

Community Update

A Report to the Greater Westchester Community

www.nyp.org

Winter 2011

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Social Skills Training for Young People

By Jo Hariton, Ph.D.

Many children and adolescents have a need for help in the development of social skills. Some have autism spectrum disorders, ADHD, depression, anxiety or learning disabilities. Others may simply not be functioning as well in social settings as their classmates. A common denominator for all of these children is a wish to do better with their peers.

It is a mistake to believe that children who lack social skills

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Plans for New Comprehensive Autism Center Underway

NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, along with its affiliated medical schools, Weill Cornell Medical College and Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, announced this October its collaboration with the New York Center for Autism to establish the Institute for Brain Development. This comprehensive, state-of-the-art institute will be dedicated to addressing the pressing needs of individuals living with autism spectrum disorders and other developmental disorders of the brain, across their lifespan. The Institute will be housed at the Westchester Division in White Plains and is expected to open in 2012.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, autism spectrum disorders affect one in 110 children and one in 70 boys. An estimated 1 million to 1.5 million American adults and children live with an autism spectrum disorder.



The Rogers building at the Westchester Division will be home for the new Institute for Brain Development, the most comprehensive facility of its kind in the region.

The New York Center for Autism, led by Laura Slatkin and Ilene Lainer, and a generous contribution from Marilyn and James Simons provided essential guidance and financial support in the formation of the Institute. Additional support is provided by Autism Speaks, North America's largest autism research and advocacy organization, founded by NYPH Trustee Bob Wright and his wife, Suzanne.

The Institute will care for patients at all life stages, from infancy through adulthood, with the whole spectrum of developmental disorders including autism, Asperger's syndrome and high-functioning autism. For children with autism, the Institute will take a unique approach and work closely with parents to guide them as they arrange for care

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A Path to Healing



Reverend Lynne Mikulak, coordinator of pastoral care and education at the Westchester Division, and hospital friend and benefactor Ilona Swaring, pose inside the recently constructed stone labyrinth in the south courtyard.

On October 19, the Westchester Division of NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital dedicated an outdoor labyrinth designed for walking and meditation for patients and staff. The 40'x40' brick labyrinth was installed by The Labyrinth Company in Connecticut, through the generosity of Ilona Swaring of New York City, a longtime hospital friend and benefactor.

Labyrinth patterns and symbolism date back to ancient times, however they have experienced a renaissance in the last three decades in healthcare settings and spiritual retreat centers. The key element in how a labyrinth differs from a maze, and why it has therapeutic value, is that a labyrinth has one path leading into the center and the same

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A Message to the Community



Philip J. Wilner, M.D.

A new and exciting chapter has begun for NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/Westchester Division which is celebrating its 117th anniversary in 2011. I am pleased to tell you about *Westchester of the Future*, a long term plan encompassing several new initiatives that will assure our hospital will continue to be the community's and region's preeminent provider of quality mental health programs.

Continuing its tradition of providing the most advanced and specialized mental health care, clinical research and teaching, the Hospital will be home to the Institute for Brain Development. This new, comprehensive, state-of-the-art facility will be dedicated to addressing the clinical needs of children and adults with autism spectrum and other developmental disorders of the brain. With construction scheduled to get underway this spring, the Institute is expected to open in 2012 and will be led by a multi-disciplined team of specialists from NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, Weill Cornell Medical College and Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons.

Thanks to an \$8 million grant from New York State, we also will be making major renovations to our inpatient geriatric and adolescent care units including the creation of new spaces for patient activities. At a time when public funding is limited, this grant is a clear recognition of the Westchester Division's commitment to our patients and a vote of confidence by our State in our creative approach to developing programs that serve the needs of our community (see page 2.)

With the strong support of NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital's Senior Leadership and the Board of Trustees, in the coming months and years we will expand our modernization and program development efforts as we continue in our second century as the region's leading mental health care provider.

Sincerely,

Philip J. Wilner, M.D.
Vice President & Medical Director

Hospital Receives \$8 Million Grant

Thanks to an \$8 million grant from New York State Department of Health, the Westchester Division will start making major renovations this spring on its inpatient geriatric and adolescent behavioral health units. The White Plains campus was one of only 19 hospitals and clinics statewide to be awarded grants totaling \$38.5 million. The awards were provided through HEAL-NY (Health Care Efficiency and Affordability Law for New Yorkers) to enable hospitals to modernize their facilities and continue providing quality patient care.

Scheduled for completion in 2012, the 19-bed geriatric and 23-bed adolescent units, each of which is about 10,000 square feet in size, will undergo a number of significant upgrades including the creation of new patient activity

spaces; comfort rooms; installation of new hardware and plumbing for the bedrooms and bathrooms and improved ventilation.

