

# Healthy Development Adelaide (HDA)

A Research & Innovation Cluster in South Australia

[www.adelaide.edu.au/hda](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/hda)

## Newsletter

Volume 7, Issue 5  
October 2011

### Upcoming Events...

- 7-9 October**  
The Society for Reproductive Biology (SRB) annual meeting will be held in Queensland, Australia.
- 9-12 October**  
The World Congress on Reproductive Biology will be held in Queensland, Australia.
- 20-22 October**  
The Australian & New Zealand Obesity Society (ANZOS) annual meeting will be held in Adelaide, Australia.
- 15-16 November**  
The Growing Up in Australia conference will be held in Melbourne, Australia.
- 30 November - 3 Dec**  
The 14th World Congress on Human Reproduction will be held in Melbourne, Australia.
- 30 November - 2 Dec**  
Nutrition Society of Australia annual meeting will be held in Queenstown, New Zealand.

Further information at  
[www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/events](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/events)

### LATEST NEWS

#### HDA and Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation (top-up) PhD Scholarships

Call to HDA members for applications .... We thank the Channel 7 Children's Research Foundation in providing their continued financial support towards a third cohort of HDA Scholars.

Top-up scholarships are \$4,000 per annum for up to 3 years to augment an Australian Postgraduate Award or equivalent competitive scholarship.

Applications are invited for 'multidisciplinary' PhD Research Scholarships in the areas of *Healthy Development*. Applications are invited from domestic and international students who are commencing a PhD in 2012, or who commenced a PhD in 2011\*.

Applications close **5pm Tuesday 1st November 2011**. For criteria and eligibility go to [www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/students/](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/students/)

#### HDA Travel Grants

HDA will provide financial support for final year PhD students and Early Career Researchers (up to 5 years post PhD) to further their research career by attending and presenting at international conference in 2012.

Travel Grants of \$1,000 each will be awarded to up to ten successful applicants. Applicants must be members of HDA for at least 3 months at the time of application.

Applications close **5pm Thursday 8 December 2011**. For criteria and eligibility go to [www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/support/](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/support/)

#### HDA Thematic Evening Brain, Behaviour & Development: *the future looks bright!*

Thursday 20 October, 5.00 - 7.30pm  
Union House (Level 4, Eclipse Room),  
University of Adelaide (North Terrace campus)

**Professor Jozef Gecz**  
*Genetic causes of epilepsy in children:  
latest developments & future research*

**Dr Debbie James**  
*Let's talk about children's communication,  
speech and language needs*

**Dr Manya Angley**  
*Autism research: progress and future directions*

**Ms Donna Nitschke**  
*Building the best brains:  
child brain development and action in schools*

Registration from 4.30pm for 5pm start  
All Welcome - FREE admission

**ONLY LIMITED SEATS LEFT!**  
RSVPs required by Friday 14 October to  
[anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au)

For full program details go to  
[www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/events](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/events)

An initiative of University of Adelaide  
since 2004

HDA Partners



The Foundation of a Healthy Society

Winner in Excellence in Research Collaboration ... SA Science Excellence Awards 2009 ...

## MEMBER PROFILE - SALLY BRINKMAN

### TELETHON INSTITUTE FOR CHILD HEALTH RESEARCH

Volume 7, Issue 5

NEW  
MEMBER



Sally is a social epidemiologist with the majority of her research focusing on societies' impact on child development. Sally is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute for Child Health Research (Adelaide office) and a Visiting Research Fellow at the Australian Institute for Social Research, University of Adelaide.

Sally is well known for spearheading the use of the Early

Development Instrument (EDI) in Australia, being the first to pilot the instrument outside of Canada. The EDI is now being used in over 20 countries and much of Sally's work is consulting to Governments and donor organisations such as the World Bank, UNICEF, AusAid and the Bernard Van Leer Foundation working with various measures of child development for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

Some recent examples of Sally's international work:

- advising the First Lady of the United Arab Emirates to setup a new Department of Motherhood and Early Childhood
- supported the Scottish government to develop a new screening schedule for chil-

dren 0 to 5 years of age

- supporting Argentina to establish an early childhood population monitoring system
- a randomized controlled trial evaluating largest ever World Bank loan (US\$127 million) for community based early child education and development program across poorest 6000 communities in Indonesia.

