

Innovations in Pediatrics

Rady Children's

Hospital
San Diego

*Rady Children's - A comprehensive system
focused solely on children.*



PEOPLE

Behavioral expert tackles obesity, eating disorders with novel approaches



Kerri Boutelle, Ph.D., a clinical psychologist at Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego and the UC San Diego School of Medicine with expertise in both obesity and eating disorders, is using cutting-edge, evidence-based approaches to help children and adolescents struggling with these issues.

In the area of pediatric obesity, Dr. Boutelle serves as the director of behavioral services at Rady Children's Weight and Wellness Clinic and the director of the Center for Healthy Eating and Activity Research at UC San Diego. In the area of pediatric eating disorders, she supervises the psychology staff at Rady Children's Medical Behavioral Unit and is the senior supervising psychologist at the UC San Diego Eating Disorders Center Treatment and Research Program. Dr. Boutelle is also a certified family-based therapy therapist, supervisor and trainer, with a national and international reputation in pediatric eating disorders and obesity.

In her roles, Dr. Boutelle uses her expertise in family-based therapy, along with other techniques, to help overweight patients lose weight -- and to help patients with eating disorders regain weight and cope with symptoms (see story below). Family-based treatment involves working with the entire family to develop effective support strategies and has been shown to improve weight and psychological symptoms and to prevent relapses.

Along with her clinical work, Dr. Boutelle has numerous research projects underway, including a study testing an emotion-regulation program for adolescents who eat for emotional reasons, studies evaluating weight-loss programs for families with a child with an autism spectrum disorder, programs aimed at reducing cravings, and studies on the gut microbiome and weight.



PROGRAMS

Eating Disorders Program addresses abdominal pain

Rady Children's Eating Disorders Program, a partnership between Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego and the UC San Diego Eating Disorders Center, is helping children and teens to cope with abdominal pain, a common symptom of eating disorders.

The abdominal pain results from anxiety, which typically accompanies eating disorders, and from the process of regaining weight. Anxiety can cause slowed digestion, loss of appetite, nausea and an upset stomach; regaining weight can cause stomach discomfort, bloating and early feelings of fullness but is essential for successful treatment.



innovation
belongs in every moment

To reduce the anxiety, the Eating Disorders Program teaches stress-management skills, helping patients to relax their bodies and feel less discomfort. These skills, which include biofeedback, dialectical behavior therapy, distress tolerance skills, progressive muscle relaxation and deep breathing, have been shown to provide relief in patients with eating disorders, as well as in patients with functional gastrointestinal disorders, such as irritable bowel syndrome and functional constipation. In the Eating Disorders Program, patients have benefited by having less anxiety at mealtimes.



The Eating Disorders Program provides both outpatient and inpatient care. [Learn more.](#)

RECOGNITION

Infectious disease expert goes to Washington

Infectious disease specialist Dr. Mark Sawyer was one of three doctors to testify before the U.S. Senate Health Committee about the current measles outbreak.



He told the panel that 1,500 kindergartners in San Diego were not fully immunized, and the number was increasing. Dr. Sawyer blamed misinformation on the Internet for parents choosing not to vaccinate. [Read more.](#)

Dr. Sawyer is also featured in a series of video clips that help parents and pediatricians talk about the importance of immunizations. "Addressing Vaccine-Hesitant Parents" is a series of short role-playing videos designed to help healthcare providers answer common questions and concerns that parents have about vaccines.

The videos were produced by Immunizations for San Diego Kids, a grant-funded project managed by [Rady Children's Center for Healthier Communities](#) in partnership with Children's Physicians Medical Group, the local American Academy of Pediatrics chapter and First 5 San Diego.

Learn more at WhyImmunizeKids.org.

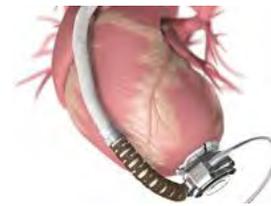
INNOVATIONS

Ventricular assist device advances heart failure treatment in children

[Rady Children's Heart Institute](#) will be using a miniaturized ventricular assist device to treat patients with end-stage heart failure.

With this cutting-edge technology, patients can avoid the abdominal surgery generally required to implant other ventricular devices. More importantly, the device is portable, so children can go home with it while they wait for a heart transplant.

The HeartWare® Ventricular Assist System features a small circulatory assist device designed to be implanted next to the heart. Over the past few years, this device has been primarily implanted in adults and is now being used in select pediatric hospitals across the country.



Dr. Rakesh Singh, Director of the Heart Failure, Mechanical Circulatory Support & Transplantation Program at Rady Children's Hospital-San Diego, recently presented his research on national outcomes of the HeartWare® device in children at the annual International Society of Heart and Lung Transplantation meeting in San Diego. Based on its superior outcomes, Rady Children's recently purchased the device and is ready to use it.