

2019-2020 Distinguished Lecturer Series
Diana Robins, Ph.D.
February 12, 2020

Diana L. Robins, Ph.D. (University of Connecticut, 2002) is a professor and the Interim Director of the AJ Drexel Autism Institute at Drexel University, where she leads the Research Program in Early Detection and Intervention for ASD. She also holds secondary appointments in Community Health and Prevention and Psychology. Much of her work has centered around developing, validating, and refining a widely-used screening tool for ASD, the [Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers, or M-CHAT](#). Dr. Robins' work is funded by the National Institutes of Health. Dr. Robins serves as the treasurer for the International Society for Autism Research.

Presentation Title: Early Detection of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Primary Pediatric Care

Children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) benefit from early intervention. However, delays in detecting ASD make it difficult for families to access ASD-specific treatment. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that primary care providers integrate ongoing developmental surveillance with screening at target well-child visits. Tools such as the Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers, Revised, with Follow-Up (M-CHAT-R/F) support universal screening in primary care settings. This presentation will review the common warning signs of ASD in toddlers, and the different strategies used to detect ASD risk. Using the M-CHAT and M-CHAT-R/F as models, I will discuss how to evaluate the utility of screening tools and discuss challenges and opportunities to integrate screening in community settings.