Nationally Sally remains the Epidemiologist for the Australian EDI (AEDI), working across the country to help facilitate the use of the AEDI. More recently this has included data linkage activities to better understand what predicts the AEDI results as well as how the AEDI can predict future educational outcomes and human capability

formation. Locally, Sally consults to Department of Children's Services Policy Directorate primarily around data-linkage, the Children's Centers Operational Group around evaluation and the SA AEDI team around community advocacy and research translation.

Sally has over 50 publications including books, chapters, monographs and journal articles covering topics such as infant mouthing behaviors, child physical activity and nutrition levels, the measurement of alcohol related violence, evaluation of teenage pregnancy prevention programs, how impact of socio demographics and service integration on child development.

✉ [sallyb@icmr.uwa.edu.au](mailto:sallyb@icmr.uwa.edu.au)

## HDA TRAVEL GRANT

### RECIPIENT CONFERENCE REPORT 2011

**Lisa Akison (HDA Scholar)**

**Research Centre for Reproductive Health, Robinson Institute, University of Adelaide**

In July/August 2011, I attended and presented a platform presentation at the 44<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the US-based Society for the Study of Reproduction (SSR) in Portland, Oregon, USA. This meeting attracts top researchers in field of reproductive biology and endocrinology and is one of the largest meetings in this field in the world. This year, there were over 200 platform presentations covering plenary/keynote lectures, minisymposia and concurrent sessions on an amazing variety of topics, with the main theme of meeting being 'Reproduction and the World's Future'. There were over 600 scientific posters presented over 3 days.

The HDA travel grant helped support me to present some of my PhD research to the international community. I was fortunate to be selected as one of 6 finalists in the highly competitive Trainee Research Platform Presentation Competition based on my submitted abstract, which was held as a featured session on the opening night of the conference. I was thrilled to be awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> prize in this competition! I also had my first opportunity to co-chair session on 'Ovarian Follicle Development', and I even got to introduce one of my PhD supervisors who was presenting in the session! This was a rare opportunity for a trainee scientist and great experience.

There were many highlights for me amongst the presentations. There were several interesting talks on novel contraceptives, with some male contraceptives currently in development and proving to be efficacious and reversible in a range of species. Given the conference was held in close proximity to the Oregon National Primate Research Center, there were quite a few talks on potential fertility preservation techniques such as in vitro 3D follicle cul-

ture as well as some detailed studies of reproductive biology in primates (macaques), a nice change from the plethora of mouse-based studies! However, many of the mouse studies were interesting too! They highlighted the tremendous advances in transgenic mouse models, with many elegant studies utilising cell-specific and tissue-specific knockout mouse models to determine some of the molecular mechanisms for important reproductive processes such as ovulation and implantation. I was also impressed with some of the new technology being developed for in vitro culture of embryos using dynamic microfluidics, as well as advances in pre-implantation genetic diagnosis. One of the most entertaining presentations was by Leon Speroff who has recently written a book called 'A Good Man' about Gregory Pincus and the development of the contraceptive pill – he made me want to run out and buy the book!

The conference also gave me an opportunity to meet face-to-face with some of my supervisors' mentors and peers from the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Texas, who regularly attend SSR each year and have some of the most prominent and productive reproductive biology research labs in the world. Overall, I found the conference to be an incredible experience that has made me realise the important contribution that my research will make to the field of reproductive biology.



