

Healthy Development Adelaide

A Research and Innovation Cluster in South Australia

Newsletter

Vol 14, Issue 2 – April 2018



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Upcoming

Conferences /

Scientific Meetings

21 - 22 May

Reproductive Health and Medicine - Vienna, Austria

2 - 8 June

Sleep - Baltimore, US

20 - 23 June

Australasian Society for Stem Cell Research - Melbourne, Australia

1 - 4 July

European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology - Barcelona, Spain

16 - 17 July

Gynaecology, Obstetrics and Reproductive Health - Bangkok, Thailand

29 July - 3 August

Childhood Trauma - Melbourne, Australia

For further event info go to www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/events

To unsubscribe from event and news notifications contact HDA.

www.adelaide.edu.au/hda

(08) 8313 8222

anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au

.... HDA Partners



Government of South Australia

Department for Education and Child Development
Women's and Children's Health Network



LATEST NEWS

New HDA Scholars

Congratulations to our two new Scholars who have been awarded a Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation PhD top-up scholarship for 3 years to the value of \$15,000 each.



Rosa Virgara

Alliance for Research in Exercise, Nutrition and Activity; School of Health Sciences, UniSA

Primary Supervisor: A/Prof Carol Maher, UniSA

Co-Supervisors: Dr Anna Philips, UniSA; Dr Lucy Lewis, Flinders University and Ms Mandy Richardson, Out of School Hours Care Association of SA (OSHCsa)

Physical activity, screen-time and wellbeing in Out of School Hours Services: how can we provide better programs for Australian children?



Fan Jia

School of Pharmacy and Medical Sciences, UniSA

Primary Supervisor: Prof John Hayball, UniSA

Co-Supervisors: Dr Kerrilyn Diener, University of Adelaide and Dr Tamara Cooper & Dr Preethi Eldi, UniSA

Application of a new vaccine technology to protect children against multiple diseases painlessly and economically



Dr Ming Li has been working in The School of Health Sciences at University of South Australia since 2008. She has been trained in clinical medicine in China and in public health at University of Newcastle in Australia. She completed her PhD project assessing overweight and obesity and investigating comprehensively social and environmental factors and lifestyle behaviours such as diet, physical activity and sedentary behaviours associated with it in children and adolescents in China.

She has built up a clear pathway of diabetes and its complications in a follow up study among Indigenous adults in North Queensland using linked medical records. She was involved in developing and evaluating interventions in chronic diseases prevention and management at primary health care settings. She has worked on exploring diet, dietary pattern, food groups and its association with non-communicable diseases including diabetes, cardiometabolic risks in different cultural backgrounds.

Her research area covers women and children's health, nutrition, HPV infection and pregnancy outcome, health disparity. She is currently working on cancer epidemiology using population-based records assessing cancer survival, survival disparities, screening and cancer. She has actively been supervising research students in China and Australia and built strong international link. She has reviewed research report and papers for high quality journals in nutrition, epidemiology, public health, women and children's health.

☎ 8302 1051

✉ ming.li@unisa.edu.au

LATEST NEWS...CONTINUED

New HDA High School Student Scholarship Awardee



Congratulations to our third year recipient of the HDA High School Student Scholarship for 2018-2019.

Rachael Dickinson has commenced her Year 11 study at Christies Beach High School and will be awarded \$1,000 over a two-year period during her Year 11 and 12.

From l to r: School Principal Graham Clark, Rachael with her award, and HDA Co-Convenor Professor Michael Sawyer.

New HDA Research Member Facebook & Twitter profiles

We need you! Let's showcase great research in SA!

Each week HDA will be profiling one of our research members on Facebook and Twitter. It's a short profile which links to a bit of research/news about your area of research. It's a tiny bit of added exposure for you...

