



Uniformed Services West Chapter – AAP News sheet – Spring 2012

Presidents' Messages:

SPRING IS HERE!

USPS 2012 was an outstanding educational experience, from Dr Kastner speaking on Parenting Teens: Getting to Calm" to Dr Ellenbogen's "Neurosurgical Pearls for the Primary Care Provider" each session had valuable pearls to add to your personal "toolbox." USPS 2013 is moving forward, and it promises to be a great experience as well. SO MARK your calendars now for MARCH 2013 for San Antonio! Enjoy the Riverwalk, the culture, climate, and history while you are there.

My favorite part of USPS this year was recognizing our Outstanding Young Physicians- Capt Jeremy Granger (USAF), CPT Ruth Faircloth (USA), and LCDR Erika Beard-Irvine (USN). Be sure to congratulate them on their outstanding achievements. It was challenging to select these award-winning young physicians from all the fine nominations that were received. Supervisors, plan ahead to nominate your young colleagues. The nomination process is usually started in December, and due by early January.

Chapter West Vice President, Keith Lemmon and I had the privilege of attending the Annual Leadership Forum (ALF). I like to compare the ALF to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) "Congress." Resolutions are submitted, voted on, and then ranked for the level of importance for the AAP to address. Several proposals included dues fee recommendations, ceasing AAP interaction with the Coca-Cola company (or at least avoiding advertizing on HealthyKids.org website), and avoiding giving out 'unnecessary' formula samples in an office practice. Of note-be watchful of your dues statement, as two states (New York and California) want to 'couple' state dues with AAP dues (which might leave out Chapter West, and you would also be paying your state dues whether you like it or not!).

At the ALF, our Chapter competed for the Small Chapter Award. This involved giving an oral presentation during the meeting. We didn't win, but competed quite honorably! Chapter West will receive a Special Achievement Award at the District VIII meeting in the summer for our success in promoting healthcare for the military child and deployment support resources.

Our chapter goals for the next year will be to get more people involved, complete the website revision, and update the deployment website with up-to-date research and innovative ideas to care for our military children.

It was great to see you in Seattle for those that were able to attend, and we look forward to hosting you in San Antonio next year.

Dr Dawn Peredo, Uniformed Services Chapter West President

Autism Prevalence Speaking Points for Chapters

March 2012

Background:

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) is expected to release new data for autism spectrum disorders (ASD) in the [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report \(MMWR\)](#) on Thursday, March 29. The incidence of autism is expected to increase above the current rate of 1/110. The study is a case finding through the [Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring \(ADDM\) Network](#), which critically examined the educational records of all 8-year-old children receiving special services for several educational categories.

Because this is likely to attract significant media attention, the AAP is providing speaking points to chapter leaders in case you are approached by local journalists. The AAP does not advise you proactively pitch this story to media. If you would like assistance with any media inquiry, please contact the AAP Department of Communications at 847-434-7877.

Why are the numbers going up?

- Pediatricians understand how concerning these numbers are to parents. We know parents want answers about what causes autism, and so do the AAP and the pediatricians who care for children with autism every day.
- Some of the increase may be due to how children are diagnosed and served in their communities. The inclusion of milder forms of autism could be increasing the total number of children diagnosed with autism. There is also a higher public and professional recognition of the disorder, which could increase diagnoses. There also may be a true rise in incidence. To understand more, the U.S. must accelerate the research to understand what is putting children at risk for this disorder. The AAP advocates for more funding for this important research.
- It's important to collect data on the prevalence of autism, like this study does. Knowing how many children are affected enables communities to plan and allocate their resources so children can receive the therapies and services they need. It also helps us target our limited research dollars. Many years ago, only a few scientists were looking at autism. Now, many researchers and organizations are dedicated to answering questions about autism. Information from the ADDM network informs and drives this continued research.
- The AAP strongly believes in the importance of early and continuous surveillance and screening for ASD to ensure that children are identified and receive access to services as early as possible. The AAP recommends that all children be screened for autism at 18 and 24 months of age. The sooner autism is identified, the sooner an intervention program can start. The earlier the better.

