



SIRG CBMH Newsletter

Dear Members of the Challenging Behavior and Mental Health (CBMH) Special Interest Research Group (SIRG), we are thrilled to share with you the latest developments in our field in this issue of our CBMH SIRG newsletter. We have some exciting news and updates to share with you.

Virtual Event on Challenging Behavior and Mental Health

We would like to invite you to a virtual event that we are hosting in May 2023. This event will focus on the challenging behavior and mental health of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We encourage you to reach out to Mindy Scheithauer at Mindy.Scheithauer@choa.org with any ideas or topics that you would like to present.



Recent Research

We would like to highlight some recent research that is particularly relevant to our SIRG. As a reminder, membership in the International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IASSIDD) includes free access to the Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities and discounted access to the Journal of Intellectual Disabilities Research.

Chronicity of Challenging Behavior in Persons with Severe/Profound Intellectual Disability Who Received Active Treatment During a 20-Year Period (2022)

Authors: Thompson, Thomas J., Michael W. Walker, Jessica Boisjoli LeBoeuf, Rune J. Simeonsson, and Eda Karakul.

This ambitious study tracked aggression, disruption, self-injury, and program refusal in individuals with for individuals with challenging behaviours living in a residential centre with an average age of 36.7 years over a period of 20 years.

The researchers found that, with intervention, aggression and physical disruption decreased over time. However, all the types of behaviours tracked persisted across time for some individuals. The results of this study demonstrate the need for continued support for individuals with intellectual disabilities who exhibit challenging behaviors. These findings have significant policy implications and underscore the importance of developing effective guidelines to address the long-term needs of this population.

The 10-Year Trajectory of Aggressive Behaviors in Autistic Individuals (2023)

Authors: Lavery, Catherine, Georgie Agar, Lucy Sinclair-Burton, Chris Oliver, Jo Moss, Lisa Nelson, and Caroline Richards.

This study tracked aggression over time in a community sample of individuals with autism spectrum disorder over ten years, with an average age of 11.8 years at the initial time point. The study aimed to evaluate person characteristics that might be related to the persistence of aggression over an extended time period. While the findings demonstrated that aggression decreased over time for some participants, it still persisted for many at the 10-year assessment point, suggesting that direct proactive intervention resources to ameliorate aggressive behaviours may be necessary for some individuals. The study identified overactivity and impulsivity as variables that may contribute to the persistence of aggression and suggests these are useful characteristics for clinicians and medical professionals to consider.

Predictors of Mental Health Service Use among Children and Adolescents with and without Neurodevelopmental Disorders (2022)

Authors: Gallant, Caitlyn, and Dawn Good

While some research has shed light on the variables that predict mental health service use among general pediatric populations, it is unclear whether these same predictive models hold true for individuals with neurodevelopmental conditions. On this basis, the authors measured service use among children, with an average age of 8 years, in a community mental health context to determine what variables might be related to service use. Interestingly, gender (males), internalising symptoms, and early life adversity were related to increased service use among individuals with neurodevelopmental conditions but not patients without neurodevelopmental conditions.

Key Takeaways: Recent Research on Challenging Behavior and Mental Health

Given the high prevalence of mental health and behavioral challenges among individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, it is incredibly important to measure the prevalence and longevity of these concerns and determine which variables might be associated with persistence and the need for intensive services.

In doing so, we can best advocate for policies and services to alleviate these challenges and ensure individuals can reach their full potential and maximize their quality of life.

The three studies highlighted here are great examples of work that does just that. They highlight that some challenges improve across time with intervention, policies should promote long-term access to these interventions, and it is important to identify which variables are most predictive of service use to promote access to care for those most in need. Taken together, these studies provide important evidence for clinical and policy development and set the groundwork for interesting new work in this area.

We hope you found this issue of the CBMH SIRG newsletter informative and useful. Please let us know if you have any suggestions for future topics or ideas for the newsletter. We look forward to hearing from you and hope to see you at the virtual event in May 2023.