

Heart and Mind Wellbeing Center



At the Heart and Mind Wellbeing Center, we recognize the strong connection between physical and mental health. This one-of-a-kind Cincinnati Children's center provides emotional support and mental health care for families affected by congenital heart disease (CHD). Our goal is to help children, teens and adults with CHD and their families navigate through challenges or uncertainty, regain a sense of hope and resilience, and improve overall health and wellbeing.

CONTACT US

For general information or referrals:

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IMPORTANCE OF MENTAL HEALTH CARE FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH HEART DISEASE

In July 2022, the **American Heart Association** published a *Scientific Statement* to inspire new standards for the integration of mental health care into congenital heart centers. In the statement, experts including our own **Nadine Kasparian, PhD**, director of the Heart and Mind Wellbeing Center at Cincinnati Children's, underscored the critical role mental health plays for patients of all ages with CHD.

WHAT SETS US APART

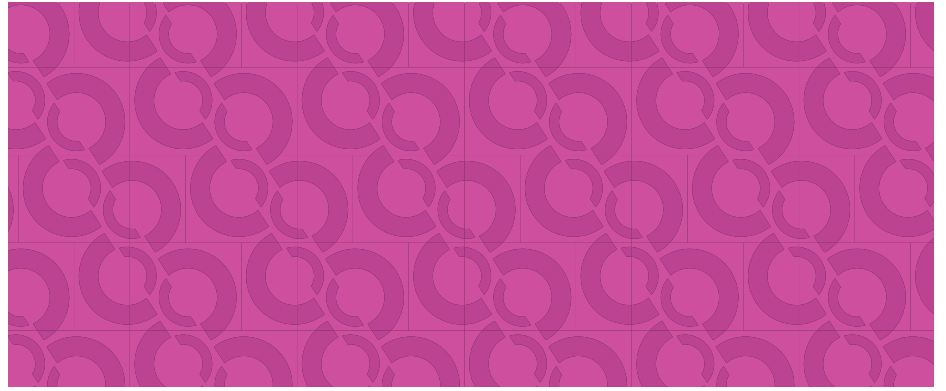
- Patients of the Heart and Mind Wellbeing Center receive mental health care **tailored specifically for those affected by heart disease**. Our experts use research-proven treatments focused on improving both mental and physical health, as well as overall wellbeing.
- Our **care spans all ages**, from prenatal care for expecting parents, through the infant, childhood and teen years, and into adulthood. We provide support and treatments beginning as early as possible and continue to offer care throughout all stages, addressing the many factors that can influence mental health across life.
- We provide **care for the whole family**—patients, parents, caregivers, siblings and partners. This may seem like the obvious thing to do, but it is rare for congenital heart centers to offer psychological care for family members. Our model recognizes the importance of family for optimal mental health and puts the patient and family at the center of care.
- Dr. Kasparian, an **international expert in mental health and heart disease**, leads the center and pioneered this work in her homeland of Australia. She has conducted extensive research to develop new programs and therapies and is passionate about ensuring that everyone who needs mental health care receives it.
- In conjunction with the Fetal Heart Program at Cincinnati Children's, the Heart and Mind Wellbeing Center **conducts groundbreaking research** in maternal mental health to improve parent and child wellbeing.



The Heart Institute at Cincinnati Children's is part of the Joint Pediatric and Congenital Heart Program.

A collaboration between Cincinnati Children's and Kentucky Children's Hospital, this program is ranked nationally by *U.S. News and World Report*.





TREATMENT TEAM

- **Nadine Kasparian, PhD, MAPS**
Director
- **Michelle Ernst, PhD**
Psychologist
- **Stacey Morrison, PsyD**
Psychologist
- **Emily Jones, MS, MEd, CCLS**
Child Life Specialist
- **Sela Shannon, LSW**
Social Worker
- **Jennifer Smith, MSW**
Program Coordinator

OUR TREATMENT APPROACH

Our unique team of experts includes psychologists, social workers and child life specialists. We work together to provide specialized care for people of all ages with heart disease and their families, including:

- Expecting parents who have received a prenatal diagnosis, whether through our Fetal Heart Program or another healthcare provider
- Infants, children and teens with CHD
- Adults through our Adult Congenital Heart Disease Program or another healthcare provider
- Inpatients and outpatients
- Parents, caregivers, siblings and partners of people with CHD

At Cincinnati Children's, cardiac care and mental health care go hand-in-hand. We provide support and therapy during periods of wellness or poor health, and during times of transition and adjustment. Wherever possible, this care is integrated with patients' cardiology care.

EXTENSIVE RESEARCH

Research is a critical part of the Heart and Mind Wellbeing Center. Dr. Kasparian and her team have been conducting research in the field of heart disease and mental health for over a decade. She uses her study findings to develop new treatments and support programs that best meet the needs of people with heart disease and their families.

Currently, the Heart and Mind Wellbeing Center is leading or heavily involved with more than 30 studies. All of our research is done in partnership with people with heart disease and their families.

“Our goal is to support families through diagnosis, treatment and transitions, so they feel informed, empowered and supported.”

—Nadine Kasparian, PhD