What causes autism?

- No single cause of autism has been identified, but science has shown there is a clear genetic component. For example, siblings of children with ASD have a higher likelihood of being diagnosed with an ASD.
- Researchers are exploring what environmental factors during pregnancy could affect the developing brain. Scientists are also studying many of the changes in our environment over the past two decades that may interact with genes to

- increase a person's risk of developing symptoms of autism. While the data have not yet proven that any of the following potential environmental factors relate to susceptibility to autism, they are all being studied. These include viral exposures, maternal medication profiles, maternal weight and stress, pesticides, fire retardants, nutritional supplements and status, potential endocrine disruptors used in plastic products, water and air pollution, food additives, and PCBs. Large epidemiologic studies, such as the National Children's Study, funded by the National Institutes of Health, will be able to track what children are exposed to and their likelihood of developing autism, which will give us some valuable clues.
- One exposure that has been studied extensively is vaccines. The AAP wants to reassure parents that current scientific studies show NO link between vaccines and autism. Many studies have looked at this, and NONE has found a link.
 - The AAP is a strong advocate for more research into the causes of autism as well as effective treatments.

Why are boys more affected?

- Genetic clues may help explain the disparity, but more research is needed to discover why boys are at a higher risk.

Why are more minority children being diagnosed?

- We have to examine the data to understand why this is. But what's important to note is that identifying children with autism early gives them the best chance of benefiting from therapies, so it is important that all children are screened at 18 and 24 months of age as recommended by the AAP.
- All children need a medical home, a source of primary care that is available, accessible, and culturally competent. Efforts to provide developmental screening in the context of a medical home for traditionally underserved populations needs to be a priority area for the AAP and funders of health care.

Where does AAP stand? What role do pediatricians play?

- The pediatrician sees a child for 11 well-child visits before the age of 3 years. Pediatricians' screening for autism at 18 and 24 months, as well as ongoing surveillance, is a critical component of early identification of children at risk for autism and early diagnosis. Ongoing efforts at educating child health providers in screening have been, and will continue to be, a focus of the AAP.
- The AAP released a comprehensive set of tools to help pediatricians screen for autism in their practices in 2007, and will be publishing a completely updated version of this toolkit in the fall of 2012.
- In addition to careful epidemiologic studies such as this, and research into causes of and successful interventions for symptoms of ASD, there needs to be continued attention to professional education. The AAP will work with pediatricians on continuing medical education so they can better help the children identified through screening to obtain appropriate services and provide medical management of the associated conditions. Federal programs need to continue to support postgraduate training of developmental experts to meet the need for an increasing number of diagnostic evaluations.

If parents suspect their child may have a developmental problem, what should they do?

- If you are worried about the way your child plays, learns, speaks or acts, talk with your child's pediatrician. If you or your doctor is still concerned, ask for a referral to a specialist who can do a more in-depth evaluation.
- At the same time, call your state's public early childhood system to request a free evaluation to find out if your child qualifies for intervention services. You do not need to wait for a doctor's referral or medical diagnosis. Research shows that early intervention services can greatly improve a child's development.
- In addition to the parent-friendly health information on the AAP parenting website, www.healthychildren.org, the AAP offers parents a series of audio interviews with experts in autism. Visit [Sound Advice on Autism](#).

Military Child and Adolescent Advocacy Update

LTC Keith Lemmon, MD, FAAP - Chapter Vice President

April is the Month of the Military Child. Take some extra time this month to contemplate the great honor we all have as military pediatricians to care for *America's Children*. Special events are scheduled across the country to honor our children as well as ongoing events through Michelle Obama and Jill Biden's Joining Forces Initiative (www.whitehouse.gov/joiningforces).