Lisa with her award, and supervisors Dr Darryl Russell and Dr Rebecca Robker

## RECENT HDA EVENTS

### 7th annual HDA Oration: *Why are economists interested in early childhood health and development?*

On 25 August, HDA held our 7th annual Oration presented by Professor John Lynch, Discipline of Public Health, University of Adelaide on *Why are economists interested in early childhood health and development?* to a large audience of ~200 people. Professor Michael Sawyer, HDA Co-Convenor chaired the event and presented Professor Lynch with the Healthy Development Adelaide Award for 2011. Prof Lynch's presentation brought together research themes from several disciplines that have been foundational in focussing attention on the importance of supporting early childhood development for individuals, communities and societies. These include the fetal origins hypothesis, lifecourse epidemiology, early life nutrition, evidence from pre-and post natal, early childhood and pre-school intervention trials, cognitive neuroscience, personality psychology, and the econometrics of investing in early childhood programs.



pic 1 to r: 1. Prof Robert Norman (HDA Co-Convenor), Prof John Lynch with his award, Prof Michael Sawyer (HDA Co-Convenor). 2. Attendees; Dr John Pockett, Anne Bosio, Dr Basil Hetzel AC, and Prof Peter Howe. 3. Attendees.

### Food Industry Forum for Nutrition Research: Sustainable Nutrition - Sustainable Lifestyles

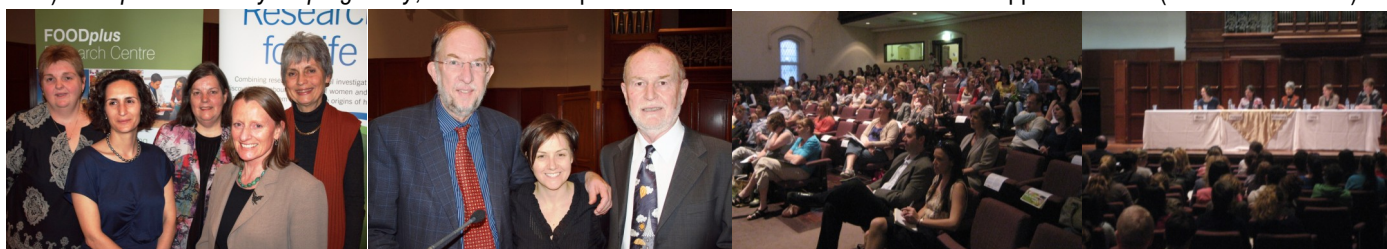
On 29-30 August, the Nutritional Physiology Research Centre at UniSA and HDA co-hosted the 2nd annual Food Industry Forum for Nutrition Research: *Sustainable Nutrition - Sustainable Lifestyles* at the Sebel Playford. Forum was officially opened by Hon. John Hill, Minister for Health followed by Prof Tony McMichael presenting the Paul Nestel lecture to an audience of 130 people. 15 speakers presented the following day covering an array of topics on *nutrition for life* and *foods for sustainable nutrition*. Major sponsors were the Australian Food and Grocery Council (AFGC) and Nestle. Supporting sponsors: Go Grains Health & Nutrition, Heart Foundation, Unilever, Nutrition Society of Australia (SA), Mars, Dairy Health & Nutrition Consortium, Meat and Livestock Australia, Sanitarium, and Simplot Australia.



pic 1 to r: 1. Dr Basil Hetzel AC with Prof Tony McMichael AO. 2. The AFGC Dinner. 3. The Food Forum. 4. The speakers (not all present).

### Eating for Two: Nutrition in Pregnancy

On 27 September, HDA along with the Foodplus Research Centre (University of Adelaide), Robinson Institute (University of Adelaide), and Women's & Children's Health Research Institute co-hosted the *Eating for Two: Nutrition in Pregnancy* community forum at Elder Hall to an audience of ~300 people. The forum provided a unique opportunity to hear from some of Australia's finest practitioners and researchers with the latest evidence in pregnancy nutrition questions answered during a panel discussion with the audience. The event MC was Amanda Blair from 5AA radio, with welcome and closing remarks by Prof Bob Gibson (Director, Foodplus Research Centre) and Prof Rob Norman (Director, Robinson Institute). Speakers included Dr Rosemary Stanton OAM on *dietary guidelines and recommendation in pregnancy*; Prof Maria Makrides (WCHRI) on *use or abuse of supplements in pregnancy*; Prof Jodie Dodd (Robinson Institute) on *impact of obesity on pregnancy*; with additional panellists Prof Claire Roberts and Ms Philippa Middleton (Robinson Institute).



pic 1 to r: 1. Prof Dodd, Prof Makrides, Ms Middleton, Prof Roberts & Rosemary Stanton. 2. Prof Norman, Amanda Blair & Prof Gibson. 3-4. Audience & Panel.

