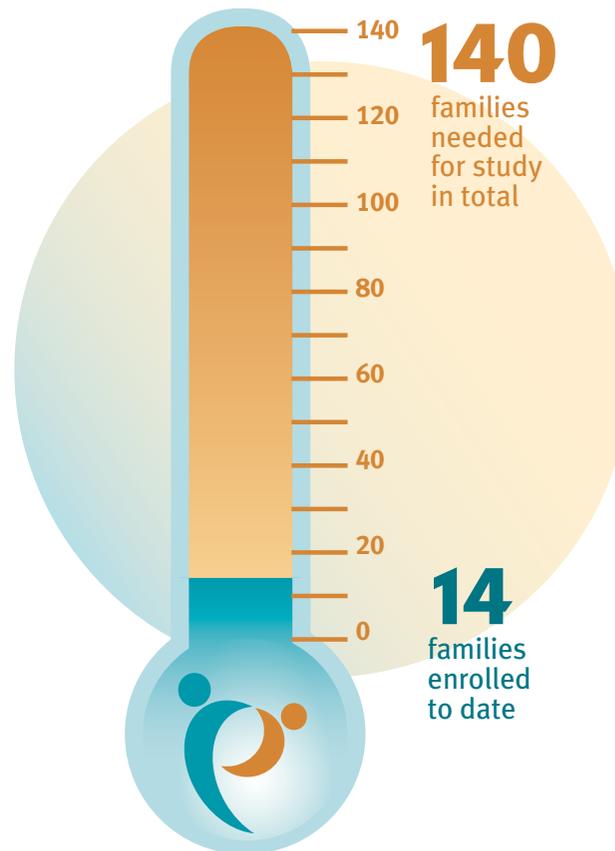


## Picking up the PACE!

**N**OW THAT SUMMER is over and the fires that affected most of us (in one way or another) are under control, we are picking up the pace of the project considerably. Most of the Qs have completed online modules to learn how to invite/ consent parents of eligible children and conduct the initial assessments. In several sites, the Qs have conducted baseline assessments of families who agreed to join the study. Similarly, almost all coaches have completed training, and some have now been assigned to coach parents who were assigned to the Parent Coaching group of the study. In the few sites that are a bit behind, we are working hard to support the coaches and Qs so that they too can move forward.

Many steps are required before a parent can participate in a complicated project like this one. So far, 18 families have been invited to participate in the project and 14 have consented. Some families are in the randomized controlled trial and some are in Parent-Child Connections, the

Aboriginal arm of the project. Our target is 140 families, and we will keep you updated about our progress in future issues of this newsletter.



## Research-to-Practice: Bridging the Gap

**T**HE PROCESS OF GETTING effective programs to the children and families who need them is not well understood. In fact, one of the big translational gaps in the research community is figuring out how to go about implementing evidence-based practices in community settings. In the PACE Coaching project, one of our research aims is to identify the practices that will optimize future implementation of a parent coaching model for toddlers at risk for autism spectrum disorder (ASD). This is important in order to achieve and maintain high quality coaching across diverse communities in BC.

We believe that one of the most powerful paths for bridging the gap between research and practice is to work closely with our community partners. This requires us to forge good lines of communication so that we can better understand how the PACE Coaching model is rolled out each unique setting.

There are several ways that we are establishing and maintaining connections with

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# Bridging the Gap

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our partner agencies and communities; this newsletter is one of them! In addition, during parent coach training, we wanted to support the most enabling context for our trainees. To that end, we organized the coach trainees into Pods to create Communities of Practice. The Pods met via our online platform, Teleroo, to facilitate sharing of information (such as curriculum checklists, goals, and videos) and to learn from each other and from their

**We believe that one of the most powerful paths for bridging the gap between research and practice is to work closely with our community partners.**

trainer. Similarly, our Qs are using the Teleroo platform to upload some assessment materials and to link in with the research team as they recruit and assess child and family participants in the study.

We are also conducting Implementation Action Planning (IAP) sessions at various points throughout the study. These sessions are aimed at learning from each of our partner agencies about unique local conditions for



supporting young children and their families, any barriers or challenges that they face while participating in the project, and what we can do to better support their participation. We have tried to be responsive to what we have heard in these IAP sessions so that we can support the most enabling context as soon as we hear that a need exists.

At the end of the study, we will summarize what we have heard from our community partners in order to describe the conditions and contexts that will support future implementation of parent coaching in BC. We hope this will contribute to the emerging research that guides others how to move effective interventions to practice settings (e.g., *Applying Implementation Science in Early Childhood Settings*; Halle, Metz, & Martinez-Beck, 2013).

## PACE session to be included at S&H Conference

THREE MEMBERS of the research team and all three PACE Coaching trainers will be presenting a session about the project at the upcoming Speech & Hearing BC conference at the Delta Ocean Pointe Hotel in Victoria. Our session will be on October 19, 2018 from 1:30-4:30. We are excited to share information about the project in general and some of what we have learned so far – we hope to see you there!



