



The Alliance is an innovative partnership between The Help Group and the UCLA Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior and is dedicated to enhancing and expanding clinical research in the education and treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and to contributing to the development, greater understanding, and use of best practice models by researchers, educators, and clinicians.

HEARING ABILITIES IN CHILDREN WITH ASD

Anjali Bhatara PhD - UCLA Division of Head & Neck Surgery Fellowship
American Association of University Women Postdoctoral Fellowship

To better understand how children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) hear and process sounds in their environments, Dr. Anjali Bhatara is testing the hearing abilities of children ages 10-14 while measuring their brain activity using EEG technology.

EXAMINING CHANGES IN DEVELOPMENT FOR YOUTH WITH AUTISM AND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

Bruce Baker, PhD - National Institutes of Health

To better assess developmental issues of youth ages 12-15, Dr. Bruce Baker is studying differences among adolescents with mild intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorders and those with typical development.

UNDERSTANDING FACTORS THAT LEAD TO SUCCESS IN SCHOOL

Jan Blacher, PhD - UC Riverside SEARCH Fellowship Program

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the processes involved in early adaptation to school, Dr. Jan Blacher is investigating the factors that contribute to school success for children ages 5-12 with ASD.

IMPROVING FRIENDSHIP SKILLS FOR YOUNG ADULTS

Alexander Gantman, PsyD - NIH T32 Postdoctoral Fellowship - Organization for Autism Research

This one-year research study, spearheaded by Dr. Alexander Gantman, is testing the effectiveness of a caregiver-assisted social skills intervention for transitional young adults ages 18-24.

ASSISTING PARENTS WITH UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF EVIDENCE-BASED TREATMENTS

Araksia Kaladjian, MA, UC Riverside SEARCH Fellowship

In an effort to enhance understanding of evidence-based treatments, Araksia Kaladjian is leading a study to test the utility of providing parent education groups for parents of preschool children with ASD.

IMPROVING LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

Connie Kasari, PhD, Organization for Autism Research

This two-year project, headed by Dr. Connie Kasari, is testing the effectiveness of improving language development for preschool children with ASD through treatment in joint attention and symbolic play.

IMPROVING SOCIAL SKILLS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

Elizabeth Laugeson, PsyD - Nathan and Lilly Shapell Foundation Friends of the Semel Institute at UCLA Semel Scholar Award for Junior Faculty Career Development Shapell & Guerin Family Foundation

This study, led by Dr. Elizabeth Laugeson, is testing the effectiveness of improving friendship skills for middle-school students with ASD using a teacher-facilitated social skills intervention in the classroom.

UNDERSTANDING THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF MUSIC

Elizabeth Laugeson, PsyD - NAMM Foundation

Dr. Elizabeth Laugeson will be examining the positive emotional and behavioral impacts of a school-based music education program for lower functioning children with ASD.

IDENTIFYING THE NEURAL PATHWAYS ASSOCIATED WITH UNDERSTANDING EMOTIONS

Istvan Molnar-Szakacs, PhD - Grammy Foundation Grant Program

In this innovative project, Dr. Istvan Molnar-Szakacs is using music as a tool to explore the ability of children with ASD and to identify emotions in musical excerpts and facial expressions using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) technology.

DETECTING DYNAMIC FACIAL EXPRESSIONS IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Judith Piggot, PhD - UCLA Center for Autism Research & Treatment Grant

Using fMRI technology, Dr. Judith Piggot is comparing children and adolescents with ASD to typically developing children in order to understand the neurological processing of emotion in dynamic faces.

DECREASING SOCIAL ANXIETY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN

Jeff Wood, PhD, Autism Speaks Family Services Community Grant

Dr. Jeff Wood is heading this project to test the effectiveness of training mental health practitioners at The Help Group to implement a cognitive behavioral treatment intervention to treat social anxiety in children ages 7-11 with ASD.

IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR ADOLESCENTS WITH ASD AND CO-MORBID ANXIETY

Jeff Wood, PhD - National Institutes of Health (NIH) Grant

Using a cognitive behavioral treatment intervention to treat social anxiety, Dr. Jeff Wood is examining the effectiveness of decreasing social anxiety and increasing adaptive functioning in adolescents ages 11-14 with ASD.

For more information, please contact

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