



Embargoed for May 4, 2009 at 2:00PM ET

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**Can Child Health Care Reduce Poverty Related School Failure?
NYU School of Medicine Physicians Present Findings**

New York, NY – May 4, 2009 Young children whose parents are active participants in their development by reading, talking, teaching and playing at every opportunity help their children become better prepared for school according to Alan Mendelsohn, M.D., Associate Professor of Pediatrics at NYU School of Medicine and Bellevue Hospital Center in New York City and his colleagues in developmental-behavioral pediatrics, developmental psychology, public policy and education. They are taking advantage of numerous health check-ups of children from birth to 5 years of age – the most critical time for brain development – to study whether working with parents can help children be better prepared for school.

For many children, health care represents the only contact with child professionals before starting school, and therefore provides an opportunity to implement low cost, preventive interventions to improve outcomes in low socioeconomic status (SES) children at high risk for disparities in development and school readiness. In partnership with Children of Bellevue, Inc., an interdisciplinary team of child health and development professionals (pediatrics, developmental psychology, and education) formed a laboratory at New York University and Bellevue Hospital Center (BHC) with the goal of leveraging health care in order to enhance parent-child interactions, a crucial and modifiable poverty-related factor.

The objective of the study was to determine whether primary care parenting interventions can have an impact on parent/child interaction at age 14

months. In one of the programs, called the Video Interaction Project (VIP), parents are videotaped while they wait to see the doctor; working together with an early childhood education specialist, parents learn to engage in positive interactions by watching themselves on tape. In a prior study, VIP has already been shown to improve IQ and reading achievement in the first grade. In a second program, called Building Blocks (BB), parenting materials are mailed monthly to families in order to encourage positive interactions with their children. In both programs, the key component is the link to child health care, which provides an opportunity for universal intervention at low cost; both build on successful child health care literacy programs such as Reach Out and Read. Together with critical educational initiatives such as pre-kindergarten, working with parents during child health care visits can help the most vulnerable children succeed in school and in life.

Dr. Mendelsohn will present the results of their study "*A Randomized Clinical Trial of the Video Interaction Project (VIP) and Building Blocks (BB): 14 Month Impacts of Primary Care Based Parenting Interventions,*", on May 4th at the Academic Pediatric Association Presidential Plenary of the Pediatric Academic Society Meeting in Baltimore.

In addition to Dr. Mendelsohn, additional researchers include Samantha B Berkule, PhD¹, Harris S Huberman, MD, MPH², Lesley M Morrow, PhD³, Catherine S Tamis-LeMonda, PhD⁴ and Benard P Dreyer, MD¹. ¹Pediatrics, NYU School of Medicine - Bellevue, New York, NY, United States; ²Pediatrics, SUNY Downstate, Brooklyn, NY; ³Education, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ and ⁴Applied Psychology, NYU Steinhardt, New York, NY.

This work is supported by the NIH/NICHD R01HD047740-04. Additional funding was provided by Children of Bellevue, Inc., Rhodebeck Charitable Trust, Tiger Foundation, Marks Family Foundation, and the New York Community Trust.

About NYU Langone Medical Center

Located in the heart of New York City, **NYU Langone Medical Center** is one of the nation's premier centers of excellence in health care, biomedical research, and medical education. For over 167 years, NYU physicians and researchers have made countless contributions to the practice and science of health care. Today the Medical Center consists of NYU School of Medicine, including the Smilow Research Center, the Skirball Institute of Biomolecular

Medicine, and the Sackler Institute of Graduate Biomedical Sciences; the three hospitals of NYU Hospitals Center, Tisch Hospital, a 726-bed acute-care general hospital, Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine, the first and largest facility of its kind, and NYU Hospital for Joint Diseases, a leader in musculoskeletal care; and such major programs as the NYU Cancer Institute, the NYU Child Study Center, and the Hassenfeld Children's Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders.

About Bellevue Hospital Center

Established in 1736 as a six-bed infirmary, **Bellevue Hospital Center** is the oldest continuing public hospital in the United States. At 273 years it has a history of medical milestones to its credit and has pioneered many innovative treatments, techniques and policies. It is considered the flagship hospital of the New York City Health and Hospital Corporation.