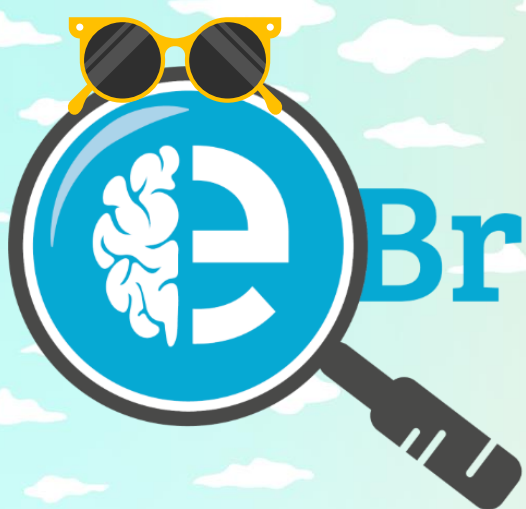




Brain



Summer Newsletter

July 2025



In this issue of the e-BRAIN Newsletter you will find:

- Page 1** *The Schizophrenia International Research Symposium (SIRS) in Chicago!*
- Page 2** *Introducing our visiting researcher, Manuel!*
- Page 3** *Celebrating the CELEBRATE Project: Final Dissemination Event*
- Page 4** *We've teamed up with the Tokyo Teen Cohort Study!*
- Page 5** *Nare's PhD Upgrade assessment & Goodbye Corentin*
- Page 6** *Boost mental well-being with a few shifts*
- Page 7** *How well do you know your mental health & Immune boosters?*



NARE

XUEMEI

BECKY

PAOLA

CORENTIN



ANDREW

YUBING

GIULIA

CATEY

SVENJA

The eBRAIN and SINaPs teams' potluck lunch

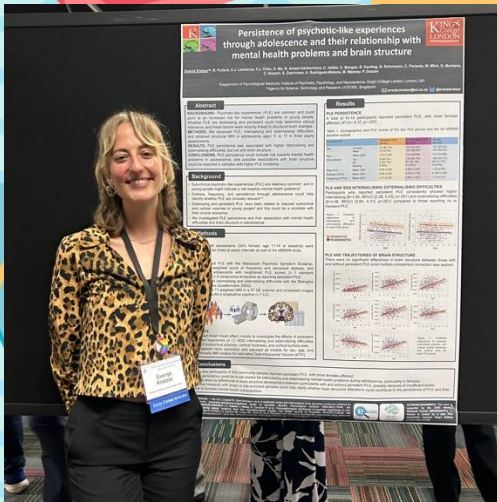
Dear reader,

Welcome to our Summer Newsletter! We have been busy attending conferences and collaborative workshops. Sadly, one of our team members, Corentin, has left eBRAIN, but we have welcomed a new visiting researcher, Manuel. Nare will talk about the Upgrade process for her PhD. We also have an update on the CELEBRATE study, and to finish off, we have a fun quiz and outline ways to boost your mental well-being. We hope you have enjoyed reading our newsletter and as always - well wishes and solidarity, wherever you may be.

The e-BRAIN team

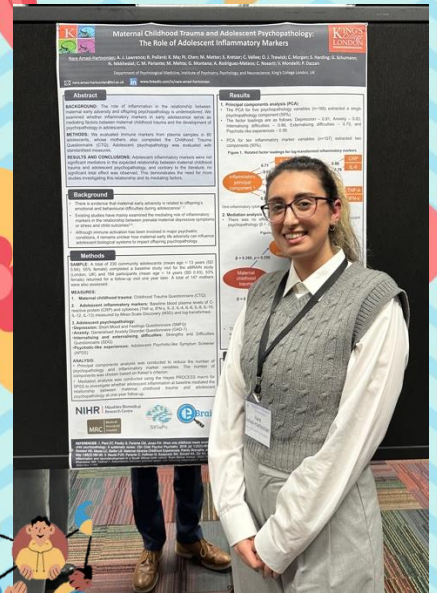


The Schizophrenia International Research Society (SIRS) Congress in Chicago!



