



S.E.L.F.-REGULATION LAB NEWSLETTER

Issue 15 | Volume 1
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Outline

Latest Research News

- Executive Functioning & Healthy Eating
- Physical Health & Community Functioning
- Emotion Regulation & Sleep Problems
- Family Functioning at Mealtime and Screen Use
- Poor Nutrition Among Young Children with and without Neurodevelopmental Disorders

Community News

S.E.L.F.-Regulation Lab Enrichment Fund



Message from our director

Hello families!

As this holiday season begins, we wanted to provide an update about what the S.E.L.F.- Regulation Lab has been up to. This year we have been working hard disseminating our research findings at a national and international level, including: World ADHD Congress in Prague, Czech Republic, the European Pediatric Psychology Conference in Málaga, Spain, the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies in Baltimore, Maryland, and the World Conference of Women's Shelters in Sydney, Australia. *Check out our research findings highlighted in this newsletter.* We want to thank all of the families for the generosity in supporting our foundation ([Donate Here!](#)) which has allowed our graduate students to attend these conferences and advance their professional development.

- Those of you currently participating in our **Parent Stress study** be on the lookout for an email to complete your final 1-year follow-up visit which includes a \$25 Amazon gift card. We appreciate your participation as this study allows us to further refine our renowned STP-K program, particularly the parenting component. We schedule these follow-up visits anytime it is convenient for you, including weekends.

Lastly, the S.E.L.F.-Regulation Lab loves to hear from our families. With your permission, we would like to highlight the amazing things our families are up to on our lab Instagram page. You can contact us via email, phone, or Instagram direct messages with your children's amazing accomplishments. If you feel like your family needs any additional support, please visit our main center's page ([CCF Programs](#)) to see programs.

We hope that you all have an amazing holiday season!

Dr. Paulo Graziano
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LATEST RESEARCH NEWS

Dr. Graziano and his five doctoral students attended the European Pediatric Psychology Conference in Málaga, Spain to present the lab's research.

Healthy Eating and Executive Functioning Among Young Children with ADHD: The Role of Fruits and Vegetables

By Maggie Johansson

Research Question:

How does children's nutrition intake (fruits, vegetables, added sugars) relate to executive functioning (EF) development in young children?

Key Terms:

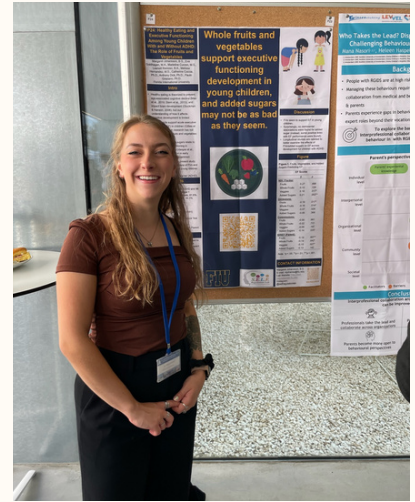
EF involves working memory, cognitive flexibility, and inhibitory control while planning and executing behaviors.

Results:

- Children who eat fruits (both fresh fruits and fruit extracts) had better EF in this group.
- Children who eat vegetables had better EF in this group.
- Children who eat added sugars had better EF in this group.
- Whether or not a child had ADHD did not affect these results.

Take-Away:

Whole fruits and vegetables support EF development in young children and added sugars may not be as bad as they seem.



The Role of Community Factors in Physical Health Outcomes for Young Children with and without ADHD.

By Leanett Reinoso

Research Question:

Are neighborhood resources associated with physical health outcomes in a diverse clinical sample of young children with and without ADHD?

Results:

- Children living in neighborhoods with greater resources showed higher physical activity levels, better nutritional quality, and lower caloric intake.
- Children diagnosed with ADHD exhibited lower physical activity, poorer nutritional quality, and higher caloric intake.
- These trends were consistent across ADHD status and ethnicity.

Take-Away:

- Greater neighborhood resources are linked to healthier physical outcomes among young children. These findings highlight the role of community environments in shaping early health trajectories and highlight the importance of investing in neighborhood resources to promote healthy lifestyles in early childhood.



LATEST RESEARCH NEWS

The Longitudinal Association Between Emotional Lability and Sleep Problems in Young Children with and without ADHD

By Eva Goldhagen, M.A.

Research Question:

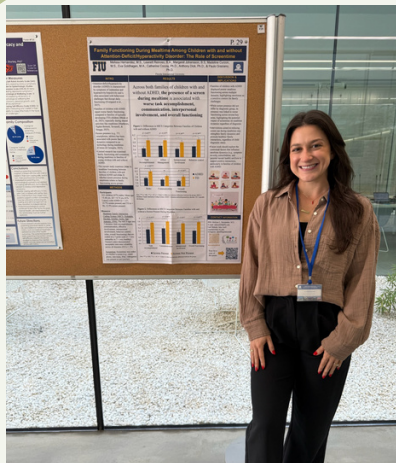
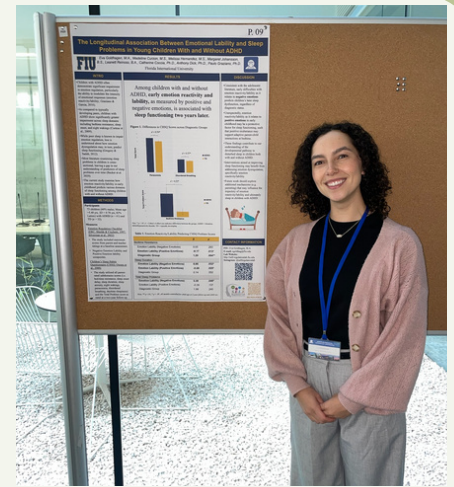
Do young children with ADHD have more sleep problems than typically developing (TD) children? Across children with and without ADHD, does baseline emotion reactivity/lability predict sleep problems two years later?