The funding will help assure that the Hospital will continue to carry out its mission as a leading health care provider into the next century and beyond.

Building facades will be restored, new windows will be installed and the emergency power systems will be upgraded to assure the

facilities will continue to operate in the event of a power failure. The units will also be re-painted and equipped with new flooring, ceiling tiles, lighting and furniture.

The total cost of the renovations is estimated at \$11.7 million, of which \$3.7 million will be paid from funds that have been generously donated by the Hospital's supporters.

Philip J. Wilner, M.D., Vice President and Medical Director, said: "This grant is one of the largest awarded by HEAL-NY. It recognizes the critical role that the Westchester Division plays in providing quality services to thousands of individuals in this community. The funding will help assure that the Hospital will continue to carry out its mission as a leading health care provider into the next century and beyond."



Westchester/Fairfield Walk Now for Autism Speaks

Sun., June 5, 2011

NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/
Westchester Division
White Plains, NY

Join NYP and Autism Speaks as we walk to change the future for all who struggle with autism! Walk Now for Autism Speaks is a fun-filled, family friendly event and is our single most powerful force to fund vital research that will lead us to the answers we need. Experience the power of thousands united by a single cause by joining Walk Now for Autism Speaks. Autism is the fastest-growing serious developmental disorder in the U.S. – we need more volunteers to join our fight. Whether this is your first walk or the 10th, take the first step and register today. You will not only raise funds, but you will become a part of a fun and supportive family-focused community. For more information and to register or volunteer, please go to: www.walknowforautismspeaks.org/westchesterfairfield

Autism Center

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in their community. These innovative "gap services" are crucial for the child and family as they plan for the child's development and future treatment, says Dr. John Walkup, director of child and adolescent psychiatry at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center and vice chair of the Department of Psychiatry at Weill Cornell Medical College.

"In the current care system, families often have the burden of finding and coordinating care for their child," Dr. Walkup says. "The Institute will serve as a bridge, linking children and their families to a full spectrum of interventions."

A comprehensive array of evaluation and diagnostic services will help identify issues early, which, Dr. Walkup notes, will improve the child's chances for optimal development and socialization.

The Institute's multidisciplinary clinical team will consist of physicians from Weill Cornell Medical College and Columbia University Medical Center in pediatrics, psychology, neurology, psychiatry and other disciplines, as well as specialists in speech and language, physical, occupational and behavioral therapies.

The Institute will serve as a bridge, linking children and their families to a full spectrum of interventions.

Alongside its mission of comprehensive care, the Institute will support work to advance effective new treatments and train the next generation of brain development specialists.

"One of the more unique treatment methods that we are currently developing is the use of computer-based techniques to teach non-verbal children with autism how to read," said Dr. Bradley Peterson, chief of child and adolescent psychiatry at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Medical Center and director of MRI Research at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons. "By using written language and mathematics, which operate on different neural systems than spoken words, we're taking a back-door approach to engage thoughtful communication in these children."

Research will extend from the Institute's clinical services in White Plains to the NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center and NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Medical Center campuses in Manhattan.

Congresswoman for a Cure



Congresswoman Nita Lowey joined employees and family members from the Westchester Division on Sunday, October 3rd for the Alzheimer's Association of the Hudson Valley's annual Memory Walk. The two-mile walk, part of which passed through the hospital grounds, raised thousands of dollars to advance research and care for those affected by Alzheimer's Disease.

Health Tip

Social Skills Training for Young People

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do not have an interest in making friends. Often they are lonely and shy away from reaching out to their peers, in part because of past experiences that have left them feeling rejected and isolated. Sometimes they have not had the opportunity to meet others like themselves who may have similar interests. By learning ways to communicate better and pick up the nuances of social cues, they become better able to feel that they belong.



Jo Hariton, Ph.D.

Children and adolescents with impairments in social functioning can benefit enormously from social skills group therapy led by a trained professional, where they learn friendship skills that they can practice with others who have similar problems.

Typical skills worked on in these groups include communication, interpersonal perspective taking, problem-solving, feelings identification, self-awareness, increasing frustration tolerance, good sportsmanship and the ability to be flexible and able to compromise. Skills are reinforced at home with the help of other family members and in time, many children will show a marked improvement in their interactions with others.

It can be tremendously reassuring for these children and adolescents to find people like themselves who they can relate to in a non-threatening and supportive environment. The benefits of decreasing loneliness and improving friendship skills in a group setting like this cannot be overestimated.

After a child has success in a social skills group, many parents will be delighted to see a renewed sense of optimism in their child, who is now equipped with the skills to make friends, and the confidence to try again with their peers.