I will be contacting you eventually but if you want to jump in early than email me and we can start an easy process, a few paragraphs and a photo is all that's needed. Contact anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au

HDA Event Attendance Certificates

HDA provides Attendance Certificates upon request to individuals that attend our events. The certificates may be used towards your professional development program within your organisation. *It is your responsibility to check whether these certificates will be eligible within your professional development program.*

To request a HDA Attendance Certificate you will be required to complete the proof of attendance form at the event with your name, organisation and email. HDA Attendance Certificates are FREE and will be emailed to you within one week. For any queries, contact anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au

Enhancing children's participation and their connections to technology and the community

Every child and young person, regardless of their needs and abilities, has the right to participate fully in their community

This forum will share research from Novita and Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital (Toronto, Canada) that showcases novel ways to support children and youth to participate, learn, play and enjoy alongside their peers and family. Two Novita speakers will present their work with young people with physical disability and complex needs and guest keynote speaker Professor Virginia Wright will share her team's research with youth with acquired brain injury.

Professor Virginia Wright

**Advances in measuring the ability of youth to safely access their community after a brain injury
- new research on our Community Mobility Assessment**

Pediatric Physiotherapist & Senior Clinician Scientist, Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, Canada

Ms Grace Bowman

Exploring factors contributing to physical activity participation for young people with disabilities

Psychologist, Novita

Dr Toan Nguyen

The Switch Access Measure (SAM): Where are we now and where we are going?

Research Officer and Rehabilitation Engineer, Novita

Wednesday 11 April, 5.30 - 7.30pm

{doors open from 5.00pm, networking with light refreshments from 7.00pm}
Rumours (6th floor), Union House, University of Adelaide (North Terrace campus)

RSVPs by Friday 6 April to anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au

Full program can be viewed at www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/events

NEW HDA MEMBERS

Dr Amy Wyatt, Senior Lecturer
College of Medicine & Public Health, Flinders University
Focus - biochemistry, protein misfolding, pregnancy

Dr Tahna Pettman, Academic
College of Medicine & Public Health, Flinders University
Focus - public health knowledge translation & exchange

Davi Macedo, PhD Candidate
School of Dentistry, University of Adelaide
Focus - social identity, Aboriginal children

Victoria Parsons, PhD Candidate
Australian Centre for Child Protection, UniSA
Focus - primary prevention for child abuse

Dr Andrea Stringer, Senior Lecturer
School of Pharmacy & Medical Sciences, UniSA
Focus - gastrointestinal & musculoskeletal physiology, Vit D

Mrs Meg Bater, PhD Candidate
SAHMRI Healthy Mothers Babies & Children
Focus - preterm birth, infant child development

A/Prof Jillian Carr, Senior Lecturer
College of Medicine & Public Health, Flinders Uni
Focus - viral pathogenesis: dengue & zikavirus

Pedro Santiago, PhD Candidate
School of Dentistry, University of Adelaide
Focus - psychometrics, Aboriginal children

Dr Lesley-anne Ey, Lecturer
School of Education, UniSA
Focus - early childhood, bullying

Media Release - 9 February, Flinders University



A Flinders University program to reduce bullying in the schoolyard and promote wellbeing among children has halved the incidents of bullying at Brighton Secondary School and is having a similar impact

in schools across the world.

This is according to independent evaluations conducted in Australia, Greece, Italy, Malta and Japan.

The PEACE Pack, pioneered by Professor Phillip Slee and Dr Grace Skrzypiec from Flinders University in 2001, provides a series of school-based strategies to provide safe learning and play spaces for students and includes an eight-week anti-bullying intervention delivered by classroom teachers.

It was introduced to Brighton Secondary School in 2014 to address an 'average level of bullying', according to Professor Phillip Slee.

"Four years ago the level of bullying at Brighton was not dissimilar to the majority of other secondary schools in Australia and the United States, and was considered to be 'middle of the road' in terms of peer aggression," says Professor Slee. "Now the level of reported bullying is as low as 5%, which puts Brighton Secondary School in the lowest category for schoolyard bullying, and which is a wonderful achievement for the school and the PEACE Pack program."

Underpinning the PEACE Pack is a strong emphasis on building the productive coping skills of the victims of bullying and involving students in a review of their own schoolyard experiences. Unlike other anti-bullying programs, the PEACE Pack takes a whole-of-school approach and focusses on relationship-building and decision-making among bullying perpetrators as well as bystanders, whose own wellness is considered to be integral to the 'bullying solution'.

Importantly, the PEACE Pack includes particular tools to support young people with special needs who may be experiencing bullying.

