HALP Research

Research within the Hyperactivity and Learning Problems Clinic is focused on developing and testing interventions for children with ADHD in clinic and school settings.

Child Life and Attention Skills Program (CLAS)

The Child Life and Attention Skills Program (CLAS) is a behavioral treatment for children with the inattentive presentation of ADHD (ADHD-I) that includes parents, teachers, and children in the intervention.

In CLAS:

- **Parents** attend weekly parent groups where they learn strategies for helping their child manage their inattention symptoms at home, and strategies for working together with their child's teacher.
- **Children** attend weekly child groups where they learn skills and strategies for overcoming the social and organizational challenges that come with having ADHD-I.
- **Teachers** receive training in implementing behavioral strategies in the classroom to help the child manage their ADHD symptoms throughout the school day. Teachers complete a daily report card every day to help the child stay on track and work toward their goals. They also attend up to four meetings with the child and his or her parent to discuss the child's progress and possible changes to their behavior goals.

CLAS was developed by Linda Pfiffner, PhD [1], and has been tested with over 260 youth with ADHD-I in two National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)-funded randomized controlled trials (R21 MH65927, R01 MH077671) at UCSF (led by Dr. Pfiffner) and across a second site at UC Berkeley (led by Stephen Hinshaw, PhD [2]). Results from these clinical trials show that CLAS is superior to usual community and school treatment services for ADHD and to traditional behavioral parent training (an evidence-based intervention for ADHD) for improving ADHD symptoms and organizational and social skills at school. At home, CLAS is superior to traditional behavioral parent training for improving organizational skills, and superior to usual services for improving ADHD symptoms, organizational and social skills. These findings support the CLAS model of coordinating parent, teacher and child treatment components for optimal outcomes.

Results from the CLAS study have been published in a number of peer-reviewed journals. Links are provided below.

Primary findings from the randomized controlled trial are presented in the following publication:

Additional publications include:


**Collaborative Life Skills Program (CLS)**

The Collaborative Life Skills Program (CLS) was developed in partnership with San Francisco Unified School District to address the gap in evidence-based school services for students with attention and behavior problems. Adapted from a research-supported clinic-based intervention for ADHD (Pfiffner et al., 2014), CLS combines three existing behavioral treatments: behavioral parent training, a daily report card with teacher consultation, and child skills training.

- **School clinicians** lead each of the intervention components at their school site.
- **Parents** attend ten 60-minute parent group meetings at their child?s school. The meetings cover parenting skills for promoting child success at home, at school, and with peers.
- **Children** attend nine 45-minute groups that run concurrently with the parent group sessions. The child group modules are focused on building independence, organization, and social skills. Skills taught in the child group are shared with parents and teachers so they can be reinforced across settings.
- **Teachers** implement a customized daily report card and evidence-based strategies to scaffold and support attention and behavior in the classroom.
CLS was developed and evaluated with funding from the US Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences (R324A080041, R324A12-358, Principal Investigator/Director: Linda Pfiffner). Initial study findings from a series of open trials with 60 students show pre to post-treatment improvement in ADHD symptoms, homework and organizational skills, social skills, academic skills, report card grades, and observations of student engagement in the classroom. Findings from a recently completed randomized controlled trial with 135 students show that students from schools assigned to CLS compared with those assigned to usual services had significantly greater improvement on parent and teacher ratings of ADHD symptom severity and organizational functioning, teacher-rated academic performance, and parent ratings of oppositional defiant disorder symptoms and social/interpersonal skills. The program has been translated to Spanish and has shown similar benefit for Spanish-speaking families and students.

Primary findings from the CLS randomized controlled trial are presented in the following publication:


Additional CLS publications include:
