



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

Issue 14 | Volume 1  
Published May 30, 2025



## Outline

### Latest Research News

- Executive Functioning poster
- School Readiness & Neighborhoods
- Social Functioning & Emotion Dysregulation
- ADHD, Disruptive Behaviors, & Sleep Problems
- Reward Sensitivity During STP-K

Meet the new 2025 STP-K Lead Counselors  
S.E.L.F.-Regulation Lab Enrichment Fund



## Message from our director

Hello families!

As this academic year comes to a close, we want to provide an update about what the S.E.L.F.-Regulation Lab has been up to. After 8 years, our NIH funded AHEAD and Nutrition grants have officially ended! We want to thank all of the families who participated (*be in the lookout for our research findings including some highlighted in this newsletter*).

- Doctoral student, Madeline, is conducting her dissertation research study with families who participated in the Nutrition study. If you are interested in participating in this onetime follow-up, please contact Madeline directly (786-309-7609, mcurzon@fiu.edu).
- Our current research projects also include our Parent Stress study. We encourage our families who are in this study (families who were a part of STP-K 2024) to complete their final 1-year follow-up visit. If you have not yet scheduled your follow-up visit, please contact Melissa directly (305-348-0104, mlhernan@fiu.edu).
- There are several benefits to participating in research studies: gift cards to compensate you for your time is one but most importantly introducing your child to scientific research (showing pictures of them as young kids doing research studies when they are older teens is always fun to reminisce!). The success of our programs is dependent on our families' participation in research, so please consider participating. 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.

We hope that you all have a strong end to the school year and enjoy your summer!

**Dr. Paulo Graziano**

Director of the S.E.L.F.-Regulation Lab & STP-K

email: selfreg@fiu.edu

Phone: 305-348-1833

Twitter: @GrazianoLabFIU

Facebook: facebook.com/selfregulationlab

Instagram: @selfregulationlab

# LATEST RESEARCH NEWS

*Dr. Graziano and his five doctoral students attended the 10<sup>th</sup> World Congress on ADHD in Prague, Czechia to present the lab's research.*

## Comorbid ADHD and Disruptive Behavior Disorders: The Role of Executive Functioning

*By Maggie Johansson*

### Research Question:

Are there differences in executive functioning (EF) in children with pure ADHD versus those with comorbidities such as disruptive behavior disorders (DBDs) and/or callous unemotional (CU) behaviors?

### Key Terms:

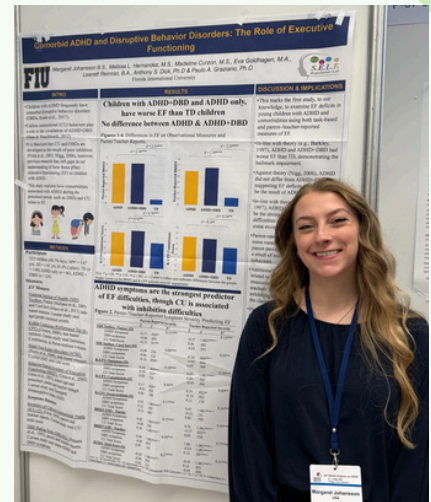
EF involves working memory, cognitive flexibility, and inhibitory control while planning and executing behaviors.

### Results:

- Children with ADHD, regardless of comorbidities, have worse EF than typically developing (TD) children.
- Children with ADHD and ADHD+DBD do not significantly differ from each other in EF.
- Children with more severe CU behaviors tend to have worse EF.

### Take-Away:

EF is a hallmark impairment of ADHD, regardless of comorbidities. Future work should determine whether changes in CU behaviors long term are related to changes in EF.



