View this email in your browser

March-ing into Spring!

Can you feel the warming rays of sunshine? Hear the pitter-patter of rain falling? See the flowers pushing through the earth as life cycles in nature start over? Indeed, Spring has sprung!

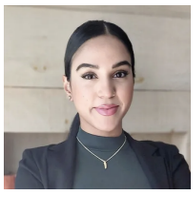
Welcoming you to this March edition of **On TARGet** with our heartfelt greetings. Often described as a time of rebirth or renewal, the month of March is quite the breath of fresh air! As we enter our 15th year, TARGet Kids! is as committed and driven as ever to improving the health of young children and families. We are excited to share what is currently in the works and what we have in store for these upcoming months as we work towards this goal.

Here is what you will find in each of our newsletter:

Welcome - You'll get a welcome message from us or another team member every issue.
TK! Spotlight - a welcome, profile, or shout out to team members.
TK! Updates - updates on our sites and TK! operations.
A look at our Research - updates, results and details on upcoming studies.
PACT Corner - updates and feedback from our valued Parent and Clinician Team (PACT) members.
Tips and Tricks - listing and links for grant opportunities, funding sources, upcoming conferences, workshops and more
Shout Outs - publications, announcements, and any other recognitions TK! members want to share.
Stay connected - links to our social media and links to others so you can follow and stay updated.

So, whether you are raising a pint of Irish stout to ring in St. Patrick's Day, have saluted brilliant female minds with inspiring reads this International Women's Day, partaking in strong, spiritual rejuvenation for Lent and Easter or the month of Ramadan or splattering the town with bright hues for the colour fights of the Holi festival, we are delighted to continue this journey with you. Through it all.

We hope you enjoy this issue.



Mateenah Jaleel

Project Coordinator, TARGet Kids!

Team Member Spotlight

We have so many members that make up our tremendous team. This section will give you a chance to learn about them. In this issue, the spotlight is on our data management team who are hard at work ensuring that our database functions and that all patient data are secure.

Chris Allen is a Clinical Research Specialist with a master's degree in Integrated Immunology from the University of Oxford. His research interest centers on the incorporation of systems immunology in clinical research.

With years of experience in observational epidemiology and clinical trial research, Chris leads the data management team. His role includes study design and initiation, development of case report forms and databases, data collection, quality control and integration of data collection throughout the program.

Esmot Ara Begum is a Clinical Research Database Application Specialist with a PhD in Paediatrics.

Esmot started her career as a Clinical Researcher, however, her interest in building syntax/codes led to her passion for this field. In her current role with TARGet Kids!, Esmot is responsible for the design, build, and support of electronic data capture systems for clinical studies. In her free time, she loves spending time with her family and her cat, Sesami.

Charlie Keown-Stoneman is an Investigator/Biostatistician in the Applied Health Research Centre (AHRC) at St. Michael's Hospital and an Assistant Professor of Biostatistics in the Dalla Lana School of Public Health at the University of Toronto. In his current role at the AHRC, he provides statistical analysis and support for observational studies and randomized trials, mainly working within the TARGet Kids! research group.

Marc Denzel Nunez is a Clinical Study Assistant II. He has an HBSc in Pharmacology & Biomedical Toxicology and Global Health from the University of Toronto. Marc works with the data management team to provide operational support on TARGet Kids! studies. He contributes to the development of databases and case report forms for TARGet Kids!.

TARGet Kids! Updates

In this section, we will share information, updates, or requests for input on our overall study operations. This could be outlining process changes or updates to information important for you. Take a look at what is to come below:

Welcome Package

We are hard at work developing a welcome package for new members of the TK! family. It will contain:

- Information on TARGet Kids!
- The story book
- Brochures
- Word search and colouring sheets for the little ones

These packages will be available soon.

TARGet Kids! Story Book

Our team developed what we hope to be the first in a series of children's books to tell the TK! story. This first book follows a child on a TK! visit and explains what happens from beginning to end. The book is child-friendly with colourful illustrations and easy to understand language.

We are in the final stage of editing to get the book ready for printing.
Look out for the TK! story coming soon to a clinic near you!

