

Tackling Acquisition of Language in Kids (TALK) Workshop Series Agendas

In 2023, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) launched the [TALK initiative](#) in response to congressional interest in research to understand early language development, specifically the learning trajectories and needs of late-talking children, children older than 18 months who do not meet expressive language milestones. This workshop series brings together experts and other stakeholders to discuss the latest findings, gaps, and opportunities in research on late talking. The workshops are organized around the TALK initiative's three central themes: longitudinal data, novel approaches, and translating research into practice.

Longitudinal Studies of Late Talkers

Friday, October 18, 2024

12:00 p.m. **Welcome and Introductions**

Virginia Salo, NICHD

12:05 p.m. **Flash Talks**

The relationship between the Survey of Well-being of Young Children (SWYC) score and late talking diagnosis

Benjamin Goldstein, Duke University

Word learning in bilingual late talkers

Margarita Kaushanskaya, University of Wisconsin

Early prediction of language outcomes using neuromarkers in premature infants

Lisa Hunter, Cincinnati Children's Hospital

Family media practices are associated with late talker status during early childhood

Rachel Barr, Georgetown University

Brief Q&A

12:35 p.m.

Panel Discussion

Differential trajectories and representation in research

Moderator: Virginia Salo, NICHD

Panelists:

Arielle Borovsky, Purdue University

Kim Noble, Teachers' College, Columbia University

Laura Justice, Ohio State University

Kelly Vaughn, University of Texas Health Sciences Center

Developmental trajectories can vary widely on an individual and group level for children identified as or at risk of late talking. Despite efforts to observe and characterize these trajectories, much is yet unknown about the unique predictors and developmental sequelae. One goal of the TALK initiative is to advance understanding of why children with various conditions and/or risk factors are late to talk and to differentiate developmental trajectories that lead to better outcomes. Panelists will discuss the latest challenges and opportunities for best characterizing early language trajectories, and how specific methodological decisions can help or hinder the reliability and generalizability of this work. In addition, the panel will discuss practical considerations for promoting sustained and mutually beneficial participation in longitudinal studies from diverse populations and strategies for dissemination of research findings.

Open Discussion

1:30 p.m.

Closing

Novel Approaches

Wednesday, October 23, 2024

12:00 p.m.

Welcome and Introductions

Kristi Hardy, NINDS or Lisa Kopf, NIDCD

12:05 p.m.

Flash Talks

Early predictors of late language emergence

Bonnie Lau, University of Washington

Using EEG to predict language delays in the first 2 years of life
Chuck Nelson, Harvard University

Neural markers of late language emergence in preschool children born extremely preterm
Yuhan Chen, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

Development of a novel remote natural language sampling paradigm for individuals with complex neurodevelopmental disorders and minimal speech
Kristy Johnson, Northeastern University

Brief Q&A

12:30 p.m.

Panel Discussion

Novel approaches: Mechanisms, measurement, and technology

Moderators: Kristi Hardy, NINDS or Lisa Kopf, NIDCD

Panelists:

Connie Kasari, University of California, Los Angeles

Tian Zhao, University of Washington

Raúl Rojas, University of Kansas

Audra Sterling, University of Wisconsin

TBD

Our panel discussion will focus on three broad topic areas covering novel approaches for diagnosing early communication difficulties, predicting the course or persistence of late talking, and understanding mechanisms associated with late talking. Specifically, the panel will discuss neural mechanisms or other biomarkers that may be predictive of late talking or differentiate children with delayed language onset versus persistent early communication difficulties. We will also discuss new or improved measurement tools that may be used to make earlier diagnoses, better predictions, or improved differential diagnosis of late talkers, including for groups of culturally and linguistically diverse children. Finally, we will cover how leveraging technology, including digital and telehealth methods, may be helpful to identify, monitor, and/or treat late talkers.

Open Discussion

1:30 p.m.

Closing

Translating Research into Practice

Wednesday, October 30, 2024

12:00 p.m.

Welcome and Introductions

Holly L. Storkel, NIDCD

12:05 p.m.

Flash Talks

Community-viable family-school partnership intervention for children with social-communication deficits in early childhood education

Michael Siller, University of North Texas

Effect of preventive parenting intervention on child expressive language: Interim findings from a randomized clinical trial

Daniel M. Bagner and Daniella Vaclavik, Florida International University

Characterizing late talking: Neurobiological and behavioural insights

Karla Washington, University of Toronto

Outcomes for 'grown up' late talkers

Mary Alt, University of Arizona

Developing profiles of late signers

Naomi Caselli, Boston University

Brief Q&A

12:35 p.m.

Panel Discussion

The clinical translational continuum

Moderator: Holly Storkel, NIDCD

Panelists:

Mary Alt, University of Arizona

Daniel M. Bagner, Florida International University

Nan Bernstein-Ratner, University of Maryland

Karla Washington, University of Toronto

Current research is devoted to developing evidence-based innovations (EBIs) that improve a person's health and quality of life. For impact on people's lives, these EBIs need to be adopted in clinical practice and everyday life. Unfortunately, wide-scale adoption of EBIs is a lengthy process that rarely occurs, limiting the impact of clinical research. How can the timeline from early-stage research to adoption in clinical practice and everyday life be accelerated? Panelists will discuss key choices that need to be made during EBI development and evaluation and will grapple with the complex balance between research rigor and translational potential. Are there steps that can be taken during EBI development and evaluation that set us up for a smoother and faster transition from research to practice or is the research-to-practice gap unavoidable?

Open Discussion

1:30 p.m.

Closing