcome!

The Children's Specialized Hospital (CSH) Research Center Newsletter provides an overview of research conducted at CSH. We will regularly share information about CSH studies, lectures, and resources. Each issue features a CSH researcher, a CSH patient/family participating in our studies, and upcoming events and activities. We would like to keep you in the loop so please reach out with any suggestions or questions.

About the Research Center at CSH

Children's Specialized Hospital has five research areas:

[Autism Spectrum Disorder](#)

[Brain Injury](#)

[Chronic Health Conditions](#)

[Cognition](#)

[Mobility](#)

Join Our Studies

Several research studies are actively recruiting participants. To see which studies you may be eligible to join and to learn more about how to participate, see [autism](#), [brain injury](#), [chronic health conditions](#), [cognition](#), and [mobility](#) studies.

Researcher Highlight

Meet Dr. Hannah Aura Shoval

Dr. Shoval is a pediatric physiatrist (physical medicine and rehabilitation-PMR doctor) who specializes in taking care of kids with brain injury, cerebral palsy and other causes of spasticity/tight muscles and difficulty walking. She is board certified in PMR, Brain injury medicine as well as Pediatric rehabilitation medicine. She is also Associate Fellowship Director for Pediatric Rehabilitation Fellowship and Assistant Clinical Professor at Rutgers-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

Her research focuses on improving function and quality of life for children. Some examples include innovative technologies such as robotics and dynamic hand bracing, vibration plates, tread wall, biofeedback treadmill and gait labs. Other research projects include education around prevention of hip dislocation, improved quality of sleep for brain recovery, botox and alcohol injections, and examining sociodemographic based access to medical care.

In 2019, her research was recognized as being one of the top 10 research articles in the area of pediatric rehabilitation from amongst research articles from all over the world!

She has multiple research collaborations including with Columbia University/ New York-Presbyterian Hospital, Hospital for Special Surgery, Kessler Foundation, New Jersey Institute of Technology, and Rutgers-Robert Wood Johnson Medical School. She also takes pride in mentoring college students, medical students, and residents in research and meets regularly with her mentees.

Watch this [video](#) to learn more about what drives Dr. Shoval to pursue research and her multiple collaborations.

[See](#) Dr. Shoval's publications.



Dr. Hannah Aura Shoval

Featured CSH Patient/Family

At CSH, our focus is on research that expands understanding and explores new treatments and therapies for our patients. In each issue, we feature a patient/family involved in CSH research. In this issue, we focus on the Blake family.

Meet the Blake family!

[Listen](#) to why the Blake family joined a CSH/Kessler collaborative research study.

December is CSH Research Engagement Month!

It is important that patients and families have opportunities to participate in research that interests them and that helps inform best practices. In December, our Research Center is sponsoring activities to raise awareness of CSH research and to promote research engagement for our patients and families. Stay tuned for more information!

If you are a CSH staff member and have been involved in a research project, poster, or presentation, or have referred patients to a research study, please let us know. We would love to recognize you!

Upcoming Grant Opportunities

Looking for funding for a research project? Our [Clinical Research Toolbox](#) has listings of potential grant opportunities.

Distinguished Lecture Series



Our next Distinguished Lecture Series webinar is December 2, 2021, entitled **“Child and Adolescent Mental Health Before and in the Time of Covid-19.”**

Speaker: **Rhonda Boyd, PhD**, Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia

Dr. Boyd is an Associate Professor in the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) and the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine. She is the Associate Director of CHOP’s Child and Adolescent Mood Program in the outpatient clinic where she practices as a licensed psychologist specializing in evaluation and treatment of youth with depression and suicide risk. She has served as a Principal Investigator and Co-Investigator on multiple federal grants including those from the National Institutes of Health and the Maternal and Child Health Bureau. Her research has focused on maternal depression, developmental psychopathology, and preventive interventions. Recently, she participated on the workgroup for the Congressional Black Caucus Emergency Taskforce on Black Youth Suicide & Mental Health.

[Register for the virtual Distinguished Lecture here.](#)

Deeper Dive: Cerebral Palsy and Health Care Utilization

Knowing more about service needs of kids with CP is crucial for program development

This month's focus is on the cerebral palsy (CP) and health care utilization study which is led by Drs. Myriam Casseus, JenFu Cheng, and Hannah Aura Shoval. This multisite study explores the relationship between sociodemographic factors and other characteristics of children with CP and their patterns of health care utilization. The goal is to identify potential barriers to and facilitators of service utilization. The study aims to provide comprehensive estimates of functional limitations and health services utilization among children with CP, which will better inform health and education planning for this population. Furthermore, as protocols for earlier identification and intervention have become standard practice, it is crucial to have accurate data on this population's current health status and health care needs to guide decisions on program development and resource allocation and to measure the potential impact of intervention strategies.

CSH Recent Publications

A child with cerebral palsy was able to interpret the novel two phase visual feedback and respond with rapid gait adaptation in a single training session.

Research at CSH was highlighted in a recent issue of the Journal of Rehabilitation and Assistive Technologies Engineering. CSH experts Sheila Blochlinger (Rehab Technology Manager) and Physiatrists JenFu Cheng, Katherine Bentley, and Hannah Aura Shoval partnered with our colleagues from the Kessler Foundation, Xuan Liu, Nuno Oliveira, Naphtaly Ehrenberg, and Peter Barrance. The study demonstrated the utility of visual biofeedback to adapt gait patterns for children with cerebral palsy. This is one of many impactful pediatric rehabilitation research projects resulting from our collaboration with the Kessler Foundation. Read the full study [here](#).

See the full list of CSH research publications [here](#).

Upcoming Events and Conferences

[2021 Virtual International Conference on ADHD](#)

Nov 4-6, 2021

[International Conference on Neonatology and Pediatrics](#)

November 10-11, 2021 Miami, USA

[World Congress on Pediatrics and Nutrition](#)

December 08-09, 2021 webinar

[Howard H Steel 2021 Conference on Pediatric Spinal Cord Injury](#)

December 8, 2021 Orlando, FL

Meet the CSH Research Center Team



Michael Dribbon, Ph.D.

Vice President, The Research Center

Research Focus: Intervention outcomes, Social Determinants of Health

Michael likes music, travel, and time with family.

Jill Harris, Ph.D.

Associate Vice President, The Research Center, Coordinator of The Autism Program, Spark Site Coordinator

Research Focus: ASD screening for under-resourced young children, transition to adulthood for youth with disabilities.

Jill likes going for walks, listening to books on tape, and vacationing in Maine.



Claire Marchetta, MPH

Research Liaison & Education Director

Research Focus: Epidemiological factors for developmental disabilities and birth defects.

Claire enjoys outdoor recreation in all forms – especially hiking, camping, skiing and running.



Myriam Casseus, Ph.D., MPH, MA

Research Development Specialist

Research Focus: Environmental risk factors for health complications

In her spare time, Myriam likes to travel, read and tend to her garden.

Joman Y. Natsheh, M.D., Ph.D.

Research Lead, Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics

Research Focus: Neural and behavioral correlates of action-control in children with neurodevelopmental disorders.

Joman enjoys reading; especially Arabic literature. She loves to travel and explore, and she can spend hours immersed in graphic design.



Uriel Richman, MA

Research Assistant, Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics

Research Focus: Cognition and child development

Uriel enjoys hiking, camping, visual arts and playing tabletop games.

Contact Us

To learn more about our research, if you are interested in discussing potential collaborations, or if you have questions or comments, please contact us at:

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