Four members of the eBRAIN team—Becky, Nare, Svenja, and Paola—recently travelled to Chicago to attend the Schizophrenia International Research Society Congress, a major global conference that brings together leading experts in psychosis and schizophrenia research. This event offered an exciting platform for the team to showcase the eBRAIN study and connect with other researchers in the field.

Nare, Svenja, and Becky each presented their research findings from the eBRAIN study through poster presentations. These sparked thoughtful discussions with fellow researchers and highlighted the innovative research being done by the team. Excitingly, Becky and Svenja received prestigious Early Career Awards! This helped to fund their attendance at the conference and connected them with experienced mentors, who enriched their experience with valuable networking opportunities.



Throughout the conference, the team attended a wide array of talks from international researchers, covering diverse and cutting-edge topics in psychosis and neurodevelopment research. One particularly memorable session explored the trajectory of psychosis across a woman's life—from puberty to pregnancy and through menopause. It was fascinating to learn how these life stages can increase vulnerability to mental health problems, it made us think about how this intersects with the eBRAIN project's focus.

Besides the conference itself, the trip to Chicago was both rewarding and inspiring. The team also took time to explore the city and, of course, sample the iconic deep-dish pizza!

We're grateful to everyone who made this experience possible and are already looking forward to the next opportunity to share our research.

Introducing our visiting researcher, Manuel!



Hello, I'm Manuel, a visiting researcher from Spain. I joined the eBRAIN team in April this year and will be staying for a few months until July. I am very grateful to be part of such an amazing team and exciting project during this time.



I am a Consultant Clinical Psychologist at the Virgen del Rocío University Hospital in Seville, Spain. I studied Psychology and completed a Master's in Advanced Studies in Brain and Behaviour at the University of Seville, where I also obtained my PhD. I am passionate about understanding how the brain works, how our environment influences brain development, and how this can impact mental health. I believe that a better understanding of these factors could improve how we help people with mental health problems. My current research mainly focuses on neuroimaging and neurodevelopmental disorders such as psychosis.



I love sports, travelling, reading (especially psychology, neuroscience, and philosophy), listening to music, and spending time with my friends and family. I'm a pizza lover, so wherever I go, I'm always on the lookout for a good pizzeria!



Celebrating the CELEBRATE Project: Final Dissemination Event



In May 2025, we held the final dissemination event of the **CELEBRATE Project**, *From Mission to Framework*, marking the successful conclusion of this two-year UKRI-funded research programme. The CELEBRATE study aimed to improve how researchers study youth mental health by co-developing research with young people.

The event brought together researchers, young participants, parents, and teachers from Birmingham, Bradford, and London to share findings, celebrate milestones, and present a draft framework of guiding principles for inclusive and representative biological mental health research.



At the heart of the event were members of the **Young Experts Working Group (YEWG)**, ten young people aged 11–16 - including some of our eBRAIN participants, who played a central role throughout the project. They spoke at the event, shared reflections on their involvement, and highlighted why youth voices must shape research that directly affects them.

The final framework produced by the CELEBRATE team will guide future biological research with young people and be shared through publications, conferences, and social media.

It was inspiring to witness the confidence and insight these young people brought to the project and the event. Their contributions really helped to make the CELEBRATE project a meaningful and collaborative success.

Follow the CELEBRATE study on Twitter (@ProjCelebrate) and Instagram (@celebrateprojectofficial), and visit their website at <https://www.celebrateproject.co.uk/> to find out more about their latest work and findings.

We've teamed up with the Tokyo Teen Cohort Study!

We recently welcomed our colleagues from the Tokyo Teen Cohort study in London! We held a workshop together, focusing on young people's mental health and brain development during teenage years. Our Tokyo colleagues shared exciting data from their work with young people in Japan. We also presented data from the eBRAIN study, and we are thrilled to join forces and to combine our research!



【青春期の健康・発達調査】

TEEN COHORT

The new project: Bridging Divides

Girls and women are about three times more likely than boys and men to struggle with anxiety and depression. A new project called Bridging Divides, based in London and Tokyo, is working to understand why this happens. The project is funded by the Wellcome Trust and led by our colleague Gemma.

The project looks at how growing up as a girl or being treated differently because of your gender can affect mental health and brain development during teenage years. The team is made up of social scientists, biologists, and young people from the UK and Japan.

