

# George Abbott Symposium

Rolleston Lecture Theatre, University of Otago

Christchurch



**Poster Evening Thursday 25 August, 6-7.30pm**

Prizes sponsored by





# RESEARCH FOR CHILDREN AOTEAROA

*Whānau, Wellbeing & Health*

*The Research for Children Aotearoa (RCA) Collaborative brings together established Research Institutes, organisations and communities to advance equitable, innovative, world-leading research for children. Proudly supported by Te Papa Hauora, this Collaborative fosters research excellence across disciplines to strengthen impact across clinical, medical, sociological and educational domains.*

George Abbott Symposium  
University of Otago, Christchurch  
26 and 27 August 2022  
(poster evening 25 August)

**Featured Speakers**

- Dr Sarah Harris, University of Otago, Christchurch
- Dr Barbara Cormack, Starship Child Health, Auckland City Hospital
- Associate Professor Sacha McMeeking, University of Canterbury
- Dr Kate Prendergast, University of Canterbury
- Professor Bronwyn Hayward
- Prof Julia Rucklidge, University of Canterbury
- Dr Sarah Whitcombe-Dobbs, University of Canterbury
- Dr Matt Hobbs, University of Canterbury
- Nicola McDonald and Kate Goonan, Te Whatu Ora Canterbury
- Professor Gail Gillon and Professor Brigid McNeill, University of Canterbury
- Dr Pippa McKelvie-Sebileau, University of Auckland
- Ms Frances Benge, Cure Kids and Dr Mavis Duncanson, University of Otago
- Dr Anna Howe, University of Auckland
- Dr Kaaren Mathias, University of Canterbury
- Professor Joe Boden, University of Otago, Christchurch
- Dr Monica Nua-George and Mr Kiki Maoate, Etu Pasifika Christchurch
- Dr Isaiah Immanuel, University of Otago, Christchurch
- Ms Stephanie Brown, University of Otago, Christchurch

# George Abbott Symposium

## Friday 26 August

8.30am	Registration
9-10am	Welcome and Introduction Launch of the Research for Children Aotearoa Collaborative
<b>10-10.30am</b>	<b>Morning tea</b>
10.30-11am	<b>Dr Sarah Harris</b> <i>The First Thousand Days – the critical importance of investing in early life</i>
11-11.30am	<b>Dr Barbara Cormack</b> <i>Does early nutrition influence growth and neurodevelopment for the smallest preterm babies?</i>
11.30am-12pm	<b>Assoc Prof Sacha McMeeking</b> <i>Inequity stopped for a moment- did we notice and what can we learn</i>
<b>12-1pm</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
1-1.30pm	<b>Dr Kate Prendergast</b> <i>How can cities support children and youth to flourish? A study of young people's wellbeing in seven international cities</i>
1.30-2pm	<b>Professor Bronwyn Hayward MNZM</b> <i>The Climate challenges for children and future generations</i>
2-2.30pm	<b>Prof Julia Rucklidge</b> <i>A Nutritional Approach to Treating Symptoms of Antenatal Depression</i> <i>The NUTRIMUM Trial: A Double-Blind, Randomised Controlled Trial</i>
<b>2.30-3pm</b>	<b>Afternoon tea</b>
3-3.30pm	<b>Dr Sarah Whitcombe-Dobbs</b> <i>'Effective engagement and assessment with families who have ongoing involvement with child protections services: principles and practicalities'</i>
3.30-4pm	<b>Dr Matt Hobbs</b> <i>Is the built environment a young person grows up in associated with their mental health: a nationwide geospatial study.</i>
4-4.30pm	<b>Nicola McDonald and Kate Goonan</b> <i>Supporting Child and Family Wellness in the Context of Health Challenges</i>

## Saturday 27 August

9-10am	<b>Prof Gail Gillon and Brigid McNeill</b> <i>Improving health literacy begins with a better start to literacy learning</i>
10-10.30am	<b>Dr Pippa McKelvie-Sebileau</b> <i>Nourishing Hawke's Bay: He wairua tō te kai – nutrition, food security and wellbeing for children in regional New Zealand</i>
<b>10.30-11am</b>	<b>Morning tea</b>
11-11.30am	<b>Dr Mavis Duncanson/Ms Frances Benge</b> <i>Cure Kids' Mission and the State of Child Health</i>
11.30am-12pm	<b>Dr Anna Howe</b> <i>Are children at high-risk of pneumococcal getting the protection they require?</i>
<b>12-1pm</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
1-1.30pm	<b>Dr Kaaren Mathias</b> <i>Can the Parwarish positive parenting intervention improve youth mental health and reduce violence in homes? A pilot study in three diverse sites in India.</i>
1.30-2pm	<b>Prof Joe Boden</b> <i>"What ingredients does a child need to thrive? Lessons from the Christchurch Health and Development Study"</i>
2-2.30pm	<b>Dr Monica Nua-George/Mr Kiki Maoate</b> <i>Etu Pasifika Child Health – What our integrated approach looks like</i>
2.30-2.45pm	<b>Dr Isaiah Immanuel</b> <i>Diabetes Mellitus Type 1 in Pasifika Children – We can do better.</i>
2.45-3pm	<b>Ms Stephanie Brown</b> <i>The challenges that children with IBD face in achieving adequate nutrition</i>
<b>3pm</b>	<b>Closing and farewells</b>

