

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

news release

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Wayne State to develop online parent-training program for addressing challenging behaviors

DETROIT – Wayne State University received a four-year, \$533,151 award from the National Institute of Mental Health of the National Institutes of Health to develop a technology-based parent-training program for addressing young children’s challenging behaviors.

There are a number of effective training programs for parents of children who have disruptive behavior disorders. However, the reach of these programs is limited due to lack of access and limited parental motivation. The newly funded grant, “Pediatric Motivational mHealth Parent Training for Child Disruptive Behaviors,” aims to address this issue by developing technology-based solutions that can be accessed in primary care facilities and online.

The team of researchers, led by Kathleen “Lucy” McGoron, Ph.D., assistant professor of research in the Merrill Palmer Skillman Institute at Wayne State University, will develop a mHealth parenting system, called the Parenting Young Children Check-up, which will be delivered in health care settings. The system will assess children for disruptive behavior problems, provide a motivational intervention and connect parents with a training website.

According to McGoron, this project will facilitate the creation and evaluation of a system that could expand the reach of parent training of young children with disruptive behavior problems.

“Young children with disruptive behavior problems often require specialized parenting skills in order to flourish,” said McGoron. “While these skills can be effectively taught in face-to-face parent-training programs, most families in need of such services do not receive them due to lack of access or desire.”

With the growth of internet access — a common mode of obtaining parenting information — the Wayne State research team will create a program that can reach parents in a variety of settings, ultimately encouraging them to use a research-informed parent-training system.

“If parents use this training program and adopt the skills the program teaches, we think it will be beneficial to them and their children by reducing stress, enhancing parent-child relationships, and leading children to gain skills that will help in social situations and school.”

The project number for this National Institutes of Health grant is MH110600.

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About Wayne State University

Wayne State University is one of the nation's pre-eminent public research universities in an urban setting. Through its multidisciplinary approach to research and education, and its ongoing collaboration with government, industry and other institutions, the university seeks to enhance economic growth and improve the quality of life in the city of Detroit, state of Michigan and throughout the world. For more information about research at Wayne State University, visit research.wayne.edu.