



Emory University School of Nursing Assistant Professor Awarded Grant for “Bringing Sleep Education for Children with Autism into Communities: A Dissemination and Implementation Project”

Atlanta, GA – January 9, 2024 - The American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM) Foundation has awarded its 2023 Strategic Research Grant for "Bringing Sleep Education for Children with Autism into Communities: A Dissemination and Implementation Project" to **Susan Brasher PhD, CPNP-PC**, Assistant Professor with Emory University's Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing and Beth Malow, MD of Vanderbilt University Medical Center. The AASM Foundation funds high-impact projects that are aimed at improving sleep health for all. Over the past 25 years, the AASM Foundation has invested more than \$25 million in funding career development, high-impact research, clinical training and community initiatives. The AASM Foundation funding will support Drs. Brasher and Malow's career trajectory in advancing their experience in dissemination and implementation related to behavioral sleep education.

Within pediatric sleep medicine, one of the greatest challenges encountered is getting information to families who face disparities in access to care. Drs. Brasher and Malow previously received support from the AASM to train community therapists (in partnership with academic sleep experts) to carry out parent-based sleep education for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and documented feasibility and effectiveness. In this dissemination and implementation project, they will extend this therapist training program to make sleep education accessible to families that encounter racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and geographic disparities. Therapists will have access to materials developed previously by the research team, including a manualized curriculum, and will participate in a novel supportive online community that enhances co-learning and promotes self-efficacy. The training program will reach underserved populations and is generalizable beyond ASD to a range of additional disabilities and underserved populations.

Dr. Susan Brasher is an Assistant Professor, tenure track, and has an extensive pediatric background in both the inpatient setting as a Registered Nurse in a pediatric dedicated hospital and in the outpatient setting as a Certified Pediatric Nurse Practitioner (CPNP). Additionally, she has several years of experience in teaching Pediatric Nursing to both undergraduate and graduate nursing students. She received her PhD in Nursing from the University of Florida with an emphasis on pediatric neurodevelopmental disorders, specifically autism spectrum disorder. She has served as a Principal Investigator (PI) and Co-Investigator (Co-I) of numerous funded grants focusing on Autism Spectrum Disorder. She has several years of experience as PI, Co-I, and project coordinator of multiple funded patient-centered outcomes research institute (PCORI) grants working with community members and research teams to address health disparities of children and young adults diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. Recently, she was appointed to be a patient-centered outcomes research institute (PCORI) ambassador to expand knowledge and participation in patient-centered outcomes research (PCOR) across the country.

For more information on Dr. Susan Brasher, visit her [faculty profile](#). To learn more about the Research Project grant, visit the American Academy of Sleep Medicine Foundation [website](#).

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About the School of Nursing

As one of the nation's top nursing schools, the Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing at Emory University is committed to educating visionary nurse leaders and scholars. Ranked the No. 1 master's, No. 2 BSN, and No. 6 DNP programs in the nation by U.S. News & World Report, the school is recognized as a Center of Excellence in Nursing Education by the National League of Nursing. The school offers undergraduate, master's, doctoral and non-degree programs, bringing together cutting-edge resources, distinguished faculty, top clinical experiences, and access to leading health care partners to shape the future of nursing and impact the world's health and well-being. Learn more at nursing.emory.edu.