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Hello!

Happy New Year Everyone,

Greetings from our January Newsletter. January is an interesting time. As we all know, it's the start of a new year, but we're still ~8 weeks out from actually registering the change when writing the date. By about mid February we will start to get it right 😊.

We have a lot to look forward to and we are excited about what's ahead for us this year. From new studies to new grant submissions, to wrapping up existing studies - the research cycle is in full swing, and we'll be sharing these updates right here in On TARGet.

Here's 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.

As Lunar New Year celebrations continue, we can't help but recognize the tragedies befalling families in California. We are deeply saddened by the troubling and horrific events tearing families apart and wrenching deep wounds among so many through uncontrolled gun violence. The sign of Rabbit is a symbol of longevity, peace, and prosperity in Chinese culture. Although it hasn't begun this way in some area, may the prediction of hope for 2023 carry the rest of the year.

Thank you for joining us on this journey, and we hope you enjoy this and all our issues for the year.

Danielle,

Program Manager TARGet Kids!

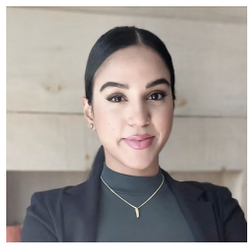
Team Member Spotlight

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, we shine the spotlight on some members of our central operations team. These are the team members who are the driving force behind the planning and execution of TARGet Kids! operations. Let's hear a bit more about them.

Thank you for all you do for TARGet Kids!

Danielle D'Annunzio is the Research Program Manager for TARGet Kids! She joined the team a little under a year ago but has been with SickKids for over 12 years. Danielle is trained in Human Rights Law and is a certified Project Management Professional (PMP). She leverages her background and education to drive her various interests which include maternal, child, and adolescent health, equity, and rights; advocacy, community engagement, diversity and inclusion.



Mateenah Jaleel is a Clinical Research Project Coordinator. Her work focuses on clinical trials involving nutrition and development in young children as well as the prevention of childhood obesity in early childhood.

Natricha Levy McFarlane is another of our Clinical Research Project Coordinators. Her work focusses on the TK! registry and observational studies as well as communication and knowledge translation. Natricha is a trained Biochemist and a Health and Medical Writer. She has worked in health for more than 10 years in areas such as women's health, chronic disease, epidemiological research, research innovation, and child health.

Jenny works as one of TK!'s Clinical Research Project Assistants in central operations. She has a BHSc in Health Sciences and Child Health and has worked with organizations such as Sunnybrook Hospital and the Offord Centre in Child Studies. Her experience includes working with individuals of various age groups recovering from burns, heart disease, cancer and substance abuse.

Nusrat Zaffar is also a Clinical Research Project Assistant in central operations. She is a trained physician with a specialization in Pathology from Pakistan. Nusrat is also trained in clinical research and has spent over 10 years working in research at different hospitals in Toronto. With a strong passion for research and social pediatrics, Nusrat finds pleasure in contributing to improving and making a difference in the lives of children and families.

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:

TARGet Kids! Revised Brochure

As we rebrand and revamp TK! and our resources, a new brochure was a natural part of the process. Coming soon, you will see our new brochure containing the same valuable information about our study but sporting a new, fresh and vibrant look in our branded colours.

All new participants to TK! will receive a copy of this new brochure and we hope to have copies that you can get from our Research Assistants in clinic.

TARGet Kids! Results Booklet

With the release of the revised TK! brochure, our study results booklet is also on the horizon. You can expect to see detailed results and statistical facts of our studies, including CoMFORT, COVID-19, PARENT, NuRISH, and other amazing findings from the TK! research team.

TARGet Kids! New Logo

In a previous issue of our newsletter, we shared our new logo with you. However, upon speaking with our very hardworking PACT members, we decided to remove the puzzle pieces to avoid any possible trademark issues with autism groups. Here is the new finalized logo. We continue to work on a design for an icon.

TARGet Kids!

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)

It's that time again when we ask teachers to complete the EDI for children in junior and senior kindergarten who are in TK! The EDI looks at children's readiness for school, which is an important developmental milestone and is related to children's success and well-being in school.

If you are a parent with a child in kindergarten who is in TK!, you should have received (or will soon receive) an email asking you for your child's teacher's information and your permission to ask the teacher to complete the EDI for your child. Parents with eligible children visiting TK! participating clinics will also be asked to complete this information.

We carve everyone's help in working with us to collect this important information.

