

UCSF SNAP Newsletter

Sensory Neurodevelopment and Autism Program

SNAP Clinics

The SNAP team is going strong for both our research and our clinical care. We have recently welcomed two new members into our clinical team—our terrific nurse, Kelly Fagan and our remarkable new cognitive behavior and sleep child neurologist, Dr. Jessica Litwin. Both Kelly and Jessica come to our team with years of experience, making the day to day better for children and their families. Thank you for your ongoing support for SNAP.

Best wishes in 2016,
Elysa Marco, MD
SNAP Director



Jessica Liwin, MD & Kelly Fagan, RN

Dr. Marco's Book List

I highly recommend Rachel Schneider's new book, [Making Sense: A Guide to Sensory Issues](#) for anyone wanting to learn more about SPD.

SNAP Research

SPD Brain Imaging Study

In the largest ever SPD brain imaging study, the SNAP neuroimaging team has found that boys and girls with Sensory Processing Disorder (SPD) have altered pathways for brain connectivity when compared to typically developing children, and these differences predict challenges with auditory and tactile processing.

Optogenetics in Autism

Dr. Audrey Brumback uses optogenetics to control neural electrical activity with light in the prefrontal cortex of mice with various genetic conditions linked to autism. She has recently shown that turning down the activity of these cells increased the amount of time the mice spend interacting socially. Her work will help us identify new therapies for ASD.

Macrocephaly and Autism

Dr. Elliott Sherr's lab kicked off a new brain imaging project to explore the relationship between macrocephaly (large head size) and ASD. Stay tuned for updates on this groundbreaking work! For more information contact Talia Berson-Talia.Berson@ucsf.edu, (415) 502-8039

SNAP Support

We are kicking off our second SNAP Crowdfunding campaign. We need your help to continue our work to better understand the causes of sensory processing differences that we see in our children and to find the best treatment for each child. Every dollar counts, we hope we can count on you to help us find answers.

[SPD Crowd Funding Website](#)

SNAP Tips

Dr. Litwin's Sleep Tips

Create the right sleep environment to support your sensory child:

Dark- use blackout curtains or dark shades to help keep the light dim.

Constant- Consider white noise or calming music at a low volume throughout the night. Some children like the [Dreampad](#).

Calm- take out all electronics from the room.

Cool- be mindful of the temperature—less than 75 degrees is best.

Comfortable- use pajamas and blankets that your child prefers. Consider using a weighted blanket or a lycra sheet.

Consistent- keeping a consistent routine will help your child sleep through the night.