The talks, Oration video, and Eating for Two podcast can be found at [www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/news](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/hda/news)

# OMEGA 3S AND HEALTHY EATING HABITS TO BOOST EDUCATION AND WELLBEING

Volume 7, Issue 5

**Dr Natalie Sinn, HDA Member ARC-Linkage Grant update**  
Research Fellow, Public Health Nutrition Group, Sansom Institute for Health Research, University of South Australia

The benefits of omega 3 fatty acids have been well documented - by more than 14,000 papers, in fact, since a seminal 1970s study first identified how the Greenland Inuits managed to avoid cardiovascular disease despite a fatty diet largely consisting of whale and seal meat.

But paradoxically, while evidence abounds of omega 3s' ability to do everything from improve brain function to reduce the risk of stroke, cancer and depression, intake of these wonder fats is on the decline - to the point where a recent NHMRC nutrition survey found that eight out of ten children and adolescents in Australia are consuming virtually no omega 3s, as well as falling far below national guidelines for fruit and veg intake.

One Sansom Institute initiative is working to turn this trend around, by providing hundreds of school kids in the Northern Territory with omega 3 supplements (or placebo) and observing the difference in learning, cognition and behaviour. Supported by an ARC linkage grant and Vifor Pharma, the project is being led by Dr Natalie Sinn, a Sansom research fellow whose PhD in psychology investigated the effects of micronutrients and omega-3 fatty acids on learning and behaviour in children with ADHD.

Dr Sinn says that while omega 3 intake has declined all over Australia, the trend is more pronounced in remote Indigenous populations. "There are so many obstacles in remote areas, a big one being that most of the foods that contain omega 3s - like seafood, leafy green veggies, nuts and seeds - are either not available or affordable," she says.

While the use of supplements can overcome some of these barriers, Dr Sinn says more education is required to ensure sustainability beyond the period of the study - which is why the project is

school-based. "As well as showing parents how important omega 3s are for children's learning and behaviour, we want to extend this to a whole range of nutrients and gain evidence to support programs to make healthy food more accessible."

And while supplements are a convenient way to up omega 3 intake, Dr Sinn says limiting unhealthy fats - such as the omega 6s found in processed foods - is an equally important measure that warrants further attention. "In traditional diets there was a one to one ratio of omega 3 and omega 6 intake, now it's more like one to twenty," she says. "We need to be doing more to reduce the amount of processed foods we're eating."

Dr Sinn applauds mass-media education campaigns like the 5-veg 2-fruit initiative, but says such messages are being undermined by marketers' attempts to make processed, branded foods appear healthier. "While advertising has a lot to answer for, there's still a lot parents can do to counter such messages and ensure their children are eating well."

But what are parents to do when faced with the combined forces of fussy eaters, misleading ads and pester power?

Dr Sinn has the following advice for parents struggling to convince their kids to eat their greens:

- Create positive environment around food for children. "Role model healthy behaviours and involve them in gardening and cooking."
- Give them healthy food options. "Don't have junk food in the house and you won't be tempted to use it as a bribe."
- Don't offer them bread for dinner if they won't eat their veggies or try to tempt them with promise of a sugary desert. "Research shows children will prefer desert meal, so continually offering it as a bribe only undermines attempts to get them to enjoy vegetables."
- If at first you don't succeed, try and try again. "Studies show that children who are regularly exposed to healthy foods will start to eat them in time if you keep offering them."



Pictured l to r: Project Officer, Deb during assessments, children at assembly with awards for best compliance, and other children taking their fish oil.

## NEW HDA MEMBERS

### **Dr Michael Stark**

Consultant Neonatologist and NHMRC Clinical Fellow,  
Research Centre for Early Origins of Health and Disease,  
The Robinson Institute, University of Adelaide.  
Focus - perinatal medicine.