Ms Frances Bengé and Dr Mavis Duncanson

## **Cure Kids' Mission and the State of Child Health**

Dr Mavis Duncanson is a Public Health Physician with interest and experience in child population health. In her current position as Director and clinical epidemiologist with the New Zealand Child and Youth Epidemiology Service (NZCYES) she contributes to the provision of information of the health of children and young people to districts of Te Whatu Ora and the Ministry of Health, to the Cure Kids annual State of Child health report, and to the annual Child Poverty Monitor in partnership with the Office of the Children's Commissioner and the JR McKenzie Trust. Mavis is also a co-director of the New Zealand Paediatric Surveillance Unit monitoring elimination of polio and occurrence of specific rare conditions in New Zealand children.

In December 2015 Frances was appointed the CEO role at Cure Kids after 25 years of experience in the Pharmaceutical Industry. Frances pharmaceutical career commenced initially in sales, before moving into leadership roles in both sales and marketing. Prior to this role Frances lead the Pfizer patented brand business across nine markets in South East Asia, Hong Kong and India. She has worked in a marketing capacity as a Portfolio manager on Pfizer's major brands as the Business Unit Manager and in 2009 was appointed Managing Director for Pfizer New Zealand. Frances has contributed to a number of board positions including Medicines New Zealand, Pfizer New Zealand and as the President and Chair of the American Chamber of Commerce Board in 2013. Currently Frances holds trustee roles on the Cure Kids New Zealand and Fiji boards and the New Zealanders for Health Research organisation. In 2002 Frances completed the Macquarie Graduate School of management, Strategic Leadership Program and holds a Graduate Diploma in Business.

Professor Joe Boden

## **What ingredients does a child need to thrive? Lessons from the Christchurch Health and Development Study**

Professor Joseph Boden is the Director of the Christchurch Health and Development Study (CHDS), a longitudinal study of over 1000 people born in Christchurch in 1977, and followed to age 40. Prof. Boden joined the CHDS in 2005, and his research interests include: mental health and substance use over the life course; psychosocial adjustment and maladaptive behaviour; and statistical methods for the analysis of longitudinal data. Prof. Boden is also active in social policy development, providing advice to the Ministry of Justice, the New Zealand Police, and the Health Promotion Agency, among other groups.

Ms Stephanie Brown

## **The challenges that children with IBD face in achieving adequate nutrition**

Stephanie is a paediatric gastroenterology dietitian. She is currently undertaking her PhD focusing on aspects of nutrition in children with Inflammatory Bowel Disease at University of Otago Christchurch.



Dr Barbara Cormack

## **Does early nutrition influence growth and neurodevelopment for the smallest preterm babies?**

Dr Barbara Cormack is Clinical Lead – Paediatric Dietitians, Starship Child Health and a Senior Research Fellow at the Liggins Institute, University of Auckland. Barbara’s specialty is neonatal nutrition and her research centres on how nutrition affects the growth, development and the long-term health of preterm babies.

Professor Gail Gillon and Professor Brigid McNeill

Affiliation: University of Canterbury Child Well-being Research Institute & Better Start National Science Challenge

## **Improving health literacy begins with a better start to literacy learning**

It is well established the children's literacy achievement is a strong predictor of educational attainment and is associated with improved health and wellbeing outcomes. The World Health Organisation has highlighted the critical importance of literacy to reducing current health inequities and has called upon Governments globally to increase investments in enhancing literacy achievement, particularly in our diverse communities.

Improved literacy outcomes in a population begins with early literacy success. Those children with strong early reading skills are more likely to experience cumulative advantages compared to children who struggle with early reading. The NZ Ministry of Education is funding a national implementation of the Better Start Literacy Approach (BSLA) -a strengths based and culturally responsive approach to accelerate early literacy learning for all children. Professors Gillon, McNeill and colleagues led the development of this approach through the Better Start National Science Challenge. Following successful controlled research trials of the approach, over 2000 new entrant and year 1 teachers around New Zealand are now implementing this approach in their classes.

