

Prior to attending Fordham, I worked in a clinical psychology lab focused on the dissemination and feasibility of internet-based treatments for early childhood psychopathology. As part of this research team, I had the opportunity to publish and present on many different topics, but the one most closely tied to my interests was a project I developed with my mentor on the family burdens associated with early-onset obsessive compulsive disorder in pre-pubescent children. Specifically, in this study I examined patterns of parental accommodation, dysfunction, and associated impairment in families of children suffering with OCD. To date the majority of work on family burdens associated with pediatric OCD has focused on older youth and thus much remains to be learned about younger affected children and their families. By continuing and extending this work at Fordham and disseminating my findings through presentations and publication, I hope to improve treatment and prevention of childhood psychopathology and thereby relieve some of the mental health burden associated with it.

As a first year graduate student, I have the rare opportunity to present my work at an influential conference in my field. The annual meeting of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapy (ABCT) is considered a premiere conference in Clinical Psychology both for those at Fordham and in the broader field. By presenting here, I will have the best opportunity to disseminate my own work, as well as learn from and connect with those in the smaller sub-field of clinical child psychology. Making these connections early in my graduate school career is essential to my growth as a researcher, particularly in regards to the development of later opportunities and collaborations.

Beyond my presentation and others like it, however, ABCT offers many additional opportunities of interest to early career scientists that I intend to take full advantage of, including panel presentations and round table discussions on topics of interest as well as external mentoring and collaboration opportunities. Additionally, this conference offers the opportunity to marry both my research and clinical interests, through which I hope to facilitate networking with clinical training directors from the NYC area to grow both as a clinician and as a clinical scientist. One concrete example of marrying research and clinical networking opportunities is the pre-conference meetings of the special interest groups (SIGs). As a participating member of the child anxiety SIG, I will be exposed to specific topics on the forefront of child psychopathology research, including developmental neuroscience and ground-breaking evidence-based treatments and dissemination, within a smaller community of like-minded researchers and clinicians.

By attending and presenting at the ABCT annual meeting this November, I intend to take away a developing confidence in presentation style, ideas for transforming this presentation into a first author paper by the end of the semester, and a greater knowledge and appreciation of the work currently being done in the field. Throughout my career at Fordham I hope to continue to this and similar work at the forefront of child psychopathology.