



**Ontario Association on  
Developmental Disabilities**

## **29<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL RESEARCH DAY RESEARCH SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP**



# **Call for Abstracts**

**Living in the Time of the COVID-19 Pandemic:  
Emerging Opportunities and Obstacles**

*Thursday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021  
Virtual Conference*

**Deadline for submissions:  
January 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

## The RSIG Research Day is Going Online in 2021!

The RSIG committee is excited to be hosting the Research Day online this year. We are looking forward to highlighting the outstanding research being done across the province by students, community researchers, people with lived experiences, and early career scholars and professionals.

Q: What will be the cost of the conference this year?

The cost of the conference will be \$30 for students/self-advocates and \$60 for researchers/professionals. All participants will be required to register for the conference, including presenters.

Q: Is the conference going to be recorded?

No. Participants will be required to attend the conference live to watch the oral presentations. The posters will be available online for the entirety of the week. Persons registered for the conference will be given the link to access the poster website ahead of the conference.

Q: How will you support presenters?

Presenters accepted for an presentations will be given the opportunity to meet with a member of the conference committee in the weeks leading up to the conference to practice using the conference platform. In addition, the RSIG committee is developing a fact sheet for presenters on how to create a dynamic, engaging online presentation.

Q: Will students still be able to win awards?

The RSIG committee will still be offering poster awards and the OADD RSIG Student Award for Excellence in Research. Students may also be nominated for the Kay Sansom Scholarship, the OADD-NADD Ontario Scholarship – Student Research Scholarship, and the Bruce McCreary Memorial Scholarship. Interested applicants should see the information in this call for abstracts and on the OADD website: <https://oadd.org/scholarships-awards/>

If you have any questions about the conference, you can speak directly with RSIG co-chairs, Lisa Whittingham ([lw99ai@brocku.ca](mailto:lw99ai@brocku.ca)) or Anna Przednowek ([annap@nipissingu.ca](mailto:annap@nipissingu.ca)).

Here's the **Call for Abstracts** for the 2021 Research Special Interest Group (OADD) Research Day:

**The objectives of the RSIG Research Day are:**

- To share new research and innovations to advance the field of intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.
- To provide an opportunity for networking and collaboration for researchers, students, professionals, and self-advocates with an interest in research in the field of developmental disabilities.
- To facilitate interest and support for research regarding intellectual and/or developmental disabilities at the level of institutions (i.e., universities, colleges, community, and government).

We are seeking poster and oral presentation contributions from researchers engaged in work related to intellectual and/or developmental disabilities that span all disciplines and all levels of experience (i.e., student, early career, and senior researchers). We encourage submissions that represent a wide range of designs, including quantitative, qualitative, and single-subject designs. Contributions that are collaborative and/or participatory research with self-advocates are also highly encouraged. Submissions may also include papers that provide promising ways of using of creative, arts-based research approaches. Due to time constraints, we will accept a limited number of oral presentations, and we often cannot accommodate all presentations submitted. Alternatively, individuals submitting for an oral presentation may be asked to present a data blitz and poster instead.

**2021 Conference Theme:**

**Living in the Time of the COVID-19 Pandemic: Emerging Opportunities and Obstacles**

*Submissions related to this theme are encouraged, but not necessary.*

**To submit a contribution (i.e., poster, oral presentation, or data blitz), please submit your abstract **online** by **January 29, 2021** at:**

**<http://oadd.org/affiliate-organizations/rsig-call-for-abstracts/>**

**For more information about OADD and RSIG, please visit: [www.oadd.org](http://www.oadd.org) or “like” us at [www.facebook.com/rsig.oadd](https://www.facebook.com/rsig.oadd)**

## 2021 GUIDELINES FOR ABSTRACT SUBMISSIONS

Please use this format for both poster and oral presentation submissions.

Abstracts should be no more than 500 words in length (word count does not include Title, Authors' names, nor Correspondence sections)

Abstracts should be typed with single spacing, using 11-point Arial font, and 1-inch margins

Authors are asked to divide their abstract into four sections:

- 1) **Objectives:** State the purpose of the research and/or any hypotheses tested.
- 2) **Method:** A brief description of the sample (number of participants; characteristics of participants such as age, disability label, health conditions), measures, techniques, and methods of analysis used.
- 3) **Results:** A summary of the findings related to the objectives of the study. If you have pending results, remember to make note of that in your abstract.
- 4) **Discussion/Conclusions:** Statement addressing the relevance and/or implications of the findings (i.e., how findings apply to real-world issues and inform practice).