Results:

- Children with ADHD reported more sleep problems than TD children including increased parasomnia, disordered breathing, and bedtime resistance.
- Baseline emotion reactivity/lability as measured by negative emotions was associated with increased total sleep problems two years later.
- Baseline emotion reactivity/lability as measured by positive emotions was associated with lower bedtime resistance scores two years later.

Take-Away:

Among children with and without ADHD, early emotion reactivity and lability, as measured by positive and negative emotions, is associated with sleep functioning two years later.



Family Functioning During Mealtime Among Children with and without Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder: The Role of Screen Time

By Melissa Hernandez Aguiar, M.S.

Research Questions:

Are there differences in mealtime functioning between families of children with and without ADHD? Does the presence of a screen (i.e., cellphone, iPad, tablet, television) relate to family functioning across families of children with and without ADHD?

Results:

- Screen presence did not differ between families of children with and without ADHD.
- Families of children with ADHD displayed poorer mealtime functioning across multiple domains (i.e., task accomplishment, affect management, interpersonal involvement, behavior control, roles, and overall functioning).
- While screen presence was not different between diagnostic groups, its presence was linked to worse functioning across several key areas: task accomplishment, communication, interpersonal involvement, and overall functioning.

Take-Away:

Even though screen use was similar for all families, having a screen on tended to make mealtime interactions less positive. Keeping mealtimes screen-free may give families a better chance to talk, connect, and enjoy time together, regardless of a child's diagnosis.

LATEST RESEARCH NEWS

Mechanisms that Contribute to Poor Nutrition Among Young Children with and without Neurodevelopmental Disorders: The Roles of Executive Functioning and Emotion Regulation

By Madeline Curzon, M.S., part of symposium with Dr. Crystal Lim and Dr. Rosmary Ros-Demarize (Dr. G's former doctoral student!)

Background:

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and other neurodevelopmental disorders (NDDs) are linked to poor health outcomes later in life. Poor nutritional practices are especially relevant among those with NDDs like overeating and picky eating. However, less is known as to *when* these differences in health behaviors begin and *why* they occur. Differences in health behaviors may occur early in childhood, and potential causes could be poor self-regulation (like executive functioning and emotion regulation).

Research Questions:

1. Do differences in nutrition practices among young children with NDDs and typically developing (TD) children occur in **early** childhood?
2. How do executive functioning (EF) and emotion regulation (ER) relate to nutritional practices?
3. Does the presence of an NDD make the associations between self-regulation and nutritional practices better or worse?

Results:

- Children with NDDs are at risk for greater caloric consumption, worse EF, and worse ER.
- Poor EF was related to greater intake of calories and greater parental restriction of children's food access.
- Worse regulation of positive emotions was related to greater intake of calories, while worse regulation of negative emotions was related to greater parental restriction of children's food access.
- There was no moderating effect for diagnosis, meaning that the associations between self-regulation and nutritional practices were the same for kids with and without NDDs.



Take-Away:

Children with NDDs are at risk for developing poor physical health, most likely due to differences in health behaviors (like nutrition) early in childhood. Difficulties with self-regulatory processes (like controlling one's attention, emotions, memory, organization) may explain why young children with NDDs are eating more and parents are required to restrict food. It is important that health care professionals and parents work toward developing healthy nutritional practices for children with and without NDDs.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Dr. Graziano and the SELF-Regulation Lab continued their collaboration with Lotus House Women's Shelter by conducting a Motivational Interviewing (MI) training to shelter staff and attending the Children's Village Grand Opening.



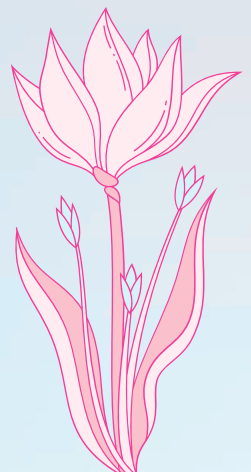
What is MI?

MI is an evidence-based approach designed to enhance a person's motivation and commitment to change by exploring their goals in a supportive, collaborative way. In child and family settings, MI helps caregivers and youth strengthen their own reasons for making positive changes, promoting autonomy and engagement in treatment.

What is the Children's Village?

It is an innovative and holistic neighborhood children's education and resource center that will provide deep therapeutic and educational supports, enriching and diverse programming, and a wide range of social services for the children and families of Lotus House and the Overtown community.

This space includes not only expanded area for parent and child mental health services, but also the addition of a preschool, after school enrichment programs, barrier-free healthcare services, indoor and outdoor play areas, and more. Ultimately, the Children's Village will provide vital supportive services that will empower our children and youth to live fulfilling, healthy, and happy lives.



For more information on group MI trainings at schools or clinics, please contact Dr. Graziano:



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The S.E.L.F.-Regulation Lab ENRICHMENT FUND



We are grateful to be preparing for recruitment for our 17th year of the Summer Treatment Program for children transitioning to and from kindergarten (STP-K). With the support of The Children's Trust of Miami, the STP-K program has served over a thousand families and trained hundreds of staff.

Our lab's mission is to not only provide evidence-based mental health services to the community, but it is also to evaluate and research effective interventions, share our findings with researchers across the world, and train the next generation of parents, students, and mental health professionals. If you want to support the future of children's mental health and wellbeing, please consider donating to the S.E.L.F.-Regulation Lab Enrichment Fund.

Give HERE
it's tax deductible!