What makes Bridging Divides special is that young people are involved at each step of the way. By listening to and working with young people, the project aims to uncover what everyday sexism looks and feels like and how it may influence anxiety and depression to create better ways to support young people's mental health.

Nare's PhD Upgrade assessment

9 months after starting my PhD, I had my Upgrade assessment. This involves writing a report about your project and having an oral examination where two examiners ask questions about your progress. It's an opportunity to show that you will be able to successfully complete your PhD project.

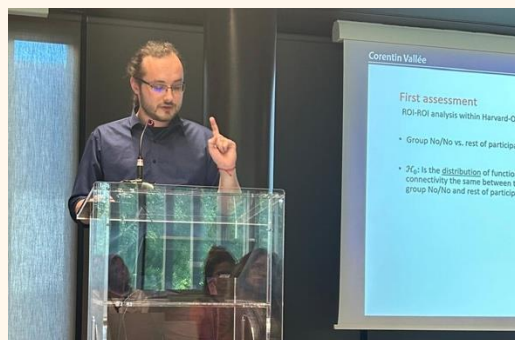
My assessment went very well! The examiners were supportive and interested, and gave me suggestions to improve my work. At the beginning, I was quite nervous, but after going through the process and hearing the positive feedback from the examiners, I felt more confident and reassured about my work.



Goodbye Corentin!

As the data collection phase of eBRAIN comes to a close, I wanted to take a moment to say goodbye and thank you!

I've had the privilege of working on this project, focusing mainly on the MRI data that you helped us collect. Alongside the research, I've been responsible for organising the eBRAIN database, which I'll continue to do remotely as the project moves forward. Although I'm stepping back from the eBRAIN day-to-day work, I'm excited to see how the data will continue to help us better understand how the brain develops during adolescence.



I've mostly enjoyed being part of a brilliant and diverse team, with people from neuroscience, biology, psychology, psychiatry—even mathematics (me!)—all working together. It's been inspiring to see how much we can achieve when different perspectives and skills come together, and it has shaped how I want to work in the future.

A special shout-out to Prof Paola for assembling this wonderful team and building up the eBRAIN project!

It's been both a challenging and rewarding experience, and I'm incredibly grateful to you, who participated and made this research possible.



Boost mental well-being with a few shifts

Summer brings longer days, warmer weather and a chance to reset our routines. For all of us, it's the perfect time to boost mental well-being with a few simple lifestyle shifts.

1) Eat a Rainbow

A balanced summer diet can help manage mood, energy levels, and focus. What does a balanced summer diet look like? One of the funniest ways is to **"Eat a Rainbow."** It means adding a variety of colourful fruits and vegetables to your meals. They are rich in vitamins, antioxidants, and fibre. Each colour may bring different nutrients that support brain health, mood, and overall energy.

Here's a list of examples for each colour:



Red: Tomatoes, red bell peppers, radishes, strawberries, raspberries, cherries, red apples, red grapes, watermelon, pink grapefruit, pomegranate

Red fruits and veggies contain 'lycopene' which may help protect against certain cancers.

Orange: carrots, sweet potatoes, butternut squash, oranges, pumpkin, orange bell peppers, tangerines, satsumas, mangoes, apricots, peaches, nectarines, papaya

Orange fruits and veggies are packed with 'beta-carotene', which the body converts to vitamin A for healthy skin.

Yellow: sweetcorn, yellow courgettes, pineapples, bananas, yellow bell peppers, yellow tomatoes, yellow apples, lemon, golden kiwi

Yellow fruits and veggies contain 'carotenoids', which could help protect the eyes.

Green: spinach, kale, lettuce, cucumbers, broccoli, green beans, celery, peas, watercress, avocado, asparagus, green grapes, kiwi fruits

Green fruits and veggies contain energy giving compounds and iron which can help prevent anaemia.

Purple: aubergines, red cabbage, purple onions, blueberries, blackberries, black grapes, plums, prunes, blackcurrants

Purple fruits and veggies are a good source of 'anthocyanins' which are a great anti-ager!