This presentation will focus on an overview of the Better Start Literacy Approach and data gathered from over 25,000 children on measures of oral language and early literacy. The accelerated early literacy performance of a subset of over 13,000 children 3 months after BSLA teaching will be described. In particular, the presentation will highlight the strong response to BSLA teaching of young Māori and Pasifika learners.

Dr Sarah Harris

## **The First Thousand Days – the critical importance of investing in early life**

Dr Harris is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Otago Department of Paediatrics, Christchurch, New Zealand Heart Foundation research fellow and paediatrician to the Mothers and Babies Regional Perinatal Mental Health Service at Princess Margaret Hospital. Her research interests include infant mental health, pulmonary hypertension, the late effects of prematurity and cardiovascular health. She leads the New Zealand Very Low Birth Weight Study. As part of her work at the Mothers and Babies Service, Sarah has experience in supporting mothers with severe and enduring mental illness and in infant mental health. She is particularly interested in the impact of early life experiences on the psychosocial and health outcomes of children and ways in which we can better identify and support families facing challenges.

Professor Bronwyn Hayward

## **The Climate challenges for children and future generations**

This paper reports on the observed and projected impacts and risks of a rapidly changing climate for children and young people particularly in Aotearoa/New Zealand which were identified in the 2022 Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability report of the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change). Discussion then considers the implications of these impacts and risks for climate resilient development that priorities the needs of tamariki and rangatahi, to reduce the impact of 'damages, harms, economic, and non-economic losses and likelihood of more chaotic future climates, in ways that also support children and future generations to flourish.

Bronwyn Hayward is Professor in Political Science and International Relations, University of Canterbury, New Zealand. She was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit in 2021 for her contributions to youth, sustainability and climate change. Her most recent book is Children, Citizenship and Environment #SchoolStrike Edition 2021 Routledge, London. Bronwyn was a Lead Author for the IPCC 2018 special report 1.5 Degrees, and is a coordinating lead author of the IPCC Sixth Assessment report (cities and infrastructure) and member of the IPCC core writing team. She also leads a 7 nation study of the sustainability of children and young people's life styles for CUSP: Centre for Understanding Sustainable Prosperity, a UK ESRC funded research group based at the University of Surrey and is a co-PI on the Deep South challenge Mana Rangatiratanga: Nurturing Indigenous youth leadership in climate change decision-making. In 2022 she won Westpac/Stuff Supreme woman of influence and Environment awards.

Dr Matt Hobbs

## **Is the built environment a young person grows up in associated with their mental health: a nationwide geospatial study**

Dr Matthew Hobbs is a Senior Lecturer | Pūkenga Matua in Public Health, Faculty of Health, University of Canterbury and is a Co-Director of the GeoHealth Laboratory | Te Taiwhenua o te Hauora. He is involved in several projects in the fields of: public health, medical and health geography, physical activity and longitudinal research.

Dr Anna Howe

## **Are children at high-risk of pneumococcal getting the protection they require?**

Anna is an epidemiologist and the Research and Policy Analyst for the Immunisation Advisory Centre, a Research Fellow with the University of Auckland, and an Adjunct Senior Fellow with the University of Canterbury. Her research focuses on improving maternal, infant, and childhood outcomes through immunisation mostly utilising our administrative health data.

Dr Isaiah Immanuel

## **Diabetes Mellitus Type 1 in Pasifika Children – We can do better**

Dr Immanuel completed his medical training at Fiji School of Medicine in 2002. He has undertaken paediatric training in Fiji and Christchurch. Isaiah recently commenced a research position in the Department of Paediatrics at University of Otago Christchurch in April 2022 and also has a part-time role as a Clinical trainee at Etu Pasifika Clinic.

Dr Kaaren Mathias

## **Can the Parwarish positive parenting intervention improve youth mental health and reduce violence in homes? A pilot study in three diverse sites in India**

Kaaren Mathias is a public health physician and Senior Lecturer at the University of Canterbury. She worked for over a decade as Program Director, of a non-profit organisation, Burans ([www.burans.org](http://www.burans.org)), promoting mental health and resilience among young people and disadvantaged communities in Uttarakhand, North India. Kaaren uses both quantitative and qualitative methods in her research with a focus on community mental health systems, participation, gender, and equity in child and youth health. Kaaren is also a Training programme supervisor with the New Zealand College of public health medicine.