Centre the title and type it entirely in **CAPITALS and BOLD**.

Please skip a line and include author names, and institutional affiliations (in **bold**, non-capitals, centered). DO NOT list street addresses underneath the title.

**Correspondence:** list contact name, affiliation and email address of all authors.

### Symposium submissions

**We will consider a limited number of symposium submissions.** A symposium consists of a moderator plus 2-3 oral presentations on the same topic. Symposia is scheduled for 45 minutes, and the moderator is responsible for keeping participants on schedule. *The conference committee may cluster submitted abstracts around a common theme into a symposium. Symposium contributions should follow the same submission process listed above for each presentation included (e.g., objectives, methods, etc.).*

***If you would like to be considered for a symposium, please contact Lisa Whittingham at lw99ai@brocku.ca for further details.***

### Data Blitz – 3 Minute Presentations

Perfect for first time presenters or works in progress. Data Blitz talks are an unconventional and engaging method of sharing information. Presenters provide a synopsis of their research. ***Each data blitz presentation is 3 minutes long, uses a maximum of 3 slides, and there are no questions.*** Data blitzes are the perfect accompaniment to poster presentations. The timing of the presentations is strictly enforced, so be prepared to keep it short and have some fun!

***Submissions for data blitzes should be 200 words and provide a basic description of the research being discussed in the presentation.***

## RSIG COMMITTEE GUIDELINES FOR REVIEWING ABSTRACTS

The following criteria is used to score abstracts for poster and oral presentations. Each area is rated on a 4-point scale (0=Not acceptable, 1=Acceptable, 2=Good, and 3=Excellent) for a total score of 20 points.

AREAS RATED
<p><b>Purpose</b>            Is the purpose or objective of the study clearly stated?            Is the <i>rationale</i> for the project made clear?</p>
<p><b>Methodology</b>            Do the authors describe the demographics of the participant adequately?            Is the methodology (e.g., procedures, data analysis, and measures) described in sufficient detail?            Does the experimental techniques (e.g., standardized measures, etc.) aid in addressing the key research questions and hypotheses?            Did the authors use standardized measures/measures with adequate psychometric properties?            For single-subject design: Is data collected on the reliability or inter-observer agreement (IOA) for each dependent variable?            If employing a qualitative approach, is it described in adequate detail and is the methodology of choice appropriate for the research questions?</p>
<p><b>Results</b>            Are the results presented in a clear, coherent fashion?            Do the results verify or contradict previous findings/theories?            If research is in progress, do the authors describe study progress to date or preliminary results?</p>
<p><b>Conclusions</b>            Is the conclusion clear and understandable?            Have potential limitations of the methodology been addressed?</p>
<p><b>Clinical/Research Implications &amp; Novelty</b>            Is the information clinically important, relevant and/or significant?            What are the practical implications of the information?            Is this research original?</p>

Abstracts will be reviewed anonymously (i.e., identifiers removed) by the conference committee, using the guidelines presented above.

***The review process will be completed by February 2021 and authors will be notified immediately thereafter by email. Poster award nominees will also be informed of their nomination at this time.***

**Please see below for an example of an abstract:**

# BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL CORRELATES OF HEALTH IN CHILDREN WITH SEVERE DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Jonathan Weiss<sup>1</sup>, Adrienne Perry<sup>1</sup>, Ami Tint<sup>1</sup>, Alvin Loh<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>York University, <sup>2</sup>Surrey Place Centre

**Objectives:** There is a growing body of knowledge highlighting higher levels of physical and mental health problems in children with developmental disabilities (DD) compared to typically developing children, related partly to inequities in health care provision. While children with severe DD often struggle with known biological risk factors that contribute to physical and mental ill-health, less is known about how psychological or social factors, such as socioeconomic status, parent health, or service use, contributes to health. The current study examines the biopsychosocial correlates of health in children with severe DD across Canada.

**Methods:** Great Outcomes for Kids Impacted by Severe Developmental Disabilities (GO4KIDDS) is an ongoing research project examining the health, wellbeing and social inclusion of children with severe DD. The current study used information from GO4KIDDS' Basic Survey. Data collection is ongoing. Thus far, data has been collected on 83 children 5-19 years of age ( $M = 11.33$ ,  $SD = 3.81$ ).