Jo Hariton, Ph.D. is the Founder and Coordinator of the Social Skill Group Therapy Program at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital-Westchester. For information on the program, please call Dr. Hariton at 914-997-5957.



Bravo!

Once again, several of our Weill Cornell Medical College physicians were named in this year's edition of Westchester Magazine's *Best Doctors* issue. They are:

- Gerard Addonizio, M.D.
- Rebecca Dulit, M.D.
- Katherine Halmi, M.D.
- Barnett Meyers, M.D.

Volunteers Welcome

The Westchester Division of NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital is currently seeking volunteers to assist in a variety of ways. If you enjoy being in a health care and/or office environment, working with people and making a difference, we could use your help!

Please call
Laurel Torres
at 914-997-5780 for
more information.



Experts Discuss Teens and Eating Disorders



On December 7th, Dr. Evelyn Attia, right, Director of the Center for Eating Disorders at NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, was joined by Harriet Brown, a New York Times contributing writer and author of "Brave Girl Eating: A Family's Struggle with Anorexia" for a community outreach presentation. One of the nation's leading authorities on eating disorders, Dr. Attia was appointed last year as the Director of the Outlook at Westchester, an inpatient program that provides treatment for adults and adolescents struggling with anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, binge eating and other eating disorders. For further information on the program, call Gwen Mancuso at 914-997-5788 or go to www.nyp.org/eatingdisorders.

Healing Path

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path out. There are no dead-ends or decisions to be made.

A growing body of multi-disciplinary clinical literature exists to support its use as a healing tool for the mind, body and spirit and as a means for calming, coping, problem-solving, and promoting self care. Staff from the inpatient units, Pastoral Care, and Psychosocial Rehabilitation departments routinely use the labyrinth for guided meditation with patients. Rev. Lynne Mikulak, Coordinator of Pastoral Care and Education at the Hospital, said the installation of the labyrinth in the enclosed south courtyard "represents the long-term stability and groundedness we seek for our patients. By walking the labyrinth, patients find a way into the center of themselves, where they might have new insights and awareness about their health and healing."

Community Lecture Series

No Fee • No Registration • Free Parking • Refreshments Served

SPRING 2011

Caring for Kids with Emotional & Behavioral Issues:

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23

Making the Connection: Benefits of Social Skills Training for Children and Adolescents
Jo Hariton, Ph.D.

TUESDAY, APRIL 5

What Parents and Relatives Need to Know: A Lively Q&A Forum with Two Experts to Provide Practical Guidance on Successful Living
John Walkup, M.D. and David Rubin, M.D.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6

Raising Great Girls: Tools to Foster Self Esteem and Help Them Cope with Adversity
Maria DePena-Nowak, M.D.

Spirituality and Wellness:

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13

Self-Reflection and Contemplation: Benefits that Cross All Belief Systems
Lisa DeFelice, Ed.M., L.M.H.C.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27

Narrative Medicine: A Presentation and Performance on the Healing Power of Story and Song
Rev. Moriah Vecchia

All presentations will take place from 7:00 to 8:30 pm in the Auditorium located on the second floor of the Main Building with the clocktower.

For further information and directions, call (914) 997-5779 or visit www.nyp.org.

NYPH Speaker's Bureau

NYPH offers speakers for your organization, school, or business group to discuss topics such as eating disorders, depression, anxiety, stress management, and other issues concerning emotional health.

For more information, call the Public and Community Affairs Office at (914) 682-6991.



For the tenth consecutive year, NewYork-Presbyterian ranks among the nation's top hospitals, according to the 2010 U.S. News & World Report *Best Hospitals* edition.



Location & Directions

- **From I-287 West.** Take Exit 8W, keep in left lane, turn left at traffic light onto Bloomingdale Road. Continue to next traffic light (Maple Avenue), then turn left into the Hospital entrance.
- **From I-287 East.** Take Exit 8 and follow Route 119 (Westchester Avenue). Turn left at Bloomingdale Road. Turn left at next traffic light, Maple Avenue, then turn left into the Hospital entrance.
- **From Hutchinson Parkway South.** Take Exit 23 (Mamaroneck Avenue) towards White Plains. Drive approximately three miles to right fork (Bloomingdale Road). Turn right at the third traffic light into the Hospital entrance.

Community Update

Photos by John Vecchiolla



As part of our commitment to the health of all of our patients, staff and visitors, the Westchester Division is now a smoke-free campus.

Printer-
Insert your
permit
number.

NewYork-Presbyterian
Westchester Division

The Westchester Division
21 Bloomingdale Road
White Plains, NY 10605