Designed to address all forms of bullying, including physical bullying, verbal bullying, exclusion bullying and cyber-bullying, the PEACE Pack offers intensive professional development for teachers, school counsellors and parents and a comprehensive anti-bullying curriculum for students.

A key feature of the program is the nomination of an anti-bullying 'champion', a person of authority who is responsible for driving anti-bullying education and culture.

"The Peace Pack has had a demonstrable and positive impact on the coping skills of our students who have or are continuing to experience bullying," says Brighton Secondary School Principal, Ms Olivia O'Neill.

"We've signed on for a fifth year of the PEACE Pack because of the improvements to our schoolyard culture and because we want to achieve zero bullying on campus."

Current data on bullying suggests that one in five Australian school students is bullied once a week or more and that cyber-bullying is associated with greater anxiety and depression than 'traditional' schoolyard bullying. According to Prof Slee, overseas statistics tell a similar story.

"Bullying in schools is a universal issue that requires leadership, commitment and engagement from the entire school community," Professor Slee says. "Brighton Secondary School has shown this leadership and proven that endemic issues such as bullying can be significantly stemmed if addressed in an open and direct manner. "We are delighted that the PEACE Pack is achieving significant and sustained reductions in bullying across multiple schools in multiple cultures and we are now focused on rolling our program out in the United States and Italy early this year," says Professor Slee.

To date, thirty-six Australian schools have utilised the PEACE Pack and the program is also currently used by 150 schools in Greece, eight schools in Malta, and six schools in Japan. Learnings from the PEACE Pack have been distilled in a new book by Professor Phillip Slee and Dr Grace Skrzypiec which is available now: [Slee P, Skrzypiec G and Cefai C \(2017\). Child and Adolescent Wellbeing and Violence Prevention in Schools. Routledge, London.](#)

About the PEACE Pack

The PEACE Pack program is suitable for children aged five to 18 years. Since 2001 it has provided primary and secondary schools with a framework through which they can adequately address school bullying and violence.

It is founded on the following principles:

P – Preparation: preparation and consideration of the nature of bullying

E – Education: education and understanding of the issues

A – Action: action taken and strategies developed to reduce bullying

C – Coping: coping strategies for staff, students and parents

E – Evaluation: evaluation, review and celebration of the program

Ultrasound training to save lives in regional SA

Media Release - 9 February, UniSA



With thousands of soon-to-be mothers across rural and remote Australia missing out on potentially life-saving antenatal ultrasounds, the University of South Australia (UniSA) is hosting two, two-day intensive workshops for remote midwives and doctors so they can provide basic ultrasound services to their communities as part of The Hospital Research Foundation's (THRF) Healthy Newborn Project.

The project, made possible thanks to more than \$100,000 in funding from THRF is being led by UniSA's Dr Nayana Parange with training to take place at the University's specialist facilities on the City East campus which includes a state of the art ultrasound simulation lab. The first workshop will take place on February 10 and 11. Dr Nayana Parange, from UniSA's Division of Health Sciences, is determined to improve the lack of trained healthcare professionals in regional communities, building on work that she's been involved in over several years, including on UniSA's Whyalla campus.

At least two ultrasound scans during pregnancy are considered best-practice antenatal care to provide vital information for a pregnant woman and the health professional, such as an estimated due date for the baby, which can be crucial in diagnosing complications. Ultrasounds can identify a range of complications, including ectopic pregnancies, which can be life-threatening.

Dr Parange says the lack of regionally-based GPs and midwives who are trained to perform antenatal ultrasounds, as well as a lack of equipment, is a widespread problem putting lives at risk.

"An antenatal ultrasound can be lifesaving but at the moment not everyone is receiving at least one ultrasound during pregnancy – as health guidelines recom-

mend – because of a lack of equipment and a lack of staff trained to use it," Dr Parange says. "Thanks to the generosity of THRF's community, we are now able to deliver a training program to GPs and midwives that will bring life-saving antenatal point of care ultrasound service within easier reach for pregnant mums and communities living in regional and remote South Australia. We also hope the government will come on board and provide equipment in the rural and remote areas that need it."

