

April 2024 - March 2025

TVCC Research Report



Research helps us do better!

Welcome

Research and evaluation activities are important to providing quality services to clients and their families. Research answers our questions and helps us be accountable to clients, families, the community, and funders.

The Research Team supports staff within TVCC and collaborates with partners worldwide. Studies range from multi-centre collaborations of national scope to TVCC-only projects focused on evaluating programs or areas of service delivery. Having an in-house research department creates a culture of inquiry that extends through our clinical services.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Engage in meaningful research
- Foster participation and a culture of learning
- Share findings and inform best practices

RESEARCH AREAS

We focus our research on four key areas that are important to clients, their families, and service providers.

01.

Service Delivery and Evaluation

02.

Belonging, Participation, and Quality of Life

03.

Innovation and Technology

04.

Clinical Expertise

CURRENT RESEARCH



1. Service Delivery and Evaluation

- Caregiver Participation Framework for Virtual Services
- Improving Functional Communication Skills through Group Interventions
- Caregiver Perceptions of Virtual Services
- Family Readiness Assessment Tool for Virtual Care
- Virtual Care: Co-Creation of Implementation Strategies
- Developing a Solution-Focused Coaching Clinician Reflection Tool
- Learning from Youth About their Pain Experiences
- Evaluation of TVCC's Welcome Call Services
- Personalizing Pathways to Wellness in Rehabilitation
- Prime G and Prime C Measure Development
- Parents' Experiences Participating in Virtual Services During COVID-19



2. Belonging, Participation, and Quality of Life

- Families' Perspectives on Creating More Inclusive Activities
- Youth with Disabilities Perspectives: What Helps Friendship?
- Youth Experiences Creating Virtual Friendships
- Youth with Disabilities and Families' Experiences of Poverty

CURRENT RESEARCH



3. Innovation and Technology

- User Testing of a New Mobile App for Adolescent Hearing Aid Users
- Clinician Insights: Enhancing Adolescent Hearing Care with Mobile Apps
- Adolescent Perspectives on Using a Mobile App for their Hearing Aids



4. Clinical Expertise

- CLEAR Communication: Perceived Impact of Learning to Listen
- Developing Listening Skill Simulations for Therapists
- Developing a Youth Resiliency Measure
- Best Practices for Inclusive Communication
- Effectiveness of an Educational Intervention to Enhance Novice Clinician's Listening Skills

In total, there were **25** active projects and studies underway between **April 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025** (selected studies listed above).

TVCC clients, staff, and families also participate in external projects, including pharmacological studies administered through partner organizations.

PROGRAM EVALUATION UPDATE

The Wellness Project

The Wellness Project study is an example of research aimed at learning from the experiences of TVCC clients and families to directly inform clinical practice. A team consisting of TVCC frontline staff and researchers put together an extensive application to the Research Ethics Board in preparation for the study. Ethics approval was granted in December 2024, and recruitment of participants is underway!

The purpose of this project is to better understand what strategies and resources help whom and why regarding increasing youth and family wellness. This study will highlight the innovative and family-centred work happening at TVCC, as well as provide recommendations that other children's treatment centres can explore with their own client populations.

Welcome Call Initiative

A program evaluation of the Welcome Call Service offered by multiple programs at TVCC has received approval to begin. TVCC welcome calls are often a point of first contact for families to begin getting support with navigating the healthcare system.

A team of TVCC clinicians, managers, and researchers are looking at what impact welcome calls have on families, ways to ensure services are accessible to all families, and how confident families feel with completing next steps in their child's care journey after welcome calls are completed. To hear back from as many families as possible, program evaluation surveys can be completed online, on paper (mailed to the family's home), or with the support of a TVCC staff or language interpreter over the phone.



COLLABORATION UPDATE

Pain

We are working with **Western University**, **University of Calgary**, and **University of Toronto** to examine experiences of 'everyday pain' among youth living with disability. This participatory arts-based study will recruit disabled youth who experience everyday pain to learn directly from them, producing knowledge that can improve pain-related care.

Friendship

We are working with **Holland Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital** on a program of research about friendship for youth with disabilities. An ongoing study takes a strengths-based and opportunity approach to shift the focus away from what youth need to change about themselves to make friends, to a greater focus on how to change environmental contexts where friendships are a shared responsibility.

