

August 2009



## Community Connection



Hello

### Ministry Funding for *CanChild* Ends

*CanChild* is entering a new period in its journey as a research and educational centre at McMaster University. The Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) is transitioning to a new model for funding research. Effective August 31, 2009 the funding that the Ministry has so generously provided to *CanChild* since 1989 will end.

*CanChild* is very grateful to MOHLTC for the funding provided over the last 20 years. This funding has allowed us to work closely with numerous organizations and to leverage over \$27M in additional research grants. The resultant research findings have improved the lives of children and youth with disabilities and their families around the globe. MOHLTC funding has also provided *CanChild* with the opportunity to develop and maintain our award-winning website that continues to have a significant impact provincially, nationally and internationally in moving evidence into practice.

The *CanChild* team is committed to continuing its work to improve the lives of children and youth with disabilities and their families. *CanChild* researchers will continue to submit research proposals in the childhood disability field and may be able to access project-specific funding in the future through the ministry's new model for health research. By necessity, our work will now be targeted to funded projects.

We remain committed to sharing evidence with a variety of audiences including families, service providers and policy-makers. We are working hard to seek new funding to maintain the *CanChild* website, the service provider communications, and our capacity to respond to emails. If you are interested in learning more about how you or your organization might support the *CanChild* website please contact:

Resources Posted  
on *CanChild* Website  
[www.canchild.ca!](http://www.canchild.ca)

### GMFCS-E&R

Dutch, Icelandic and Swedish translations have recently been added to the Arabic, Danish and Japanese translations!

### Effectiveness of Strengthening for Children with Cerebral Palsy

This *Keeping Current* was written by Adrienne Harvey PhD, who examined the effectiveness of muscle strengthening for children with cerebral palsy. Her review was conducted in part for the *International Society for Prosthetics*

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All donations to *CanChild* are eligible for a tax receipt.

## Research Updates

### *Partnering for Change*

The **Partnering for Change Study** is testing the feasibility of an innovative consultation model of school health occupational therapy (OT) service delivery that focuses on transfer of knowledge about children who have coordination difficulties to parents and teachers. Occupational therapists work in classrooms, acting as a 'coach' to try out and demonstrate strategies that may help children with developmental coordination difficulties. In the pilot phase (October 2008-June 2009, funded by Ontario Neurotrauma Foundation and Ontario Rehabilitation Research Advisory Network), two experienced OTs worked in two schools in the Halton District School Board. The pilot phase was very successful, suggesting that this model may be able to meet the needs of some children who have coordination difficulties but may reach more teachers than is possible in the current model. In October 2009 we will enter the next phase of the study (funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research) in which 5-6 OTs provide this new model to families and teachers of students in JK to Grade 3 in a few schools. Please contact the Study Coordinator at *CanChild*, **Cindy DeCola**, for more information.

### *Family-centred Functional Therapy for Children with Cerebral Palsy (Focus on Function Study)*

Young children with cerebral palsy and other developmental motor delays commonly receive physical and occupational therapy to help development and independence in movement, self-care and play activities. Two commonly used approaches to treatment were compared in this randomized clinical trial funded by the U.S. National Institutes of Health (2005-2009). The "*child-focused*" approach aims to improve function by working with the child to improve his/her skills and abilities. The "*context-focused*" approach aims to improve function by changing/adapting the task and/or environment around the child to improve his/her skills and abilities.

The **Focus on Function Study** was led by researchers at *CanChild*, the University of Alberta, and the Calgary Health Region. One hundred and thirty children (ages 1 to 6) and their families from across Ontario and Alberta were involved in the study. Ninety-eight occupational and physical therapists from across Ontario and Alberta were trained to carry out the therapies for the study. This is the largest study of its kind in North America. Although results are not yet available, the study protocol is published [online](#).

Results will be presented at the AACPDM meeting in Arizona in September

and Orthotics (ISPO) Conference, Oxford, in September 2008. Click [here](#) to view.

Also check **What's New** on *CanChild* website.

## Recent *CanChild* Publications Have Appeared In....

...*Child: Care, Health and Development*

**John Cairney** and colleagues from Toronto Brock University and *CanChild* wrote an article (Vol. 35, 402-408) entitled: "*Comparing probable case identification of developmental coordination disorder using the short form of the Bruininks-Oseretsky Test of Motor Proficiency and the Movement ABC*"

...*Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*

An article by **Peter Rosenbaum, Cheryl Missiuna**, and colleagues was published in this journal in January 2009. "*Proposed motor development assessment protocol for epidemiological studies in children*" suggests an approach to following motor development longitudinally in a large population-based study of infants, children and youth. (63 Supplement

### Accomplishments, Awards and Honours

Members of the *CanChild* team have received numerous awards over the past year. **Robin Gaines** was recognized by the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario with a research excellence award that will permit her to focus on the development of a parent training program. **Dianne Russell** received the Research Scientist Award from McMaster Child Health Research Institute (MCHRI). Dianne will continue to study innovative methods for knowledge translation to service providers and families, and develop evidence-based materials and methods that will increase parents' understanding of children with cerebral palsy. **Carol DeMatteo** was awarded the John C. Sibley award for part-time faculty at McMaster University for her exceptional commitment to innovative teaching, interdisciplinary education and research to improve client care. Gesellschaft Neuropädiatrie, the German Neuropaediatric Society, presented the Emil Becker Award to **Peter Rosenbaum** in April for his contributions to the understanding of motor development over the past 25 years. **Danielle Levac** received the Physiotherapy Foundation of Canada-Research Grant in the Neurosciences for her PhD work using virtual reality within physiotherapy interventions for children with acquired brain injury.

### Speaking of...

**Cheryl Missiuna** delivered a keynote address at the DCD VIII International Conference in Baltimore in June 2009 on *'Partnering for Change'*. **Bob Palisano** and **Peter Rosenbaum** were both invited speakers at the International Cerebral Palsy Conference in Sydney, Australia in February. Peter presented *'What parents and clinicians want to know - and what we should be telling them - in 2009'*. Bob spoke about *'Gross Motor Function Through the Lifespan of Individuals with Cerebral Palsy'*. **Jan Willem Gorter's** keynote presentation at the 17th European Congress on Obesity in Amsterdam, May 2009 addressed the question *'How do we solve a problem like obesity in childhood disability?'*

### Remember to Check Out *CanChild's* Newly Designed Website!

Funding from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care helped *CanChild* to make it easier for users to navigate within the site and find resources quickly. While the website address [www.canchild.ca](http://www.canchild.ca) remains the same, one of the significant changes is the addition of three microsites for some of *CanChild's* content that is frequently accessed. The home page contains three 'hot buttons' which link directly to [Developmental Coordination Disorder \(DCD\)](#), [Motor Growth Measures](#), and [Lifecourse and Transitions](#) resources.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact us at [canchild@mcmaster.ca](mailto:canchild@mcmaster.ca).

...*Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology (DMCN)*

In April 2009, **Steven Hanna** and other investigators from *CanChild* published "*Stability and decline in gross motor function among children and youth with cerebral palsy aged 2 to 21 years*" based on results from the Adolescent Study of Quality of Life, Mobility and Exercise (ASQME) Study. (Vol. 51(4), 295-302). [Click here](#) to read more about the ASQME Study.

### New *CanChild* Member

*CanChild* would like to welcome **Eyal Cohen** to our team of investigators. Dr. Cohen is a general paediatrician at the Hospital for Sick Children and an Assistant Professor in the Department of Paediatrics at the University of Toronto. His research interests focus on models of care coordination for children with complex and chronic health needs, improving the quality of inpatient care, and barriers to conducting research in vulnerable populations.