

# Department of Research Abstracts

**GRADUATING PEDIATRIC RESIDENTS' TRAINING AND ATTITUDES VARY ACROSS MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS** Gretchen Caspary, Sarah Horwitz, Manpreet Singh, Wanda Fremont, Mana Golzari, Ruth E.K. Stein, Mark Wolraich.. Research, AAP, Elk Grove, IL; Peds, Stanford Univ, Palo Alto, CA; Psych & Behav Sc, Stanford Univ, Palo Alto, IL; Peds, UCSF, San Francisco, CA; Columbia Univ, NY, NY; Peds, AECOM/CHAM, Bronx, NY; Peds, OU Child Study Ctr, Oklahoma City, OK. **Presented at the 2008 Pediatric Academic Societies Annual Meeting.**

**Background:** Although pediatricians identify more mental health problems in children than they did in the past, many remain unrecognized and untreated. Given that mental health training and the sense of responsibility developed during residency may shape future practice, we investigated these issues among residents.

**Objective:** Examine residents' training and attitudes toward pediatric mental health issues.

**Design/Methods:** A national random sample of 1000 pediatric residents were surveyed as part of the 2007 AAP Graduating Residents Survey. 638 (63.8%) responded after up to 8 contacts. Residents were asked whether they had received training in 3 task areas: DSM diagnosis for ADHD, depression, and anxiety; dosing with ADHD medications and antidepressant/anxiety medications; and strategies for managing/treating depression. They were also asked whether they thought pediatricians should identify, refer, and treat 6 specific mental health problems. A repeated measures test compared the 3 tasks, and a Friedman nonparametric test examined differences among the 6 conditions.

**Results:** 85% were trained in DSM diagnosis for ADHD, compared to 65% for depression and 52% for anxiety. 79% were trained to dose with ADHD medications, but only 39% for antidepressant/anxiety medications. 51% had training in strategies for managing/treating depression. Residents were less likely to endorse treating rather than identifying or referring these conditions ( $p < .001$ ) (see Table). Residents were least likely to endorse treating bipolar disorder ( $p < .001$ ) and most likely to endorse treating ADHD ( $p < .001$ ).

% Agreeing that Pediatricians Should:			
	<u>Identify</u>	<u>Refer</u>	<u>Treat</u>
ADHD	96%	60%	68%
Child/adolescent depression	95%	87%	25%
Anxiety disorders	89%	78%	31%
Learning disabilities	87%	84%	29%
Behavior management problems	87%	90%	17%
Bipolar disorder	<u>66%</u>	<u>96%</u>	<u>5%</u>
Average	87%	83%	29%

**Conclusions:** The amount of training pediatric residents receive in diagnosis and treatment of mental health issues vary by task. While most residents feel responsible for identifying mental health problems, most do not leave residency believing pediatricians should treat these conditions. ADHD, where guidelines for pediatricians are well publicized, is the exception.

