

NEWS

# Community Newsletter: Interventions evaluated; microglia; big data analyses

BY MICHAEL FERGENSON

9 OCTOBER 2022

It has been a rainy week here in New York City, but research threads highlighting fresh findings and resources helped dispel some of the gloom.

A storm of tweets from **Kristen Bottema-Beutel**, associate professor of special education at Boston College in Massachusetts, described her and her colleagues' "systematic **review of intervention studies** for transition-age autistic youth ..." published in *Autism*.

Our systematic review of intervention studies for transition-age autistic youth was just published in **@journalautism**, with **@ShanCLaPoint**, **@soyoonkimkang**, Sarah Mohiuddin, Vicky Yu, and **@RachaelMcKinno5** 1/10 <https://t.co/KHRBAF9S0X>

— Kristen Bottema-Beutel (@KristenBott) **October 3, 2022**

The analysis assessed the quality of 193 different studies on interventions for autistic people aged 14 to 22 and found that the majority "had problems that make it hard to determine whether or not the intervention worked."

"We concluded that the lack of quality research on how to **support autistic youth** who are transition-age is a \*structural problem\*," Bottema-Beutel continued, tweeting that "autistic youth may have difficulty transitioning from high school not because it's an inherent part of being autistic, but because there is very little useful information about how best to support them."

but because there is very little useful information about how best to support them. 10/10

— Kristen Bottema-Beutel (@KristenBott) **October 3, 2022**

“A joy and a privilege to be publishing such **excellent work** in **@journalautism**,” tweeted *Autism’s* editor-in-chief **Sue Fletcher-Watson**, professor of developmental psychology at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland.

Thank you sue!!

— Kristen Bottema-Beutel (@KristenBott) **October 4, 2022**

Summing up the thread, **Elaine McGreevy**, a speech and language therapist at Access Communication in Hilltown, Northern Ireland, tweeted, “When we say we have an **‘evidence base’** can we be sure the evidence is good quality, relevant & focused on what autistic people want?”

Review of 'autism intervention' studies show high bias, poor controls, little reflection on harms, outcomes measures don't relate to real life.  
When we say we have an 'evidence base' can we be sure the evidence is good quality, relevant & focused on what autistic people want? <https://t.co/nQjUi2yHoa>

— Elaine McGreevy (@ElaineMcgreevy) **October 3, 2022**

The effect of prenatal immune stress on microglia featured in another **study** with a deluge of attention this week, tweeted by co-investigator Lindsay Hayes, a research associate at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland.

“Maternal immune activations leads to **prolonged microglia blunting** in acute immune reactivity. Prenatal insults may lead to innate immune tolerance?!” Hayes tweeted.

Maternal immune activations leads to prolonged microglia blunting in acute immune reactivity. Prenatal insults may lead to innate immune tolerance?! 1/N

— Lindsay Hayes (@Lindsay\_4c) **September 28, 2022**

“Would be exciting to check **neuronal activity patterns** in more detail in this system!” replied **3Brain AG**, a biotech company in Wädenswil, Switzerland.

Wow, interesting and difficult work! Congratulation! Would be exciting to check neuronal activity patterns in more detail in this system! ?????

— 3Brain AG (@3Brain) **September 29, 2022**

**Urs Meyer**, professor of pharmacology at the University of Zurich in Switzerland, offered congratulations and called it a wonderful study, tweeting, “When too little is **too much**.”

Congrats Lindsay and team! A wonderful study ?????????????? When too little is too much ??

— Meyer Lab UZH (@meyer\_uzh) **September 29, 2022**

“Early life stress and the impacts it has on **developing brains** and systems is one of my favourite topics!” tweeted Erin Fuller, manager of research and engagement at Hunter Medical Research Institute in New Lambton Heights, Australia, congratulating the researchers.

Early life stress and the impacts it has on developing brains and systems is one of my favourite topics! Congrats on the paper! **@Lindsay\_4c** ?????#psychoneuroimmunology <https://t.co/kKmf8Gipp6>

— erin a fuller (@FleurLeRin) **September 29, 2022**

Lastly, have you ever wanted to up your game when it comes to analyzing large amounts of data? You're not alone.

"I want to learn to do the kind of **big data set analyses** that I often see Ed Policy folks doing! How can I learn this?" **Micheal Sandbank**, assistant professor of occupational science and occupational therapy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, asked, and she was soon swimming in replies.

Hey! I want to learn to do the kind of big data set analyses that I often see Ed Policy folks doing! How can I learn this? I can also take 3 courses for free at UNC so what would this be called/what should I search for in the catalog?

— Micheal Sandbank (@MichealSandbank) **September 22, 2022**

**Craig Van Pay**, a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Oklahoma – Tulsa, shared a link to **EdSurvey**, which he called an amazing resource. "Once you learn through the tutorials, other **big data sets** are similar!"

This is fantastic Craig!

— Micheal Sandbank (@MichealSandbank) **September 22, 2022**

**Allison Gilmour**, assistant professor of special education at Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, tweeted that "**the biggest hurdle** is learning data cleaning and managing across datasets and practice is the best way to learn."

This probably not the answer you want, but the biggest hurdle is learning data cleaning and managing across datasets and practice is the best way to learn. Happy to chat if it's helpful!

— Allison Gilmour, PhD (@AllisonFGilmour) **September 22, 2022**

“I would also highly recommend following **@Cghlewis**. She has a **ton of helpful data** wrangling and systems level data management resources,” tweeted **Kerry Shea**, senior research scientist at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville.

I would also highly recommend following **@Cghlewis** She has a ton of helpful data wrangling and systems level data management resources:<https://t.co/JChB0V7ESA>

— Kerry Shea, PhD (@operantbaby) **September 22, 2022**

“**@LauraMStapleton** did an **excellent workshop** at UMD's CILVR on this last year,” tweeted **Sarah Pedonti**, professor of education and allied professions at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, North Carolina.

“Good news,” replied **Laura Stapleton**, professor of measurement, statistics and evaluation at the University of Maryland in College Park, “there’s **another one** coming up... just two months away!!”

Aww, thanks, Sarah! And good news... there's another one coming up... just two months away!! <https://t.co/O24b6kpkS1> [pic.twitter.com/dWV00F2htb](https://pic.twitter.com/dWV00F2htb)

— Laura Stapleton (@LauraMStapleton) **September 22, 2022**

That’s it for this week’s Community Newsletter! If you have any suggestions for interesting social posts you saw in the autism research sphere, feel free to send an email to [michael@spectrumnews.org](mailto:michael@spectrumnews.org).

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