While some pregnant women will travel for an ultrasound, many don't – for a range of reasons – or are unable to do so. But there's little data to provide reliable numbers around this.

THRF's Healthy Newborn Project will enable Dr Parange and her team to undertake a needs analysis survey to provide data around access to antenatal ultrasound scans in rural and remote communities across Australia. Over the next 12 months the research will examine factors such as the impact of needing to travel, and determine how many lives could be saved through improved access to antenatal ultrasound. Women living in the APY Lands in South Australia's remote north west, face a five-hour drive and a plane journey to be able to receive an ultrasound scan.

"Which makes it difficult in itself and there's no funding for a support person to go with them either, so that's another factor that can discourage them," Dr Parange says. "If women are able to get the service locally, then life-threatening conditions can be picked up in a timely way."

THRF's Chief Executive Paul Flynn says the project will save the lives of mothers and babies. "THRF is thrilled to be supporting this exciting project with UniSA that is set to be a game changer for families in Australia's regional and rural communities," he says. "This is the first time in Australia that a training program with a focus on antenatal care has been funded through the support of the community. Our donors and ticket buyers in the Hospital Research Home Lottery look forward to hearing about the lifesaving outcomes of this project and seeing its impact for years to come."



NEW WCHN CEO

Lindsey Gough will be returning to SA Health to take up the role of Chief Executive Officer at the Women's and Children's Health Network (WCHN) on 9 April 2018.

Lindsey was recently Deputy Chief Executive Officer at Western NSW Local Health District, and has significant experience in senior positions both in South Australia and interstate.

Lindsey's roles included General Manager of the Royal Adelaide Hospital and executive positions at Adelaide Health Service, Central Northern Adelaide Health Service and Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service.

Media Release - 5 February, UniSA



A new study led by the University of South Australia's Dr Grant Tomkinson has found that although children's cardiorespiratory (CRF) fitness levels declined in the 80s and 90s, they have stabilised since the year 2000.

"Our recent research shows that children's cardiorespiratory fitness – their ability to perform prolonged and vigorous exercise – declined in wealthy countries across the world throughout the 1980s and 90s, although amazingly, that trend appears to have slowed and stabilised since then in many countries, including Australia," he says.

"We found that the decline in fitness was larger for boys than for girls. That could be due to the recent promotion of girls' participation in sport and other physical activity initiatives such as the Australian Government's *Girls Make our Move* program."

Dr Tomkinson says his data derives mainly from higher-income countries that know the importance of physical activity and have programs in place to encourage kids to be active.

"We found that countries with a widening gap between rich and poor residents had the worst declines in fitness levels," he says.

"That widening gap between the rich and the poor resi-

dents suggests a trend towards a larger sub-population of poor individuals within a country.

"Poverty is linked to poor social and health outcomes, including lower physical activity and CRF levels, increased obesity, lower life expectancy, higher death rates and increased risk of heart and other diseases, mental illness and drug use."

Dr Tomkinson says that CRF fitness is an important marker of good health and the fourth leading risk factor for heart disease and the research suggests that, poorer children are at the greatest health risk.

"They probably also lack the opportunities, the time, and resources to participate in physical activities that improve or maintain CRF," he says.

Dr Tomkinson's study looked at fitness trends in one million children between the ages of nine and 17 years from 19 countries using the beep test (a progressive exercise test involving continuous running between two lines in time to recorded beeps which increase in speed).

With future trends impossible to predict, Dr Tomkinson says he hopes the tide is turning.

"I'm convinced that fitness is still declining in poor countries and will continue to decline for a generation or so," he says.

"However, I hope that our key finding, that fitness has plateaued in rich countries, is the start of some good news in this space and a turning of the tide for the health of the next generation."

The research paper *Temporal trends in the cardiorespiratory fitness of children and adolescents representing 19 high-income and upper middle-income countries between 1981 and 2014* by Grant R Tomkinson, Justin J Lang and Mark S Tremblay has been published in *British Journal of Sports Medicine* examining whether today's children are fitter than children from the past.