**Results:** According to parents, 42% of children were rated as 'healthy' or 'very healthy' compared to other children of the same age. Parent rating of health was correlated with the average number of monthly medical appointments,  $r(83) = -.43$ ,  $p < .001$ , and the number of times children went to the emergency room in the last year,  $r(83) = -.33$ ,  $p = .002$ . Common health problems included seizures (28%), feeding or eating difficulties (gastro-intestinal problems, feeding tubes, major allergies and sensitivities, et.; 31%), and asthma (12%). Severity of parent mental health problems was correlated with frequency of child mental health problems,  $r(83) = .49$ ,  $p < .001$ , but not related to the child's physical health rating. Child happiness was related to specific medical conditions, such as the presence of seizures,  $p = .03$ .

**Discussion/Conclusion:** The poster will elaborate on these preliminary results using multiple regression, and will discuss how biological, psychological, and social factors work together to predict child physical and mental health.

## Correspondence:

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# RSIG AWARDS

## RSIG Poster awards

The RSIG will still be providing **3 student poster awards; one first place award, one second place award, and a “People’s Choice” award.**

The first-place recipient of the poster award will be presented with a certificate, as well as a \$150 prize at the end of the conference and **will be asked if they would like to speak for a few minutes about their research (this is optional and not required).** The second-place award winner will receive a \$100 award.

All abstracts submitted for a poster presentation by a **student** will be considered for the poster award. Presenters who were not accepted for an oral presentation and who agreed to do a poster presentation will also be considered for the poster award. Posters considered for awards will be evaluated anonymously (i.e., identifiers removed) using the abstract review guidelines to select the top 5 student posters. Poster award finalists will be informed of their nomination in their acceptance letters. **No application required.**

For posters nominated for an award, members of the RSIG conference committee will ask the finalists to discuss their poster (maximum of 2 minutes) and will rate the presentation of the posters including the visual presentation of the poster (e.g., How does the poster look? Is it a clear, comprehensive, readable poster?) on the day of the conference.

We will also be awarding a “**people’s choice**” poster award. Conference attendees will have the opportunity to vote for their favourite poster. The winner will receive a \$50 prize, to be awarded during the awards ceremony of the conference. Winners of the RSIG poster award are not eligible to also win the “People’s Choice” poster award.

## OADD RSIG Student Award for Excellence in Research

This award is presented annually to one student who has made an outstanding contribution to the field of developmental disabilities through an innovative and novel piece of research. Winners of this award will receive **\$250** and will be invited to present a **15-minute talk at the conference.**

**Students are encouraged to self-nominate, but faculty members are also encouraged to nominate worthy candidates.**

Please go to <http://oadd.org/affiliate-organizations/rsig-awards/> for more information.

## Kay Sansom Scholarship

**Three awards of \$1,000 each** and a one-year membership in OADD are available to **Ontario students with interests in the field of intellectual and/or developmental disabilities** in three categories: medical/graduate, undergraduate, and college students.

*Please note that this award is adjudicated by OADD Board Members and presented at the OADD conference, not the RSIG Research Day.*

Please go to <http://oadd.org/scholarships-awards/awards-scholarships-overview/kay-sansom-scholarships/> for more information.

### **OADD-NADD Ontario Scholarship – Student Research Scholarship**

**One award of \$1,000** is available to a college or university student completing a research study or writing a thesis focused on intellectual and developmental disabilities co-occurring with mental health needs.

*Please note that this award is adjudicated by OADD Board Members and presented at the OADD conference, not the RSIG Research Day.*

Please go to <https://oadd.org/scholarships-awards/awards-scholarships-overview/oadd-nadd-ontario-scholarships/> for more information.

### **Dr. Bruce McCreary Memorial Scholarship**

**One award of \$5,000** is available to students enrolled full-time in an accredited clinical program of study with an emphasis on working with individuals with developmental disabilities, their caregivers and families.

*Please note that this award is adjudicated by OADD Board Members and presented at the OADD conference, not the RSIG Research Day.*

Please go to <https://oadd.org/dr-bruce-mccreary-memorial-scholarship/> for more information.

**To prevent a conflict of interest, individuals on the RSIG Committee are not eligible for any of these awards for the duration of their membership.**