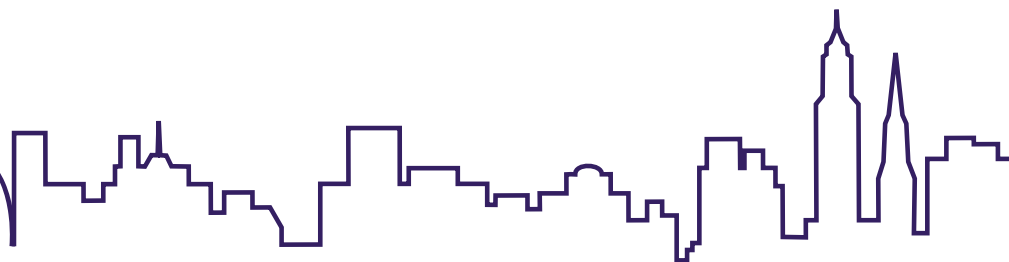


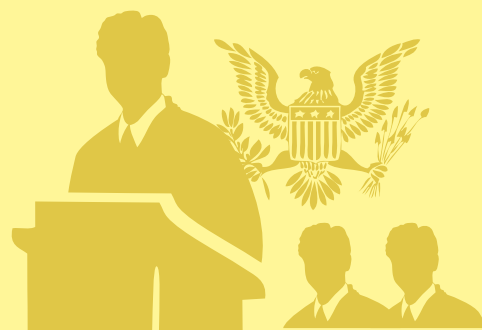
HARPP



The Hunter Autism, Research, Practice, & Policy (HARPP) Center

**A Poster Session Presented
at the Fifth Annual World
Focus on Autism**

Thursday, September 27, 2012





Michael Siller



John L. Brown

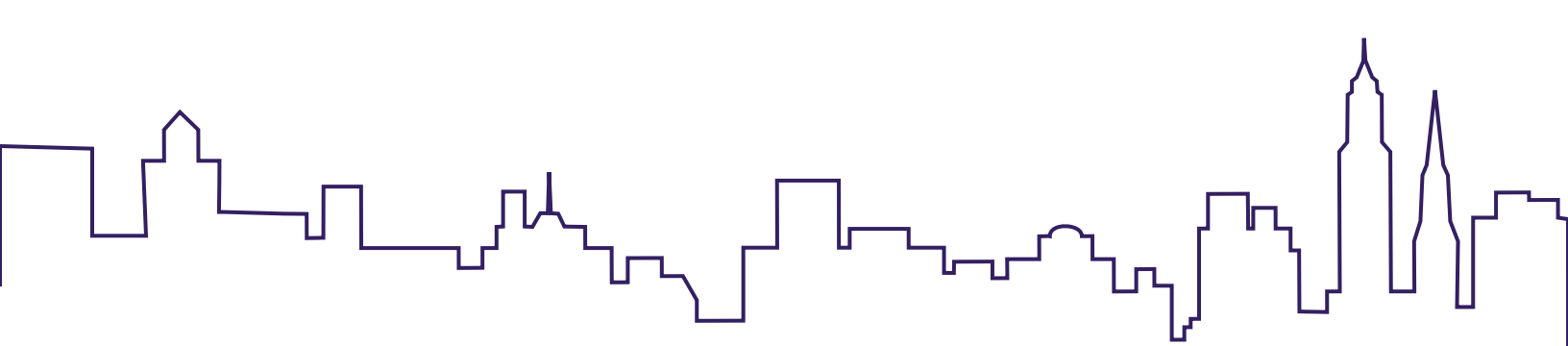
WELCOME

As the Co-Directors of the Hunter Autism Research, Practice, & Policy (HARPP) Center, it gives us great pleasure to welcome you to the Fifth Annual World Focus on Autism. The HARPP Center was created in direct response to the growing needs of New York City children, adolescents, and adults on the autism spectrum. Our programs support the families and practitioners who work with these individuals, drawing upon Hunter's strengths in teacher training, research, community outreach, and public policy. Each of Hunter's five schools – Arts and Sciences, Education, Nursing, Public Health, and Social Work – contribute to this effort, making the Center uniquely positioned to produce applied research, and to address the pressing issues facing those affected by autism.

Today's poster session will introduce you to a selection of current HARPP Center projects. You will learn about research to better understand the earliest autism red flags during infancy; innovative educational approaches to support healthcare providers with early identification and referrals; programs to train teachers, psychologists, social workers, and related professionals on evidence-based interventions; and efforts to directly support children, youth, and adults with ASD as well as their families. It is our hope that this poster session will help create a context for conversations that raise awareness, share experiences, and inspire actions in order to support more meaningful lives of those affected by autism around the globe.

