

# Allergic Diseases SIG

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## SIG UPDATES

Thank you to all who joined us for our SIG meeting in New Orleans. The SIG membership is growing and we continue to look for opportunities to help increase the number of pediatric psychologists who are interested in providing clinical services and conducting research related to allergic diseases.

As a reminder, our SIG encompasses all allergic diseases. If you currently work with children with atopic dermatitis (AD), eosinophilic esophagitis



(EOE), Food Protein Induced Enterocolitis Syndrome (FPIES), IgE-mediated food allergies, or asthma we hope you will consider joining our SIG! To join, please email us at [AllergicDiseasesSIG@gmail.com](mailto:AllergicDiseasesSIG@gmail.com).

We are currently working to expand our online SIG page through the SPP website. Our goal is to use this space to

provide SIG members access to detailed fact sheets, resources to use in clinical care, access to the measures database discussed at the last SIG meeting, and to connect members to promote clinical and research collaborations. Please look for future updates about the website in upcoming SIG communications!

## Spreading the Word

Members of the SIG are working together to help spread the word about the psychosocial impact of allergic diseases. Past Co-Chair, Dr. Linda Herbert continues to work with **FARE** (Food Allergy Research & Education) to promote mental health availability for patients with food allergies and their families. Dr. Linda

Herbert and Dr. Ashley Ramos will be presenting at the **Contains: Courage, FARE Summit 2019** on Saturday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> to promote mental health adjustment in food allergy patients. Dr. Jennifer LeBovidge is spearheading a proposal for the **American Academy of Allergy Asthma & Immunology** to develop age-specific

handouts on the psychosocial impact of food allergy.

**Have work to share?**  
We'd love to feature you in the next SIG newsletter! Please email us to share your recent clinical programming, presentations, and published manuscripts to highlight in our next issue of "Spreading the Word."

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## Meet New Members of the SIG Leadership Board:

**Amy Hahn, PhD** is a faculty member in the Department of Pediatric Psychology and Neuropsychology at Nationwide Children's Hospital (NCH). She is involved with several medical teams, including Allergy, Pulmonary, Pain, and Dermatology. Dr. Hahn works collaboratively with pediatric allergists to promote the benefits of psychology in serving children and families with allergies. Her clinical work has focused specifically on managing anxiety in the context of food allergies, and helping children and families focus on improved quality of life and overall daily functioning. Her work with pediatric food allergies started in graduate school at UMBC, and she continues to engage in research efforts related to food allergy knowledge and parenting.



**Amy Hahn, PhD**  
Clinical Chair



**Alix McLaughlin**  
Student Representative

**Alix McLaughlin** is a 3<sup>rd</sup> year graduate student at Eastern Michigan University, where she is mentored by Dr. Catherine Peterson. Her research interests focus on neurocognitive and family functioning in food allergy. Alix's thesis will examine the associations between anxiety and quality of life in children with food allergy and their parents from a dyadic perspective. She joined the Allergic Diseases SIG in 2019 and will serve until 2021.

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## Student Spotlight

**Mallory Netz, M.S.**, is a graduate student at the University of Florida and is currently completing her psychology internship at Children's Mercy Kansas City. Along with her mentor, David Fedele, Ph.D., ABPP, Mallory helped to initiate and develop an outpatient consultation service for the University of Florida Pediatric Allergy Clinic. Her clinical experiences informed the development of her dissertation, which examines health communication during pediatric outpatient allergy encounters. The study is a novel, observational investigation of the impact of caregiver distress and family food allergy management on health communication among youth, parents, and healthcare providers. Mallory has been a member of the Allergic Diseases SIG since 2017. She recently assisted with the development of the measures bank, which was presented at the 2019 SIG meeting.



**Mallory Netz, MS**  
Student Spotlight

## Clinical Corner: Celebrating Halloween with Food Allergies

Parents of children with food allergies have reported several social limitations for their family (Bollinger et al., 2006), including birthday parties, dining out and holiday celebrations. With Halloween just around the corner, families may be considering how best to approach the holiday in order to balance safety and fun. If you work with families with food allergies or those who may have close friends with allergies (or other dietary restrictions), take time to help them problem-solve ways to approach Halloween. While families may be inclined to avoid celebrating all-together in order to ensure their child is safe, psychologists can help families recognize the benefits of participating safely instead in order to promote inclusion and functioning for their child.



### Addressing the Emotional Impact of Halloween:

If the child feels disappointed about the holiday, it is important to acknowledge their feelings. It can be difficult to miss out on an activity or experience that their peers are participating in. Validating that experience can help the child feel supported and heard! Encourage parents to approach this time of year with preparedness, creativity, and a focus on healthy functioning to help families establish positive holiday practices!

Here are some tips for supporting families as they prepare for Halloween:

- Focus on non-food aspects of the holiday like decorating the house, carving pumpkins, getting dressed up, etc. Participate in non-food activities like hayrides, fall nature hikes, watching Halloween movies, etc.
- Plan ahead for Halloween activities at school. Communicate with the child's teacher about what safe treats can be used so the child with food allergy can participate.

Here are some ideas for handling **Trick-Or-Treat**, specifically:

- Participate in the *Teal Pumpkin Project*. Place a teal pumpkin at your door to communicate to trick-or-treaters that you have non-food treats. FARE has resources available about this here: <https://www.foodallergy.org/education-awareness/teal-pumpkin-project>.
- If age-appropriate, discuss how the child would like to handle trick-or-treating. Many children find joy in handing out non-food treats to other trick-or-treaters. Some kids prefer to collect all types of candy and upon returning home, inspect the candy and read labels with their parents to determine what is safe. Others prefer to only take candy that they know is safe for them and review with parents as they go.
- Consider a candy exchange! The child can collect candy then at the end, trade it in for a non-food treat such as a trip to the park or zoo, later bedtime, extra TV/screen time, or a toy of their choice!
- Non-food treats may include: bouncy balls, glow sticks, temporary tattoos, squishy toys, spider rings, bubbles, coins. Try to avoid latex products and make sure to read all labels for hidden allergens (e.g., wheat in PlayDoh).

Written By: Amy Hahn, PhD (Clinical Chair)