The Chapter has begun the process of updating the content and design of our Military Youth Deployment Support Website : (www2.aap.org/sections/uniformedservices/deployment/index.html) . We have formed a committee consisting of Tri-service as well as multidisciplinary representation. Our first organizational conference call, facilitated by the AAP Chapter support staff, was held on March 22nd. The next meeting focusing on updating resources and media coverage on the site is scheduled for April 23rd. The website was initially developed in 2006 through funding received by the Chapter through the Healthy People 2010 Chapter Grant Program. It has been continually updated and revised since that time but the last major overhaul was in 2009. The site has been utilized as an important resource for military and civilian pediatricians, youth serving professionals and military families. Recent utilization data supplied by the AAP shows that the site was visited by 580 unique visitors in Jan, 833 times in Feb, and 1351 times in March. The AAP and the Uniformed Services Section is providing financial and technical assistance to insure that the coming update is a quality product that is peer reviewed. If you would be interested in serving on the oversight committee, please contact our Chapter Executive Director – Mrs. Elina Ly.

Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury (DCoE) presents:

DCoE April Webinar – Children of Deployed Parents: Health Care Provider Strategies for Enhancing Coping Skills [<http://www.dcoe.health.mil/Training/MonthlyWebinars.aspx>]

April 26, 2012, 1-2:30 p.m. (EDT)

Overview: Since the onset of Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom, military families have experienced multiple and extended deployments. Although many children adjust well, the stress of parental deployment may increase the risk for

adjustment problems, emotional difficulties and internalizing/externalizing behaviors (e.g., physical aggression/substance abuse). Health care providers frequently serve military families struggling with deployment-related issues. This webinar will discuss the impact of parental deployment on children's psychological health and identify strategies and resources relevant to coping.*

Presenters

COL (ret.) Stephen Cozza, M.D.*
Associate Director
Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress

Michelle Sherman, Ph.D.*
Director, Reaching out to Educate and Assist Caring, Healthy Families (REACH Project)
Veterans Affairs Medical Center* *

Registration and Education Credits

Sign up for the webinar [
<https://dcoe.adobeconnect.com/a1124277231/dcoeaprilwebinar/event/registration.html>
] today.

Continuing education units and continuing medical education credits are available from Saint Louis University. You must register in advance using the Adobe Connect website to qualify.

If your network security settings do not allow you to access Adobe Connect, use another network or device to access the registration page. Once registered, you may use Adobe Connect or Defense Connect Online to attend the webinar.

Resident CATCH (Community Access To Child Health) Corner

Check out the CATCH website: www.aap.org/catch for more details and project ideas. If you would like to discuss an idea for a project, please contact MAJ Thornton Mu, the Chapter West CATCH grant facilitator at thornton.mu@us.army.mil

Pediatric Research in an Office Settings (PROS)

If you are interested in participating in PROS or have questions the Uniformed Services West Chapter PROS coordinator is MAJ Roselynn Cuenca and can be reached at roselynn.cuenca@us.army.mil

Educational Grant Opportunities

Galderma Laboratories, L.P. has partnered with the AAP and pledged \$30,000 to support pediatric education in dermatology and support chapters that are interested in dermatology education. To receive additional information or complete the short application please contact DeeDee Cada at DeeDeeCada@aap.org

Chapter Grant Coordinator

Norman J. Waecker, Jr., MD FAAP



Research Grants: The Uniformed Services West Chapter has been managing research and training grants for our members for the past 5 ½ years. We have successfully helped several investigators by accepting research and grant funds through the USW Chapter. We have helped in the implementation and managing of these projects. All proceeds from the grants have remained in the chapter to assist with administering current grants and for helping chapter members with future opportunities. Anyone interested in more information can contact either the Chapter Grant Coordinator, Norman J. Waecker Jr. MD. MPH, FAAP, at either pedsid@cox.net, or our Executive Director, Ms. Elina Ly, at elina.ly@med.navy.mil.

Young Pediatricians Network

A young pediatrician-driven Web site that contains all the links and resources of interest to the new generation:

Check it out:

www.aap.org/ypn

Chapter Volunteer Opportunities

If you are interested in Chapter volunteer opportunities please feel free to contact the Chapter administrative office. Working together we can make our Chapter better and stronger.

US West Chapter Administrative Office:

Naval Medical Center San Diego
San Diego, CA 92134

Phone: 619-532-5233

Fax: 619-532-7617