Basil Hetzel Institute Research Report 2017



The 2017 Basil Hetzel Institute Research Report details the extensive research undertaken at the Institute, the productive research arm of The Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

The report can be found here

<http://www.basilhetzelinstitute.com.au/latest-news/research-reports/>

We hope you enjoying reading this report and welcome your feedback to Rebecca Anderson, BHI Communications Officer at rebecca.anderson@adelaide.edu.au

Why teens need up to 10 hours' sleep

Media Release - 21 February, Flinders University



Technology, other distractions and staying up late make it difficult, but researchers say teenagers need to make time for 8-10 hours of sleep a night to optimise their performance and maintain good health and wellbeing.

As soon as teens get less than nine hours sleep, attention deficits accumulate and jetlag-type behaviour starts to kick in – putting them at risk of poor performance at school and even personal injury through accidents, including car crashes if they drive.

Young people who do not get enough sleep can also find their sleep patterns worsen.

“Who cares? Well, most adolescents worldwide do not obtain sleep in the recommended range of 8 to 10 hours per night,” says Dr Michelle Short, who conducted a nine-night sleep study on 34 teenagers aged 15-17 at the Flinders Child and Adolescent Sleep Clinic.

“Adolescents require more sleep for optimal functioning than typically obtained. Our study of sleep deprivation in controlled conditions shows that this clearly affects the ability to function well as well as their men-

tal health and sense of wellbeing. Feeling sleepy, poor cognitive performance and bad sleep patterns can also lead to elevated risk of injury or even death, particularly among learner drivers,” Dr Short warns.

After school holidays, and several months of sleeping in, Dr Short says it could take time to re-establish a good routine for the body clock to swing into a healthy sleep range for rising early for school, university or work.

“Our bodies and brains need the right amount of sleep, so we need to wind back the body clock into the Adelaide time zone,” she says.

Signs that your teen may have a problem with their sleep include if they:

1. Are sleepy or fatigued during the day,
2. need an alarm (or parent) to wake up on school days,
3. fall asleep too quickly (<5mins) or too slowly (>30m), or
4. find it very difficult to wake in the morning.

The paper, ‘Estimating Adolescent Sleep Need Using Dose-Response Modelling,’ by Flinders University Psychology researchers MA Short, N Weber, C Reynolds, S Coussens (UniSA) and MA Carskadon (EP Bradley Hospital Sleep Research Laboratory US), has been published in the journal *Sleep* (Oxford University Press).

Adolescents or parents who would like help with their teen’s sleep can contact the Flinders University Child and Adolescent Sleep Clinic via email on casc.enquiries@flinders.edu.au

New ARACY State Coordinators



Kiran King and Julie Petersen have recently commenced in the role of State Coordinators for South Australia with the Australian Research Alliance for Child and Youth (ARACY). ARACY works to improve the wellbeing of children and young people by collaborating with partners to turn evidence into policy and practice. Kiran and Julie will support ARACY members in SA by sharing their learnings and work across the ARACY network and helping them find new opportunities to collaborate with other ARACY members across Australia.

Kiran is also the collective impact leader with the Mid Murray Family Connections Network with the Mid Murray Council. This role involves coordinating a community response to childhood vulnerability highlighted by the Australian Early Development Census. Prior to this role, Kiran worked as a clinical Social Worker across the alternative care, homelessness and domestic violence and mental health sectors. Kiran holds a Bachelor of Marketing and a Masters of Social Work.

Julie Petersen worked in Academia before joining the Commonwealth and then the South Australian State government in 2001. She has worked for the Department for Child Protection – on and off- over the last 11 years, and is currently responsible for Research. Julie’s degrees are in Politics, Law and Demography. Julie is passionate about research and learning, particularly continued learning for front line staff, and the wellbeing of young people experiencing or that have experienced out of home care.

If you would like to make contact with Kiran or Julie about ARACY’s work, please email kking@mid-murray.sa.gov.au or julie.petersen@sa.gov.au

Forget me not: kids creating dementia-friendly communities

Vol 14, Issue 2 –
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Media Release - 28 February, UniSA



Every three seconds, someone in the world is diagnosed with dementia. In Australia alone, the number of people living with dementia is projected to increase from approximately 425,416 to 1.1 million by 2056. Despite its growing prevalence, dementia is often misunderstood and stigmatised.

