**INCLUSION OF WOMEN AND MINORITIES AND CHILDREN**

We are evaluating the validity and efficacy of a screening tool for estimating the risk of a future diagnosis of autism, particularly in comparison with the state of the art clinical practice. Our tool is not questionnaire based, and analyzes patterns of co-morbid disorders in the past of individual patients to determine future risk. Thus, our tool is, by design, expected to reduce biases that are suspected to impact diverse communities in autism screening.

1. The screen is designed to be universal, so all patients that are treated in the pediatric primary care within the first 30 months of life will be a subject of this study, unless the patient refuses access to past medical records, or does not give consent. Thus, our population will include males, females, and demographic variations that are reflective of the general patient population in the University of Chicago Medical Center (UCM). This tends to be a very diverse population.
2. Including diverse groups such as African American and Hispanic children is important, since recent report by the American Academy of Pediatrics documents literature showing that these communities have historically been under-diagnosed, which might reflect socio-economic and other biases that arise from the use of checklists presented to parents to determine the child’s future risk. Our study directly addresses these issues, and plans to investigate if a more objective tool will reduce such biases
3. N/A
4. There are no selection criteria that need to be implemented other than the age bracket. the population served at UCM is highly diverse with minorities making up over 50% of the cohort.

This study is limited to the age of 60 months, because autism is seldom diagnosed beyond that age. Our team consists of developmental psychologists (Dr. Peter J. Smith), and the study will be carried out in a pediatric primary care setting at UCM under supervision from trained personnel at the Department of Pediatrics, University of Chicago.