Resilience

We are working with **Bloorview Research Institute**, **Drexel University**, **Mount Royal University**, **Toronto Metropolitan University**, **York University**, **March of Dimes** and many other organizations to develop a measure of resiliency that is geared to reflect the types of adversities commonly experienced by people with disabilities. The team is collaborating to develop and test a measure of four resiliency-related adaptive self-capacities.

Solution-Focused Coaching

We are working with **Western University** and **Bloorview Research Institute** to develop a solution-focused coaching (SFC) reflection tool. This tool will provide clinicians with a sense of the key SFC conversational elements, strategies, and best practices to support their work with clients and families.



RESEARCH CONSULTATIONS

Consultations support TVCC programs, as well as other organizations, to foster innovation, quality improvement, and the development of best practices. From April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025, our team completed **411** consultations (average of **34** consultations per month). Consultation counts do not include the additional collaborative work that we do with our partners on research studies.

237 Internal consultations with TVCC programs

34 External consultations with people from other organizations

140 Committee-based consultations with various working groups

Examples of **Internal** Consultations:

- Reviewing research literature about waitlist management strategies
- Summarizing bereavement policies and research to inform TVCC's best practices on supporting parents who experience bereavement at the loss of a child/TVCC client
- Assisting staff to find and use research evidence and develop evaluations to gather client and family feedback to inform clinical decision making and service delivery

Examples of **External** Consultations:

- Discussing research plans and practices with other children's treatment centres (e.g., KidsAbility and Grandview Kids)
- Reviewing collaboration and/or recruitment requests
- Sharing our research findings with external researchers and clinicians
- Providing information about TVCC's research program and opportunities for conducting research at TVCC

Select Examples of **Committees**:

- Leader of the Child Health Symposium Committee and member of the Child Health Research Day Committee
- Member of the Research and Innovation Community of Practice (Empowered Kids Ontario)
- Member of the Quality Improvement Committee (TVCC)

CHILD HEALTH SYMPOSIUM

On May 28, 2024, the research program held our 10th annual Child Health Symposium, a research collaboration between TVCC and the Faculty of Health Sciences at Western University.

The focus of the event was “The Power of Client and Family Engagement: Research and Best Practices in Child and Youth Health and Well-Being.”

Highlights included a panel of parents who shared their stories about what supported their families’ engagement, and the Keynote Speaker, Dr. Gillian King, Distinguished Senior Scientist at Bloorview Research Institute, Canada Research Chair in Optimal Care for Children with Disabilities.

We collaborated with the Paediatric Program at the Children’s Hospital to present the Child Health Research Day at the London Health Sciences Centre and the Joint Child Health Research Poster Evening Reception at Goodwill Industries on May 29, 2024.

Highlights

345 attendees registered for both days

91 research poster presentations

33 oral presentations

233 attendees interacted with the conference app (example: viewed virtual posters)

COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE

Website

The research pages on the TVCC website have been re-developed and updated. Organized by the following principles, “Learn, Collaborate, and Participate,” web users can now more easily navigate the pages, and better understand what is happening in the Research Program.

Six existing pages were updated, and eight new pages were created (e.g., Collaborate, Listening and Communication, the Child Health Symposium, etc.). More new content is underway, including pages written in collaboration with clinical staff. Our new and improved webpages can be found at:

<https://www.tvcc.on.ca/research-tvcc>

Social Media

We launched a five-day, “Did you know?” video series to highlight key facts about research at TVCC. Videos were posted on TVCC’s Facebook and Instagram platforms.

The series began by introducing the research program (Day 1) and its team members (Day 2). Next, the videos highlighted the Research Program’s strategic priorities (Day 3), research areas (Day 4), and lastly, what studies and collaborations are underway (Day 5).

Learn about Research at TVCC

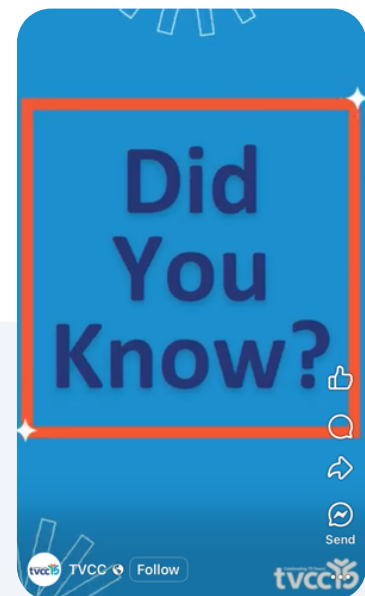
Key Research Areas

We focus our research on four key areas that are important to clients, their families, and service providers:

1. Service Delivery and Evaluation
2. Belonging, Participation, and Quality of Life
3. Innovation and Technology
4. Clinical Expertise

What studies are happening now?