Once again, allow us to welcome you and wish you an enjoyable and productive morning.

Sincerely, Michael Siller and John L. Brown
Co-Directors of the Hunter Autism Research,
Practice, & Policy (HARPP) Center



OVERVIEW OF THE HARPP CENTER POSTERS

Advancing the Science of Early Identification

Eyes on Autism? Look Here!

Dana Schnall, Elina Slobod, and Tricia Striano

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Supporting children, youth, and adults with ASD as well as their families

Collaborating with Parents to Increase Communication in Young Children with Autism

Michael Siller and Meghan Swanson

Project REACH: Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder at CUNY – An Inclusive Global University Community

Lisa Pollich

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Educating healthcare providers, teachers, psychologists, social workers, and related professionals

Promoting Early Identification of Autism in the Primary Care Setting: Bridging the Gap between What We Know and What We Do

Meghan Swanson, Emily Hotez, and Michael Siller

Providing Respecialization Training for Autism Professionals

John L. Brown

Training Institute for Staff of the ASD Nest Program

Jamie Bleiweiss and Shirley Cohen

Autism in Low Income Countries: current status, challenges and solutions.

Donia Fahim and Nilofer Naqvi

Advancing the Science of Early Identification



Eyes on Autism? Look Here!

Dana Schnall, Elina Slobod, and Tricia Striano

Babies speak a universal language. They use eye contact to learn (Striano et. al, 2006). Brain activity at 4 months shows the use of eye contact cues is modulated by familiarity of adults (Hoelh et al., 2012). Children with autism often do not look to eyes. To develop innovative tools for intervention, we are researching how children with autism process eyes in the context of familiar and unfamiliar adults. In partnership with EDHR.org, we've created a video for World Focus on Autism: Look to Babies!

Dr. Striano is Professor of Psychology and Co-founder of the Institute for Education on Health and Research, EDHR.org. Dr. Striano's investigates developmental, social, cognitive neuroscience. Author of over 100 research papers on early infant development, Dr. Striano currently focuses on the early detection of autism. Dr. Striano develops picture and media rich tools to communicate health related research to the public. Her research team at HARPP is currently investigating intervention tools for autism that integrate neurosciences and art. Follow Dr. Tricia Striano on Twitter @howbabieslearn

Ms. Schnall is currently an Honors Student at the Infant and Child Research Group, directed by Tricia Striano. Her research focuses on the ways that children with autism use social cues to learn. For more information about Ms. Schnall and her research please visit <http://childdevelopmentnyc.wordpress.com/>

Ms. Slobod is currently an Honors Student at the Infant and Child Research Group, directed by Tricia Striano. Her research focuses on the ways that children with autism use social cues to learn. For more information about Ms. Slobod and her research please visit <http://childdevelopmentnyc.wordpress.com/>

Supporting children, youth, and adults with ASD as well as their families

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Collaborating with Parents to Increase Communication in Young Children with Autism

Michael Siller and Meghan Swanson

This project offered support to 150 parents, aiming to promote the social and communication skills of their young children with ASD. Children ranged in age between 18 months and 7 years. We have developed an innovative parent education program (Focused Playtime Intervention, FPI) that involves 12 in-home training sessions. FPI promotes coordinated toy play between parent and child, and helps parents to acquire effective strategies for encouraging their child's communication. Results from two clinical trials reveal that FPI reliably increases responsive parental communication as well as children's attachment behaviors and spoken language.

Dr. Siller is an Assistant Professor in the Psychology Department at Hunter College and Co-Director of the Hunter Autism Research, Practice, & Policy (HARPP) Center. His research focuses on the social and communicative development of children with ASD, parent-child communication, and the efficacy of parent mediated interventions. More recently, Dr. Siller compared the feasibility of different models for educating primary care providers on best practice guidelines for screening and referral of toddlers with ASD.



Project REACH: Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder at CUNY – An Inclusive Global University Community

Lisa Pollich

Project REACH is a project, created by The City University Of New York in association with The Far Fund, whose aim is to help college students with autism do three things. 1) Help college students on the spectrum integrate into college life. 2) Help provide the best reasonable accommodations possible, without over-accommodating or under-accommodating, so that students with ASD succeed in school. 3) Help students from ASD make the adjustment from college into the workforce. A global approach to helping students with ASD succeed in school and in life.