White: cauliflower, garlic, white onions, potatoes, mushrooms, turnips

White fruits and veggies support immunity, brain function, and mood with anti-inflammatory compounds and essential nutrients like vitamin B6 and vitamin D.

Try to keep 3–5 colours on your plate each day! Not every meal has to look like a rainbow, but the more variety, the better! You can use FRESH, TINNED, FROZEN or DRIED – They all count!

2) Move for Your Mind

Physical activity isn't just about fitness. Even 20–30 minutes of walking, biking, swimming, or dancing a day can lower stress and improve mood. In summer, being active outdoors adds natural sunlight, which helps with sleep and vitamin D—both essential for mental health. These simple lifestyle changes can strengthen our emotional resilience.

Pick **one** daily habit, like a short morning walk, adding a portion of fruit to breakfast or packing a colourful lunch, and build from there. Let's make this summer a season of energy, balance, and self-care!

How well do you know your mental health & Immune boosters?

Give this quiz a go and find out more about how our diet and immune system can affect our mental health!

1. Which vitamin, often found in mushrooms and sunlight, helps regulate mood and supports your immune system?

- A. Vitamin C
- B. Vitamin A
- C. Vitamin D
- D. Vitamin K



2. What does the term "eat the rainbow" mean?

- A. Only eat rainbow-colored candy
- B. Eat foods from every fast-food restaurant
- C. Include fruits and vegetables of many colours in your meals
- D. Only eat red and yellow foods

3. Which of these foods supports brain health and helps prevent anaemia?

- A. Chips
- B. Green leafy vegetables
- C. Ice cream
- D. White bread



4. Purple fruits and vegetables are high in anthocyanins. What do they help with?

- A. Making you taller
- B. Improving skin health and slowing aging
- C. Making your food taste spicy
- D. Helping you sleep less

5. Which neurotransmitter, often boosted by physical activity, is primarily responsible for feelings of happiness and well-being?

- A. Dopamine
- B. Serotonin
- C. Cortisol
- D. GABA



6. Chronic stress can weaken the immune system by increasing levels of which hormone?

- A. Insulin
- B. Cortisol
- C. Melatonin
- D. Adrenaline



7. Which vitamin deficiency is most commonly linked to symptoms of depression and fatigue in youth?

- A. Vitamin B12
- B. Vitamin A
- C. Vitamin C
- D. Vitamin K

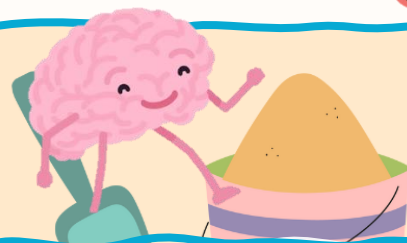


8. What role does magnesium play in mental health?

- A. It increases anxiety and nervousness
- B. It speeds up heart rate
- C. It lowers serotonin levels
- D. It acts as a natural calming agent supporting nerve and muscle function

9. How does regular physical activity affect brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), and why is it important?

- A. Decreases BDNF, reducing brain plasticity
- B. Increases BDNF, but harms mood
- C. Has no effect on BDNF
- D. Increases BDNF, supporting learning and memory



Find the answers on the last page of the newsletter! How many points did you score?

Dear Reader,

Thank you for reading our Newsletter. We hope you enjoyed it!

We wanted to take this opportunity to say thank you so much for being involved with the eBRAIN study! Wishing you all a very happy holiday, have a lovely break and take care of yourselves.

If you'd like to find out more about the study or ask any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch! You can find our contact details and social media accounts below. We look forward to hearing from you! Bye for now!

The e-BRAIN team



If you missed our last newsletter or would like to view our previous newsletters, you can find them here: <https://www.ebrainstudy.com/blog>

Want more? Why not check out our [website](#) for more eBRAIN content, including blogs, mental health resources, challenges and more! 😊



Answers for the quiz: 1. C; 2. C; 3. B; 4. B; 5. B; 6. B; 7. A; 8. D; 9. D



✉ ebrain@kcl.ac.uk

🌐 ebrainstudy.com

🐦 [@e_brainstudy](https://twitter.com/e_brainstudy)

📘 [@ebrainstudy](https://www.facebook.com/ebrainstudy)

