

Targeted Research Initiative for Youth

Meritorious Research 2009

Lorie Hamiwka, M.D.
Pediatric Neurologist
Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital
Columbus, OH

Application Title:

Peer Relationships among Children with Epilepsy

Award Amount: \$75,000

General Audience Summary:

We know that adults with epilepsy who develop seizures in childhood have more social difficulties than healthy adults. They are less likely to marry, have close friends and be involved in social activities. Children's relationships and friendships with each other are very important in normal development. Children with epilepsy are known to have social difficulties, therefore the problems seen in adulthood may be a result of poor peer relationships as children. We plan to study peer relationships and friendships in children with epilepsy compared to healthy children to determine why they have these difficulties and to improve long-term social outcomes.

Sigita Plioplys, MD
Head of Pediatric Neuropsychiatry Clinic
Children's Memorial Hospital
Chicago, IL

Application Title:

Risk Factors for Pediatric Psychogenic Non-Epileptic Seizures

Award Amount: \$75,000

General Audience Summary:

The study examines pediatric psychogenic non-epileptic seizures (PPNES; behaviors that look like epileptic seizures but are in fact due to psychological causes) and associated risk factors. It examines 40 children with PNES ages 8-17 and compares them with 40 siblings in the areas of emotional, learning, language, coping, and family characteristics. All children with PNES and their siblings will receive educational, language and psychiatric evaluations. The differences between the children with PNES and their siblings will be analyzed to describe specific PNES risk factors that will be used for future PNES treatment studies.

David Lane Wodrich, Ph.D.
Mary Emily Warner Associate Professor
Arizona Board of Regents for and on behalf of Arizona State University
Tempe, AZ

Application Title:

Assuring Knowledge and Confidence among Those Teaching Youth with Epilepsy

Award Amount: \$34,000

General Audience Summary:

The Epilepsy Foundation is probably right when it says that knowledgeable and confident teachers are important, but there isn't now a good way to measure these things. We will develop a trustworthy way to do so. We will then measure the level of knowledge and confidence among those currently teaching a student with epilepsy and teachers in general to see how much of a problem exists. We will also learn where each group gets information and finds support to promote the confidence necessary to teach a student with epilepsy. This information will help us to propose better follow-up projects to build teachers' factual knowledge and promote their confidence.