CURRENT RESEARCH



PRESENTATIONS

Servais, M., Moodie, S., & Willoughby, C., Bolack, L., King, G., & Shepherd, T. (2024, October). *CLEAR communication: Exploring clinical listening in complex situations*. Presented to OT, PT, SLP, and Audiology student clinicians, Faculty of Health Sciences, Western University, London, ON (October 21, 2024; Invited presentation).

Servais, M., King, G., Chiarello, L., Seko, Y., Nalder, E., Luong, D., & Pinto, M. (2024, June). *Building resilience: Youth with disabilities, parents, and service providers share their perspectives*. Child and Parent Resource Institute Research Symposium Conference, London, ON (June 20; peer-reviewed).

Smart, E., Servais, M., McKillop, M., Nichols, M., McQueen, L., & Graham, H. (2024, June). *Personalizing pathways to wellness in children's rehabilitation: The experiences of youth with disabilities and their families participating in the Wellness Project*. Child and Parent Resource Institute Research Symposium Conference, London, ON (June 20; peer-reviewed).

DiFabio, D., Glista, D., Moodie, S., O'Hagan, R., **Servais, M.**, & Tremblay, P. (2024, May). *Unlocking the potential of family-centered virtual care: A framework for enhancing caregiver participation*. Presented at the 2024 Child Health Research Day, London, ON (May 29, 2024; peer-reviewed).

Servais, M., King, G., Chiarello, L., Seko, Y., Nalder, E., Luong, D., & Pinto, M. (2024, May). *What strengthens the resiliency-related adaptive self-capacities in youth with disabilities? Youth, parents, and service providers share their experiences*. Presented at the 2024 Child Health Symposium, London, ON (May 28, 2024; peer-reviewed).

Smart, E., Li, J., Becerra, M., & King, G. (2024). *Programs promoting virtual social connections and friendships for youth with disabilities: A scoping review*. Poster presented at the 2024 Child Health Symposium, London, ON (May 28, 2024; peer reviewed).

Smart, E., Servais, M., McKillop, M., Nichols, M., McQueen, L., & Graham, H. (2024, May). *Pathways to wellness in children's rehabilitation: The experiences of youth and their families in the Wellness Project*. Presented at the 2024 Child Health Symposium, London, ON (May 28, 2024; peer-reviewed).

Denusik, L., Glista, D., **Servais, M.**, Friesen, J., Oram Cardy, J., & Cunningham, B. J., (2024, May). *Are we targeting the outcomes caregivers value? Exploring caregivers' views on the important outcomes of caregiver-mediated programs for young autistic children and their families*. Presented at the Speech-Language & Audiology Canada Conference, Vancouver, BC, Canada (May 9–11; peer-reviewed).

PUBLICATIONS

Research Area 1: Service Delivery and Evaluation

Developing a Caregiver Participation Framework for Virtual Care

DiFabio, D., Moodie, S., O'Hagan, R., **Servais, M.**, Tremblay, P., & Glista, D. (2025). Unlocking the potential of pediatric virtual care: An e-Delphi study on a virtual caregiver participation framework in audiology. *American Journal of Audiology*, 34(1). 37-50.

https://pubs.asha.org/doi/10.1044/2024_AJA-24-00125 (Open Access)

Summary: “Developing a Caregiver Participation Framework for Virtual Care” (released February 2025)

Key Message: In this study, a virtual caregiver participation framework is enhanced by experts’ specialized knowledge. The resulting framework is expert-informed and consensus-based, highlighting the components and complexities of caregiver participation in virtual care.

