DREXEL UNIVERSITY
A.J. Drexel Autism Institute

Early life influences on cognitive and physical development: Parents and environment

Whitney Schott, PhD

Research Associate, Population Studies Center (PSC), University of Pennsylvania
Senior Researcher, Insight Policy Research

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Whitney Schott is Research Associate at the Population Studies Center (PSC), University of Pennsylvania, and Senior Researcher at Insight Policy Research. At the PSC, she is Principal Investigator for a study on adolescent health and nutrition funded by the Sackler Institute of Nutrition Sciences and has been involved in several studies of child growth and development funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Development. At Insight Policy Research, she is leading the evaluation of the Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics (DBP) program as part of an overall evaluation of Autism Cares funding by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration. She has conducted in-depth interviews with numerous program directors of the Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities (LEND) and DBP programs from all over the United States on their training programs designed for professionals who provide services to individuals and families affected by autism spectrum disorder and other developmental disabilities, and on major systems of care issues they have encountered. Her published and ongoing work examines parental cognitive stimulation and child cognitive outcomes, stunting in infancy and later overweight status, the determinants of catch up growth (and faltering) among children, the relationship between early nutrition and later cognitive performance, between maternal common mental disorders and child health and cognitive performance, and the dynamics of health insurance choice between public and private programs (in Chile). In future work, she hopes to examine whether nutritional interventions designed for typically developing children are appropriate for children with autism and other developmental disabilities, identify and evaluate school interventions intended to provide appropriate services to children with autism and other conditions affecting functioning in school, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and disparities in access to screening and services for children with autism. Dr. Schott holds a Ph.D. in demography from the University of Pennsylvania and an M.A. in economics from University of Maryland, College Park.

Location:

A.J. Drexel Autism Institute, Drexel University
3020 Market Street, Suite 560, Conference Room A
For more information, email AutismInstitute@drexel.edu