The University of South Australia is helping to break through these barriers through a new intergenerational dementia education program—called *Forget me not*—designed to improve awareness and understanding of dementia among South Australian community.

Developed in partnership with the City of Unley, Unley Primary School and aged-care provider, ECH, the eight-week program is delivering weekly lessons about dementia to 90 Year four and five Unley Primary School students.

This week, the students also start art collaborative art lessons with people living with dementia at the ECH Day Program at Henley Beach. Lead UniSA researcher, Dr Ashleigh Smith, says the immersive program will help build a dementia-friendly community.

“Dementia is a national health priority, with one in 10 people aged over 65, and three in 10 aged over 85 living with dementia,” Dr Smith says.

“Dementia is a clustering of neurodegenerative conditions, affecting cognitive development, memory, and behaviour with no cure. And while many people living with dementia live well, they do benefit greatly from

social interactions as these generate memories, creativity and imagination, all cognitively stimulating factors that can help slow the progression of the disease.”

“The *Forget me not* program provides many opportunities for social interaction, and enables primary school students to learn from older people living with dementia, while the older people are able to take on a role as teachers and mentors through positive interactions. We’re not only building a dementia-friendly community, we’re also creating greater acceptance and understanding of a condition that affects thousands of Australian families.”

Unley Primary School Principal Peter O’ Sullivan says the program offers significant merits to students and their families.

“With people living longer, more families are exposed to dementia and are often ill equipped to explain its complexities to their child,” Mr O’Sullivan says.

“This program teaches children lifelong skills such as communication, empathy and compassion whilst also educating them about the ever growing issue of dementia.”

City of Unley Acting Mayor Peter Hughes says that all parties are excited about the program and the potential positive impact it will have on the participants, the community and the school.

“People living with dementia report that the key to a dementia friendly community is a positive and accepting community. It is therefore important to provide opportunities for these values to be formed in children at an age when they are developing their world views,” Acting Mayor Hughes says.

“We are particularly excited to be teaching dementia education early in life and hope the program helps improve knowledge and attitudes towards dementia in the students now, and in the future.”

The *Forget me not* program has been developed with support from the State Government’s Office for the Ageing and the UniSA Research Themes Investment Scheme grants. Following an evaluation by the University of South Australia, *Forget me not* may be extended to other schools in South Australia.

Animal study hints at link between vitamin D and autism, but don’t start supplementing yet

21 March - The Conversation

In the last few decades scientists have been discovering the many uses of vitamin D and the possible effects of not getting enough of it. An animal study published has found a possible link between the amount of the vitamin in the mother’s diet and her offspring’s behaviour.

For the full story go to <https://theconversation.com/au>

Silence around stillbirth a major issue for bereaved parents

Vol 14, Issue 2 –
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Media Release - 2 March, UniSA



Stillbirth: a silent tragedy affecting 2.6 million parents.

What's the biggest obstacle facing bereaved parents after losing a child at birth? Society's un-

willingness to discuss it openly, says UniSA PhD candidate Danielle Pollock, whose first child, Sofia, was stillborn four years ago. Danielle is calling on health providers to take the lead and provide more information about stillbirth during antenatal classes.

New research from the University of South Australia has uncovered the biggest obstacle facing bereaved parents after losing a child at birth – the silent treatment and stigma surrounding stillbirth.

Four years ago, UniSA PhD candidate Danielle Pollock gave birth to her first child, Sofia. Sofia was a perfectly normal baby but for some reason her heart stopped beating two days before she was born. “I got to kiss her, hold her, sing to her and tell her I loved her,” Danielle says. I couldn’t take her home but every day I think of her. It doesn’t get any easier.”

What has made the experience harder for 28-year-old Danielle and her husband is the wall of silence surrounding stillbirth.

“Women who experience stillbirth are constantly misunderstood. People avoid you because they don’t know what to say and you are made to feel like a leper. Society does not encourage us to talk about the child we lost and, instead, we are encouraged to put the experience behind us and move on. No-one asks me my child’s name, her birthday, or to see photographs of her. We are completely shut down.”

Four years on, Danielle now has a three-year-old son, Charlie, and a newborn, Zoe. She is also in the final year of her PhD, exploring the stigma around stillbirth, which affects six parents every day in Australia and 2.6 million worldwide each year.