### **A/Professor Gaynor Parfitt**

Exercise and Sport Psychology, School of Health Sciences,  
University of South Australia  
Focus - psychological health and behaviour change.

## Allira's Angels Not just any Quiz Night

Volume 7, Issue 5

This event is in support of the Women's and Children's Hospital Foundation and 2 year old Allira Prosser who suffers from an incurable genetic disease.

When: Friday 11th November, 6.30pm for 7.00pm start

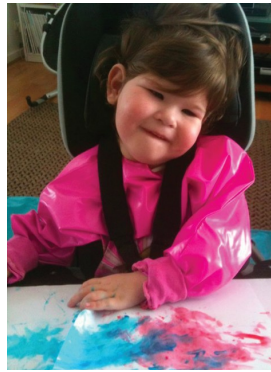
Where: West Adelaide Football Club

How much: \$15 per person, bookings for tables of 10

What: Quiz, games, prizes, silent auction, guest speaker

BYO food platter, meals and drinks can be purchased from the bistro.

Online bookings are made for the group so basically you get a central person to organise it and book your table online for \$150 at [http://www.stickytickets.com.au/6453/Alliras\\_Angels\\_Quiz\\_Night.aspx](http://www.stickytickets.com.au/6453/Alliras_Angels_Quiz_Night.aspx)



Half of all funds raised will go to the Women's and Children's Hospital Foundation palliative care department who provide support to terminally ill children and their families in SA. The other half will go towards providing specific medical and therapeutic equipment and services to better Allira's quality of life.



Allira's Angels facebook page can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Alliras-Angels/160382764027499>

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## Forum for Child Welfare Education & Children's Wellbeing - Philosophy, Policy & Practice

*The 2011 International Forum for Child Welfare is 'Education & Children's Wellbeing - Philosophy, Policy and Practice' to be held in Melbourne, 18-21 October.*

The Forum will explore the theme of education as a first priority for enabling and equipping children from across the globe to reach their potential, to participate fully in community life, and to contribute to wellbeing of others.

Specific themes to be covered include:

- The importance of nurture and health in early years and the impact of poverty on a child's development
- The impact of trauma on children as a result of war, death, tragedy, injury, isolation and disadvantage

- The role of the family and community in building better outcomes for children.
- The specific needs of indigenous, refugee and children with a disability, including the barriers which prevent them from achieving their potential.
- The role and practice of child led decision making
- The specific needs of children in alternative care
- The critiques of social policy agendas and their capacity to aid or hinder improved outcomes for children.

Please visit the following website for further information:

<http://www.worldforum2011.org/program.asp>

### Stem Cell Tourism

**Stem cell tourism - how far would you go?**

Wednesday, 23 November from 6:00 - 7:30pm  
The Science Exchange, 55 Exchange Place, Adelaide  
Hosted by the Royal Institution of Australia (RiAus)

If faced with an incurable disease or disability, would you travel overseas for an experimental treatment? Many Australians already go abroad for dental work, cosmetic surgery and IVF services which can be more expensive or unavailable here. This talk will explore the reality and potential for stem cell science, and look at how long Australians may have to wait.

Join ABC Radio National's Norman Swan and a panel of experts - Robert Norman, Stephen Couche, Simon Koblar, and Megan Munsie - as we weigh up the pros and cons of travelling abroad for experimental treatments.

Free, booking required at <http://stem-cell-tourism.eventbrite.com/>

### AusFoodtech Symposium

The **AusFoodtech 2011** inaugural symposium brings together Australian and international food technology experts to address the key issues and demands affecting the food industry today.

Tuesday 18 October at the Adelaide Convention Centre, and coinciding with the AusBiotech national conference.

To register go to [www.ausbiotech2011.com.au/AusFoodtech](http://www.ausbiotech2011.com.au/AusFoodtech)

### Child Abuse & Neglect lecture

**Child abuse and neglect - Developing an Australian solution**  
by **Professor Marianne Berry**

Tuesday 11 October, 6.00pm at Bradley Forum, Level 5, Hawke Building, North Terrace, UniSA City West campus

*Prof Berry is Chair in Child Protection and Director of the Australian Centre for Child Protection at University of South Australia.*

Enquiries to: 8302 2964 or [knowledgeworks@unisa.edu.au](mailto:knowledgeworks@unisa.edu.au)

# Young Investigator Awards Finals Event

Volume 7, Issue 5

The finals event of the Young Investigator Award will be held on **Thursday 27 October, 5.30 – 8.30 pm** at the **Sanctuary, Adelaide Zoo**.