Caregivers’ Perspectives on Program Outcomes

Denusik, L., Glista, D., **Servais, M.**, Friesen, J., Oram, J., & Cunningham, B.J. (2024). “We were the best people to do the job”: Caregivers’ reported outcomes of a virtual caregiver-delivered program for autistic preschoolers. *Autism & Developmental Language Impairments*, 9, 1-17.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/23969415241244767> (Open Access)

Summary: “Caregivers’ Perspectives on Program Outcomes” (released June 2024)

Key Message: In this study of a virtual caregiver-delivered group program designed to support young autistic children, interviews with 21 caregivers were analyzed within the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) framework (World Health Organization, 2001). Caregivers identified novel outcomes that had been overlooked in previous research, such as improvements in social communication.

PUBLICATIONS

Research Area 1 Continued: Service Delivery and Evaluation

Preschool Group Interventions for Functional Communication

Lewcock, M., Theurer, J., **Servais, M.**, & Cunningham, B. J. (2024). Real-world changes in preschoolers' functional communication skills: A single-subject analysis of two group interventions. Preprint available from: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4734266

Summary: "Preschool Group Interventions for Functional Communication" (released September 2024)

Key Message: Real-world outcomes from two caregiver-mediated group interventions aimed at increasing children's vocabulary and expressive language skills were examined. Early findings suggest that group intervention programs for preschoolers can improve communication participation, early linguistic behaviours, and vocabulary.

Examining Caregivers' Experiences of Virtual Services Based on their Autistic Children's Attributes

Miletic, K., **Servais, M.**, Oram Cardy, J., & Denusik, L. (2024). Do caregiver perceptions of the virtual More Than Words[®] program differ based on autistic children's attributes? *American Journal of Speech-Language Pathology*, 33(3), 1127-1141. https://doi.org/10.1044/2024_AJSLP-23-00278

Summary: "Evaluation on of a Caregiver-Mediated Virtual Intervention: Impact of Autistic Children's Attributes" (released April 2024)

Key Message: All caregivers perceived at least some benefit to participation in a caregiver-mediated virtual group intervention. Caregivers gained new knowledge and strategies, as well as tailored support. The specific skill areas that improved varied based on the child's social communication stage.

PUBLICATIONS

Research Area 2: Belonging, Participation, and Quality of Life

Facilitating Virtual Social Connections for Youth with Disabilities

Bowman, L.R., **Smart, E.**, Oh, A., Xu, Y., Curran, C.J., Menna-Dack, D., Hammond, J., & Thorne, M. (2024). Facilitating virtual social connections for youth with disabilities: lessons for post-COVID-19 programming. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 46(22), 5253-5262.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/09638288.2023.2301484>

Summary: "Virtual Social Connections: Lessons for Post-COVID-19" (released May 2024)

Key Message: The benefits of virtual programming to enhance social connections include access to social spaces and opportunities to communicate in alternative ways. A hybrid approach to service delivery, combining online with in-person options is recommended for future social programming.



PUBLICATIONS

Research Area 3: Innovation and Technology

Clinician's Perspectives on Mobile App Use for Adolescents with Hearing Aids

Glista, D., O'Hagan, R., Servais, M., & Jalilian, N. (2024). Adolescent-centered mHealth applications in a collaborative care model: A virtual focus group study with audiologists. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 67(8), 2794-2810. https://doi.org/10.1044/2024_JSLHR-23-00679 (Open Access)

Summary: "Mobile App Use for Adolescents with Hearing Aids: Clinician Perspectives" (released September 2024)

Key Message: Clinicians support using mobile apps to personalize adolescents' hearing aids. Mobile app use gives adolescents more control over their hearing health care. Multi-level strategies (i.e., organizational, professional, and client-based), as well as technological and design improvements, will improve uptake of app usage by adolescents.



2024-25 Highlights

25 projects and studies

6 peer-reviewed articles

8 peer-reviewed presentations

6 research summaries

411 total consultations

1 research conference held
(2024 Child Health Symposium)



Through consultations, projects, and studies, the TVCC Research Program aims to: 1. Engage in meaningful research; 2. Foster participation and a culture of learning; and 3. Share findings and inform best practices.

We look forward to an upcoming year of collaboration, progress, and shared learning.



OUR TEAM

TVCC's small but mighty Research Program includes our Director, one full-time, and three part-time staff. We are located on the second floor of the 779 Base Line Road East location in London. Contact us at research@tvcc.on.ca



Michelle Servais
Researcher



Eric Smart
Researcher



Meaghan McKillop
Research Project
Coordinator



Megan Nichols
Knowledge
Translation Specialist



Kristel Pallant
Director
Quality Management