## School Readiness Among Young Children with ADHD: The Role of Neighborhood Factors

*By Leanett Reinoso*

### Research Question:

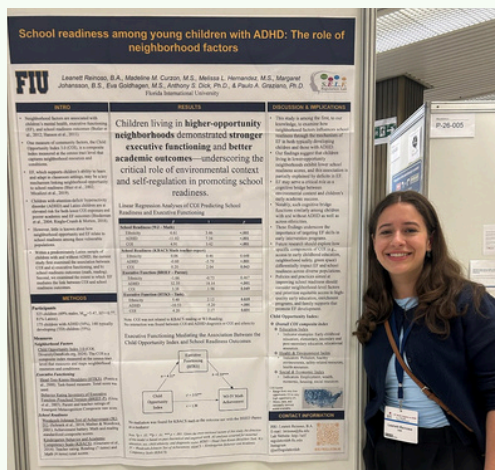
Are neighborhood factors associated with school readiness and executive functioning (EF) in a predominately Latinx sample of children with and without ADHD?

### Results:

- Children living in lower-opportunity neighborhoods demonstrate lower school readiness and EF skills.
- EF deficits partially explain the link between neighborhood disadvantage and school readiness.
- These patterns are consistent regardless of ADHD status or ethnicity.

### Take-Away:

Neighborhood conditions play a crucial role in shaping children's school readiness and EF. EF may act as a cognitive bridge connecting environmental context to early academic success.



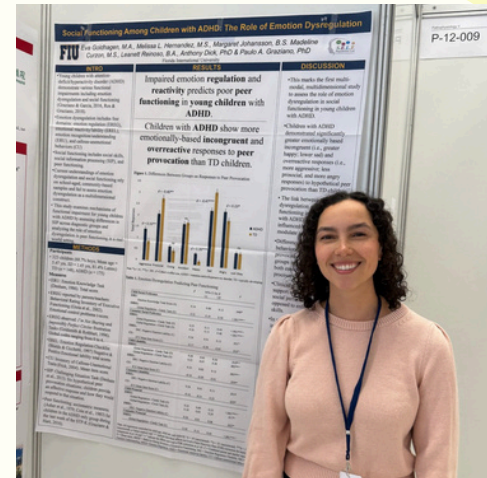
# LATEST RESEARCH NEWS

## Social Functioning among Children with ADHD: The Role of Emotion Dysregulation

By Eva Goldhagen, M.A.

### Research Question:

Do young children with ADHD process social information differently than typically developing children? For young children with ADHD, does emotion dysregulation (ED) predict peer functioning?

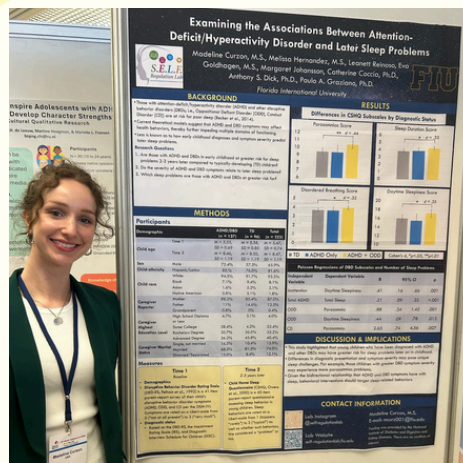


### Results:

- Differences in social information processing across diagnostic groups include: children with ADHD endorse more happy and aggressive responses and less sad and prosocial responses to hypothetical peer provocation situations.
- Across subdomains of emotion dysregulation (i.e. emotion awareness/understanding, emotion regulation, emotion reactivity/lability, callous-unemotional behaviors), emotion regulation most consistently predicted peer functioning in young children with ADHD.

### Take-Away:

Typical social impairments associated with young children with ADHD may be attenuated by better emotion regulation. Interventions should focus on social performance, not just social skills.



## Examining the Associations Between ADHD and Later Sleep Problems

By Madeline Curzon, M.S.

### Research Questions:

Are those with ADHD and disruptive behavior disorders (DBDs) in early childhood at risk for later sleep problems? Do the severity of their symptoms relate to specific sleep problems? Which sleep problems are they at greater risk for?

### Results:

- Parents of children with ADHD and comorbid DBDs (e.g., Oppositional Defiant Disorder [ODD]) reported greater concerns related to Parasomnias, Sleep Duration, Disordered Breathing, and Daytime Sleepiness compared to typically developing kids and kids with just ADHD.
- Greater Inattention and ODD symptom severity predicted greater number of Daytime Sleepiness problems.