# “How Much Does That Cost?”



*Jathishinie Jegathisawaran, Wendy Ungar, and Kate Tsiplova of The Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto.*

**P**ARENTS OF CHILDREN with or at risk for autism spectrum disorder (ASD) often access a diverse range of health, community, and social and educational diagnostic, treatment, and support services. Access to these services depends, in part, on what is funded and available. There is public pressure to expand ASD services, and many provinces have introduced reforms to their early intervention programs. Since such services are expensive and compete with other programs for funding from different levels of the government, it is vital to collect evidence on the value for money of alternative ASD programs.

One of the objectives of PACE Coaching is to conduct a cost effectiveness analysis. This will be done by Dr. Wendy Ungar, a PACE co-investigator, and her research team at The Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, Ontario (SickKids). All parents who join the PACE Coaching study, regardless of their group assignment, will complete an interview called the Resource Use Questionnaire for Toddlers (RUQ-T). The RUQ-T measures the types and amounts of all services that families access for their child who is at risk for ASD, as well

as their out-of-pocket costs. The services will include family and government costs related to parent coaching, as well as all resources used for assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and management of ASD. Other family costs, such as missed days from work and normal daily life activities, will also be measured. The research team will then calculate the additional costs of parent coaching compared to the costs of standard care. These costs will be weighed against the additional benefits of parent coaching that are observed, in terms of functional outcomes.

We are excited to include this component of the PACE Coaching project because understanding how families access and use the resources that are available to them is critical to inform policy-making that affects the funding of such programs. We are also excited because this will be the first evaluation of cost-effectiveness of parent coaching in a diverse, geographically distributed community setting. For more information about the SickKids team, please visit Technology Assessment at SickKids: <http://lab.research.sickkids.ca/task/>

# Behind the Scenes

**I**N PAST ISSUES of this newsletter, we introduced you to our project assistant, trainers, coaches, Qs, and Teleroo partners. Now, we want to introduce you to some of the other members of our team at both UBC and the University of Alberta.

**Oscar Olvera Astivia** recently joined the UBC team in the role of data analyst. Oscar completed his Ph.D. in Measurement, Evaluation and Research Methodology at UBC in 2017 and then worked as a postdoctoral research fellow for the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP), a UBC interdisciplinary research network. Currently, he is a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Educational & Counselling Psychology and Special Education, with expertise in latent variable modelling, multilevel modelling, and data visualization. We are thrilled to have Oscar on board to offer advice, guidance, and expertise as we begin to collect and compile data for the randomized controlled trial.



Working with Oscar will be three UBC research assistants who will help to manage the data that you provide: Kyle Dadgar, Claire deBruyn, and Xin Gao. They will be scoring, coding, collating, and entering information from the practice logs, coach training checklists, parent and child assessment measures, and all of the many other bits and pieces of information that we receive daily by mail, fax, or email. It's a big job that is both important and often unrecognized, so we want to acknowledge these hard working UBC graduate students for their efforts.

**Kyle Dadgar** is a graduate student in the Human Development, Learning, and Culture area who manages the monthly activity logs and scores the child measures for the project. He has an honours B.A. degree in Psychology from UBC and plans to complete an M.A. thesis that examines how adolescents interact with social media. In the past, Kyle has held multiple research assistantships, investigating topics such as children's social cognitions and parents' beliefs about their children. Kyle is a baker and crafter



in his spare time, and especially enjoys scrapbooking and card making.

**Claire deBruyn** is a graduate student in Counselling Psychology, with special focus on trauma and close relationships. She acts as the Teleroo support assistant and video coder for the project. Prior to this, she completed a B.A. in Psychology from Simon Fraser University, with a minor in Counselling and Human Development; and a Bachelor of Social Work from UBC. She has worked in Early Childhood Education and has also done social work in hospital settings. Claire enjoys performing in musicals, spending time with friends, and drinking tea in her spare time.



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**Xin Gao** is a graduate student in Special Education and is our SPSS data entry whiz. Previously, he completed a B.Ed.



in special education at Beijing Normal University, and was certified as a special educator with students in grades K-12. Xin worked as a special education assistant in Beijing and, since moving to BC, he has also worked as a behavior interventionist with a Chinese family. Xin plans to complete a meta-analysis of the research on family-centred positive behavior support for his M.A. thesis. In his spare time, he likes to swim, cook Chinese cuisine, and sing alone at home.



**WE ARE ALSO VERY PLEASED** to introduce two new research assistants at the University of Alberta: Chantel Labonté and Shiva Zarezadeh. They are working under the direction of co-investigator Veronica Smith to manage and analyze transcripts and surveys from the Implementation Action Planning meetings conducted at the start, mid-point, and end of the project. They might live far away, but they are not forgotten!

**Chantel Labonté** is a third year doctoral student in School and Clinical Child Psychology at the University of Alberta. Through her training as a child psychologist, she has provided psychological assessment and intervention to children, adolescents, and their families who face a variety of developmental and mental health concerns. Her dissertation research focuses on exploring how to best support the development of children with autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disorders. In her spare time, Chantel enjoys spending time on a friend's farm and skiing the bunny slopes in Alberta.



**Shiva Zarezadeh** is a fourth year doctoral student in Psychology at Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Iran and a researcher at University of Alberta. Shiva is a child Psychologist and floor-time therapist with specialization in children with autism spectrum disorder. Her dissertation research puts a spotlight on children's visual-spatial and language development and the challenges that might affect their social-emotional development. Shiva likes to travel and learn about other cultures.

