Weill Cornell Medicine Psychiatry

Psychology Grand Rounds





Thursday, May 15, 2025 12:00pm-1:00pm



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Dylan Gee, PhD

Associate Professor Tenure Yale School of Medicine



<u>Financial Disclosure</u>: Dr. Gee has no relevant financial relationship(s) with ineligible companies to disclose and DOES NOT INTEND to discuss off-label or investigational use of products or services.

Dr. Dylan Gee is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at Yale University, where she directs the Clinical Affective Neuroscience and Development Laboratory (CANDLab). Dr. Gee received her bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College, her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from UCLA, and completed her clinical internship and postdoctoral fellowship at Weill Cornell Medicine. Her lab's research focuses on neurodevelopmental mechanisms of early adversity and risk for psychopathology in childhood and adolescence, with a translational focus to inform interventions and policy related to youthwell-being. She currently leads NIH- and NSF-funded research on child and adolescent brain and behavioral development, and serves as a co-principalinvestigator at the Yale site of the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development (ABCD) Study.

EARLY ADVERSITY AND THE DEVELOPING BRAIN: LEVERAGING DEVELOPMENTAL NEUROSCIENCE TO PROMOTE YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

ABSTRACT

Early adversity is a potent risk factor for the onset and exacerbation of psychopathology, yet there is vast heterogeneity in the nature of adversityexposure and in trajectories of mental health following adversity. Delineating neurobiological processes related to risk and resilience during development is critical to identifying youth who could most benefit from intervention and for optimizing treatments. Leveraging a multimodal approach that includes behavioral experiments, neuroimaging, psychophysiology, and ecological momentary assessment, my program of research has centered on how early experiences shape brain and behavioral development. Corticolimbic circuitry, which supports emotional learning and regulation, is sensitive to stress and undergoes dynamic changes throughout childhood and adolescence. In this talk, I will discuss developmental changes in corticolimbic circuitry and how adversity influences this development. Next, I will highlight and provide examples of novel approaches to decomposing heterogeneity in the effects of adversity on neurodevelopment and mental health, which may help to shed light on mechanisms of risk and resilience. Finally, I will illustrate how these findings from developmental neuroscience can inform efforts to optimize clinical interventions for anxiety and stress-related disorders in youth. Together, these findings can advance knowledge of the neurobiological mechanisms that support favorable mental health outcomes and inform approaches to promote resilience among youth exposed to adversity and with psychiatric disorders.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- 1. Describe the impact of early environments and sensitive periods on brain development and the emergence of psychiatric risk.
- 2. Identify changes in corticolimbic circuitry during typical development and in response to early-life stress.
- 3. Apply knowledge of brain development to inform clinical strategies for assessing and treating psychiatric disorders in children and adolescents.

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