

Newsletter May 2013

Working memory training in children with traumatic brain injury

Thank you for supporting our Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT) evaluating working memory training in children (aged 8 - 16 years) with traumatic brain injury (TBI). The study is actively recruiting participants from East Anglia and the South West of England.

Study updates

- We are currently recruiting children into the study, and we are in the process of carrying out screening and baseline assessments. We are also about to start the computerised working memory training with some of the children.
- Anna Adlam (PI) presented the research study at a conference in Dallas, Texas in April. The research presentation was well received and we have been invited to present again next year. The audience is excited to hear about our progress, our study findings, and our plans for future research developments. If you would like to receive a copy of Anna's talk, please email a.r.adlam@exeter.ac.uk
- To help boost recruitment for the study the research team are planning to apply for MHRN (mental health research network) support to assist in identifying potential participants, and increase the awareness of the research study. We look forward to letting you know the outcome of this application.
- Alongside the trial, we are planning to write a brief article to reflect practitioner's perspective on working memory training. We have created a survey for English and American clinicians/practitioners who use the computerised working memory training, and hope that the results from the survey will help to further our understanding of the value of the training. If you or your colleagues use the computerised working memory training, and you are willing to contribute to this brief survey, please use the link below:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/C8KK39J>

If you have any questions about the survey, please do not hesitate to contact Anna Adlam (a.adlam@uea.ac.uk) or Darren Dunning (d.dunning@uea.ac.uk).

- Ania Piasecka has now returned to her PhD studies at UEA and is planning to investigate attentional control and working memory in children who have survived a brain injury. Children with brain injury will be compared with age- sex-, and IQ-matched children, who have not experienced a brain injury, on measures of general cognitive function, memory, and attention. Ania is also planning to use the computerised working memory training.

- We have recently created a page on the UEA website to promote studies by our Developmental Neuropsychology Research group. The website contains details regarding current neuropsychological studies at the UEA, including the working memory trial. We are pleased to let you know that this website is now 'live'; if you would like to visit the website please use the link below:

<http://www.uea.ac.uk/medicine/neuropsychology>

- We also have a Facebook page to promote our research projects. Please 'Like' the page if you have a Facebook account and please inform your colleagues of this. Families of children with TBI can also 'Like' this page if they are interested in our research:

www.facebook.com/neuroUEAexeter

Study aims

A TBI in childhood can lead to problems with working memory; this can cause further difficulties with learning, academic achievement, behaviour, and social functioning. The current study is evaluating a computerised working memory training programme with young people who have survived a TBI. We are interested in finding out what young people and their families think about the computerised training programme and whether the training programme helps with memory, attention, numeracy, and literacy.

Who is eligible?

Study Inclusion Criteria:

- Survivors of paediatric TBI
- Medically stable
- 6-months post-injury
- 8 yrs – 16 yrs: 11months
- Proficient English fluency
- Access to Internet

Study Exclusion Criteria:

- Evidence of visual/motor impairment preventing use of computer
- Medication affecting memory
- Premorbid diagnosis of learning disability
- Previous direct, repeated practice, working memory training
- Lack capacity to assent/consent

Contact details

If you have any questions related to this study, or experience any problems, please do not hesitate to contact us via, Anna Adlam (a.adlam@uea.ac.uk or a.r.adlam@exeter.ac.uk) or Darren Dunning (d.dunning@uea.ac.uk). We can also be contacted via our research team telephone number: 01603 59 1507.