Despite these numbers, the stigma around stillbirth is entrenched, Danielle says, and not helped by the lack of information from healthcare providers about stillbirth or how to reduce the chances of it happening.

“Babies aren’t meant to die – and most in Australia don’t – but, unfortunately, six babies are stillborn every day. We are not told about this in antenatal classes and neither are we told how to relate to a bereaved parent who has lost a child at birth. I didn’t know if I was a mum. Sofia was my first child, but I wasn’t encouraged to acknowledge her. When people ask how many children you have, what are you supposed to say without making the conversation awkward for other people?”

Danielle’s research to date has found that more than 80 per cent of bereaved parents and more than 60 per cent of women who had a live birth were not told about the possibility of a stillborn child during their pregnancy. Of the former, they were only told because they had complications.

“Healthcare professionals are very comfortable talking about Down syndrome, spina bifida, listeriosis, even domestic violence. But stillbirth is a subject they avoid. It’s probably because they don’t want to create any anxiety, but it would be more helpful if it was discussed in antenatal care.”

Danielle hopes to address this in the last stage of her PhD which involves obstetricians, midwives and GPs giving their feedback about stillbirth and how best to educate people.

“I want healthcare professionals to be able to openly discuss with pregnant women the possibility of stillbirth, but not in a way that will scare them. That is the wrong approach. I also want people in general to understand how to relate to bereaved parents and not resort to unhelpful comments such as ‘You can always have another’. Babies can’t be replaced but they can be acknowledged.”

Claire Foord, CEO of stillbirth prevention charity Still Aware, says Danielle’s research is “critical for informing change in the way we address stillbirth in Australia. The results of her study could be pivotal for understanding why awareness of stillbirth on a large scale is imperative for prevention.”

Low-paid ‘women’s work’: why early childhood educators are walking out

23 March - The Conversation

Early childhood educators are among the lowest-paid Australians, with many taking on a second job for a supplementary income. Many leave the sector altogether – with low pay identified as the central reason for doing so. This means the sector loses skilled workers at a time when its workforce should be growing in size.

For the full story go to <https://theconversation.com/au>



Professor Randy Jirtle

Professor of Epigenetics, Department of Biological Sciences, North Carolina State University, Senior Scientist, McArdle Laboratory for Cancer Research, University of Wisconsin

Epigenetics: How Genes and Environment Interact

Thursday 5 April, 4:00–5.00pm

Adelaide Health & Medical Sciences Building, Lecture Theatre 1, G030, 57 North terrace

All welcome! No RSVP required.

Professor Jirtle's work has established a new paradigm for determining how the environment impacts on human development and health. He was amongst the first to show how the environment alters genes to influence their patterns of expression. The result is heritable changes in gene expression that do not involve changes to the underlying DNA sequence – a change in phenotype without a change in genotype. This means that environmental exposures to poor nutrition, toxic chemicals, or other kinds of stress can exert long-term effects on susceptibility to chronic diseases. These changes in our genetic makeup can be transferred through the gametes into the next generation, so environmental exposures of parents at conception is critically important for the health of the next generation.

National Protective Behaviours Conference
by Act for Kids



The National Protective Behaviours Conference is a two-day event bringing together current research, innovative practice and systemic approaches that collectively reduce the incidence and impact of abuse and violence in the community through empowerment and education.

Who is it for?

Teachers, principals, early childhood educators, social workers, psychologists, child protection advocates, health professionals, family support practitioners, police and anyone interested in creating safer communities.

Thursday 30 August – Friday 31 August

Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre

South Brisbane, QLD

For further info or to book at Eventbrite go to

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/national-protective-behaviours-australia-conference-2018-tickets-42517073712>

HDA event Attendance Certificates – AVAILABLE

HDA provides Attendance Certificates upon request to individuals that attend our events. The certificates may be used towards your professional development program within your organisation. *It is your responsibility to check whether these certificates will be eligible within your professional development program.*

To request a HDA Attendance Certificate you will be required to complete the proof of attendance form at the event with your name, organisation and email.

HDA Attendance Certificates are FREE and will be emailed to you within one week.

For any queries, contact anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au