Excerpt from the TK! story book

A Look at Our Research

In this section we will highlight updates on our current and upcoming research. We will not be able to cover everything in each issue, but we hope covering our completed, ongoing and upcoming research pursuits will help to provide some insights on our impact.

Ongoing studies

TARGet Kids! Early Development Instrument (EDI) data collection (formerly Fit for School, Fit for Life)

We are well on our way with the process to begin data collection using the EDI for the 2022-2023 school year. We have sent emails to parents for their permission to ask their child(ren)'s teacher to complete the EDI. We will be sending the surveys to teachers shortly.

The EDI provides vital information on school readiness that can be used to drive developmental care for children through primary care. Check out some of the information that we have gathered from the EDI data collected over the years in TK!

Learning about school readiness

Upcoming studies

TARGet Kids! Registry

We are in the advanced stages of our revamp of the TK! database. Testing of the database is underway to ensure that everything works as it should. We will keep you updated on our progress, and you will be the first to know when we are ready to launch!

Long COVID in Children and Adolescents: Predictors of symptoms and neuropsychological and mental health outcomes

Long COVID happens when people who have been infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, still have symptoms of the condition after weeks, months, or even years have passed. Some of the symptoms of Long COVID include tiredness, muscle/joint pain/weakness, headaches, problems sleeping and trouble concentrating.

This study will look at:

1. The risk factors for developing Long COVID in children and adolescents
2. Whether there are differences in how children and adolescents functioned before or at the time they became infected with the virus that causes COVID, which would separate recovered COVID from Long COVID.
3. If Long COVID result in neurological effects such as fatigue, mental health issues, attention problems and depression.

We hope that the results of this study will help us to identify children and adolescents who are at risk for developing Long COVID and guide recovery and intervention efforts by being better able to target needs. Additionally, we hope to gain a better understanding of how Long COVID affects the developing brain.

Effects of screen use on sexual health attitudes, behaviours, and risks in Canadian youth

Another study we hope to carry out is to look at how screen use affects the sexual health attitudes, behaviours and risks in youth in Canada. We hope to find out if the type of screens adolescents use (TV, video games, digital media, etc.) and the length of time they use them, have any impact on adolescents starting to engage in sexual intercourse at an early age.

This information will help us to answer important questions on the effects of early childhood screen use on adolescent sexual and reproductive health. We also hope to use the information to promote healthy sexual behaviours and lessen risky behaviour in adolescence.

PACT Corner

This section will highlight updates, opportunities, information, and profile our invaluable PACT team. This partnership between parents and clinicians is impactful in so many ways.

PACT Recruiting

Are you a parent with a child(ren) in TARGet Kids!? Are you interested in working with us to help guide our research activities? Well, this is your chance!

We are recruiting new members to join our PACT. You can find more information on the PACT including the Terms of Reference on our website at www.targetkids.ca/pact

Please reach out to us if you are interested by emailing us at targetkids.pact@gmail.com

Visit Our Website

or

Email Us

PACT Involvement with TK!

Our PACT got actively involved in 3 new Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) grants with TK!. At the last PACT meeting, members gave feedback on the new grants, following which, a few PACT members joined as collaborators on the grants. A total of 7 PACT members reviewed proposals, provided feedback and wrote letters of support for the proposed studies to be done.

Tips and Tricks

In this section we will include any lessons learned or tips and tricks that have helped us in our work. This could include funding sources, upcoming conferences, workshops, or additional resources that are relevant to TARGet Kids! Stay tuned for more information as future volumes are shared.

Funding Opportunities: *Garry Hurvitz Centre for Brain & Mental Health Spring Grant Competitions*

SickKids® | Garry Hurvitz Centre for Brain & Mental Health

Spring Grant Competitions

HEALTH OUTCOMES

The Brain and Mental Health Outcomes catalyst grant competition is a strategic initiative of the Garry Hurvitz Centre for Brain & Mental Health (GH-CBMH). The purpose of this competition is to improve the brain and mental health outcomes of children and youth by supporting the development of new ideas and interventions that would not qualify for funding through typical granting agencies. A focus on health outcomes is key! You must implement unique concepts, approaches or methodologies that will **catalyze improved paediatric brain and mental health outcomes.**

Grants of **up to $100,000** ($50,000/year for two years) will be awarded for novel project proposals focused on improving brain and mental health outcomes in children and youth. The project must be collaborative, innovative and based on sound clinical and/or scientific rationale. Preliminary data is not required.

