



About the Event

This presentation provides an overview of encopresis and behavioral constipation in children, with a focus on evidence-based medical and psychological assessment and intervention. The talk begins with a review of diagnostic criteria, physiological mechanisms, and common developmental and psychosocial factors associated with toileting difficulties in childhood. Medical and behavioral assessment strategies are discussed, emphasizing the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration. Evidence-based medical management and its integration with cognitive-behavioral treatments are reviewed. The cognitive-behavioral treatment component highlights the use of positive reinforcement, behavioral shaping, structured toilet-sitting regimens, and environmental modifications to support successful toileting behaviors and address avoidance and shame. Practical guidance is provided for tailoring interventions to individual children and families. Clinical case examples are included to illustrate assessment, treatment planning, and common challenges encountered in practice.



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Thursday, April 9th, 2026
10:30am - 11:30am



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Instructional Level: This event is appropriate for all audiences (introductory, intermediate and advanced).



Financial Disclosure: Drs. Chen & Gillenson have no relevant financial relationship(s) with ineligible companies to disclose and DO NOT INTEND to discuss off-label or investigational use of products or services.

Speaker Biographies :

Drs. Bernie Chen and Caroline Gillenson are postdoctoral fellows in pediatric psychology and integrated care at Weill Cornell Medicine. Both provide consultation-liaison and outpatient psychological services, working closely with pediatric teams to support children, adolescents, and families facing complex medical, behavioral, and emotional challenges. Their clinical expertise includes evidence-based behavioral and cognitive-behavioral interventions, parenting support, and integrated behavioral health care. Their work is grounded in developmentally informed, family-centered, and culturally responsive care.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe the diagnostic criteria, physiological mechanisms, and developmental and psychosocial factors associated with encopresis and behavioral constipation in children.
2. Explain the components and integration of comprehensive medical and behavioral assessment and treatment approaches.
3. Apply evidence-based behavioral interventions for encopresis and discuss case example.
4. Discuss considerations for developmentally appropriate, inclusive, and socioeconomically responsive implementation of encopresis treatment.

References:

1. Aymerich, C., Pedruzo, B., Pacho, M., Herrero, J., Laborda, M., Bordenave, M., De Pablo, G. S., Sesma, E., Fernández-Rivas, A., Catalan, A., & González-Torres, M. Á. (2023). Relationship between elimination disorders and internalizing-externalizing problems in children: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *JCPP Advances*, 3(3), e12185. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcv2.12185>
2. Heron, J., Grzeda, M., Tappin, D., Von Gontard, A., & Joinson, C. (2018). Early childhood risk factors for constipation and soiling at school age: an observational cohort study. *BMJ Paediatrics Open*, 2(1), e000230. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjpo-2017-000230>
3. Olaru, C., Diaconescu, S., Trandafir, L., Gimiga, N., Olaru, R. A., Stefanescu, G., Ciubotariu, G., Burlea, M., & Iorga, M. (2016). Chronic Functional Constipation and Encopresis in Children in Relationship with the Psychosocial Environment. *Gastroenterology Research and Practice*, 2016, 1-7. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2016/7828576>
4. Shepard, J. A., Poler, J. E., & Grabman, J. H. (2016). Evidence-Based Psychosocial Treatments for Pediatric Elimination Disorders. *Journal of Clinical Child & Adolescent Psychology*, 46(6), 767-797. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15374416.2016.1247356>