### Take-Away:

- Child with ADHD and DBDs have greater risk for sleep problems later in childhood.
- Differences in diagnostic presentation may pose unique sleep challenges.
- Given that sleep and ADHD and DBD symptoms influence one another, behavioral interventions should target sleep-related behaviors.



# LATEST RESEARCH NEWS

## Assessing Reward and Punishment Sensitivity Among Children with ADHD and Comorbid Disruptive Behavior Disorders Prior to and During a Multimodal Intervention

By Melissa Hernandez Aguiar, M.S.

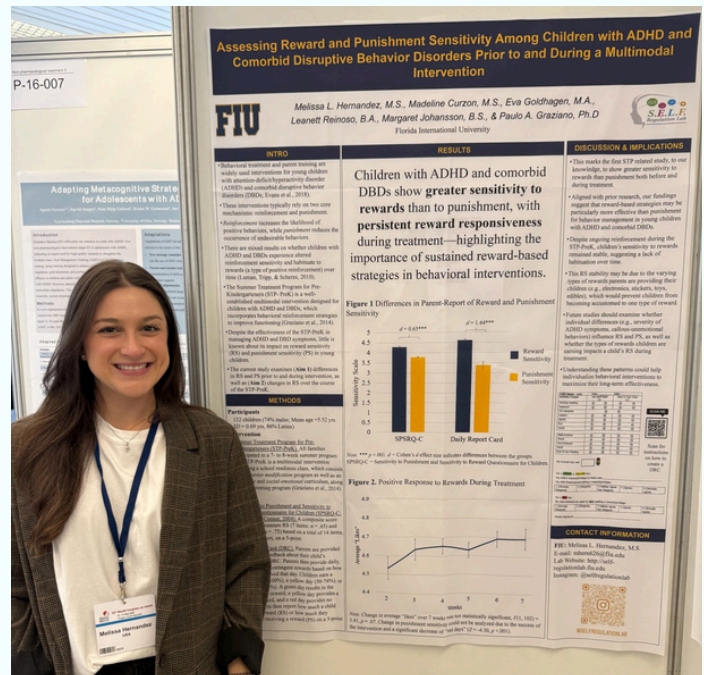
POSTER  
FINALIST!

### Research Questions:

Are there differences in children with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and comorbid disruptive behavior disorders' (DBD) reward sensitivity (RS) and punishment sensitivity (PS) before and during intervention? How do RS and PS change over the course of the summer treatment program (STP-K).

### Results:

- Children with ADHD+DBD were more sensitive to rewards than punishments before and during the STP-K.
- Children with ADHD+DBD continued to enjoy the rewards they received for "green"/"yellow" days throughout the 7-week intervention.
- Due to the success of the intervention and significant decrease in "red" days, we could not assess the stability or change in PS.



### My Child's Reward/Privilege Menu

**Level 1: I met 75% or greater of my goals!**  
I can earn:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

**Level 2: I met 50-74% of my goals!**  
I can earn:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

**Level 3: I met 0-49% of my goals ☹️**

I cannot earn any privileges/rewards for the day

### Take-Away:

Children with ADHD+DBD responded more strongly to rewards than to punishments. Their interest in rewards stayed high over time, suggesting they didn't get tired of or bored by them. This research supports using consistent, positive rewards like praise or privileges to encourage good behavior. Reward-based strategies may be especially effective in helping children with ADHD stay motivated and engaged at home and in schools.



# STP-K ANNOUNCEMENTS

Meet the 2025 Lead Counselors!



**Leanett**

Fun Fact: I've been on a road trip through 7 states



**Maggie**

Fun Fact: I've participated in STP in Seattle, Washington



**Sadie**

Fun Fact: I've coached volleyball for 6 years



**Gaby**

Fun Fact: I recently climbed the volcano Acatengango





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



We are grateful to be starting our 16th year of the Summer Treatment Program for transition to and from kindergartners (STP-K). With the support of The Children's Trust of Miami, the STP-K program has served hundreds of 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!***