This competition is open to researchers, clinical staff, fellows, research associates and directors / managers / coordinators.

Application deadline: April 17, 2023 @ 11:59pm
Please review the application and guidelines here.

Application Form

INNOVATION FUND

The *Brain & Mental Health Innovation Fund* is an exciting initiative of the Garry Hurvitz Centre for Brain & Mental Health (GH-CBMH). The purpose of this fund is to support Centre members who are applying to external granting agencies that require matching funds. The maximum match per project is **$50,000 per year for up to 3 years ($150,000 total)**.

This competition is open to SickKids staff with a Research Institute appointment that permits holding external grants.

Application deadline: April 1, 2023 @ 11:59pm
Please review the application and guidelines here.

Application Form

Call for Proposals: *Accelerating Clinical Trials Consortium*

Supporting the Completion of High-Impact Randomized Controlled Trials

- Submit the full application to **act-aec@phri.ca** by **noon EST on April 3rd, 2023**
- Information about new clinical trials consortium announced by CIHR can be found here
- For more information or questions please email **Nicole Yada**, Program Director, ACT Consortium

SickKids RESEARCH INSTITUTE | CLINICALRESEARCH

ACT AEC Accelerating Clinical Trials Accélérer les Essais Cliniques

On behalf of the Accelerating Clinical Trials/Accélérer les Essais Cliniques (ACT/AEC) Consortium, please find a call for proposals attached, entitled *Supporting the Completion of High-Impact Randomized Controlled Trials.* Important details on application instructions and eligibility can be found below.

Application instructions

- Please combine the following application components into a **single PDF**:
  - Written proposal: Maximum of 3 pages if written in English or 4 pages if written in French (see formatting requirements in section titled, *Proposal Sections and Adjudication Criteria* in the RFA document); includes 1 page trial summary
  - References, figures, or tables (optional, up to 1 page)
  - Letter of support from an ACT Network (up to 1 page)
  - Most recent version of the protocol, and preferably also including the most recent version of the statistical analytic plan
- Submit the full application to act-aec@phri.ca by **noon EST on April 3rd, 2023**
  - Once submitted, written confirmation of receipt will be provided within 24 hours of submission. If you do not hear back within 24 hours, please follow up to ensure successful delivery.

Eligibility criteria

For a trial to be eligible for this opportunity, it must fulfill each of the following points:

1. Be registered with an organization such as clinicaltrials.gov
2. Be led by a Canadian researcher who is a member(s) of an ACT Network
   - the principal investigator(s) of any trial can only submit 1 application to this competition
3. Have a letter of support from an ACT Network
   - each Network can provide a maximum of 3 support letters to this competition, and
4. Agree funds will be transferred to an organization eligible to hold CIHR funds; this organization will ensure and report that funds were used for CIHR eligible expenses, and the researchers will acknowledge ACT Consortium partnership and funding in all related presentations and publications.

About the Accelerating Clinical Trials/Accélérer les Essais Cliniques Consortium

On January 19th, the Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR) formally announced that the Accelerating Clinical Trials/Accélérer les Essais Cliniques (ACT/AEC) Canada Consortium was the successful applicant for the federal grant for a 3-year term.

The ACT/AEC Canada Consortium consists of hundreds of investigators, patient-partners, healthcare professionals, government, and the biotechnology industry, as well as highly qualified personnel (e.g., study coordinators, biostatisticians) at 28 research networks and 11 clinical trial units located across the country, to address operational bottlenecks to conducting clinical trials in Canada. The ACT/AEC Consortium spans from Nova Scotia to British Columbia and Nunavut.

For more information or questions please email Nicole Yada, Program Director, ACT Consortium.

Have ideas for stories? Email us at ask.crs@sickkids.ca to let us know!

Keep up-to-date with CRS events HERE

Forward to colleague

Learn More

Shout Outs

Our work would not have an impact if we kept the findings or recognition to ourselves. In this section, we share our recent publications, announcements, and any other recognitions TK! members want to share. Celebrating our accomplishments helps us to further the impact.

