

uTALK: Texts Advancing Language in Kids

Key words:

- Speech and language delay
- Mobile health
- Underserved populations

Learning objectives:

- Learn how to design a mobile health program
- Learn how to market a program to its target population
- Learn how to assess the feasibility of a pilot program

Project objectives:

- To design a low cost program to address pediatric speech and language delay in underserved populations
- To evaluate the feasibility of this program
- To evaluate parental perceptions of the program

Activities:

- Designed a text message curriculum for parents of children with speech and language delay
- Obtained project funding from the American Academy of Pediatrics Community Access to Child Health (CATCH) grant program
- Researched online platforms for program delivery
- Obtained IRB approval to study the program
- Designed pre- and post-program surveys to evaluate the program
- Implemented the program in the outpatient clinic at San Francisco General Hospital
- Enrolled 30 participants in the program
- Conducted pre-program surveys on all program participants
- Currently conducting post-program surveys on program participants

Outcomes:

- Program results and materials: see attached
- Grant funding: American Academy of Pediatrics Community Access to Child Health (CATCH)
- Award receipt: Paul Young Travel Award (Granted for presentation at the Academic Pediatrics Association) Conference
- Presentations:
 - (1) Bailey K, Wilkinson C, Harris J, Whittle A. uTALK: Evaluation of a mobile health program addressing speech and language delay." Academic Pediatric Association, Region IX and X Annual Conference, Jan 2014. Oral Presentation.
 - (2) Accepted for presentation at: Pediatric Academic Society and Asian Society for Pediatric Research Joint Meeting. Vancouver, BC. May 2014.

Lessons in Implementation:

- Text messaging is a good medium for reaching families at San Francisco General Hospital
- Successful program promotion requires significant time and effort
- Development of a good survey instrument is difficult
- Partnerships are essential to creation of a successful mobile health program

Potential future projects:

- Expanding text message content to allow parents to participate in the program for a longer duration if they desire
- Using a control group to determine whether this program improves speech and language development

Resources:

- San Francisco General Hospital Children's Clinic
- San Francisco General Hospital Multidisciplinary Assessment Center
- American Academy of Pediatrics Community Access to Child Health grant
- Twilio
- Mentors: Amy Whittle, Jamal Harris, Anda Kuo
- Project Co-Leader: Carol Wilkinson