Dr. Pollich is a Disability Accommodation Specialist at the City University of New York (CUNY) Central Office of Student Affairs and the Project Director of CUNY's Project REACH -- an initiative to improve services and supports for CUNY students with autism spectrum disorders. She has been working with CUNY for 12 years, in areas including student affairs, Affirmative Action, and adjunct teaching. Dr. Pollich her Ph.D. in Sociology from the CUNY Graduate Center; her dissertation analyzes the employment experiences, perceptions, and workplace challenges of individuals with an invisible neurological disorder.



Educating healthcare providers, teachers, psychologists, social workers, and related professionals



Promoting Early Identification of Autism in the Primary Care Setting: Bridging the Gap between What We Know and What We Do

Meghan Swanson, Emily Hotez, and Michael Siller

Recent advances in early identification of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) are reflected in a 2006 policy statement published by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), which recommends that family physicians administer screening tests during every well-child visit scheduled at 18 and 24 months. This project invites primary care providers to participate in learning collaboratives to implement the AAP guidelines for autism screening. Inspired by recommendations developed during a public policy roundtable held at the Roosevelt House in 2011, this project continues to provide educational opportunities to over 500 primary care professionals in NYC.

Dr. Swanson is a Postdoctoral Fellow collaborating with Dr. Siller in the Psychology Department at Hunter College. Her research interests include, parent-mediated interventions and the use of eye-tracking measures to advance early identification of ASD.

Ms. Hotez is a doctoral student in developmental psychology at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, working under the mentorship of Dr. Siller at Hunter College. Her research interests include the use of learning collaboratives to improve autism-specific screening and referral practices in primary care settings and understanding family characteristics that predict access to appropriate intervention programs.



Providing Respecialization Training for Autism Professionals

John L. Brown

Hunter College’s Advanced Certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis provides advanced training for Master’s level professionals in science-based autism intervention. The course of study includes a 5-course sequence that is approved by the Behavior Analysis Certification Board. This program provides intensive training to teachers, psychologists, social workers, and related professionals who work with children, youth, and adults with autism spectrum disorders as well as to the supervisors and administrators of the programs in which they work. The scope of the program’s impact on individuals with autism spectrum disorders is discussed.

Dr. Brown is the New York Collaborates for Autism distinguished lecturer, the Director of Training and Programs in Applied Behavior Analysis at Hunter College and Co-Director of the Hunter Autism, Research, Practice, & Policy (HARPP) Center. His research interests include the development of interventions to increase communication skills and reduce problem behavior among individuals with autism.

Training Institute for Staff of the ASD Nest Program

Jamie Bleiweiss and Shirley Cohen

Susan L. Hyman practices Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics at the Golisano Children's Hospital of the University of Rochester Medical Center in Rochester, NY. She is an Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Division Chief of Neurodevelopmental and Behavioral Pediatrics. In addition to clinical assessment and management of children and youth with autism and other developmental disabilities, Dr. Hyman teaches medical students, residents, fellows and other professional trainees and maintains an active research program focused on medical comorbidities of autism, interventions for autism, and diet and nutrition of children with autism. She is co-PI of the Rochester site of the Autism Treatment Network. In addition, she is the chair of the Autism Subcommittee of the American Academy of Pediatrics. As such she advises the AAP Committee on Children with Disabilities and is responsible for the revised version of the AAP Toolkit on Autism for pediatric health care providers.



Autism in Low Income Countries: current status, challenges and solutions.

Donia Fahim and Nilofer Naqvi

Many of the challenges facing individuals with autism and their families are global, however individuals with Autism from low-income countries are more vulnerable due to the lack of resources and differing perceptions of the disorder. Trained personnel, appropriate educational placements as well as appropriate assessment and intervention tools tend to be sparse. To address this need, more than 14 years have been spent working at a grass-root level to raise awareness and provide training to parents, extended family members and teachers working with individuals with Autism. However, to establish educational sustainability in low-income countries local stakeholders and global NGOs must invest in community awareness of the implications of ASD, long term and consistent parent and teacher training, and consider developing culturally and linguistically sensitive instruments.

Dr. Fahim is an Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Special Education at Hunter College, a Speech and Language Therapist, and a member of the Educational Committee of the Arab Autism Network. She has extensive experiences designing treatment programs and workshops for parents and professionals around the globe, including Nigeria, Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Lebanon.

Dr. Naqvi is a Bilingual School Psychologist for the New York City Department of Education and holds specialist training in the identification and assessment of children on the autism spectrum. Her interests are in early child development in different cultures with an emphasis on children with developmental disabilities and their access to intervention programs. She has conducted research and training on this topic in Cambodia and most recently in Tanzania.





www.hunter.cuny.edu/autismcenter

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