TK! Events

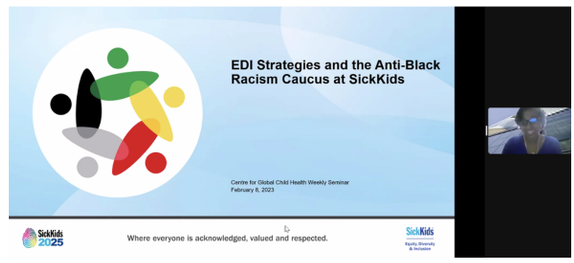
Hosted Rachel (Rae) Martens from CANChild

Last month, Dr. Priscilla Medeiros Knowledge Mobilization Specialist with the Edwin S.H. Leong Centre invited Danielle and Dana to meet with their invited guest and speaker Rae Martens, Research Engagement Specialist from the CanChild Network.

For TARGet Kids!, this was a great opportunity to discuss experiences, lessons, and the impacts of patient and family engagement. We brought Rae and Priscilla to our site at Sumac Creek Health Centre, where they met with our Research Assistant and learned more about our TARGet Kids! process in clinic. It was a great meeting and a privilege to connect with such a well-versed leader on patient and family engagement.

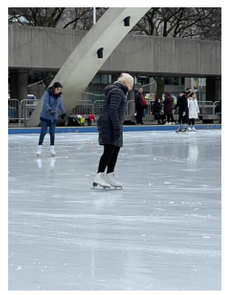
Centre for Global Child Health Weekly Seminar (virtual)

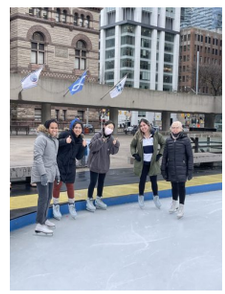
On February 8, guest speaker Danielle D'Annunzio, Research Program Manager for TARGet Kids! and Co-Chair of the Hospital's Anti-Black Racism Caucus, joined the Weekly Seminar Series and gave a presentation entitled, "EDI Strategies and the Anti-Black Racism Caucus at SickKids." Danielle discussed the creation of the Anti-Black Racism Caucus, its motivating principles, and how it intersects with Equity Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) activities at SickKids.



TK! Ice Skating Event

To add a bit of outdoor fun, some members of the TARGet Kids! team went ice skating at Nathan Phillips Square. There's nothing better than a smile on the ice even if you fall!





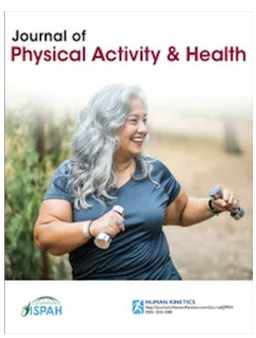
TK! Publications

We are thrilled to announce that our team has recently published a study on parent perspectives on COVID-19 vaccination in the Canadian Medical Association Journal (CMAJ).

The study examines parents' decision-making about SARS-CoV-2 vaccination for their children and provides important insights into the future of planning vaccine rollouts among children in Canada.

We are incredibly proud of TK! team for their dedication in bringing this important research to light. Click the button below to learn more about the study.

Learn More



We published another excellent piece of work in the Journal of Physical Activity & Health. The study looked at how children's movement behaviours changed during the COVID-19 pandemic through the different stages of lockdown in Ontario.

Click the button below for details of the study.

Learn More

Upcoming Events

Visit to South Africa for HeLTI coming up in April

Dr. Catherine Birken and the Healthy Life Trajectories Initiative (HeLTI) team will be leaving for South Africa at the end of April for a 7-day meeting discussing the project's goals, status, and findings to date.

You can learn more about the HeLTI study at The Toronto Spring Baby Show coming up April 15-16, 2023 at the Enercare Centre, Hall B, Exhibition Place.

Stay Connected

In this section, you will find links to our social media platforms, and any updates or specific ways or opportunities to get involved with our communications networks. TK! is now on:

Have a story, a comment, experience or blog post idea, you want to share with us for our social media platforms? Please let us know by emailing us at targetkids.study@sickids.ca. Be sure to include "Comms" in your subject line.

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