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Attending the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual OADD-RSIG Research Day was not only a great learning experience, but also provided me with the opportunity to gain more knowledge of the wide range of research related to developmental disabilities being conducted in Ontario. Given that the majority of my previous research experience has focused on memory and attention in children with autism, I found both the oral and poster presentations extremely informative. Of particular interest to me was a series of oral presentations discussing behavioural interventions in children with developmental disabilities. Seeing as children with developmental disabilities are at risk for behavioural problems, Ontario has a network of community behavioural services that offer parents a number of behavioural strategies to reduce problematic behaviour. Dr. Maurice Feldman examined how many families were utilizing these behavioural services. At several different time points, parents completed a service questionnaire as well as behaviour questionnaire, which indicated that majority of families were *not* receiving any formal parental training or behavioural treatments. Wait lists, availability of parents and ease of

medication, were identified as potential reasons why such services were not being utilized.

A second presentation by Kerry-Anne Robinson, examined those families who are receiving community behavioural services. Through the use of two different focus groups (one for parents and one for behavioural consultants) these authors described a number of factors that can contribute to parental adherence to clinical recommendations of behavioural intervention strategies. Factors such as, lack of communication between clinician and parent as well as knowledge of *why* and *how* specific behavioural strategies work, were identified by both groups and could potentially explain why parents have difficulty in applying at-home behavioural intervention strategies. These researchers expect that by identifying such variables will help improve the implementation and further success of behaviour intervention strategies in this population.

Overall, due to the large number of children with developmental disabilities who are at risk for developing behavioural problems, this series of oral

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Reports from Delegates Supported by Autism Ontario

presentations suggest how important it is to provide parents with additional training, knowledge and support in implementing behavioural intervention strategies. These presentations, as well

as all the others at OADD-RSIG, provided me with invaluable knowledge and I would like to thank Autism Ontario for enabling me to attend and I look forward to next year.