Nicola McDonald and Kate Goonan

## **Supporting Child and Family Wellness in the Context of Health Challenges**

Nicola McDonald (Consultant Child and Family Psychologist) and Kate Goonan (Child and Family Psychologist) work in the Paediatric Consultant Liaison service at Christchurch Hospital. They specialise in supporting young people experiencing psychological challenges alongside physical ones. Nicola lectures at the University of Canterbury and previously worked in the NGO sector. Kate additionally works at Stand Tu Māia and has previous experience within education and mental health settings.

Dr Pippa McKelvie-Sebileau

## **Nourishing Hawke's Bay: He wairua tō te kai – nutrition, food security and wellbeing for children in regional New Zealand**

Pippa McKelvie-Sebileau is a doctoral candidate at the School of Population Health, University of Auckland. Prior to enrolling in her doctoral studies, she was Research Manager at the Eastern Institute of Technology, Te Pūkenga, and Project Manager on the Nourishing Hawke's Bay: He wairua tō te kai research initiative. She has a BSc (Hons) in Psychology from Victoria University of Wellington and a Masters of Science (Research) from the University of Melbourne. She has worked in Australia, Iceland and France as a researcher and research manager on projects across education, public health, oncology and cardiac electrophysiology. Her current research interests include collective action for systems change, in particular in public health and pro-environmental initiatives.

Associate Professor Sacha McMeeking

## **Inequity stopped for a moment- did we notice and what can we learn**

Sacha is the Executive Director Māori, Pacific and Equity at the University of Canterbury. She is known for solution-building that meets Iwi Māori aspirations. Sacha was previously the director of a boutique consultancy working with Iwi Māori in strategy development, kaupapa Māori asset management and innovation and the General Manager Strategy and influence with Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, responsible for government relations on behalf of the Iwi. Sacha won the inaugural Fulbright Harkness Fellowship in 2010. She has a desire to support and grow the next generation of Māori scholars through initiatives like the Māui lab and is researching in the areas of Iwi Māori development, innovation and entrepreneurship, Iwi Māori futures, social and cultural capital, Comparative approaches to Indigenous peoples and Public policy.

Dr Monica Nua-George and Mr Kiki Maoate

## **Etu Pasifika Child Health – What our integrated approach looks like**

Monica Nua-George is the Clinical Director of Etu Pasifika Christchurch. She is Niuean Samoan and trained at Auckland Medical School, graduating in 2006 and gained FRNZCGP in 2016. Monica has spent most of her doctor life working in South Auckland General Practice, moved to Christchurch in 2019 and she is excited for the future of primary care and a new way of delivering services.

Dr Kate Prendergast

## **How can cities support children and youth to flourish? A study of young people's wellbeing in seven international cities**

Dr Kate Prendergast is Research Manager for Hei Puāwaitanga and Research Fellow for the Centre for the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity (CUSP), UK. Her research explores the intersection of wellbeing, public health and sustainability, with a focus on children and young people in urban contexts. Her work is inspired by the need to understand how people can flourish in a world of limited resources. Dr Prendergast is project manager for the CYCLES International Survey, which examines the everyday lives of young people in seven world cities. She's previously worked at Stats NZ and also at AUT where she was a lead researcher on a longitudinal wellbeing study involving 10,000 New Zealanders.

Prof Julia Rucklidge

## **A Nutritional Approach to Treating Symptoms of Antenatal Depression The NUTRIMUM Trial: A Double-Blind, Randomised Controlled Trial**

Julia is a Professor of Clinical Psychology in the School of Psychology, Speech and Hearing at the University of Canterbury and the Director of Te Puna Toiora, the Mental Health and Nutrition Research Lab and co-author of *The Better Brain*. Originally from Toronto, Canada, she completed her PhD at the University of Calgary in clinical psychology, and in 2000, immigrated to New Zealand. She has become well known for her research investigating the interface between nutrition and mental health, has published over 150 empirical papers, been the recipient of numerous local and international awards and frequently features in the media on her work. Her 2014 TEDx talk has been viewed close to 5 million times. Julia is passionate about translation of research to practice and making nutritional interventions for the brain mainstream.

Dr Sarah Whitcombe-Dobbs

**Effective engagement and assessment with families who have ongoing involvement with child protections services: principles and practicalities**

Dr. Sarah Whitcombe-Dobbs is a child and family psychologist and senior lecturer in the Faculty of Health at the University of Canterbury. Her research and practice areas focus on effective assessment and intervention with families who have ongoing involvement with child protection services (Oranga Tamariki in Aotearoa/New Zealand).

## Notes



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