Learning about school readiness

COVID-19 Project Update

As we continue to study how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected families, we launched a child arm of the study in December. We sent emails to families inviting children in TARGet Kids! who are 11 to 16 years old to join the COVID-19 study. This will allow us to hear children's perspectives as we will be collecting information from them directly.

If you are a parent of an 11–16-year-old in TK!, you can speak to your child to see if they are interested in joining the study. If you have not received an email and are interested, feel free to reach out to us at covid.study@sickkids.ca.

Learn more

The Impact of High Sugar Intake on the Gut Microbiome, Obesity, and Cardiometabolic Risks: a Novel Study in Preschool-aged Children (Sugar & Microbiome)

This is a study about preschoolers between 3-5 years old. In this study, we ask parents about the food their children eat and collect some stool samples (yes, poop) from the children. We do this so that we can look at how free sugar (sugar that is added to food or is in things like fruit juice) affects the gut health of preschool children.

If you are interested in this study, please talk to the Research Assistant at your clinic or email us at targetkids.study@sickkids.ca.

Learn more

Probiotics for EVEry Newborn vs Treatment-as-Needed Comparative Effectiveness Trial (PREVENT)

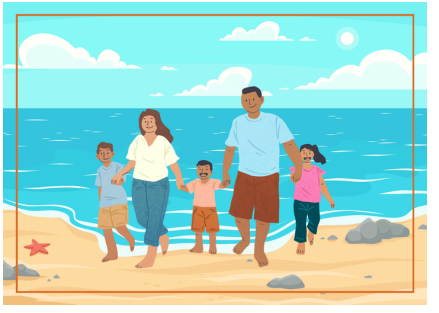
PREVENT is a pilot study looking at the role of probiotics in preventing and/or treating colic (excessive crying) in very young infants. We are currently recruiting from two of our clinics in Toronto and we appreciate the families who have contributed to the study so far!

Learn more

Connecting Families: A Randomized Controlled Trial of the Impact of Screening and a Poverty Reduction Intervention for Families of Young Children in Primary Care

For this study, we hope to see how parenting stress and child development is affected when we help families with low income find available financial supports. A Community Service Worker will help the families find any financial assistance that may be available to them.

We are looking for families in the Kingston area to join this study and will reach out to eligible families directly.



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 Meeting 2023: A Message from Sarah

Thank you to all our PACT members for attending our first meeting of 2023! We had a fun and productive meeting discussing grant applications and how our PACT members can be involved in the grant process to better support our research team. In March, we look forward to working with our PACT members to review our research priorities to ensure we are reaching the milestones that we have set out together.

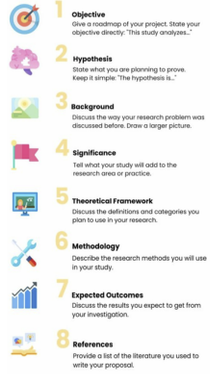
If you missed the meeting, we are sharing below two important pieces of information that were discussed:

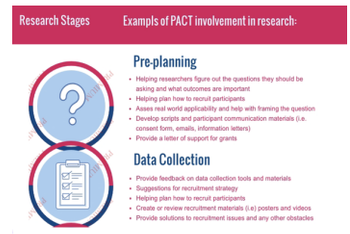
1. A research proposal template to help you understand what is involved in writing a grant proposal.
2. Examples of some of the ways as members of the PACT, you can help us in the research process.

Sarah Rae, Clinical Research Project Assistant

Research Proposal Template

PACT Roles in Research





What is next for TK! and the PACT?

For 2023, our focus will be on:

- Representation
- Community engagement
- More father engagement
- PACT engagement in ALL phases of research

Visit Our Website

or

Email Us

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:

- CIHR Project Grant competition — Registration: February 8, 2023; Internal SickKids Deadline: March 1, 2023; Full Application: March 8, 2023

Learn More

- Wellcome Trust mental health research funding opportunity — Preliminary Application: June, 7, 2023; Full Application: September, 2023

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.

Publications

Dr. Catherine Birken

We had a new study recently published in the journal of *Pediatric Obesity*. TK! research team led by Dr. Catherine Birken found a link between higher pre-pregnancy maternal body mass index and faster growth rates in early childhood, particularly for infants between 0 and 4.

Read More

Job Opportunities

Post-Doctoral Research Fellow

TK! is looking for a new Post Doctoral Fellow (Job ID 17322) to join our program, under the supervision of Dr. Catherine Birken.