The three finalists will present their research in 'lay language' to a general audience and will be judged by a media panel representing television, radio and the press.

The 2011 finalists are:

### **Nadira Ruze Haji**

*Winning the battle against burns and scars in children*  
University of Adelaide and Women's and Children's Health Research Institute

### **Lisa Nicholas**

*Maternal weight loss around the time of conception has a negative impact on insulin signalling in her offspring after birth*  
University of South Australia

### **Dr Lachlan Jolly**

*Understanding molecular basis of learning and memory problems*  
SA Pathology

Further details can be found at <http://www.cywhs.sa.gov.au/yia/>

If you would like to attend the YIA Finals Event, please RSVP by Friday 21 October via e-mail: [anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:anne.jurisevic@adelaide.edu.au) or phone: 8303 8222 (email preferable).

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## Healthy Australia Forum

**Building a viable Australian Health Workforce for our future: Transformation strategies for health system change**

Tuesday 18 October, Adelaide Town Hall, 6.00pm start (refreshments served from 5.30pm)

- Dr Helen Bevan, Transformation leader in UK National Health Institute and Dr Joshua Tepper, Canadian leader of HealthForceOntario human resources strategy will tackle the big questions.
- 
- RSVP to [www.hawkecentre.unisa.edu.au](http://www.hawkecentre.unisa.edu.au) or phone 8302 0215

## de Lissa Oration

**Tomorrow's Educators for Today's Children**  
Keith Bartley, Chief Executive of DECS

18th October, 6.30-8.00pm  
Amy Wheaton Building, Marie Munn lecture theatre, UniSA Magill Campus.

The Oration will draw on Mr Bartley's distinguished career in the fields of education and early childhood development, and reflect on the unique opportunities and challenges facing SA in terms of national and state reforms.

RSVP and more details to [sarah.rose@unisa.edu.au](mailto:sarah.rose@unisa.edu.au) or phone 8302 4215

## Intergenerational Family Care

The next Health, Disability and Lifespan Development lunch-time seminar will be presented by Cecily Young and Linley Denson on '**Intergenerational Family Care**'.

19th October, 12.15 - 2.00 p.m.  
Sandwiches and coffee will be provided at 1.30pm.  
Room 526/527, Level 5 Hughes Building (University of Adelaide north terrace campus)

Further info and RSVP to [juliet.summers@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:juliet.summers@adelaide.edu.au) before Monday 17 October for catering purposes.

## CanTeen National Bandanna Day Volunteers needed

Cancer affects the lives of thousands of young Australians every day. Canteen needs volunteers to help sell bandannas on National Bandanna Day on the streets of Adelaide.

**Canteen's National Bandanna Day 2011**  
**Friday 28 October**

Volunteer as little as 2 hours of your time!  
Contact Canteen on 8161 7488 or [sa.nt@canteen.org.au](mailto:sa.nt@canteen.org.au) to get involved.



## Australian & New Zealand Obesity Society Meeting

**The Australian and New Zealand Obesity Society (ANZOS) 2011 Annual Meeting will be held at the National Wine Centre, Adelaide, 20-22 October.**

This year's conference theme is "*The Obesity Challenge: physical, psychosocial and environmental.*" The ANZOS Annual Meeting will be the perfect conference for delegates with a genuine interest in obesity to network and share their experiences.

It's designed to bring together clinicians, scientists, dieticians, researchers, psychologists, exercise physiologists, public health practitioners, guideline developers, students, educators, policy makers, administrators and patients to work toward an integrated approach to improve the management and prevention of obesity in Australasia.

For more information and to register please visit [www.eventc.com.au/ANZOS2011/](http://www.eventc.com.au/ANZOS2011/)

