

Ecu news

OPEN DAY

ECU Open Day will be held on Sunday 29 July 2012 at the Joondalup Campus, with a range of presentations and activities scheduled between 10am and 3pm. Occupational Therapy staff and students will be on hand to answer questions and give demonstrations. Please feel welcome to come to the campus for Open Day to find out more about ECU and the occupational therapy course.

RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

Dr Sonya Girdler at Edith Cowan University has been running an occupational therapy research program since 2009 in collaboration with a number of partners including the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research, Princess Margaret Hospital, The Centre for Cerebral Palsy, WA AIDS Council and Carers WA. These partnerships ensure that ECU research students have the opportunity to be involved in clinical research that is relevant to children, families and individuals of Western Australia.

The research formats include randomised clinical trials, program evaluation, and systematic reviews, resulting in findings that support evidence-based practice and identify 'best practices' for clinicians, policy makers, and families.

Since its inception 25 honours students have graduated. The conversion of these honours students into doctoral students is high with currently six students enrolled in doctoral studies. The first doctoral students will graduate at the end of 2012.

Kitty Foley is undertaking her PhD in partnership with the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research. Her research is exploring the challenging time of post-school transition for young adults with Down syndrome. This research will help to inform strategies and policies to better support young adults with Down syndrome and their families.

Sarah McGarry is undertaking her PhD research in partnership with Princess Margaret Hospital. Sarah is examining the

psychological impact of paediatric physical trauma on children, parents and staff at PMH, results will significantly contribute to the development of future interventions to better meet the needs of this group.

Tanya Millard is undertaking her PhD research in partnership with the WA AIDS Council and the Alfred Hospital in Melbourne. Tanya's work involves the development on an on-line intervention for men living with HIV. Tanya's work with her clinical partners has been critical in informing the development of her intervention.

Anna Urbanowicz is working on her PhD research in partnership with the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research. Anna is looking at the role of communication in activities of daily living for girls and women living with Rett syndrome. Understanding the factors that impact on communication will help to facilitate their engagement with those around them.

Kiah Evans is examining role balance and working women with multigenerational caring responsibilities. This research with women living in the 'sandwich generation' will help to understand the challenges they face on a daily basis, and how they might be better supported.

Belinda Mclean is beginning her doctoral studies and aims to investigate the use of the SenScreen in children with Cerebral Palsy. She will undertake her candidacy presentation later this year.

PUBLICATIONS IN 2011 AND 2012 FROM THE ECU OT RESEARCH TEAM INCLUDE:

Calley, A., Williams, S., Reid, S., Blair, E., Valentine, J., Girdler, S., & Elliott, C. A comparison of activity, participation and quality of life for children with and without spastic diplegia cerebral palsy. *Disability and Rehabilitation*. (In press)

Pillay, D., Girdler, S., Bourke, J., Collins, M., & Leonard, H. Spirituality and organised religion in supporting parents of children with Down syndrome and intellectual disability. *Disability and Rehabilitation*. (In press)

Ecu news continued

Foley, K-R., Blackmore, A. M., Girdler, S., O'Donnell, M., Glauert, R., & Leonard, H. To feel belonged: the voices of children and youth with disabilities on the meaning of wellbeing. *Child Indicators Research*. (In press)

Foley, K-R., Dyke, P., Girdler, S., Bourke, J., & Leonard, H. Young adults with intellectual disability transitioning from school to post-school: A literature review framed within the ICF. *Disability and Rehabilitation*. (In press)

McGarry, S., Moir, L. & Girdler, S. The Smart Wheelchair: Is it and appropriate mobility training tool for children with physical disabilities? *Disability and Rehabilitation: Assistive Technology*. (In press)

Foley, K., Downs, J., Bebbington, A., Jacoby, P., Girdler, S., Kaufmann, W. E., & Leonard, H. (2011). Change in gross motor abilities of girls and women with Rett syndrome over a three to four year period. *Journal of Child Neurology*. 26(10), 1237-45.

Oates, A., Bebbington, A., Bourke, J., Girdler, S., & Leonard, H. (2011). Leisure participation for school-aged children with Down syndrome. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 33, 1880-9.

Urbanowicz, A., Downs, J., Bebbington, J., Jacoby, P., Girdler, S., & Leonard, H. (2011). Use of equipment and respite services and caregiver health among Australian families living with Rett syndrome. *Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders*, 5(2), 722-732.