Learn More and Apply Here

TK! in Clinic

Greetings from Danielle and Pamela here at the clinic! Here is a glance at the research corner at Village Park Paediatrics with our TARGet Kids! posters.

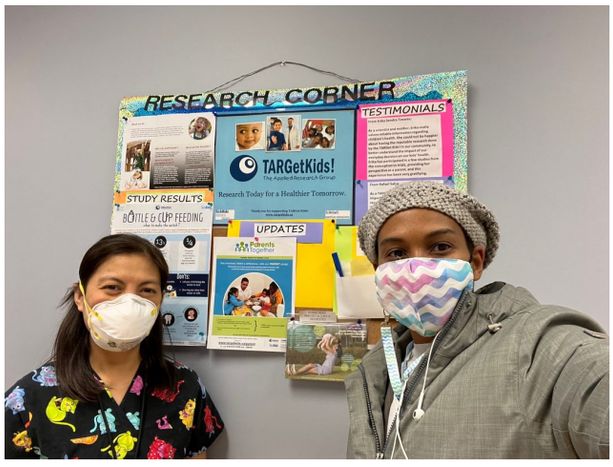
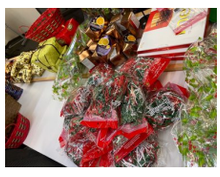
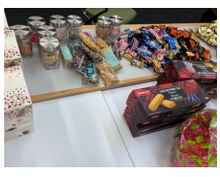


Photo taken at Village Park Paediatrics Clinic

TK! Spreading Joy for Holidays

We were excited to prepare baskets for the winter holidays. We put candies, cookies, chocolates and many other elaborate goodies together and distributed the love-filled baskets to the clinics. We hoped to share the joy and happiness with our RAs and all of the healthcare practitioners in the clinics.

Many thanks to our clinic teams for supporting and staying close with TK!. We wish our community a warm & happy season with family!

Preparing baskets for the holiday

Delivering baskets to clinics

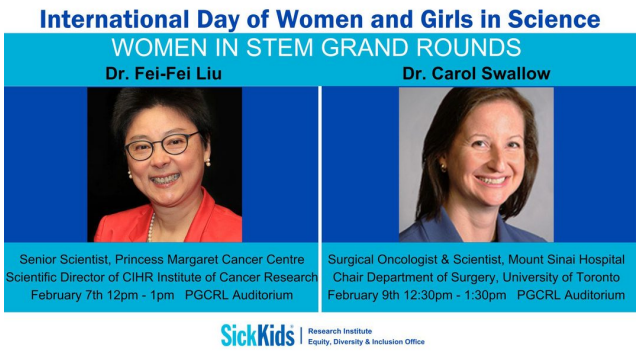
Upcoming Events in February

International Day of Women and Girls in Science

In celebration of the International Day of Women and Girls in Science on February 11, two following events held by SickKids are taking place:

- February 7th – Dr. Fei-Fei Liu
- February 9th – Dr. Carol Swallow

In honor of the day, two notable female scientists are invited for Women in STEM Grand Rounds; details are on the poster.



Black History and Futures Month

February is Black History Month in recognition of the past and present achievements and contributions of Black Canadians. During the month, people across Canada celebrate and honor the heritage, traditions and culture of Black Canadians and their communities.

Here are some events from *On the Stoop*. For more information and registration, click on the links below:

- Feb 9th 2:00-3:00pm Our Stories in Celebration: The Artist Faduma Mohamed. Registration link
- Feb 22nd 1:00-2:00pm Our Stories in Celebration: The Artists Eddie Lartey and Amoya Reé. Registration link
- Feb 23rd 1:00-3:30pm BOPSers with Keynote Dr. Afua Cooper (still waiting on final details such as teams live link) SAVE THE DATE
- Feb 28th 1:00-2pm Re-Framing HIS-story Screening and Discussion. Registration link

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SickKids Upcoming Events

1. **Centre for Global Child Health Seminar Series**—February 8, 2023; with Danielle D'Annunzio, Program Manager TARGet Kids!, and Co-Chair of the Anti-Black Racism Caucus SickKids
2. **Health Equity Rounds**—February 17, 2023 Noon-1pm; with Dr. Andrea Knight, Canada Research Chair Tier 2, Staff Physician Rheumatology
3. **Wes Hall Book Launch**—March 6, 2023

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.

TARGet Kids!

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